



COLLEGE OF MUSIC

University of North Texas College of Music

Doctoral Lecture Recital | Monday, October 10, 2022 | 5:00 pm | Recital Hall

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**A PEDAGOGICAL GUIDE TO *DISTANT VOICES* BY PING GAO:
INTRODUCING FOLKLORE-BASED CONTEMPORARY MUSIC TO
LATE INTERMEDIATE AND EARLY ADVANCED PIANO STUDENTS**

As one of the folklore-based piano compositions in China, the piano suite *Distant Voices* (1999) by Chinese pianist-composer Ping Gao (b. 1970) stands out as being inspired by different types of folk songs and also drawing on some contemporary concepts and techniques. Through exploring timbres reminiscent of Chinese folk music and a variety of compositional possibilities on the piano, Gao recast the richness and essence of national charm by depicting the rich, microtonal palette of the folk tradition in his musical language. This work can be an effective pedagogical tool and helpful supplement for late intermediate or early advanced piano students, as well as developing contemporary performance skills. It may also be considered as a useful source for teachers to incorporate folk music styles from different regions of the world into their teaching, cultivating their students' appreciation for other cultures and distinctive music styles.

This dissertation is to conduct an interpretive analysis of *Distant Voices*, demonstrating how a grasp of folk music styles and characteristics of twentieth-century Western music may be introduced in teaching late intermediate or early advanced piano students. The incorporation of Chinese folk idioms, such as stylistic folk songs, folk instruments, and pentatonic modes and scales, with contemporary Western characteristics such as non-tertial harmony and complex rhythm and meter will be thoroughly examined with musical examples and specific teaching procedures. Discussions of other technical challenges, including leaps, grace notes, repeated patterns, and the use of pedal, can be used as references for learning and performing this work. Viewed as an intercultural work, *Distant Voices* provides a transition for piano students from studying the standard repertoire of the Baroque, Classical, and Romantic periods to contemporary compositions through the integration of Chinese folk-custom and twentieth-century compositional concepts and techniques.

Distant Voices (1999)Ping Gao (b. 1970)
I. Nostalgia
II. Love Song from Kangding
III. Blue Flower