

Kefan Chen

Up Skyward

for Trio

(2024)

The inspiration for this piece comes from the 'Yi Gou Gou' opera. "Yi Gou Gou" opera is a traditional local opera from my hometown, characterized by a rise in pitch at the end of each sentence by an octave. Unlike stages in grand theaters, it thrives among ordinary people who love drama. Performance troupes set up rudimentary stages using simple scaffolding, often without amplification or microphones, and the show begins. Accompanied by the orchestra's music, people of all ages from the village gather to watch, making it the highlight of the village and town during important festivals for centuries. Drawing inspiration from the distinctive "slide up" and other elements I captured in "Yi Gou Gou" opera, I composed this piece with the intention of bringing its uniqueness into new music, allowing people to experience the essence of "Yi Gou Gou" opera.

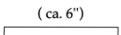
Approximate duration: 9 minutes

Performance Notation

For All Instruments

-  = Quarter sharp
-  = Quarter flat
-  = Play the pitch freely but should around the notated area
-  = Fast glissando after the note; mimics the vocal style of "Yi Gou Gou" opera.
Here is a video link of the opera for reference :
<https://youtu.be/K0-BmmfzSYs>
-  = Smooth glissando between two notes

In Time

-  (ca. 6") = The range of a music phrase and its approximate duration
-  = Interpret the lines as cues for ensemble play or synchronize with other players
-  = Keep playing until the line ends
-  = Play the notes as one group and with free rhythm
-  = pause; stop playing until the next note

For Flute

-  = Airy notes; has three different qualities: half air and half pitch; completely air; and air with resonance
-  = Note status of normal notes
-  = Note status of airy notes with a clear pitch
-  = Note status of airy notes with pitch resonance
-  = Note status of airy notes with completely air
-  = Flutter tongue; play the rhythm as written when it has less than 16 tremolos; play as fast as possible when it has 16 tremolos
-  (voice) = Play with the voice; sing the pitch freely, but should be high or low based on the notation
-  = "Quasi pizzicato", Tongue slap; for lower register and stronger sounding, use tongue slap; for higher register and softer sounding, play "pizz."
-  = Slowly rotate the tube; allowing the pitch to fluctuate up and down with the rotation, and let the air fluctuate as well

For Alto Saxophone

-  = Airy notes; has three different qualities: half air and half pitch; completely air; and air with resonance
-  = Note status of normal notes
-  = Note status of airy notes with a clear pitch
-  = Note status of airy notes with pitch resonance
-  = Note status of airy notes with completely air
-  = Flutter tongue; play the rhythm as written when it has less than 16 tremolos; play as fast as possible when it has 16 tremolos
-  = Play with the voice; sing the pitch freely, but should be high or low based on the notation
-  = Tongue ram
-  = Tremolo the airy notes with the fast key slap
-  = Irregular vibrato on the pitch

For Cello

-  = Bow pressure; play normally when there is no label
-  = Snap pizzicato/Bartók pizzicato
-  = Tremolos; play the rhythm as written when it has less than 16 tremolos; play as fast as possible when it has 16 tremolos
-  = Notes that played as high as possible
-  = Mute the string by hand, create the white noise sound
-  = When hand slightly mute the string, the hand runs rapidly and rhythmically between high and low registers
-  = Slap on the wood surface of the instrument; slap on the side, front and back base on the notation
-  = Finger clicks on the wood surface rapidly and rhythmically
-  = Stomping with the left foot;
attach a small wooden object (such as a plank, block, or stick) to the sole of the left foot. Place a separate wooden block on the ground to be struck by the left foot
-  = Stomping with the right foot;
fasten a string of small jingle bells to the top of the right shoe
-  = Irregular vibrato on the pitch

* **Metrical:** Perform strictly following the given tempo and time signature.

* **Free but synchronized:** Play freely, focusing on expression without strict adherence to timing, but align with others at the vertical dotted lines through visual cues.

Up Skyward

(I)

Kefan Chen

Metrical (ca. ♩ = 60)

Firmly

A

(voice)

Flute

Alto Saxophone

Violoncello

sf *mf* *sf* *mf* *p* *sf*

(Airy) slowly rotate the tube (R: resonance)

Tongue Slap (T.S.)

irregular vibrato

pizz.

Free but synchronized

B (ca. 4")

(ca. 4")

(ca. 4")

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

sf *pp* *f* *sf*

(Try to reach but failed)

Normal irregular vibrato

arco. muted lightly by hand Sul G

p *f* *sf*

(ca. 6")

(ca. 6")

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

mf *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p*

(voice)

mf *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p*

mf *p* *sf* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p*

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

(ca. 4'')

(ca. 3'')

(ca. 3'')

con tutti

f

con tutti
Tongue Ram
(T.R.)

f

con tutti
pizz.

arco.

pp

T.S.

mp

T.R.

f

arco.
muted lightly by hand
Sul C

mp

keep playing with unregular small pulse
like hesitation

Review

Metrical (ca. ♩ = 60)
Firmly

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

14

C

mf

f

mp

T.S.

T.R.

f

mp

pizz.

arco. muted

f

p

pizz.

arco. unmuted

f

p

f

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

16

f

mf

f

f

pizz.

f

(voice)

arco.

18

Fl. *f* *f* (Airy) (.)

Alto Sax. *mp* *f*

Vc. *f* *p*

arco.

D

Free but synchronized
(ca. 4")

19

Fl. *p* *mf* as fast as possible

Alto Sax. *p* *mf* keep playing with unregular small pulse like hesitation

Vc. *pp* rhythmically and smoothly

Metrical (ca. ♩ = 60)
Firmly

20

Fl. *f* *mf*

Alto Sax. *mf* *sf* con cello

Vc. *mf* *ff* con alto sax.

22 **E**

Fl. *mf* *mp* *f* *mf*

Alto Sax. *cont. fl.* *ff* *mf* *f* *mp < f* *mp* *p*

Vc. *cont. fl.* *pizz.* *arco.* *ff* *pp* *mf* *p*

24 (voice) (chu--)

Fl. *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Alto Sax. *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p*

Vc. *pizz.* *sf* *pp* *mp* *pp* *mp* *pp* *front* *front* *front* *front*

26 (chu--)

Fl. *p* *mf* *p* *mf*

Alto Sax. *T.R.* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *f*

Vc. *front* *front* *front* *front side* *8va* *front side front* *mf* *p* *mf*

Free but synchronized

5

(ca. 4") (ca. 4") (ca. 4")

29

Fl. *ff* *mf* *p*

Alto Sax. *sf* *mf* *f*

Vc. *sf* *p* *mf*

arco. pizz.

Metrical (ca. ♩ = 60) Firmly

(8)

31

Fl. *mf*

Alto Sax. *mp* *mf* *p*

Vc. *mp* *mf* *pp*

arco.

Free but synchronized

(ca. 6") (ca. 4") (ca. 2")

32

Fl. *p*

Alto Sax. *mp* *pp* *mp*

Vc. *mp*

as fast as possible

* start at the middle of E.H., don't need to be synchronized

as fast as possible
* don't need to be synchronized

(ca. 2") (ca. 4")

34

Fl. *mp* *mf* *f*

Alto Sax. *mf* *sf*

Vc. *mp* *sf*

Metrical (ca. ♩ = 100)

Firmly

36 **G**

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

ff

ff

ff

Free but synchronized

(ca. 6")

(ca. 6")

37

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

pp

mp

pp

mp

pp

mp

speech like playing

repeat the pattern

overflow

Metrical (ca. ♩ = 100)

Firmly

39 **H**

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

ff

p

ff

f

ff

Free but synchronized

(ca. 6")

Fl. 40 *mp*

Alto Sax. *sf* *p*

Vc. *p* muted Sul G *p*

* start at the middle of the flute, don't need to be synchronized

Metrical (ca. ♩ = 100)

Firmly

Fl. 41 *mf* *mp* *mf*

Alto Sax. *f* *mp* *f* *mp*

Vc. *sf* *mf*

unmuted → muted

Free but synchronized

(ca. 8")

Fl. 42 *mp* *ff* *mp* (Airy) (s)

Alto Sax. *mp* *ff*

Vc. muted → un-muted *f*

(ca. 6") (ca. 4")

43

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

mf

f

mf

f

muted

repeat the pattern

unmuted

M

Metrical (ca. ♩ = 60)
Firmly

44

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

ff

ff

ff

arco.

Freely and unsynchronized (ca. 10")

45

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

ff

p

p

mf

f

sf

8va

slowly rotate the tube

Metrical (ca. ♩ = 60)
Firmly

A

Fl. 48 T.S. (chu-- (R.) (voice) M

Alto Sax. *con fl.* T.R. *f mp sf pp molto sf*

Vc. pizz. arco. *con fl.* keep playing with unregular small pulse like hesitation *f p mf f*

Fl. 50 (chu-- (voice) M (chu-- (voice) M

Alto Sax. T.R. *f mp sf pp molto sf mp sf*

Vc. *f mp f*

Fl. 52 (chu-- (voice) M

Alto Sax. T.R. *pp sf f mp sf f mp sf*

Vc. *f f*

Free but synchronized

(ca. 3")

54

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

f *sf*

mf *mf* *sf*

con cello T.R.

finger click front

con a.sax.

Metrical (ca. ♩ = 60)

Firmly

55

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

f *sf* *sf* *sf* *sf*

p *molto* *pf* *p* *molto* *p* *molto* *p* *molto* *pf* *p*

front

pizz. Sul A D

Sul A D

mf *p* *p* *p*

M *M* *M* *M* *M*

(R.) (chu--)

58

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

mf *pp* *mf* *pp* *mf*

molto *p* *f* *f* *f*

p *p* *f* *pp* *f*

(Airy)

arco. muted

Freely and unsynchronized
Warmly



(ca. 12")

60

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

pp *mp* *p* *mp*

don't need to be synchronized

faster than alto sax.

mf *pp*

don't need to be synchronized

(ca. 10")

63

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

sf *mf*

(voice)

mp (voice)

p *mp*

(ca. 6")

65

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

sf

(voice)

rhythmically

mf *f* *mf*

Bravely

keep being rhythmic

(voice)

Fl. 67

Alto Sax.

Vc.

ff *p* *f* *p* *ff* *p* *f* *p* *ff* *p* *f* *p*

f *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p*

f *mf* *f* *ff*

slap on the strings

Metrical (ca. ♩ = 60)

Firmly

69

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

p *mf*

p *mf*

mp

Free

(ca. 6")

70

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

mf

muted slightly by hand
Sul C

hand runs between high and low
rapidly and rhythmically

Precise rhythmic synchronization is essential in this measure.

Free

(ca. 2'')

(ca. 8")

The musical score consists of three staves: Flute (Fl.), Alto Saxophone (Alto Sax.), and Violoncello (Vc.).

- Measure 73:** The Flute and Alto Saxophone parts are silent. The Violoncello part begins with a half note C₂ (one ledger line below the staff), which is marked as being "muted slightly by hand". A dynamic marking of *p* (piano) is present at the start of the measure.
- Measure 74:** The Flute and Alto Saxophone parts remain silent. The Violoncello part continues with a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, alternating between C₂ and D₂. This pattern is described as the "hand runs between high and low rapidly and rhythmically". The measure ends with a double bar line.

Metrical (ca. ♩ = 60)
Firmly

74

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

mp

mp

f

Free and unsynchronized

Fl. (ca. 8'') (ca. 4'')

Alto Sax.

Vc. front

f *p* *f* *p* *f*

f *p* *mf*

p

Fl. (ca. 8'')

Alto Sax.

Vc. pizz.

ff *p*

ff

f

keep the pattern

Fl. (ca. 8'')

Alto Sax.

Vc. arco.

pp *pp* *ppp*

slowly rotate the tube

Free but synchronized

Breathly

A

79 (ca. 5") (ca. 5") (ca. 2")

Fl. *take the mouth piece off* *8va--* *ppp* *pp* *mp*

Alto Sax. *play with another mouth piece* *inhale* *pp* *inhale T.R.* *p* *con cello* *con cello T.R.* *pp* *p*

Vc. *high* *mid* *low* *con a.sax.* *back* *front* *pp* *p*

(ca. 4") (ca. 8")

Fl. *(R.)* *(Airy)* *pp* *p*

Alto Sax. *pp* *mp*

Vc. *front* *finger click* *play the rhythm freely as if dancing* *left foot (with wood)* *right foot (with jingle bells)* *mp* *p* *mp* *pp* *mp*

(ca. 5") (ca. 4") (ca. 3")

Fl. *(chu--)* *mp* *p* *mp* *mf* *put the mouth piece on* *f* *f*

Alto Sax. *exhale* *mp* *mp* *p* *mf* *play with the instrument* *f*

Vc. *front* *side* *back* *front* *mf*

(ca. 4")

(ca. 8")

87

Fl. (voice) (Airy) *p* *mf*

Alto Sax. (Airy) *p* *mf*

Vc. *mf* *pp*

Metrical (ca. ♩ = 60)

90

Fl. *mf* (chu--) *pp* *mf* *pp* (chu--)

Alto Sax. (Airy) *p* *pp* *p* *pp*

Vc. pizz. *pp* front 3 *mf* 3 *pp* *mf* *pp* (.) 3 *pp* pizz. *mf* 3

Free but synchronized

(ca. 6")

(ca. 6")

92

Fl. *mf* *pp* *pp*

Alto Sax. *p* (chu--) *pp* inhale *mp* exhale *p* inhale *mp* exhale *p*

Vc. front *p* Sul C sul pont.

94

(ca. 6") (ca. 6")

Fl. *mf* *pppp* *pp* slowly turn the tube

Alto Sax. inhale (key trill) *mp* *ppp* exhale

Vc. hand gradually mute the strings from A, D, G, C gradually give slight pressure keep the similar pattern *mf* *ppp* Sul D muted

97

(ca. 6") (ca. 6")

Fl. *mp* *pp* T.S. *mp*

Alto Sax. T.R. inhale (key trill) *mp* *ppp* exhale T.R. inhale (key trill) *mp* *ppp* exhale T.R. *mp*

Vc. *mp* pizz. arco. Sul D muted *ppp* pizz. *mp* arco. Sul D muted *ppp*

100

(ca. 3") (ca. 5")

Fl. *mp* *ppp* *p*

Alto Sax. inhale (key trill) *mp* *ppp* exhale T.R. *mp*

Vc. *p* *mp*

(ca. 7")

101

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

inhalé (key trill) exhalé T.R. (Airy) exhalé T.R.

pp *mp*

Sul D muted

p *mf*

(ca. 10")

103

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

inhalé (key trill) exhalé inhalé (key trill) exhalé inhalé (key trill) exhalé

mf *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

sul ord. → pont. ord. → pont. airy ord.

mf *p* *mf* *p* *mf*

(ca. 10")

105

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

(chu--) (voice) (chu--)

p *sf* *mf* *p*

inhalé (key trill) exhalé inhalé (key trill) exhalé T.R. (key trill)

mf *p* *sf* *molto* *mf* *p* *molto*

f *f*

(ca. 10")

107

Fl. *mf* *p* *mf*

Alto Sax. inhale (key trill) *mf* exhale *p* inhale (key trill) *mf* (Airy) inhale (key trill) *mf*

Vc. *mf*

Metrical (ca. ♩ = 60)

Firmly



108

Fl. *mf* *molto* *molto* *mf* *f* T.S. (R.) (chu--)

Alto Sax. *mf* *molto* *f* *p* *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *f* *p* *f*

Vc. *mp* *mf* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p*

slowly rotate the tube

muted slightly by hand

front Sul C muted

Free but synchronized

Firmly

(ca. 10")

111

Fl. T.S. *fff* *mp* *p*

Alto Sax. T.R. inhale (key trill) *fff* *f* inhale (key trill) *f* exhale *p*

Vc. *f*

(ca. 8")

113

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

inhale (key trill) exhale inhale (key trill) exhale

mf

Sul C muted → unmuted

pp *pp* *pp* *pp*

(ca. 6")

115

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

inhale (key trill) inhale (key trill)

mf *mf* *mp* *mp*

pizz. mute the strings

(ca. 12")

116

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

inhale (key trill)

p *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p*

pizz. arco. Sul C muted

Sul C muted

pp *mf* *p*

(ca. 3") (ca. 9")

Fl. 119 *p* *f* *mf* *8va*

Alto Sax. *p* *mf* *molto*

Vc. *mf*

Put the mouth piece on

Sul C muted $\rightarrow$ sul ord. unmuted $\rightarrow$ pont.

(ca. 6")

Fl. 123 *ff* *f* *f* *f* *mp* (voice) (chu--)

Alto Sax. (voice) *f* *pp* *f* *pp*

Vc.

Metrical (ca. ♩ = 60)
Firmly
D

Fl. 124 (voice) *mp* *mf* *molto* *ff* *mf* *molto* *ff*

Alto Sax. (Airy) *mp* *molto* *ff* *mf* *molto* *ff* *mf* *molto* *ff*

Vc. *mp* *molto* *mf* *molto* *f* *molto* *f*

Precise rhythmic synchronization is essential in this section.

126

(voice)

Fl.

p *f* *mf* *ff* *sf* *sf* *sf*

Alto Sax.

p (voice) *ff* *sf* *sf* *fff* *sf*

unmuted *f* *mp* muted

Sul C muted

sul pont. *f* *ff* ord.

128

Fl.

fff *sf* *fff* *fff* *fff* *fff* *fff* *fff*

Alto Sax.

sf *sf* *fff* *fff* *fff* *fff* *fff* *fff*

sul pont. *f* *ff* ord.

Vc.

f *ff* *f* *ff* *fff*

Free but synchronized

Firmly

E

(ca. 4")

130

Fl.

mf

Alto Sax.

back front

mf *sf* *sf* *sf* *sf* *sf*

Metrical (ca. ♩ = 60)

Firmly

(voice)

131

Fl. (chu--)

Alto Sax.

Vc.

fff *mp* *fff* *fff* *f*

Normal

f *fff* (voice) *fff* *fff* *sf*

f *ff* *ff* *mp*

Free but synchronized

Firmly

(ca. 12")

133 (R.)

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

mf *f* *mf* *sf*

T.S.

mf *sf* *mf*

muted slightly by hand

sfp *f* *p*

Metrical (ca. ♩ = 60)

Firmly

rit.

molto rit.

135

Fl.

Alto Sax.

Vc.

ff *mf* *mf* *sf* *sf* *sf* *fff*

(voice)

ff *mf* (voice) *f* *fff*

arco.

f *mp*

T.S.

T.R.

front

ff *fff*