

A CULTURAL ANALYSIS OF CHEN YI'S SI JI (FOUR SEASONS) FOR  
ORCHESTRA

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## ABSTRACT

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Chen Yi, a prominent composer of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, has been the subject of considerable musical study; however, her orchestral piece, *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra*, has yet to be inspected with a great deal of scrutiny. The aim of this study is to provide a musical and cultural analysis of *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra*, comparing the composition to the traditional Chinese concept (*si ji*) after which the piece is named. The cycle of the seasons has been an important model throughout Chinese history, for both agricultural and philosophical purposes. According to traditional Daoist philosophy, the seasons are the result of the interaction between *yin* and *yang*, polar opposites that provoke each other into a continuous cycle of motion. *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra* relies on these polar opposites not only for the overall structure of the piece, but also to control the flow of intensity from one section of the composition to the next.

In the analytical section of this document, I compare flow of energy in the traditional cycle to flow of intensity in Chen Yi's *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra*. To measure musical intensity, I created a graph in which the x-axis represents time as measured in beats, and the y-axis contains the name of every staff used in the score. On each beat and for every sounding instrument, I inputted the given dynamic as a numeric value. After inputting these values, all lines were summed for a total intensity measurement for that given beat. I used this data to create charts, allowing one to easily

see the flow of intensity over the course of a section, season, or the composition as a whole.

The final data shows that Chen Yi remained remarkably true the philosophical concept. In most instances, the flow of musical intensity in *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra* closely mirrors the flow of energy in the traditional cycle. Chen Yi successfully reaches back to her cultural heritage while using 21<sup>st</sup>-century compositional techniques to create a truly cross-cultural masterpiece.

To Dr. Marilyn Shrude, my teacher and mentor,  
and to my committee, for their commitment to my success.

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## INTRODUCTION

### Research Problem, Document Organization, and Review of Literature

Chen Yi, a prominent composer of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, has been the subject of considerable musical study; however, her orchestral piece, *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra*, has yet to be inspected with a great deal of scrutiny. The aim of this study is to provide a musical and cultural analysis of *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra*, comparing the composition to the traditional Chinese concept (*si ji*) after which the piece is named. The cycle of the seasons has been an important model throughout Chinese history, for both agricultural and philosophical purposes. According to traditional Daoist philosophy, the seasons are the result of the interaction between *yin* and *yang*, polar opposites that provoke each other into a continuous cycle of motion. *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra* relies on these polar opposites not only for the overall structure of the piece, but also to control the flow of intensity from one section of the composition to the next.<sup>1</sup>

The introduction of this document contains a biographical sketch of Chen Yi, the background of *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra*, and an introduction to the foundational philosophies of the traditional cycle of the seasons. The next section, “Analysis of Form and Energy Flow,” contains a statement of purpose, a sectional division of *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra*, an overview of the traditional cycle of the seasons, and a description of the method of analysis. The analysis itself follows the form of the piece

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this study, intensity is defined as the sum of every musical line’s dynamic marking at any given moment. For more information, see “Method of Analysis.”

chronologically. The sections of the composition include: Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter. The analysis of each season contains an overview, a comparison to the traditional cycle of the seasons, a section overview, and an analysis.

Most of my sources fall into one of two categories: scholarly works on Chen Yi and her music, and sources related to the traditional cycle of the seasons. The dissertations on Chen Yi that best coincide with the purpose of this document are Guo Xin's *Chinese Musical Language Interpreted by Western Idioms: Fusion Process in the Instrumental Works by Chen Yi*,<sup>2</sup> Li Songwen's *East meets West: Nationalistic Elements in Selected Piano Solo Works of Chen Yi*,<sup>3</sup> and Li Xiaole's *Chen Yi's Piano Music: Chinese Aesthetics and Western Models*.<sup>4</sup> Other information on Chen Yi is derived from her own doctoral dissertation;<sup>5</sup> an interview with John de Clef Piñeiro;<sup>6</sup> press releases primarily from the New York Times; and the website of her publisher, Theodore Presser Company.<sup>7</sup>

My information on the Chinese cycle of the seasons comes primarily from Michael R. Saso's *Taoism and the Rite of Cosmic Renewal*,<sup>8</sup> Hsu Cho-Yun's *Han Agriculture*,<sup>9</sup> *Calendrical Calculations* by Edward M. Reingold and Nachum

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<sup>2</sup> Guo Xin, *Chinese Musical Language Interpreted by Western Idioms: Fusion Process in the Instrumental Works by Chen Yi* (Ph.D. diss., The Florida State University, Fall Semester, 2002).

<sup>3</sup> Li Songwen, *East Meets West: Nationalistic Elements in Selected Piano Solo Works of Chen Yi* (D.M.A. diss., University of North Texas, August 2001).

<sup>4</sup> Li Xiaole, *Chen Yi's Piano Music: Chinese Aesthetics and Western Models* (Ph. D. diss., University of Hawaii, 2003).

<sup>5</sup> Chen Yi, *Piano Concerto* (D.M.A. diss., Columbia University, 1993).

<sup>6</sup> John de Clef Piñeiro, "An Interview with Chen Yi" (New York: 26 July 2001), *New Music Connoisseur*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (Fall 2001), [http://www.newmusicon.org/v9n4/v94chen\\_yi.htm](http://www.newmusicon.org/v9n4/v94chen_yi.htm) (1 January 2010).

<sup>7</sup> Theodore Presser Company, "Chen Yi" (24 February 2010), <http://www.presser.com/Composers/info.cfm?Name=CHENYI> (2 March 2010).

<sup>8</sup> Michael R. Saso, *Taoism and the Rite of Cosmic Renewal* (U.S.A: Washington State University Press, 1972).

<sup>9</sup> Hsu Cho-yun, *Han Agriculture* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1980).

Dershowitz,<sup>10</sup> and *The Moon Year* by Juliet Bredon and Igor Mitrophanow.<sup>11</sup> My philosophical sources on the cycle of the seasons include Liu JeeLoo's *An Introduction to Chinese Philosophy from Ancient Philosophy to Chinese Buddhism*<sup>12</sup> and Richard Wilhelm's *Lectures on the I Ching: Constancy and Change*.<sup>13</sup>

### **An Overview of the Life of Chen Yi**

Chen Yi (surname Chen) is among the most prominent Asian composers living in America today. She has been heralded by the *New York Times* as “one of the most distinctive composers of her generation,”<sup>14</sup> and “a formidable composer, a true modernist with an acute ear and keen imagination.”<sup>15</sup> She was the first woman to be accepted into the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, graduating with a master's degree in composition. She completed her Doctor of Musical Arts degree at Columbia University under the guidance of cultural icon Chou Wen-Chung and Pulitzer-Prize-winner Mario Davidovsky. She has received many esteemed awards, such as the American Academy of Arts and Letters Charles Ives Living, the Alpert Award in the Arts, and the Roche Commission, for which she composed *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra*.

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<sup>10</sup> Edward M. Reingold and Nachum Dershowitz, *Calendrical Calculations* (United States of America: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

<sup>11</sup> Juliet Bredon and Igor Mitrophanow, *Moon Year* (New York: Paragon Book Reprint Corp., 2001).

<sup>12</sup> Liu JeeLoo, *An Introduction to Chinese Philosophy: From Ancient Philosophy to Chinese Buddhism* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2006).

<sup>13</sup> Richard Wilhelm, *Lectures on the I Ching: Constancy and Change*, translation and introduction by Irene Eber (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979).

<sup>14</sup> Anthony Tommasini, “CRITIC’S DIARY; Generations and Traditions Intersect in a Musical Week,” *The New York Times*, 28 April 2004.

<sup>15</sup> Anthony Tommasini, “New Operas at the Met: What Works?” *The New York Times*, 11 January 2007.

Chen Yi's rich cultural heritage stems from both her musical training in early childhood and the challenges that she faced during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). She was born in Guangzhou, a city in the southeast of China, on April 4, 1953. Her parents, both medical doctors, were music lovers and saw that their children had a proper music education. From age three, Chen Yi took private lessons in violin, piano, and music theory, with violin being her primary instrument. Early on, she mastered the complete collection of Paganini's 24 Capricci and Bach's three partitas and three sonatas for violin. It was no different for her siblings. Her sister played the piano and gave concerts before the leaders of state at the age of five. Her brother is the concertmaster of the China Philharmonic Orchestra and teaches at Beijing's prestigious Central Conservatory of Music. Chen Yi notes that she remembers sitting as a family after dinner listening to the compositions of violinist Fritz Kreisler. Her father told her that she, too, could play her own works for the violin. This, perhaps, planted the seed for her future profession.<sup>16</sup>

This musical ideal came to an abrupt halt in 1966 at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. During his reign, Chairman Mao Zedong attempted to eliminate western-influenced thought and "re-educate" the upper class "bourgeois." In the Cultural Revolution, however, many of Mao's peers began gaining power and used their influence for extreme censorship and persecution of supposed dissenters. Furthermore, youth organizations were established to implement Maoist ideals and seek out nonconformists, but they eventually lost control, accusing and punishing countless innocent victims.

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<sup>16</sup> John de Clef Piñero, "An Interview with Chen Yi."

Initially, the Chen family made an effort to continue musical study during the Cultural Revolution by using metal practice mutes on their violins and placing a blanket into their piano to mute the sound; however, in a family with two upper-class doctors, there was little hope of escaping persecution. Eventually, the family of five was sent to five different locations.

My mother was kept as a prisoner at the hospital to do heavy labor and was compelled to engage in self-criticism — we couldn't see her for about a year. Shortly after undergoing a serious stomach operation, my dad was forced to leave his medical positions in the city and go to work as a doctor in the countryside. My sister was sent to a remote farm in the North, and my younger brother was sent to a middle school in the South. Our domestic possessions were either seized or destroyed, and our home was locked and kept empty in the city.<sup>17</sup>

In the countryside, Chen Yi was forced to do physical labor. Her responsibilities often included carrying 100-pound baskets of stone up a mountain 20 times a day to make military forts for the peasants. She recalls, “After unloading the basket, my feet became so weak that I could not even walk properly but slid down hill. I had to grip onto blades of grass and slide slowly downward to prevent rolling off from the hill!”<sup>18</sup> She states that it was her hope for the future that helped her to “overcome hardship, to bear anger, fear and humiliation under the political pressure.”<sup>19</sup>

Even under those extreme circumstances, Chen Yi managed to grow and develop as a musician and as a person. She was able to learn the musical language of the farmers with whom she lived. She not only learned from their singing, but from the musical rhythms and tones of their dialect. She was, fortunately, allowed to bring her violin with her to the countryside; however, she was only allowed to play revolutionary songs that

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Yeung Hin-Kei, *Chen Yi and her Choral Music: A Study of the Composer's Ideal of Fusing Chinese Music and Modern Western Choral Traditions* (D.M.A. diss., University of North Texas, December 2006), 3.

<sup>19</sup> John de Clef Piñeiro, “An Interview with Chen Yi.”

served as propaganda for the government. She reciprocated the musical gifts of the people by playing these tunes for “poor country kids, to farmers, (and) to soldiers.”<sup>20</sup> While the melodies could not be altered, Chen Yi added Paganini-like octaves and virtuosic ornamentation that she learned during her studies as a child. Even before her formal training at the conservatory, Chen Yi was mixing Chinese music with western techniques.

Chen Yi, however, did not spend the entire duration of the Cultural Revolution doing manual labor. In 1970, she was recruited to be concertmaster of the Beijing Opera Troupe in Guangzhou. Xiaole Li notes in her 2003 dissertation for the University of Hawaii that this experience may have had several positive impacts on Chen Yi as a composer. First, it gave her a deeper understanding of traditional Beijing Opera, a cornerstone of Chinese culture. Second, she was occasionally called upon to write incidental music for new operas. This music would employ both western and eastern instruments, again necessitating that she explore an integration of two diverse worlds. Finally, she had the opportunity not only to listen to traditional Chinese instruments, but also to play them. She learned to play the *ruan*, a plucked lute, when it was needed in performance.<sup>21</sup>

When the Cultural Revolution ended in 1976, schools around the country reopened, including the Central Conservatory in Beijing. The conservatory received a flood of over 18,000 applications from musicians throughout China, with only 200 being accepted.<sup>22</sup> Among them was Chen Yi, who was initially admitted for violin performance. Also in the first class were internationally recognized composers Zhou

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Li Xiaole, *Chen Yi's Piano Music*, 21.

<sup>22</sup> John de Clef Piñeiro, “An Interview with Chen Yi.”

Long (her future husband) and Tan Dun. When she graduated in 1986, she was the first woman to receive a master's degree in composition in China. In celebration, the Central Philharmonic Orchestra performed an entire evening of her works. Shortly after, Columbia University professor Chou Wen-Chung recruited her through his United States-China Arts Exchange.<sup>23</sup> She left China for America and became a doctoral student at Columbia under his direction.

While at Columbia, Chen Yi studied with Chou Wen-Chung and Mario Davidovsky, graduating in 1993. Since then, she has been the composer-in-residence for the Women's Philharmonic, Chanticleer, and Aptos Creative Arts Center in San Francisco. She taught at the Peabody Conservatory from 1996 to 1998, and is currently the Distinguished Professor in Composition at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music and Dance.<sup>24</sup>

## Musical Influences

### Chinese Musical Influences

Chen Yi notes that “although I started learning violin and piano with the standard Western repertoire from an early age, of course I was surrounded and strongly influenced by Chinese culture.”<sup>25</sup> There are several influences from her native background that pervade her music. Two of them are *Ba Ban* and Daoism.

*Ba Ban*, seen below in Ex. 1, is a source tune from southeast China whose melodic and rhythmic properties are subtly used in the structure of many traditional folk

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<sup>23</sup> James R. Oestreich, “The Sound Of New Music Is Often Chinese; A New Contingent Of American Composers,” *The New York Times*, 1 April 2001.

<sup>24</sup> Theodore Presser Company, *Chen Yi*.

<sup>25</sup> Chen Yi, *Piano Concerto*, 1.

compositions.<sup>26</sup> Chen Yi notes that she heard *Ba Ban*-inspired music growing up, even before she studied the subject in depth at the Beijing Conservatory.<sup>27</sup> She often uses the *Ba Ban* melody in her compositions, sometimes masked and sometimes verbatim. Also, she may structure phrase lengths and organize hypermeter around its rhythmic groupings. Some compositions that were directly inspired by the form are *Song in Winter*, *Sparkle*, *Piano Concerto*, and, of course, *Ba Ban* for solo piano.<sup>28</sup> *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra* is no different. The main theme of this composition is based on *Ba Ban* and hypermeter is also organized around the folk tune's beat groupings.

Ex. 1. *Ba Ban*, the Source Tune



The influence of Daoism is clearly evident in Chen Yi's music. For example, her composition *Qi* is named after the Daoist concept of universal, active energy. While *Qi* translates literally as "air" or "steam," it has very different connotations in Chinese philosophy. Liu JeeLoo notes:

<sup>26</sup> Li Songwen, *East Meets West*, 44.

<sup>27</sup> Chen Yi, *Piano Concerto*, 3.

<sup>28</sup> Li Songwen, *East Meets West*, 28-29.

*Qi* pervades the universe; in other words, the universe is simply the totality of *qi* in perpetual motion and constant alteration. In this cosmology, the cosmos is viewed as being composed of a great force (*qi*) that has no mind of its own. This great force permeates everything in the cosmos; as a result, everything is interconnected in this organic whole.<sup>29</sup>

Xiaole Li notes that this concept of highly active, mysterious energy is a part of the composer's "natural language," and thus Chen Yi's music is, in fact, an artistic realization of *qi*.<sup>30</sup>

*Qi* exists within two forms, those being *yin* and *yang*, polar opposites that are inversely related. In this theory, the sum of the energy in the universe never changes, and so when *yin* rises, *yang* falls, and vice versa. These two forces can be applied to many dualistic constructs, but the most common designations are *yang* being positive, masculine, bright, or hot, and *yin* being negative, feminine, dark, or cold. This concept is a common theme in Chen Yi's music. Xiaole Li quotes Chen Yi commenting on her composition *Near Distance*: "...in fact, these two words stand far apart, they are antonyms. [They are something] you can't really hold, something [that] doesn't appear in front of you. . . . *Near Distance*, is an antonym of the ultra extreme of the [*sic*] distance, you can also interpret it as *yin* and *yang*."<sup>31</sup> Contrast is an important organizing element throughout *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra* as well. Chen Yi states that the third season is particularly influenced by "high-low, far-near, dark-light, deep-shallow" dualities.<sup>32</sup>

Chen Yi's love of the beauty and mystery of nature also originates from Daoist thought. Liu JeeLoo notes that Daoism at its roots encourages "going back to Nature or

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<sup>29</sup> Liu JeeLoo, *An Introduction to Chinese Philosophy*, 6.

<sup>30</sup> Li Xiaole, *Chen Yi's Piano Music*, 58.

<sup>31</sup> Li Xiaole, *Chen Yi's Piano Music*, 55.

<sup>32</sup> Chen Yi, *Prefatory Material from Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra* (Presser, 2005).

the natural itself.”<sup>33</sup> This love oftentimes manifests itself for Chen Yi through an attraction to Chinese landscape paintings and landscape-inspired poetry. One particular poet that Chen Yi names as influential from an early age is Su Shi.<sup>34</sup> In 1985, she set one of his poems to music in *Three Poems from the Song Dynasty*. In *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra*, Chen Yi assigns a poem to each season. Each poem is a landscape portrait, and three of them are by Su Shi. These poems are quoted in the latter section of this document, “An introduction to Chen Yi's *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra*.”

### Non-Chinese Musical Influences

It is important to note that Chen Yi is a cross-cultural composer; that is to say, she not only writes from her own cultural heritage, but also successfully blends elements of twentieth and twenty-first-century European and American compositional techniques. Western art music has been prevalent throughout her life, even as she played standard repertoire on violin and piano as a child. She was introduced to the music of Béla Bartók at the Beijing conservatory in the 1980s by visiting composition professor Alexander Goehr.<sup>35</sup> She may have felt a bond with Bartók as she, too, incorporated rural folk music into her compositions.

At Columbia, she studied the music of Bartók, Debussy, Stravinsky, Lutosławski, Schoenberg, Berg, and others. Chen Yi was particularly attracted to “Schoenberg's *Sprechstimme*, and Berg's approach to twelve-tone tonality.”<sup>36</sup> Through combining Chinese tonality with atonal, twelve-tone, and microtonal techniques, she notes that she

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<sup>33</sup> Liu JeeLoo, *An Introduction to Chinese Philosophy*, 150.

<sup>34</sup> Chen Yi, *Piano Concerto*, 1.

<sup>35</sup> John de Clef Piñeiro, “An Interview with Chen Yi.”

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

has been able “to broaden my compositional palette, to mix with more new colors. Specifically, I have been able to explore new pitch relationships with dissonant intervals and noise, rather than being limited to or framed in an ever-consonant sonority [of Chinese pentatonicism].”<sup>37</sup>

### **An Introduction to *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra***

Chen Yi composed *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra* in fulfillment of the 2005 Roche Commission, a prestigious prize offered by Switzerland’s Roche health company. Chen Yi was the second composer to receive the award, the first being Sir Harrison Birtwistle in 2004. Subsequent recipients of the Roche Commission were Hanspeter Kyburz of Switzerland (2006), George Benjamin of the U.K. (2008), and most recently Toshio Hosokawa of Japan (2010). Recipients receive a premiere at the Lucerne Festival in Switzerland and a U.S. premiere in Carnegie Hall by the Cleveland Orchestra.<sup>38</sup>

Chen Yi’s *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra* is a single-movement piece with four distinct sections, each representing a season. The orchestration consists of woodwinds in threes with an additional piccolo, English horn, bass clarinet, and contrabassoon; four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, and tuba; timpani and four percussionists; harp; and strings. The duration of the piece is approximately 14 minutes. Chen Yi found inspiration for each section in four poems written during the Song dynasty (960-1279). Three are by Su Shi (1036-1101) and one is by Zeng Gong (1019-1083). The

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Roche, “Roche Commissions,” 2009 F. Hoffmann-La Roche Ltd., [http://www.roche.com/factsheet\\_roche\\_commission.pdf](http://www.roche.com/factsheet_roche_commission.pdf) (accessed 4 October 2009).

first poem represents spring, the second summer, the third autumn, and Zeng Gong's embodies winter. Translated by the composer, they are as follows:

Su Shi: The West Lake, the Beauty (Spring)

The brimming waves delight the eye on sunny days;  
The dimming hills give a rare view in rainy haze.  
The West Lake looks like the fair lady at her best  
Whether she is richly adorned or plainly dressed.

Su Shi: The Landscape in Contrast (Summer)

Like spilt ink dark clouds spread o'er the hills as a pall;  
Like bouncing pearls the raindrops in the boat run riot.  
A sudden rolling gale comes and dispels them all,  
Below Lake View Pavilion sky-mirrored water's quiet.

Su Shi: The True Face of Mount Lu (Autumn)

A row of peaks from the front; a deep line from the side;  
Near, far, high, low--a new shape wherever the mists part.  
We cannot recognize the true face of Mount Lu  
Because we are always in it.

Zeng Gong: The ThunderStorm [sic] (Winter)

As clouds rack waves urge waves,  
With severe wind a long roll of thunder.  
In house curtains on four walls,  
In bed looking into thousand mountains under a gust of rain.<sup>39</sup>

### **Fundamentals of Chinese Philosophy**

Before beginning an analysis of *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra* using concepts from traditional Chinese philosophy, we must first examine the foundation of these philosophies. Scholars generally agree that the roots of nearly all of the ancient Chinese schools of thought are represented within the Book of Changes, or the *Yi Jing (I-Ching)*. Yoong calls it “the single most important work in the history of Chinese philosophy.”<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Chen Yi, *Prefatory Material* from *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra*.

<sup>40</sup> Liu JeeLoo, *An Introduction to Chinese Philosophy*, 26.

Referenced in the *Analects* and the *Dao De Jing* alike,<sup>41</sup> the *Yi Jing* may have been written some 2000 years before their creation. The book was not written by a single person at a single time, but rather developed in stages over hundreds, if not thousands of years. Precise dating of the *Yi Jing* is difficult, but Bo Mou asserts that early versions of the text existed by 2000 B.C.E.<sup>42</sup>

Originally, the text served as a form of divination. One would ask the book a question and would receive a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer. According to legends, a man by the name of Xi Chang Bo was imprisoned by the king. While in jail, he was able to create a system of interrelated symbols that reflected the nature of the universe so fully and completely that one could ask any question and obtain the answer through interpreting those symbols. When a situation was seen within the context of the inevitable interaction of cosmic forces, it was said that the future could be revealed.<sup>43</sup>

According to the *Yi Jing*, all elements in the universe are derivatives of two sources: *yin* and *yang*. *Yin* is represented by a broken line (--) and *yang* by a solid line (—). Each symbol, or trigram, has three lines. Each line is either broken or solid, resulting in eight possible variations. The pure *yin* combination (☷) is symbolic of earth. This element is described as feminine or receptive. The pure *yang* combination (☰) is symbolic of the heaven, and is described as masculine or creative. The six possible mixtures of *yin* and *yang* are referred to as their children and are designated to the following elements:<sup>44</sup>

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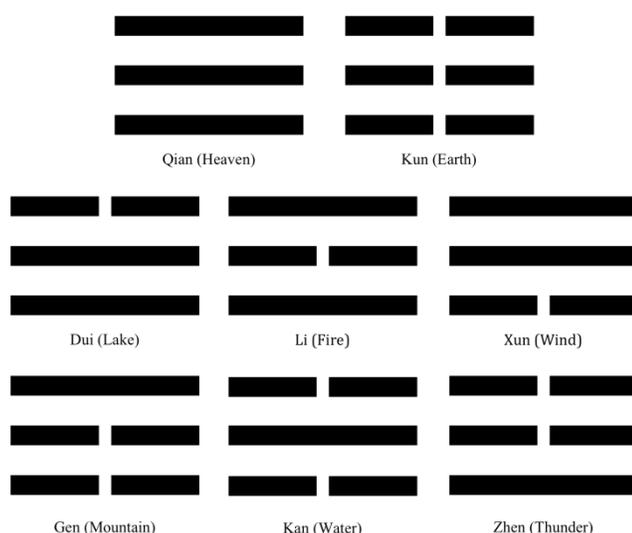
<sup>41</sup> The *Analects*, written by Confucius and/or his disciples, is the primary text of Confucianism. The *Dao De Jing* is one of the primary texts of Daoism and was written by Laozi and/or his disciples.

<sup>42</sup> Bo Mou, *History of Chinese Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 2009), 71.

<sup>43</sup> Bo Mou, *History of Chinese Philosophy*, 102.

<sup>44</sup> Liu JeeLoo, *An Introduction to Chinese Philosophy*, 27.

Ex. 2. The Eight Trigrams of the *Yi Jing*



During the Zhou dynasty (1046-256 BCE), it is said that King *Wen* expanded the number of possible combinations by placing one trigram on top of another. The result was 64 possible hexagrams, each one assigned to a different situation one might encounter in life. Furthermore, the king wrote a “judgment,” or a small statement regarding what should be done at that time. These moral decisions were the beginnings of a system of ethics that reflected the values of the culture at that time.<sup>45</sup>

During the next millennium, other commentaries were written that provided insight into the essence and meaning of each of the hexagrams. One of these commentaries was said to be written by Confucius (551-479 BCE). At this time, additional concepts were mapped onto the trigrams including colors, familial relationships, the eight cardinal directions, the cycle of hours in a day, and the seasons. Wilhelm reminds us that it would be misleading to focus merely on the contents of each

<sup>45</sup> Liu JeeLoo, *An Introduction to Chinese Philosophy*, 28.

trigram or hexagram; instead, they should be examined as a single point within a dynamic process of transformation from *yin* to *yang*, and from *yang* to *yin*.

...according to the *Book of Changes*, these opposites (*yin and yang*) must not be regarded as enduring but should be seen as changing states, which can pass from one into another. And because of this, contrast as such becomes relative. The point is merely to find the proper attitude for the understanding of contrast. By reaching such a position, a person no longer clings to one pole and assigns to the other a negative, opposite position, but, flowing with time, he can experience contrast itself. The stress here is on an inner adaptation to these outer opposites. If one maintains a harmony between the inner self and the surrounding world, the world, in spite of all diversity, can do no harm.<sup>46</sup>

The seasons will be the focus of this study as applied to Chen Yi's *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra*.

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<sup>46</sup> Richard Wilhelm, *Lectures on the I Ching*, 4.

## ANALYSIS OF FORM AND ENERGY FLOW IN SI JI (FOUR SEASONS) FOR ORCHESTRA

### Defining the Study

#### Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to identify, quantize, and compare the flow of energy in *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra* to that of the traditional seasonal cycle of *yin* and *yang*. It begins with a denotation of sections in the orchestral composition and then provides an overview of the traditional cycle of the seasons. After this, I detail my method of analyzing intensity flow in *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra*. Intensity will henceforth be defined as the sum of the dynamic values of every musical line within a given moment. I then employ my methods to provide a more detailed discourse on each section of *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra*. Within this discourse, I provide an overview of the given section of Chen Yi's composition, compare its overall flow of energy to that of the parallel season within the traditional cycle, provide a sectional structure, and analyze the flow of intensity within that structure.

#### Denotation of Seasons in *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra*

As previously stated, *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra* is a single movement piece. There are no breaks between sections or markings in the score to delineate seasons. Rather, one season naturally flows into the next, as is the case in real life and in the traditional form. The order of the sections in the composition is Spring, Summer,

Autumn, and Winter. Spring (m. 1-58) features forward-moving rhythms and constant *crescendo*, naturally giving rise to the dense, climactic Summer (m. 59-104). Summer begins at a high dynamic level and grows to yet a higher climax (m. 81). The intensity then drops dramatically and a descending string melody leads into a violin solo. The violin solo (m. 95-106) serves to transition from the bombastic Summer to the soft, chromatic Autumn (m. 105-178), which has the lowest average intensity of any section. Winter (m. 179-243) features rapid growth in dynamics and density. It increases to a climax, and then has a sharp drop in intensity. After the climax of Winter, there is a soft, beatless texture containing unpitched whispers in the orchestra. In the last measure (m. 243), the main thematic material is repeated in the harp, symbolizing a return to the beginning of the cycle.

Ex. 3. Section Overview of *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra*

Section	Measure	Description
Spring	1-58	Features forward-moving rhythms and constant <i>crescendo</i> .
Summer	59-104	Builds to a climax and ends with a violin solo that transitions into the Autumn section.
Autumn	105-178	Presents a relatively soft and chromatic texture, full of contrast.
Winter	179-243	Features rapid growth in dynamics and density. Climax is followed by a clouded, beatless texture. “Ends” with a connection to the beginning.

### Overview of the Traditional Cycle of the Seasons

The traditional Chinese calendar is structured differently than the standard western calendar, particularly in regard to the beginning and end of seasons. While the solstices and equinoxes commence seasons in the west, they come precisely in the middle of each season in the Chinese calendar. The spring equinox, therefore, divides spring into

two equal parts. Likewise the summer solstice comes precisely in the middle of summer, and so forth. The phases of *yin* and *yang*, however, are initiated by the solstices and equinoxes.

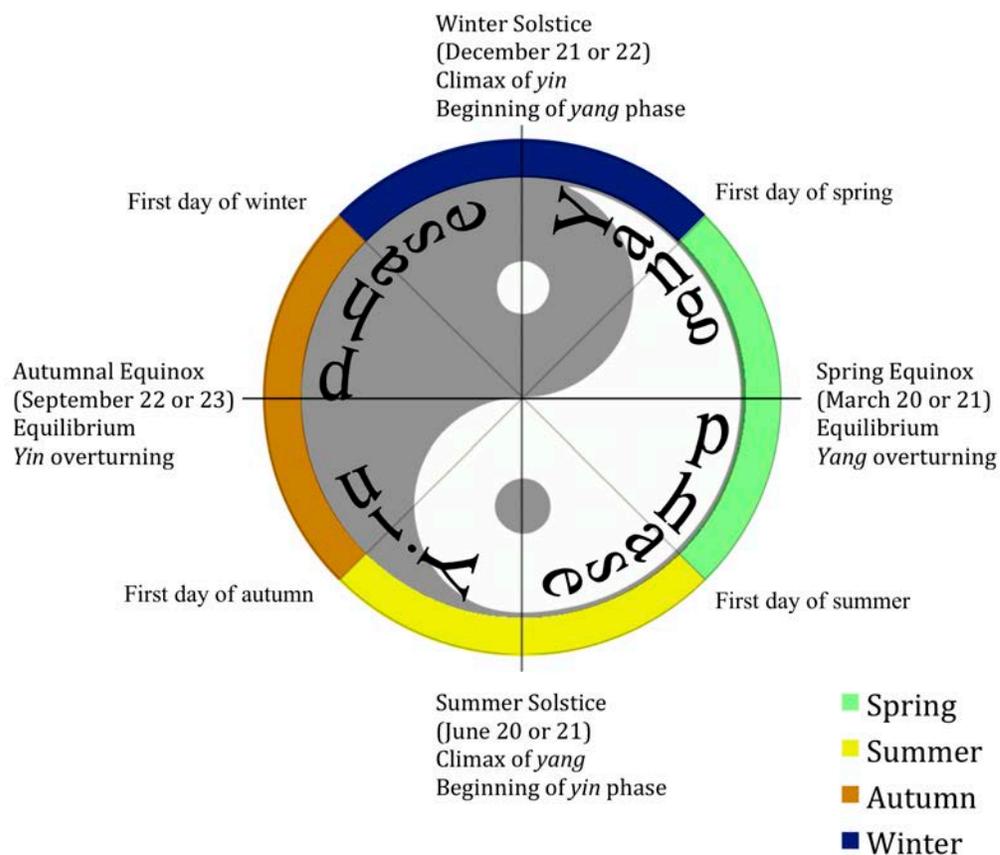
One seasonal cycle is represented by a phase (a half cycle) of *yin* and a phase of *yang*. It is important to remember that *yin* and *yang* are inversely related. Whenever *yin* rises, *yang* must decline, and whenever *yang* gains strength, *yin* must yield. *Yin* and *yang* can be applied to nearly any duality, and their roles are, therefore, very flexible. In terms of seasons and agriculture, *yang* represents life, brightness, and heat, while *yin* represents death, darkness, and cold.

As light is a *yang* characteristic, the *yang* phase is marked by increasingly long days. It begins on the winter solstice (December 21 or 22), the day with the least amount of sunlight, and increases to the summer solstice (June 20 or 21), the day with the most sunlight hours. From this point forward, the amount of sunlight hours decreases each day until the winter solstice. As darkness is a primary *yin* characteristic, this half of the year represents the *yin* phase. The spring and autumnal equinoxes (March 20 or 21, and September 22 or 23, respectively) are the points in which the daylight hours are equal to nighttime hours, and therefore the forces of *yin* and *yang* are balanced. The difference lies in what force is being overturned. During the spring equinox, *yang* is overturning *yin*; during the autumnal equinox, *yin* is overturning *yang*.

As can be seen in the following chart, the Chinese spring exists entirely in the *yang* phase. This is logical considering rising *yang* has characteristics of increasingly warm temperatures and growing life. Autumn, on the other hand, exists entirely in the *yin* phase. The growing *yin* characteristics of increasingly cold temperatures and decay of life

can clearly be seen in this season. Summer witnesses the rise, climax, and decline of *yang*, and winter is host to the rise, climax, and decline of *yin*.<sup>47</sup>

#### Ex. 4. Energy Flow in the Traditional Cycle of the Seasons



<sup>47</sup> Juliet Bredon and Igor Mitrophanow, *The Moon Year*, xxi.

### Method of Analysis

In the analysis of *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra*, I compare flow of energy in the traditional cycle to flow of intensity in Chen Yi's composition. Through creating a link between the two forms, one can see their similarities and differences. To measure musical intensity, I created a graph in which the x-axis represents time as measured in beats, and the y-axis contains the name of every staff used in the score. On each beat, I inputted the given dynamic for each staff of the score as a numeric value. I calculated the dynamics at:

Ex. 5. Dynamic to Intensity Conversion Table

<b>Dynamic</b>	<b>Intensity Value</b>
resting	0
<i>ppp</i>	1
<i>pp</i>	2
<i>p</i>	3
<i>mp</i>	4
<i>mf</i>	5
<i>f</i> or <i>sfz</i>	6
<i>ff</i> or <i>sffz</i>	7
<i>fff</i>	8

In cases of a *crescendo*, decimals were used in favor of integers for the sake of precision. For example, if a line began at *piano* and grew to *mezzo piano* over three beats, the dynamic values would be 3, 3.5, and 4. After inputting the values for each line, all lines were summed for a total intensity measurement for that given beat. I used this data to create charts, allowing one to easily see the flow of intensity over the course of a section, season, or the composition as a whole. Then, I converted the x-axis from beats to seconds in order to make the chart time-accurate. For example, the piece begins at  $\text{♩}=120$ , so there

would be two intensity entries per second. Later in the piece, the tempo changes to  $\text{♩}=80$ , yielding 0.75 intensity entries per second.

There were several limitations to this form of analysis. First, all instruments do not sound at the same volume when given the same dynamic. An oboe at *fortissimo* would be of lesser intensity than a trumpet at *fortissimo*. Also, my method does not account for range. A flute playing C4 at *forte* would be less intense than a flute playing C6 at *forte*. Furthermore, the graph is not without subjectivity. There were issues such as decay time that are not notated in the score but have an impact on the aural presentation. A ringing gong at triple *forte* will have a much longer decay time than a harp in its upper range. Finally, my measurements are all quantized to the beat. Fast passages with multiple dynamic changes per beat could not be accurately represented; however, in the end, those details did not detract from the overall effectiveness of the study. Because the number of flaws was small compared to the total number of dynamic entries (over 10,000 per season), the flaws were easily absorbed by the study without significant influence.

## Spring

### Overview

Chen Yi's Spring is characterized by unrelenting expansion and growth. The section is 272 beats long at  $\text{♩}=60$ , resulting in four minutes and 32 seconds of constantly increasing tension. Chen Yi maintains this tension by following each growth with a collapse in energy, after which the growth begins anew. In terms of dynamics, this might translate into a dramatic *crescendo* followed by a stark cut-off or *subito piano*. At any given moment there are multiple layers of *crescendo*, each of a different length. The longest *crescendo* is in the xylophone part, which grows from *piano* in measure one to *forte* in measure 55, ending only four measures before the following Summer section. There are also superimposed layers of *crescendi* that span subsections and *crescendi* that occur at the beat level, all simultaneously interacting.

### Comparison to the Traditional Cycle of the Seasons

In the traditional Chinese cycle, spring begins half way between the winter solstice and the spring equinox, or February 4. At this point, temperatures are still low and days are relatively short, emphasizing the cold, dark qualities of *yin*. As the season progresses, the *yang* qualities of heat and light grow in power as temperatures rise and daylight hours increase. The first day of spring also represents the beginning of the agricultural cycle. As life is a *yang* quality, growing crops is also a characteristic of growing *yang*.

In a primarily agricultural society, the beginning of a new cycle of crops was cause for enormous joy and festivities. *Chun Jie*, or Spring Festival, traditionally lasted 24 days, from the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of the 12<sup>th</sup> lunar month to the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the first lunar month. It is still celebrated today, though the ties to agriculture have weakened. The nine days before the actual Chinese New Year serve as preparation for the festival; the fifteen days afterward are filled with many smaller festivals, such as the birthdays of monk Jing Shui Zu Shi and the Jade Emperor, and the festival of *Kuan Yü, the God of War*. The holiday culminates in the Lantern Festival, during which brightly colored lanterns are placed all around the city and the dragon dance is performed.

The primary purpose of the festival as a whole is to dispel the *yin* spirits that may desire to loiter, causing more death and darkness, and to encourage the growth of *yang* spirits, which will bring good luck throughout the coming year. During this time, Chinese are as cautious as they are joyous, being very careful not to do anything that would disrupt the changing of energies. Saso notes that taboo acts include:

- 1) Walking out of a door backwards when carrying heavy materials, as it may reverse a person's good luck.
- 2) Engaging in loud physical labor, as it might scare away *yang* spirits.
- 3) Scolding, angry, or bitter words.<sup>48</sup>

Like spring in the traditional form, Chen Yi's Spring section contains elements of rising *yang*, in that a) the overall intensity is constantly rising and b) the section contains many masculine, forceful *yang* characteristics. Spring's strong sense of pulse, the constant stream of sixteenth notes, and the *crescendi* ending on downbeat accents all give the section a sense of forward-moving drive. The scoring in the low range of the

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<sup>48</sup> Michael R. Saso, *Taoism and the Rite of Cosmic Renewal*, 17.

orchestra is fairly thin, with the complete absence of all low winds and brass. This is because Chen Yi is saving their power for the climax in the Summer section.

Chen Yi does not choose to build tension by using even and steady increments of intensity, but rather fluctuates between growth and collapse. This again is in keeping with energy growth in the traditional cycle. In the traditional form, *yin* and *yang* are constantly vying for dominance, creating small whirlpools of discord within the overall change of force. This vacillation can be seen in reality as the unsteady increase of temperatures during the Chinese springtime (February 4 to May 6). Overall, temperatures are rising, but some days are, nevertheless, colder than others.

#### Section Overview

Spring of *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra* can be divided into two equal sections: the first section from measure one through 29 (henceforth Section 1), and the second from measure 30 through 58 (henceforth Section 2). The sections contain the same number of measures, the same number of beats (that being 136), and the same metrical scheme. Section 1 is unstable, with short spurts of intensity continuously cutting through the texture. It contains two subsections (henceforth Section 1a and 1b) that both start soft, grow to a climax, and then pull back again. Section 1a is propelled forward by string clusters that *crescendo* from *piano* to *forte* over two to three beats. Trills and chromatic passages in the woodwinds form a constant backdrop of activity. In Section 1b, the strings sustain chords that support solo passages in the trumpets and oboes.

Between Section 1 and Section 2, there is a four-measure phrase (m. 26-29), transitional in nature, which builds tension through ascending lines of tremolo eighth-note triplets in the strings. Section 2 presents a gradual, steady build toward the Summer

section. It also contains two subsections (henceforth Section 2a and 2b). In Section 2a, the violins have an augmented variation of the *Ba Ban* Theme that soars on top of chromatic woodwind scales. In Section 2b, there are short solo passages that alternate between the trumpets and horns.

Ex. 6. Section Overview for Spring

Section	Measure	Description
Section 1a	1-11	Contains unstable spurts of energy, especially within the strings' chromatic clusters.
Section 1b	12-29	Strings sustain chords while trumpets and oboes alternate solos. Ends with ascending lines of tremolo eighth-note triplets in the strings.
Section 2a	30-46	Violins present a soaring melody above chromatic scales in the woodwinds.
Section 2b	47-58	Trumpets and horns alternate short melodic lines.

### Analysis

There are two musical threads introduced within the first five measures that continue throughout the piece. The first thread is the Chromatic Motif, which will henceforth refer to any use of adjacent chromatic pitches in either a scalar or cluster formation. The scalar presentation often times moves through an ascending sequential pattern instead of a step-by-step ascent. It is stated clearly in the flutes in measure three. The second thread comes from *Ba Ban*,<sup>49</sup> which emphasizes the intervals of a perfect fifth, fourth, and minor third (as measured from the lowest note). It is first introduced in the first trumpet in measure five, and henceforth will be referred to as the *Ba Ban* Theme.

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<sup>49</sup> For more discussion on *Ba Ban*, see pages seven and eight of this document.



nothing to maturity. The short string *crescendo* summarizes the entirety of the season in a single moment.

Chen Yi creatively employs both the Chromatic Motif and the *Ba Ban* Theme within the string swells. While the use of dynamics and adjacent chromatic pitches are literally repeated in each iteration of the string swell, there is another element of growth added to the sequence, that being rising pitch. Each occurrence is transposed at either a perfect fourth or fifth, and the interval between the first violins and cellos in each cluster is a minor third. These are all of the intervals used in the *Ba Ban* Theme, as counted from the lowest pitch. Throughout the piece, there is a constant play between the *Ba Ban* Theme and the Chromatic Motif. Sometimes they are placed adjacently, occasionally they are presented simultaneously, and often they are interwoven in a single melodic gesture.

Chen Yi again creates a microcosm of expansion in the trumpet section by employing two methods: the first is through multiple adjacent *crescendi* within a single trumpet line, each followed by a *subito piano*, emphasizing growth, collapse, and growth again. This pattern is first introduced in trumpet 3 in measure four. Like the surging string chords, it also mirrors the overall form of the Spring section. The gesture is particularly effective here due to the large dynamic range of the muted trumpet: at *piano* in the mid-range, it can be nearly inaudible; at *mezzo forte*, the sound slices cleanly through the texture.

Ex. 9. Trumpet Swells (m. 4)

Trumpet (in C)

1  
2  
3

con sord. (harmon)

*mf* *mf* *mf*

The second method Chen Yi uses to create surges of intensity is by interjecting like-sounding instruments in rapid succession and then immediately removing them from the texture. Usually, these lines begin with open intervals, suggesting the opening of the *Ba Ban* Theme (Ex. 10), and then become more chromatic. The gesture is initially restricted to the trumpets (Ex. 11), but later spreads to the oboes (m. 13) and horns (m. 18). It occurs three times within the first 11 measures.

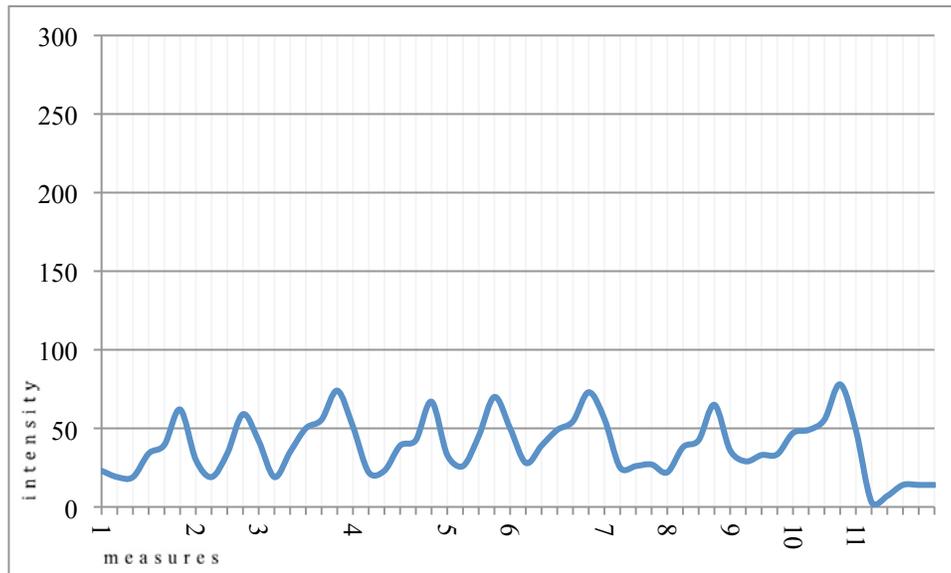
Ex. 10. Beginning of Traditional *Ba Ban* Tune



Ex. 11. Layered Entrances (m. 5-6)

The intensity flow of the first 11 measures clearly illustrates the general instability of the overall texture and the predominance of the swelling gesture.

## Ex. 12. Intensity Flow of Spring, Section 1a (m. 1-11)



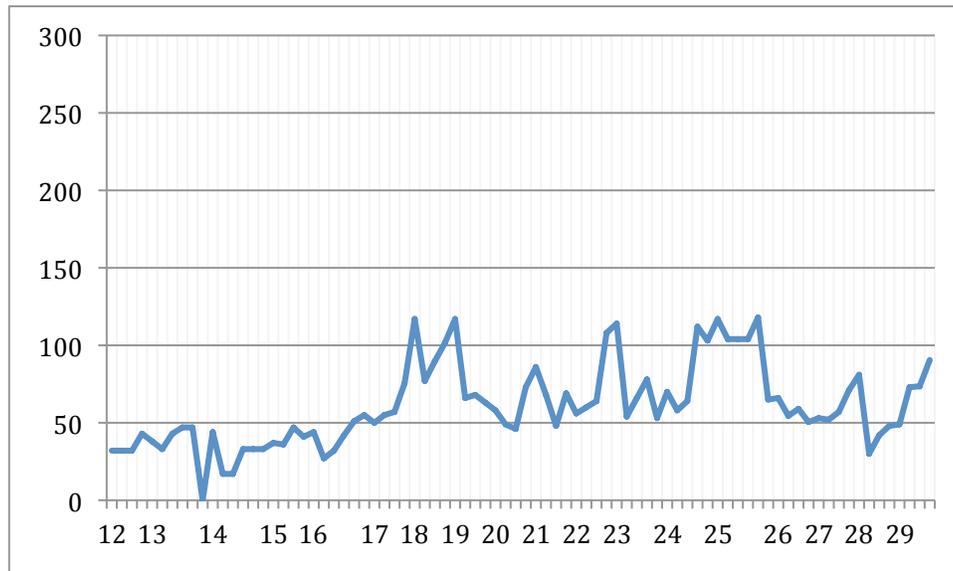
Section 1b begins in measure 12, where there is a noticeable change in texture. For the first time, the string section (minus the contrabass) abandons their gesture of a chromatic *crescendo* in favor of homophonic chords. These chords steadily increase in volume from *pianissimo* in measure 12 to *forte* in measure 25. This 14-measure *crescendo* is divided into two phrases of nearly equal length with a short interruption of three-and-a-half beats rest in measure 18. The first phrase is from measure 12 to 17. Within this phrase, the strings play three chords, approximately 10 beats each. The active melodic lines are continued in the trumpets, but they alternate with the oboes, which are also playing a mixture of the *Ba Ban* Theme and the Chromatic Motif.

In measure 18, the string section rests and the energy is transferred to a harp glissando and a chord in the horns that increases from *forte-piano* to *forte*, ending on the downbeat of measure 19. After this small transition, the horns play quarter-note triplet chords that ascend with pentatonic intervals found in the *Ba Ban* Theme. This gesture,

repeated about a measure-and-a-half later, also serves to stir the texture through highly active dynamic changes. The strings enter immediately after the measure-18 cadence, again with long, sustained chords. This time, however, the strings have interlocking whole-step trills, which adds excitement to the texture. The contrabasses have the same *glissando pizzicato* featured in Section 1, providing unity. In the last two measures of the phrase (m. 24-25), the flutes double the oboes' melody adding strength directly before the transition to Section 2. During the transition, the energy of the woodwinds and strings suddenly retracts and grows again. The strings immediately drop from *forte* to *piano* and begin a new pattern of tremolo eighth-note triplets that rise in pitch an octave and a major sixth and grow in volume from *piano* to *forte*.

In conclusion, Section 1b has elements of stability not present in Section 1a, such as sustaining string chords; however, with lines constantly coming in and out of the texture and *crescendi* continually punctuating the music, the intensity flow is still unstable and volatile. There are three large *crescendi* in the strings (including the transition) and each melodic line is full of one *crescendo* after another. For example, the trumpet line begins at *mezzo forte* two beats before the transition (m. 25), grows to a *forte piano*, swells to a *mezzo forte*, and then immediately to *forte*. These constantly fluctuating lines result in an overall unstable intensity.

Ex. 13. Intensity Flow of Spring, Section 1b (m. 12-29)



Section 2 (m. 30-58) is characterized by a more stable growth toward a climax. Section 2a (m. 30-46) begins with piccolo and flutes alternating a pattern of four sixteenth notes (m. 30-32). After three measures, the gesture is passed to the oboes and clarinets (m. 33-35). In measure 36, the flutes rejoin the texture, but the piccolo is reserved for the upcoming melody. All of this activity is supported by similar material in the xylophone. The strings (minus the contrabasses) contribute to the intensity with cluster trills. There are low punctuating chords in the contrabasses, marimba, and harp.

Each gesture in the winds is marked with a *crescendo*, indicating a growth in volume with a return to the original dynamic; however, the dynamics increase incrementally throughout Section 2 as well, creating a sensation of growth in energy on both the beat level and the section level.

## Ex. 14. Woodwinds before String Melody (m. 41-44)

The image shows a musical score for measures 41-44. The score is written for a woodwind and string ensemble. The woodwind parts include Piccolo, Flute 1, Flute 2/3, Oboe 1/2, Clarinet 1/2, Bassoon, and Bass Clarinet. The string parts are not explicitly shown but are mentioned in the text. The music is in 4/4 time and features a chromatic motif backdrop. The woodwinds play a series of ascending and descending lines, while the strings provide a counterbalance. The score is marked with a dynamic of *mf* (mezzo-forte). The measures are numbered 41, 42, 43, and 44. The time signature is 4/4. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The score is written in a standard musical notation with a treble clef for the woodwinds and a bass clef for the strings.

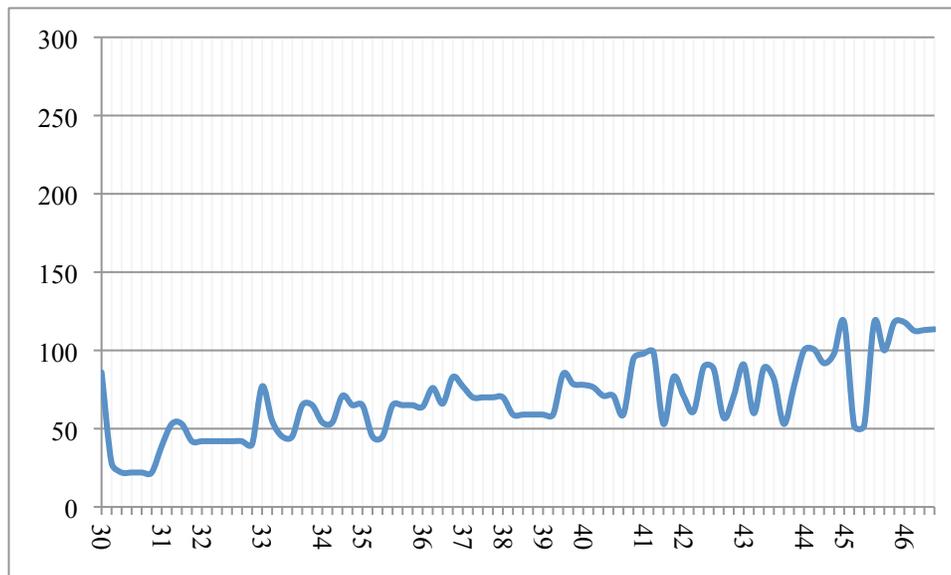
In measure 37, the first and second violins and piccolo play an augmented version of the *Ba Ban* Theme in octaves over the Chromatic Motif backdrop of the woodwinds and xylophone. On the fifth beat of measure 40, the piccolo leaves the *Ba Ban* Theme and joins the Chromatic Motif. The *Ba Ban* Theme is spun out using similar interval content until two measures before Section 2b (m. 45). While the violins are playing the high melody, the low strings are providing a counterbalance to the constantly rising woodwind lines. For the first time, a downward gesture is featured.

Beginning in measures 39 and 40, the low strings, playing a tritone apart, *glissando* down a minor third while diminishing in volume. In measures 44 and 45, however, they reverse this pattern and *glissando* upward. The xylophone maintains the motor-rhythmic backdrop that began in measure 30. The brass section saves their energy for Section 2b. Two bars before the end of the section (m. 45-46), the upper strings abandon their soaring melody and join the woodwinds with chromatic materials, increasing the density (and therefore intensity) directly before the new section.

In the following chart, notice:

- 1) The overall increase of intensity due to the gradual *crescendo* in the woodwinds.
- 2) The spikes of intensity caused by the low string *decrescendi*.
- 3) The increase of intensity in the last bar caused by the union of chromatic *forte* lines of the woodwinds and strings.

Ex. 15. Intensity Flow of Spring, Section 2a (m. 30-46)



The primary difference between Section 2a and 2b (m. 47-58) is that of stability. Instability on the micro level is sacrificed in favor of a steady increase in momentum. The chromatic texture so prevalent in 2a is thicker in 2b with all participating instruments playing together rather than alternating. The woodwinds begin with trills in the upper register supported by *glissandi* trills in the strings. Furthermore, the woodwinds are no longer dominated by *crescendi* on the beat level. This is abandoned in favor of larger phrases at increasing dynamic levels. The main melodic material of Section 2b comes

from the alternation of horn and the trumpet lines, both emphasizing *Ba Ban* Theme fragments.

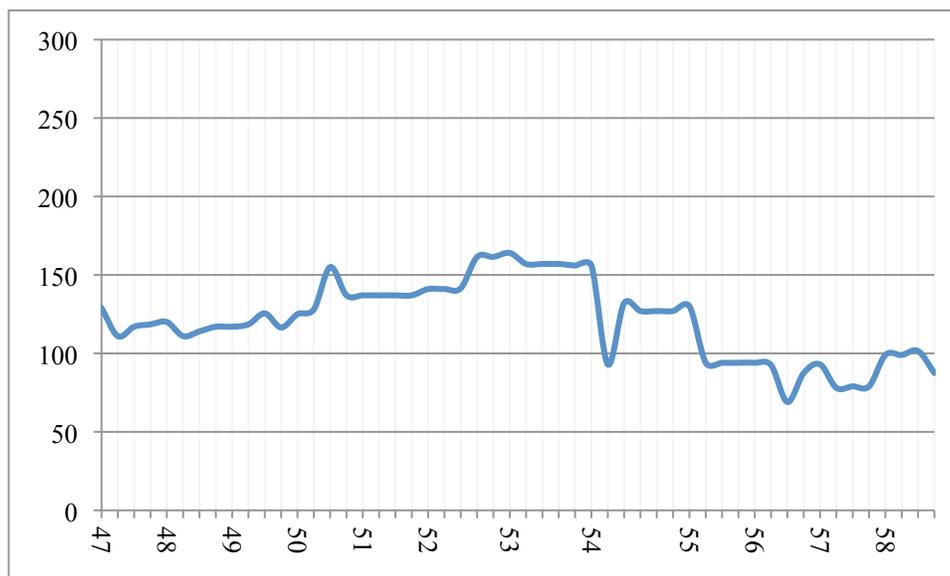
Another important characteristic of 2b is the absence of material in the low register. The bass clarinet, bassoons, trombones, and tuba have been silent throughout Spring. In Section 2b, the previously active cellos and basses are silent as well. Chen Yi saves the low end of the sound spectrum in order to increase the effectiveness of the climactic eruption that occurs at the beginning of Summer.

Five measures before Summer (m. 54-58), the texture gradually becomes thinner. In measure 54, the horn part concludes; in measure 55, the trumpets and the ever-present percussion come to a halt; in measure 56, the piccolo, first flute, and clarinets all *decrescendo* from double *forte* to *mezzo forte*. This drop in intensity can be seen in the following chart. Two measures before Summer (m. 57-58), an increase in intensity is supplied by way of rising pitch in the piccolo, first flute, clarinets, and harp; however, as the method of measuring intensity in this study is limited to dynamics and density, this rise of intensity is not reflected in the subsequent chart.

In the following chart note:

- 1) The high degree of stability in comparison to the previous sections.
- 2) The rise in intensity up to measure 54.
- 3) The dramatic decrease in intensity directly before the onset of Summer.

Ex. 16. Intensity Flow of Spring, Section 2b (m. 47-58)



In conclusion, Chen Yi follows the model of the traditional cycle of the seasons, which features a continual growth of energy throughout spring, through implementing a consistent overall rise in musical intensity for the duration of her Spring section.

## Summer

### Overview

The Summer section of Chen Yi's *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra* (m. 59-104) is full of explosive sound and relentless energy. It begins with a low, violent chromatic cluster and forceful, high accents, which create an overall instability (m. 59-66). Adding to this are the melodic fragments of the *Ba Ban* Theme in the oboes and trumpets (m. 67-72) and a soaring melody in the piccolo, flutes, and violins, all of which culminate in measure 81. The soaring melody continues in the strings (m. 82-94), but this time is accompanied only by a snare drum that enters in measure 84. The melody twists downward and leads into a cadenza-like violin solo (m. 95-106) that climbs upward in pitch and finally disappears into the soft, mysterious Autumn section. The portion of Summer before the violin solo (m. 59-94) is 144 beats long at  $\text{♩}=80$ , resulting in one minute and 48 seconds of music. The violin solo (minus the two transitional measures in the Autumn section) is forty beats long at  $\text{♩}=60$ , adding forty seconds. Therefore, the entire length of Summer is two minutes and 28 seconds.

### Comparison to the Traditional Cycle of the Seasons

In the cycle of seasons, summer represents the growth, climax, and decline of *yang* energy. This climax occurs at the summer solstice (June 20-21), the day with the most hours of sunlight during the year. In the traditional calendar, the peak of *yang* energy is observed by means of festivals and ceremonies. Michael Saso notes in *Taoism*

and the *Rite of Cosmic Renewal* that the festival associated with the summer solstice is called Duan Wu Jie and is welcomed with such ceremonies as:

...the famous dragon boat race, which draws many spectators, and is variously interpreted as a fertility rite, a rite for rain, originally a human sacrifice to the river dragon, and a commemorative act for men or women who have drowned in the river. The famous poet *Ch'u Yüan* (*Chu Yuan*), who committed suicide by jumping into the Milo River in Hunan, is commemorated on this day by throwing glutinous rice cakes into the water.<sup>52</sup>

Chen Yi's Summer reflects this model with its growth in intensity, which climaxes in measure 81, and the subsequent decline by way of thinning instrumentation in the measures that follow.

#### Section Overview

The Summer section of Chen Yi's piece can be divided into five sections, which have a distinct relationship to the growth, climax, and decline of *yang* energy. The first three sections (henceforth Section 1, 2, and 3) increase in intensity through dense textures and high dynamics; the following two sections (henceforth Sections 4 and 5) show greatly diminished intensity due to thinner instrumentation and, eventually, lower dynamics. In Section 1 (m. 59-66), the low woodwinds, low brass, and percussion form a chromatic cluster (A1-G#2). This cluster will continue into the beginning of Section 4. The piccolo, flutes, and clarinets of Section 1 play rapid, upward 5-note runs, which are punctuated by sharp, cluster accents in the oboes, trumpets, percussion, and harp. In Section 2 (m. 67-72), the oboes and trumpets 1 and 2 introduce short melodic fragments that use the interval content of the *Ba Ban* Theme.

In Section 3 (m. 73-80), the oboe and trumpet fragments continue, but a soaring melody in the woodwinds (piccolo, flutes, and clarinets) and strings (violins and violas)

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<sup>52</sup> Michael R. Saso, *Taoism and the Rite of Cosmic Renewal*, 25.

is added, which is reminiscent of Spring's Section 2a (m. 37-47). Section 4 (m. 81-94) is defined by a triple-*forte* unison/octave string line, which overlaps slightly with the ending material of Section 3. The string melody is reinforced by a snare drum roll that enters in measure 84. Section 5 (m. 95-104) consists of a violin solo, which begins at double *forte* with forceful accents in the low register. The solo continues its upward climb, but eventually relaxes the intensity by way of lower dynamics and fewer accents.

Ex. 17. Section Overview for Summer

Section	Measure	Description
Section 1	59-66	Low, dissonant woodwind and brass cluster begins. Other instruments punctuate with motivic fragments and clusters.
Section 2	67-72	Low cluster continues. High clusters are added in flutes and violins. Rhythmic punctuation continues in percussion and low strings. Oboes and trumpets 1 and 2 play short melodic fragments.
Section 3	73-80	Low cluster, melodic fragments, and rhythmic punctuation continue. Soaring melody begins in the piccolo, flutes, clarinets, violins, and violas.
Section 4	81-94	Materials from Section 3 overlap through the first two measures. Unison/octave string line continues at triple <i>forte</i> and is reinforced by snare drum.
Section 5	95-104	Solo violin begins forcefully in the low register and winds upward while relaxing in dynamics and articulation.

### Analysis

Summer begins with a highly dissonant texture containing two primary layers. The first layer consists of a cluster in the low woodwinds and brass, with support from the percussion. The second is comprised of runs in the upper range of the piccolo, flutes, and clarinets, which are accented by a chromatic cluster in the high register of the oboes and trumpets 1 and 2. The interaction of these two layers, which are separated into the

extremes of the orchestral register, generates an enormous amount of tension. Of the cluster layer, Chen Yi states: “Here I have used, for the first time, all low brass, woodwind and percussion instruments to form a cluster in their lowest register with rhythmic arrangement, which supports the outbreak of the wide-range melody [which begins later, in measure 73] developed from the initial material.”<sup>53</sup> The chromatic cluster (A1 to G#2) is scored for the bass clarinet, bassoons, horns, trombones, and tuba. This sudden addition of extra musical lines at a high dynamic level causes the intensity to rise dramatically.

Ex. 18. Chromatic Cluster (m. 59-60)<sup>54</sup>

The image displays a musical score for measures 59 and 60, titled 'Ex. 18. Chromatic Cluster (m. 59-60)<sup>54</sup>'. The score is transposed and includes parts for the following instruments: Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), Bassoons (Bsn. 1, 2, 3), Horns (Hn. 1, 2, 3, 4), Trombones (Tbn. 1, 2), and Tuba (B. Tbn. Tuba). The music is marked with a forte (ff) dynamic. The bassoon parts feature triplet markings. The score shows a chromatic cluster in the low register, with upward runs and accents in the high woodwinds and trumpets.

The upward runs and accents in the high woodwinds and trumpets fill the treble range. Their purpose is to excite the texture, creating large spikes in the overall flow of intensity. This infuses the section with a high degree of forceful *yang* energy. The piccolo, flutes, and clarinets repeat this rising gesture, while the oboes, trumpets, and

<sup>53</sup> Chen Yi, *Prefatory Material* from *Si Ji (Four Seasons)* for Orchestra.

<sup>54</sup> All score examples are transposed.

harp (reinforced by the percussion) play a tight cluster (A $\flat$ 5-B $\flat$ 5) with *forte* accents and downward pitch bends.

Ex. 19. Woodwind Runs and Tpt. and Ob. Accents (m. 61)

The image shows a musical score for measure 61, featuring woodwind runs and accents for various instruments. The score is written in treble clef and includes the following parts:

- Picc.**: Piccolo flute, playing a sixteenth-note run with an accent on the first note.
- Fl. 1, 2, 3**: Flutes, each playing a sixteenth-note run with an accent on the first note.
- Ob. 1, 2, 3**: Oboes, each playing a sixteenth-note run with an accent on the first note.
- E. Hn.**: English Horn, playing a sixteenth-note run with an accent on the first note.
- B $\flat$  Cl. 1, 2, 3**: B-flat Clarinets, each playing a sixteenth-note run with an accent on the first note.
- Tpt. 1, 2, 3**: Trumpets, each playing a sixteenth-note run with an accent on the first note.

The score is marked with a '61' at the beginning of the measure. The woodwind runs are indicated by a bracket with the number '6' underneath, suggesting a sixteenth-note run. The accents are marked with a '>' symbol above the first note of each run.

This combined gesture occurs six times with slight rhythmic variation. Rather than placing the *forte* cluster accents in the same position each time, Chen Yi moves them around different parts of the beat in order to add variety and unpredictability. The first three times, the accents occur on the first note of the woodwind run. In the fourth and fifth statements, they come in the middle. In the last iteration, the flutes and clarinets divide into two separate runs and the accented notes occur in the center of the second iteration.

Section 2 of Summer begins in measure 67 at the onset of a series of new melodic fragments in the oboes and trumpets 1 and 2 (Ex. 20). The fragments occur three times before Section 3, with the highest pitch of each fragment occurring higher than the previous iteration (G5, A5, B♭5, respectively). During the first two gestures, the third trumpet sustains the highest pitch of the texture and sustains it with a series of *crescendi*, similar to those seen at the beginning of Spring (tpt. 3, m. 4). The first two fragments resemble the *Ba Ban* Theme and the third is a statement of the Chromatic Motif. Added to the texture are Bartok *pizzicati* in the low strings and sustained harmonics a half step apart in the violins.

Ex. 20. Ob. and Tpt. 1 and 2 Melodic Fragmentation (m. 67)

Section 3 (m. 73-80) utilizes more instruments than previous sections. It maintains the low woodwind and brass cluster and the oboe and trumpet fragments, but adds a soaring melody in the piccolo, flutes, clarinets, and high strings. This melody, similar to that seen beginning in measure 37 of Spring, is a hybrid theme, mixing elements of the *Ba Ban* Theme and the Chromatic Motif. Its purpose here is to provide unity through the repetition of materials from a previous section and to add another layer to the thickening texture. Chen Yi maintains the independence of this new line in the midst of a dense texture by:

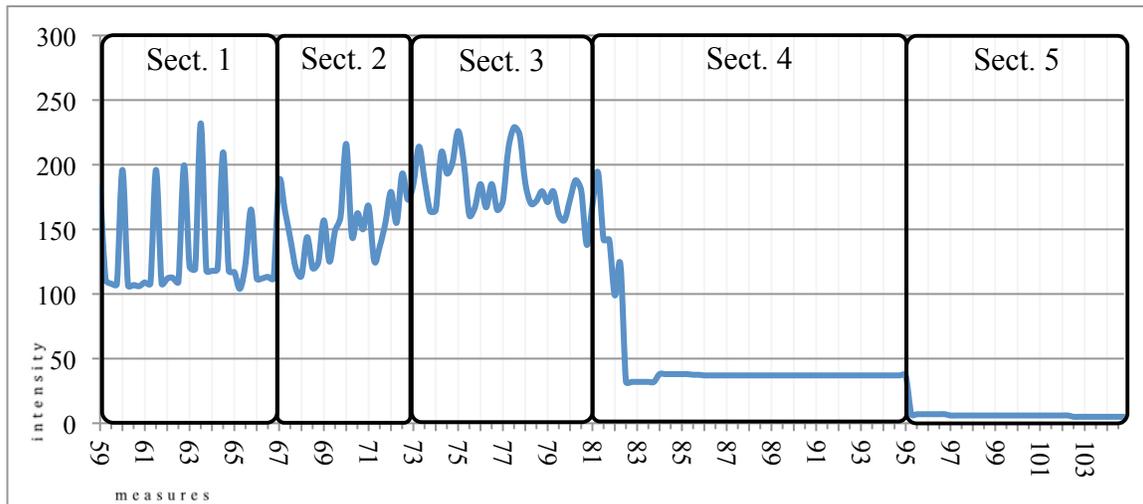
- 1) Doubling it in three octaves.
- 2) Isolating it in the high range of the orchestra.
- 3) Using longer note values than those in the adjacent layer (trumpet and oboe fragments).

In the penultimate measure of the section (m. 80), the trumpets climb to an incredibly high climactic point (E6 in the first trumpet) and abruptly cut off. Immediately after, the cluster in the low woodwinds and brass leaps an octave higher and sustains for two-and-three-fourths beats; it is followed by another octave leap sustained for four-and-a-half beats, and reaches a double-*forte* climax in measure 82. While the cluster is in its highest octave, the woodwinds have a chromatic run that mirrors the trumpets four beats earlier. This enormous peak of energy masks the beginning of Section 4 in measure 81.

The growth and volatility of Section 1 through 3 can be clearly seen when illustrated with intensity values. Note in the chart below:

- 1) The spikes of intensity in Section 1 caused by the woodwind runs and accents in the trumpets and oboes.
- 2) The steady increase of intensity in Section 2.
- 3) The high degree of intensity of Section 3 caused by the inclusion of all instruments at a high dynamic level.

Ex. 21. Intensity Flow of Summer, Sections 1-5 (m. 59-104)

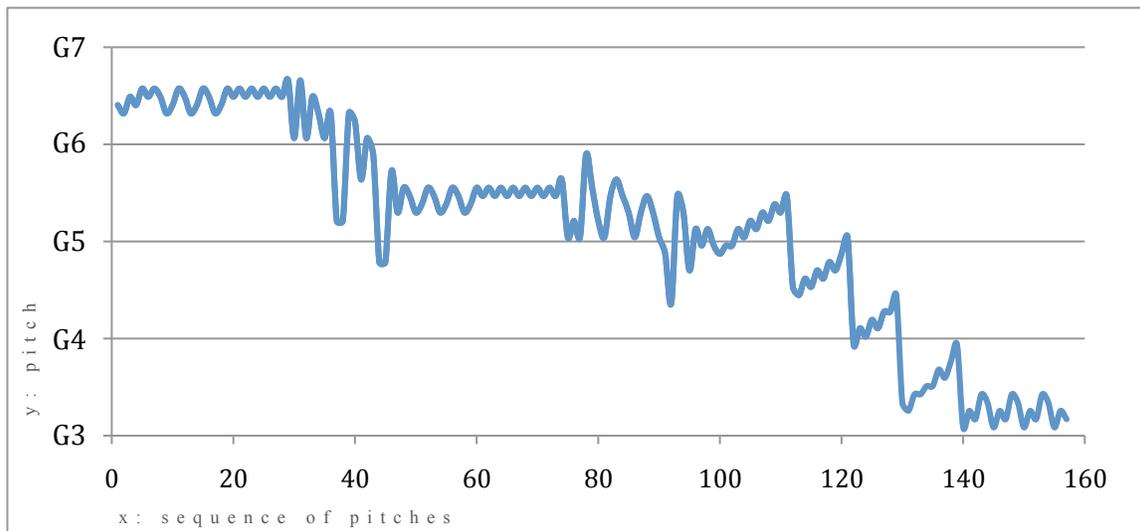


After the accumulating textural density of Sections 1 through 3, Section 4 consists only of strings (minus the contrabass) and a snare drum. As can be seen in Ex. 21, this significant reduction in instrumentation causes a sharp decrease in intensity. The strings take up a strong, soaring, bold melody in three octaves, which begins amidst the climax of Section 3. The snare drum sustains the tension with a roll, beginning with an accented *forte*, which diminishes over two bars and settles at *mezzo forte* in measure 86. The string line remains at triple *forte* throughout, sustaining the intensity until the last possible moment.

The instrumentation remains the same throughout Section 4 and there is not a considerable amount of variation in dynamics; the intensity likewise has little change. The main structural focus here is not intensity, but rather the rising and falling of pitch. The strings begin in their upper register and wind downward. Note in Ex. 22 that while there is not only a clear overall movement from high to low, there is also a great deal of irregularity and instability in the moment-to-moment flow. The y-axis represents the

pitch of the first violins, with a range of G3 to C#7. The x-axis represents the sequence of pitches from measure 81 to 94, not the number of beats. Length of pitch is disregarded in order to focus on pitch contour.

Ex. 22. Melodic Contour of First Violins in Summer Section 4 (m. 81-94)



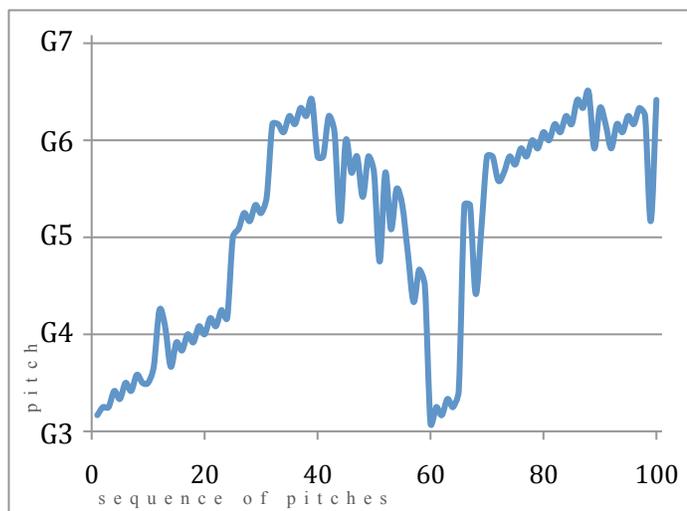
In Section 5, a 10-measure violin solo (m. 95 to 104), serves as a transition from Summer to Autumn. The solo begins on the last note of the triple *forte* melody in the strings (m. 95) and disappears into the clouded woodwind texture of Autumn (m. 106), but is otherwise unaccompanied. The exchange of energy between the string section and the solo violin on A $\flat$ 3 in measure 95 is particularly smooth due to the connection in timbre and thematic material. The similarity between the timbre of the B6 harmonic in the solo violin and the piccolo on the same pitch (m. 105-106) likewise makes the transition into Autumn appear seamless.

There are several musical elements in the solo that guide the transition, these being dynamics, articulation, and range. The passage begins at double *forte*, diminishes incrementally to *mezzo forte* (m. 102), and then fades to *piano* after the woodwinds enter

(m. 105-106). At the beginning, separate bow strokes and accents are given to each of the sixteenth notes, quintuplets, and sextuplets; as the passage continues, slurs are added; by the last three measures, all of the faster note values are slurred and unaccented, implying a smoother, more serene timbre.

As in the case of Section 4, looking at the flow of intensity in Section 5 is not helpful. With only one instrument and a limited amount of dynamic variation, the chart only reveals a slight downward slope. More important here is the use of range in comparison to the previous descending string line of Summer (m. 81-94). The range of the solo is from G3 to C7. The pitch does not rise steadily throughout, but rather moves upward in a jagged line. Its upward motion counterbalances the downward motion of Section 4.

Ex. 23. Melodic Contour of Violin Solo (m. 95 to 104)



As a whole, Chen Yi's Summer features an enormous rise of intensity to a climax, followed by a dramatic decline of intensity. This mirrors summer in the traditional cycle, in which a growth of energy climaxes around the festival Duan Wu Jie and subsequently diminishes.

## Autumn

### Overview

Chen Yi describes the mood of Autumn (m. 105-178) as “mysterious.” “Am I inside of a deep ancient forest, being surrounded by thousands of mountains, or getting fascinated in an illusory dreamland?”<sup>55</sup> The clouded chromatic woodwind and string chords and tightly interwoven melodic themes create an aura of enigmatic wonder. The section is in a constant state of transformation as textures thicken and then dissipate by way of subtle changes in instrumentation and range. Chen Yi notes that “The high-low, far-near, dark-light, deep-shallow images are represented in multi-layers of sound blocks produced by various combinations of instruments.”<sup>56</sup>

### Comparison to the Traditional Cycle of the Seasons

In Chinese Buddhist thought, life, like the seasons, is cyclical and can be mapped onto the seasons and the energy of *yin* and *yang*. Youth is represented by spring and growing *yang*; adulthood is represented by summer and mature *yang*; old age is represented by autumn and rising *yin*; and winter represents death and mature *yin*, after which the cycle begins anew. As Wilhelm notes, “The four seasons turn like a mighty wheel. Life ascends, blossoms, bears fruit, sends its seeds below, and when the dark half of the year comes, everything is returned again.”<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Chen Yi, *Prefatory Material from Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra*.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> Richard Wilhelm, *Lectures on the I Ching*, 74.

The latter half of the cycle, characterized by rising *yin*, is clouded by the unknown. While a young man may be able to project his vision of the future into old age, what happens after death is a mystery. Wilhelm quotes Confucius as stating, “Wait until you are dead, then you will experience it.”<sup>58</sup> This sense of confusion and foggy uncertainty is displayed in Chen Yi’s *Autumn* through the ambiguity of tonal centers within the chromatic backdrop, the continual shift of timbres and instrumentation, and the dense polyphony among like-sounding instruments.

### Section Overview

Sectional divisions in Chen Yi’s *Autumn* are decidedly masked and unclear, adding to the aura of ethereal ambiguity. It may seem, therefore, unfitting to impose formal divisions; however, doing so will only add depth to its meaning. *Autumn* can be roughly segmented into four parts. Section 1 (m. 105-128) is characterized by solos in the woodwinds and harp along with sustaining string chords, which together shape the increasing intensity. In Section 2 (129-142), the solo lines and sustaining chords continue. The lines are generally rising and increase in dynamics until measure 138, where the strings *glissando* downward and *decrescendo*. The texture is agitated throughout by a series of *piano* to *forte* *crescendi* in the low winds and horns.

Much of Section 3 (m. 143-161) is dominated by an English horn solo with increasingly agitated clusters in the winds and strings. Scalar passages are found in the latter part of the section and serve to keep the tension moving forward. Section 4 (m. 162-178) consists of a string passage that is reminiscent of the descending string line in

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<sup>58</sup> Richard Wilhelm, *Lectures on the I Ching*, 137.

Summer's Section 4 (m. 81-94). The activity in Section 4 of Autumn, however, is greatly reduced before a sudden and dramatic entrance into Winter.

Ex. 24. Section Overview for Autumn

Section	Measure	Description
Section 1	105-128	Solos in the woodwinds and harp and sustaining string chords begin. Ends with contrabassoon solo.
Section 2	129-142	Solo lines and sustaining chords continue. String lines rise until measure 138, where the strings <i>glissando</i> downward and <i>decrescendo</i> . Texture agitated throughout by <i>piano</i> to <i>forte crescendi</i> in low winds and horns.
Section 3	143-161	English horn solo accompanied by clusters in the winds and strings.
Section 4	162-178	Melodic lines in strings spiral downward

Analysis

The first part of Section 1, with its shorter instrumental solos, is introductory in nature. Three measures of piccolo and flute activity are followed by three similar measures in the oboes and English horn. Subsequently, there are two measures of trilling oboe chords (m. 111-112). Playing slightly before and during each of these events is a timpani line spanning a tritone (B $\flat$ 2-E3), which is performed by means of a bowed high cymbal on the drumhead and pedal *glissandi*. The overall intensity of this phrase has an arch-like form due to the underlying string chords that *crescendo* to *mezzo forte* in measure 109 and subsequently diminish. The three-measure groupings at the beginning of the section (Ex. 26) are constructed in a manner very similar to the melodic trumpet lines that begin in measure five of Spring's Section 1a (Ex. 25). In every case:

- 1) Like-sounding instruments are grouped.

- 2) Entrances are staggered.
- 3) The *Ba Ban* Theme is present.
- 4) The lines coalesce in clusters primarily composed of half steps, with or without octave displacement.

Ex. 25. Staggered Tpt. Entrances (m. 5-6)

Musical score for three trumpets (Tpt. 1, 2, 3) showing staggered entrances in measures 5 and 6. Tpt. 1 enters in m. 5 with a melodic line marked "con sord. (straight) mp". Tpt. 2 enters in m. 5 with a similar line marked "con sord. (straight) mp". Tpt. 3 enters in m. 6 with a line marked "mf".

Ex. 26. Three-Measure Groupings and Oboe Cadence (m. 105-112)

Musical score for woodwinds (Piccolo, Flutes 1-3, Oboes 1-3, English Horn) showing three-measure groupings and oboe cadences in measures 105-112. The score includes dynamics like *mp*, *mf*, and *pp*.

In the subsequent seven bars (m. 113-119), the harp punctuates the texture with the first *forte* notes of Autumn. It doubles the entrances of the strings, which sustain the

pitches with microtonal trills. This shimmering texture prepares and supports the clarinet solo.

The clarinet solo (m. 117-126) begins in the upper part of the middle register and moves into the extreme upper register (Ex. 27). Both the Chromatic Motif and the *Ba Ban* Theme are clearly present, but intricately woven together. The solo is punctuated by intermittent countermelodies from the harp and piccolo. When the solo clarinet reaches the height of its climb, the texture thickens as the harp continues in a soloistic passage and the remaining clarinets add sustaining pitches. Ending the section is a contrabassoon line (m. 126-128), which begins with a reference to the *Ba Ban* Theme and moves downward with disjunct motion. The low strings *crescendo* in the last measure of Section 1 (m. 128), providing momentum into Section 2.

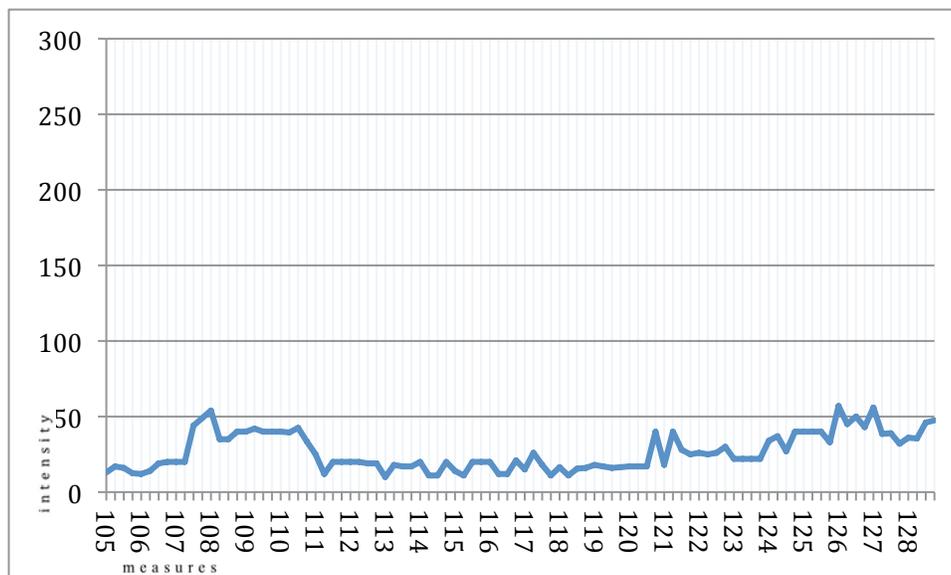
Ex. 27. B $\flat$  Cl. Solo (m. 117-126)

In the following chart (Ex. 28), note:

- 1) The low overall intensity throughout caused by the sparse instrumentation and relatively soft dynamics.
- 2) The wave of intensity in the first eight bars caused by the string chords (m. 105-112).

- 3) The instability caused by the irregular entrances of the harp and piccolo (m. 117-124).
- 4) The increase in tension caused by the added support from the piccolo, harp, and the remainder of the clarinet section (m. 124-126).
- 5) The slight increase in intensity at the end of the section caused by the contrabassoon solo and *crescendo* in the low strings (m. 126-128).

Ex. 28. Intensity Flow of Autumn, Section 1 (m. 105-128)



The main feature of Section 2 (m. 129-142) is rising string lines as supported by mid-range chords in the low woodwinds and horns. The contrabassoon solo from Section 1 continues briefly into Section 2 (m. 129-133), smoothing the transition. While the strings move upward with *tremolo* lines, they also increase in dynamics with offset *crescendi* from *mezzo piano* to *forte piano*. In measures 132 and 133, the strings drop back in dynamics and become less active to allow the low wind chords to take the foreground (m. 134-138). They fuel the intensity with a series of *crescendi* that begin at

*piano* and move to *forte* four times over five measures. The strings also *crescendo* in measure 138, arriving at *forte* before falling downward in pitch and volume with *tremolo glissandi* into a sustained chromatic chord (Ex. 29). At the height of the string *crescendo*, the timpani *glissandi* with bowed cymbal return, connecting the climax to a wave of sound in the winds. The flutes, oboes, and clarinets form a chromatic chord that augments the sustained strings sonority (m. 140-142), while the third and bass clarinets (Ex. 30) echo the descending pitch of the violins in downward scalar motion.

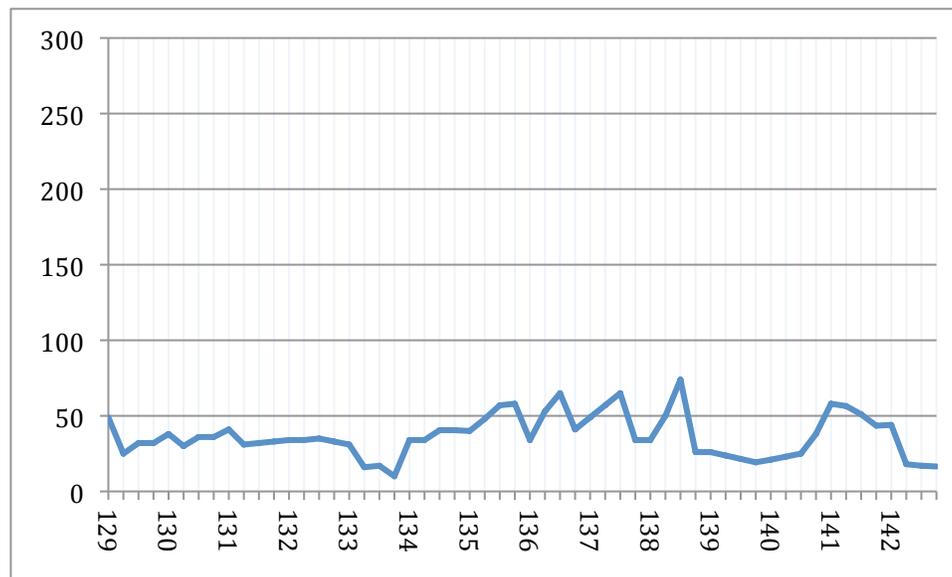
Ex. 29. Vln. I and II. (m. 137-140)

Ex. 30. B $\flat$  Cl. 3 and B. Cl. (m. 141-142)

In the following chart (Ex. 31), note:

- 1) The softening of the string lines in measure 132 and 133.
- 2) The peak of the *crescendi* in measures 135 to 138.
- 3) The activity caused by the upper woodwinds in measure 140 through 142.

Ex. 31. Intensity Flow of Autumn, Section 2 (m. 129-142)

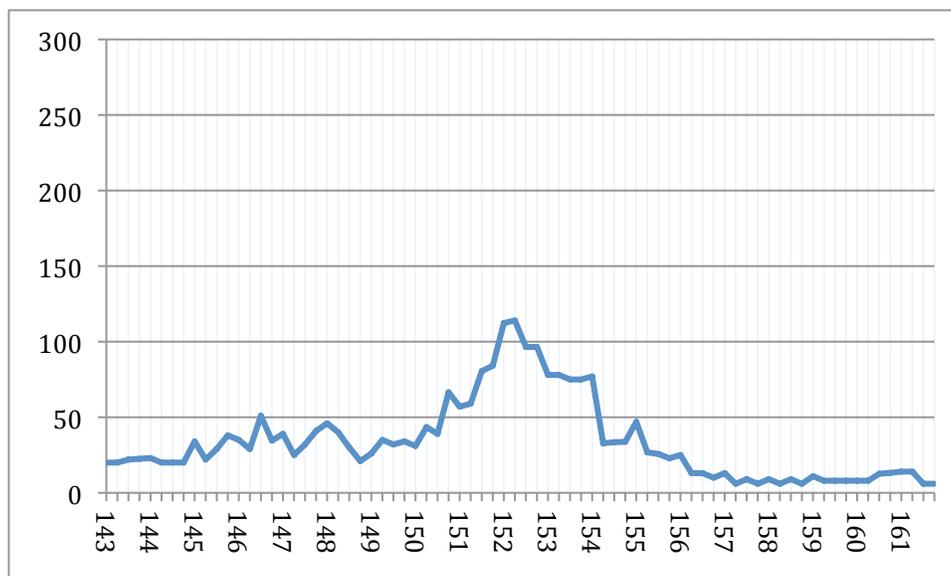


Section 3 of Autumn (m. 117-126) begins with an English horn solo and timpani *glissandi* with bowed cymbal. The English horn solo has much in common with the preceding clarinet solo (m. 143-155), but in general, is a larger structural gesture. It is 13 measures in length while the clarinet solo is only 10. The English horn solo has a range of two octaves and a whole step (B3-C#5) while the solo clarinet's range is an octave and a major seventh (C5-B6).

The solo is supported by a number of elements, including sustaining chords in the low woodwinds and strings, timpani *glissandi*, and increasingly agitated flute lines. High harmonic string clusters begin the section (m. 143-144) and then cut off two measures

later. The low woodwinds and horns fill in this rest with a low cluster, which is passed to the strings in their low register in measure 146. During the low chord in the strings, the timpani *glissandi* resurface. In between fragments of the English horn melody, the flutes have an accented chromatic cluster with eighth notes against triplet eighth notes. As the passage progresses, the flutes and English horn overlap more and more. In measure 151 through 152, there is a relatively large wave of sound caused by a *crescendo/diminuendo* from *piano* to *mezzo forte* and back to *piano* in the and low winds, horns, bass drum, and strings. During this swell, the flutes enter one by one with active lines that use both materials from the Chromatic Motif and the *Ba Ban* Theme. This swell can be seen clearly in the following chart:

Ex. 32. Intensity Flow of Autumn, Section 3 (m. 143-161)



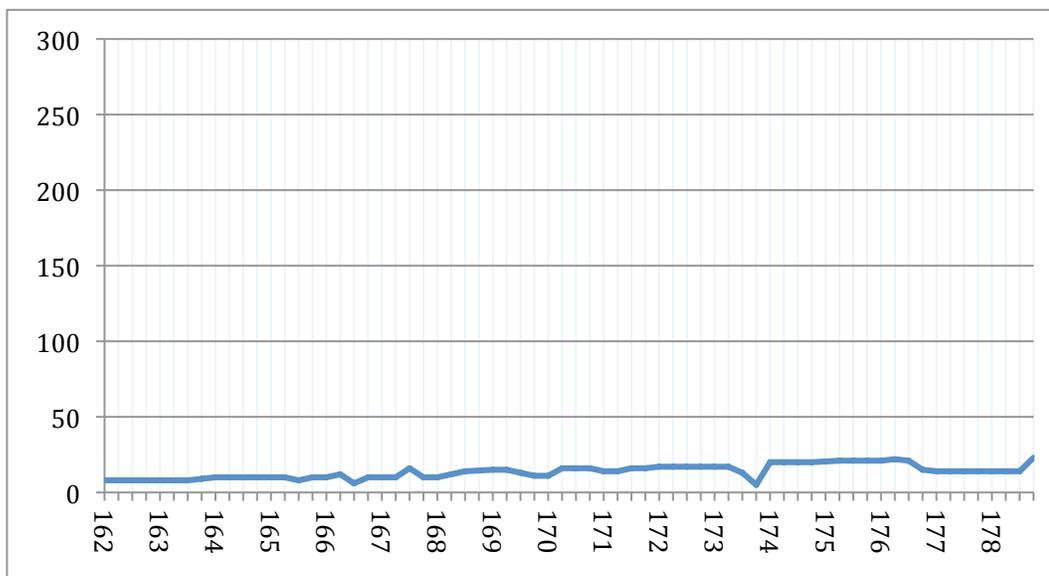
The fourth and final section of Autumn (m. 162-178) consists solely of strings. This stands in stark contrast to the previous two sections due to its dramatic decrease in

simultaneous lines and its homogeneity. Sections 1 through 3 employ a larger variety of instrumentation in a thicker texture. The high winds and strings are almost always present; the horns make an appearance in every section; the harp is active in Sections 1 and 2; and various percussion is used throughout Section 3. Section 4 contains only the violins, violas, and cellos. This dramatic reduction in simultaneous lines results in a lower overall intensity. Chen Yi reduces tension directly before the Winter section in order to make Winter's climax that much more effective. This technique was also employed to a lesser extent at the end of Spring (m. 55-58). It is, in effect, the "calm before the storm."

The passage begins in measure 162 with the first and second violins playing a lyrical, disjunct melody in octaves. In measure 166, the violas enter with a countermelody, which mingles with the violins until 170, when a solo cello comes into the foreground. The cello solo remains the most prominent line until measure 177, when the melody is transferred to the rest of the cello section. The upper strings support the solo cello with melodic fragments and sustained sonorities.

In the following chart (Ex. 33), note the lower overall intensity caused by the reduction in instrumentation and the slight increase of intensity throughout caused by the layered entrances of the strings.

Ex. 33. Intensity Flow of Autumn, Section 4 (m. 162-178)



Chen Yi's orchestral work emulates the clouded, mysterious autumn in the traditional cycle through its constant chromaticism, a continual shift of timbres and instrumentation, and the dense polyphony within like-sounding instruments.

## Winter

### Overview

Chen Yi's Winter (m. 179-243) is much like her Summer in that it features a build to a climax, followed by a dramatic decline in intensity. The Winter section, however, is more extreme than Summer with higher dynamics and density, and, therefore, a higher overall intensity. The build of intensity begins in measure 179 and climaxes in 229. It is marked by increasingly faster tempos, thickening textures, and rising dynamics. Of this build, Chen Yi notes, "The music gradually builds up a momentum toward the last section, which opens up the whole spectrum of sound from the orchestra."<sup>59</sup> After the climax, the composer presents a soft, clouded texture that represents the aftermath of the previous eruption. In the last measure (m. 243), the sound dissipates and a solo harp line appears, bringing closure to the piece.

### Comparison to the Traditional Cycle of the Seasons

In the traditional cycle, winter represents the growth, climax, and decline of *yin*. The peak of *yin* comes at the winter solstice (December 21 or 22), the longest night of the year. This date is marked by the *Dong Zhi* (Winter's Extreme) festival. Seen as the second most important holiday of the year, it is a time for uniting with family and enjoying traditional foods. Even in today's celebrations, Chinese eat *tang yuan*, soup containing small glutinous rice balls stuffed with sweet sesame paste. *Tang yuan* literally means "soup balls," but has the same pronunciation as "family reunion," and is therefore considered an appropriately auspicious treat. Although *yin* is associated with

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<sup>59</sup> Chen Yi, *Prefatory Material* from *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra*.

darkness and death, this is a joyful celebration, as it marks the beginning of the decline of *yin* and the increase of positive *yang* energy.<sup>60</sup>

Chen Yi's *Winter* follows this model by having an increase in intensity to a climactic point in measure 229 followed by a dramatic decrease in intensity. In the last measure, the solo harp comes through the clouded, dark *yin* texture, symbolizing the bright, clear infant *yang*.

### Section Overview

*Winter* can be divided into five sections demarcated by tempo changes that increase incrementally until the last section, which matches the slowest tempo of the piece. Sections 1-3 build to a climax using a variety of elements referenced previously in the piece. The elements are:

- 1) A low, forceful melody.
- 2) Powerful cluster chords.
- 3) Accents.
- 4) The upward winding Chromatic Motif.
- 5) Melodic fragments, often times in the first trumpet.
- 6) Repeated notes in the percussion.

Section 4 represents the climax of the piece, and Section 5 is the aftermath of the climax with a return to the beginning.

Section 1 (m. 179-196, ♩=80) begins with several of the above elements, including the low, forceful melody in the cello and contrabass (later reinforced by low woodwinds

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<sup>60</sup> Joseph Yeh, "The Winter Solstice" (23 December 2008), [http://www.culture.tw/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=1053&Itemid=157](http://www.culture.tw/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1053&Itemid=157) (2 March 2010).

and tuba); powerful cluster chords beginning in the strings and later moving to the brass; and accents in the bass drum and harp. Other elements are subsequently included, such as the melodic fragments in the trumpet 1 (m. 184); the Chromatic Motif in the strings (m. 185) and woodwinds (m. 189); and the repeated notes in the percussion (m. 190).

Section 2 (197-204,  $\downarrow=88$ ) contains a high degree of unstable intensity. The low woodwinds, brass, and percussion double small portions of the low, forceful melody, creating large spikes in intensity. All elements continue, but the high soaring melody is added in the high woodwinds and strings. The bongos and suspended cymbal are added to the repeated percussion notes, and the tam-tam joins the accents in the harp.

Section 3 (m. 205-216,  $\downarrow=96$ ) is much like the preceding section; toward the end, however, it solidifies with nearly every instrument finding a place within the aforementioned six elements. The low woodwinds and tuba double the cello and bass instead of emphasizing portions of it. The cluster chords continue in the brass. Accents continue in the percussion and harp. The Chromatic Motif is no longer an isolated element, but rather is combined with the trumpet and horn fragments. The high melody becomes more rhythmically stable, emphasizing eighth notes. Repeated notes in the percussion occur more frequently and forcefully. Towards the end, the brass section gradually joins the percussion in preparation for Section 4.

Section 4 (m. 217-229,  $\downarrow=108$ ) represents a unified, consistently high intensity flow. Most of the brass play double *forte* sixteenth-note sextuplets, and the low woodwinds, horns, various percussion, harp, cello, and bass present a series of powerful, alternating accents. The higher woodwinds begin with whole-step trills and the upper

strings with asynchronous trilling *glissandi*; both join the sixteenth-note sextuplet brass chords in measure 223. The texture swells to a triple-*forte* climax in measure 229.

In Section 5 (m. 229, beat 3 - 243, ♩=60), unpitched whispers in the woodwinds, brass, timpani, percussion 2 and 4, harp, and contrabass blend with soft, chromatic chords and *glissandi* in the violins and violas. A bass drum swell forcefully breaches the texture, echoing the recent climax. The vibraphone plays an augmented variation of the *Ba Ban* Theme at *mezzo piano* (m. 235-239), which is nearly imperceptible amidst the clouded ethereal texture. The cellos perform two two-measure *glissandi* with microtonal trills, which also blend into the texture. Towards the end, the timpani *glissandi* with bowed cymbal resurface, preceding and accompanying a fleeting statement of the *Ba Ban* Theme in the harp, which brings the piece to its completion.

## Ex. 34. Section Overview of Winter

Section	Measure	Tempo	Description
Section 1	179-196	$\text{♩}=80$	Six elements are presented, including a low, forceful melody; powerful cluster chords; accents; the upward winding Chromatic Motif; melodic fragments, often times in the first trumpet; and repeated notes in the percussion.
Section 2	197-204	$\text{♩}=88$	All elements continue, but the high soaring melody is added in the high woodwinds and strings.
Section 3	205-216	$\text{♩}=96$	All elements continue, but in a more stable manner. Towards the end, the brass section joins the percussion in playing repeated notes, which serve as preparation for Section 4.
Section 4	217-229	$\text{♩}=108$	16 <sup>th</sup> -note sextuplets are played by a majority of the instruments. Strong, alternating accents fill the low range of the orchestra.
Section 5	229.5-243	$\text{♩}=60$	Soft unpitched whispers blend with chromatic clusters in the upper strings. Bass drum swells infuse the texture. Ends with a statement of the <i>Ba Ban</i> Theme in the harp.

## Analysis

Section 1 begins in measure 179 with a low, disjunct melody in the cellos and basses, surging cluster chords in the violins and violas (supported by the bass drum), and a short, accented chord in the harp, which punctuates the last eighth note of the *crescendo*. The low melody presents variations of the *Ba Ban* Theme and is reinforced by the bass clarinet and bassoons in measure 183 and the tuba in measure 191 in order to compete with the rising intensity in the rest of the orchestra. Together, they maintain their unison/octave melodic motion until the end of the section (m. 196). The Chromatic Motif is woven into the texture throughout Section 1. It is most clearly evident in the strings in

measure 185 and woodwinds in measures 189, 191, 195, and 196. The cluster chords also continue throughout the section, but in constantly morphing permutations. The chord leading into Winter (m. 178) (Ex. 36) is similar to the string cluster in the first measure of the piece (Ex. 35) in that:

- 1) Both contain a chromatic cluster.
- 2) Both have a large swell in dynamics.
- 3) Both are accented on the final eighth note by an event somewhere else in the orchestra. In measure one, it occurs in the timpani, harp, and contrabasses. In measure 179, it occurs in the bass drum and harp.

Ex. 35. Cluster Chord (m. 1)

Ex. 35. Cluster Chord (m. 1) musical score details:

- Percussion 4 (Snare Drum):** *p* to *mp* dynamic, marked with "(hard stick) ped. gliss."
- Harp:** Notes B, C<sup>#</sup>, D<sup>#</sup>, E, F<sup>#</sup>, G, A. Dynamics *p* to *f*.
- Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello:** *con sord.* dynamics *p* to *f*.
- Contrabass:** *pizz.* dynamic *sfz*.
- Tempo:** 6/4, ♩ = 120.

Ex. 36. Cluster Chord (m. 178-179)

Ex. 36. Cluster Chord (m. 178-179) musical score details:

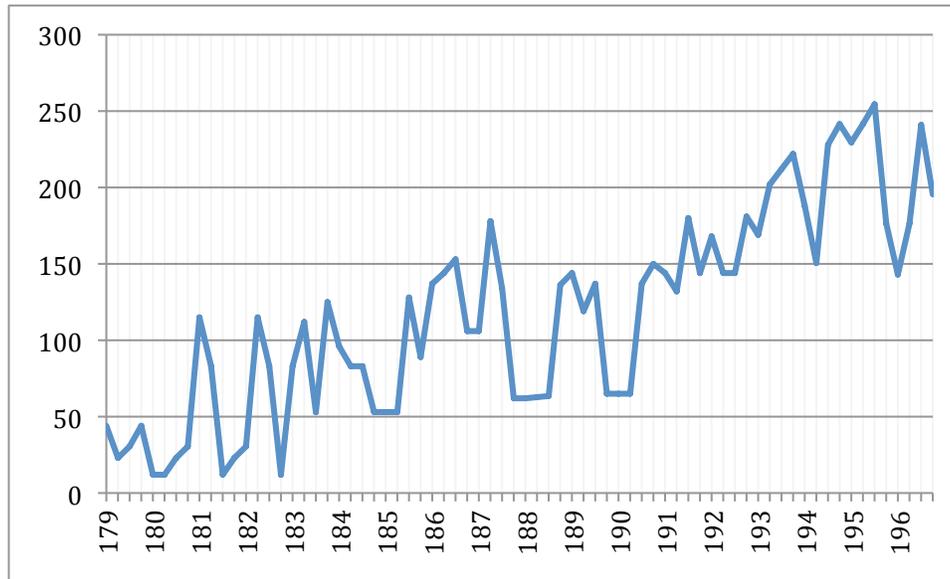
- Percussion 3 (Bass drum):** Dynamics *pp* to *mf*.
- Harp:** Dynamics *p* to *sf*.
- Tempo:** 6/4, ♩ = 80.

The last point is key to understanding the way Chen Yi manipulates the surging chords. The second time the chord is articulated (m. 179), the same accent technique is used. The third time (m. 181), however, the final note of the strings is accented by the entire brass section and snare drum. While the accented pitches in the first two iterations were relatively short and subtle, the flutter-tonguing brass is sustained and obtruding. The fourth iteration (m. 181-182) is like the third. In the fifth iteration (m. 183), the instrumentation changes with the brass initiating the chord and the strings accenting the final pitch with a sustained *forte-piano* chord. After this shift, the cluster chords remain primarily in the brass section until the end of Section 1.

In measure 184, trumpet 1 begins playing a series of melodic fragments that continue in some form until the end of Section 3 (m. 216). During the remainder of Section 1 (m. 185-193), the highest pitch of each trumpet fragment ascends a half step each time, beginning on G5 and ending on C6. This is similar to the rising trumpet fragments in measures 67 through 80 of *Summer*. In measure 188, the horns begin to break away from the brass chords, moving progressively higher and sustaining longer until they join the English horn, violins, violas, and cellos for a short, mid-range statement of the *Ba Ban* Theme in the final three measures of the section (m. 194-196). This melody, doubled by the violins, violas, and cellos, begins with the *Ba Ban* Theme and climbs upward, providing momentum into Section 2. Also in the last three measures are two final chords in the trumpets and trombones. The first grows from *forte-piano* to double *forte*; in the second, the first trumpet has a *crescendo* while the rest remains at *forte*.

In Ex. 37, one can clearly see the overall rise in intensity caused by the thickening orchestral texture and the irregularity of flow primarily due to the powerful brass chords.

Ex. 37. Intensity Flow of Winter, Section 1 (m. 179-196)

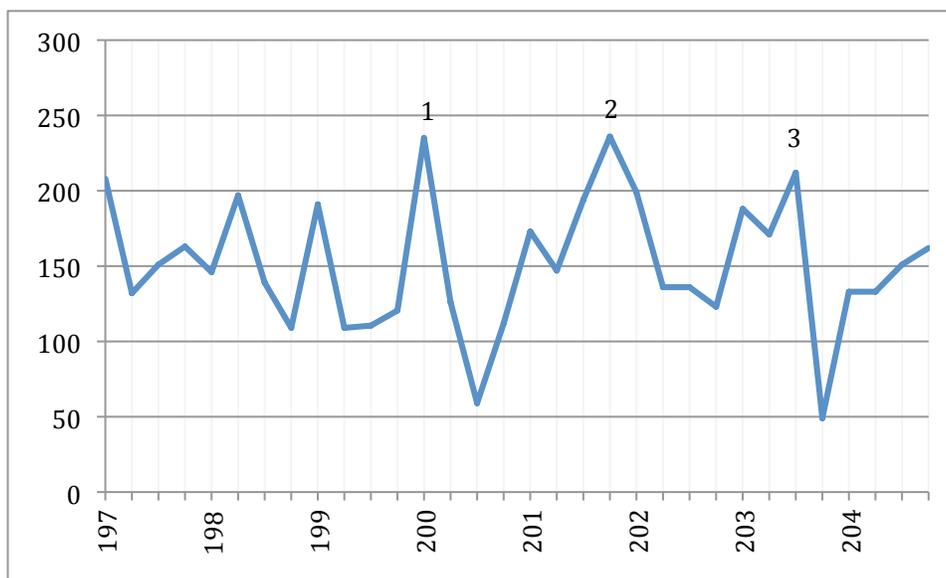


While the entire orchestra is playing in Section 2, most parts fit loosely into one of the aforementioned six elements: low, forceful melody; powerful cluster chords; accents; the upward winding Chromatic Motif; melodic fragments, often times in the first trumpet; and repeated notes in the percussion. In addition, a high melody is added to the texture. This new element, which grows out of the conclusion of Section 1 and continues throughout Section 2, consists of sustained notes and quick flourishes in the high woodwinds, violins, and violas. The unison line in the cellos and contrabasses also continues from Section 1, but yields dominance to the high melodic line. The rhythm of the unison line consists of eighth-note triplets with intermittent rests. While there is no literal repetition, there are several patterns that immerge, resulting in a cyclical feeling. One interval that is consistently emphasized is that of a descending seventh (minor or major), which is doubled and sustained in the low woodwinds and brass. The horns,

trumpets 2 and 3, and trombones 1 and 2 play either the familiar sustained cluster chords or join the harp in short accented chords. Trumpet 1 continues to play short, melodic fragments that primarily climb upward in pitch.

In the following graph, note the higher overall intensity caused by the addition of the soaring melody, but the instability caused by the brass chords and the descending seventh in the low winds and brass. There are three times in which the chords coincide with the descending-seventh motif (m. 200, 201, and 203). Note in the chart below how this overlap causes larger spikes in intensity.

Ex. 38. Intensity Flow of Winter, Section 2 (m. 197-204)



The above seven elements (the original six plus the new soaring melody) all continue in Section 3 (m. 205-216); however, each element solidifies, becoming more stable before entering the climactic Section 4. The high melodic line becomes more rhythmically consistent, moving from flourishes to steadier values. The low-string pattern is no longer accented by the low woodwinds and brass, but rather is doubled by them.

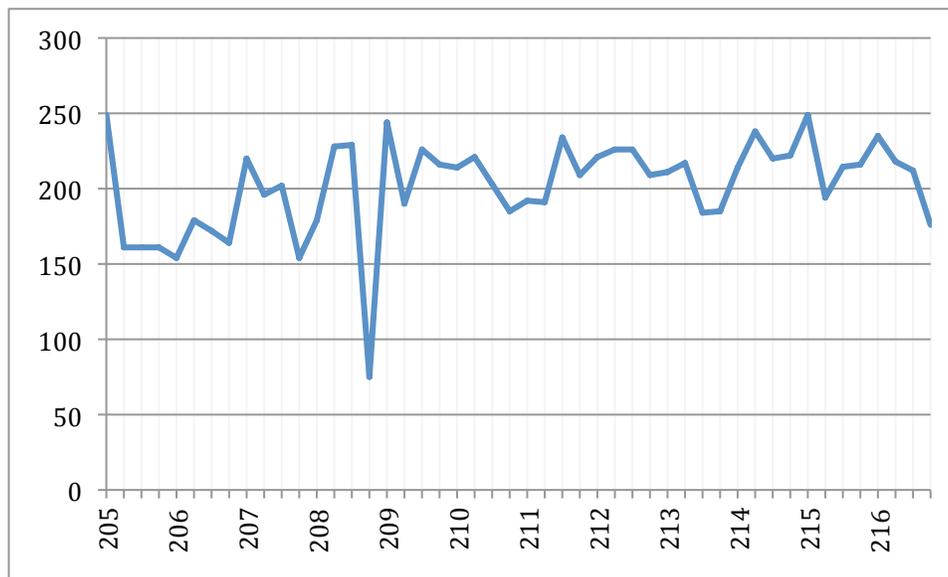
The brass chords continue, but gradually yield dominance to the Chromatic Motif. In measures 206 through 208, trumpet 1 plays the Chromatic Motif before and after the brass chords, and in measure 209, the motif is transferred to the horns. The horns then play a version of the *Ba Ban* Theme with augmented intervals and rhythmic values (m. 210, beat 3 - m. 213). In measure 212, the trumpets play the Chromatic Motif in parallel major triads and are joined by the trombones in measure 215. The roots of the trombone and trumpet triads are a tritone apart.

The final three measures (m. 214-216) of Section 3 are transitional in nature, preparing the texture for the climactic Section 4. The high melody breaks up as the violins shift to asynchronous *glissandi* played as fast as possible in their upper range, while the woodwinds have sixteenth-note sextuplet runs leading up to whole-step trills. In the final measure of the section, the brass cease playing the Chromatic Motif and articulate sixteenth-note triplet chords, preparing for the upcoming sextuplet chords of Section 4.

In the following chart (Ex. 39), notice:

- 1) The consistently high intensity due to a solidifying of all thematic elements.
- 2) The drop in intensity in measure 208 caused by a brief interruption in the high melody.

Ex. 39. Intensity Flow of Winter, Section 3 (m. 205-216)



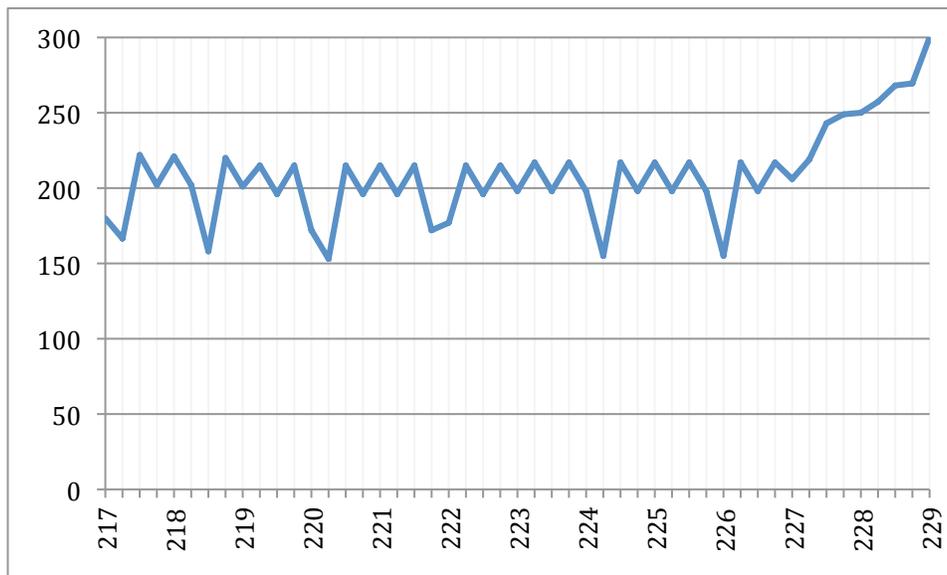
Section 4 (m. 217-229) is the most bombastic part of the piece. The greatest rise in intensity comes from the brass. Previously, they played intermittently, punctuating the texture every few beats with *forte* chords. During this section, they play on every beat, articulating sixteenth-note sextuplet chords at double *forte*.

## Ex. 40. Sextuplet Chords (m. 217-218)

The low melodic line ends abruptly and is replaced by vicious off-beat accents in the low woodwinds, harp, and low strings, alternating with a second group of accents in the horns, Beijing opera gong, and tam-tam. The high woodwinds continue their whole-step trills from the previous section. The clarity of this line is blurred by unmeasured *glissandi* in the high strings continued from Section 3. In measure 223, all of the high woodwinds and strings join the sixteenth-note sextuplet chords in the brass. Two bars before the climax of the piece (227-228), the texture rises in intensity one last time. The dynamics *crescendo* to triple *forte*, sextuplet chords play without rest, and most of the off-beat accents give way to sustaining pitches.

Note in Ex. 41 how the texture is more consistently intense due to the dense sextuplet chords, but still contains sporadic spikes in intensity due to the off-beat accents. Also, note how the intensity increases at the end because of a rise in dynamics.

## Ex. 41. Intensity Flow of Winter, Section 2b (m. 217-228)



Section 5 (m. 229-234) represents the aftermath of Winter’s climax. It presents an even fog of unpitched sound with sparse pitched elements interwoven in a nearly imperceptible manner. In contrast to the rhythmic, driving Winter, Section 5 is beatless with a discomforting sense of timelessness. The woodwinds, brass, timpani, percussion two and four, harp, and contrabasses are instructed to “sing breathy sound without pitched voice,” creating a clouded, surreal ambience.

## Ex. 42. Unpitched Singing (m. 229)

The upper strings *glissando* between high harmonic pitches, adding to the otherworldly atmosphere. Hidden in the fog is the vibraphone, playing the *Ba Ban* Theme with motor on at *mezzo-piano* (m. 235-239). The cellos play two two-measure *glissandi* (plus downbeat) that are decorated with microtonal trills (m. 233-235; 240-242). This high,

*piano* gesture blends into the adjacent upper strings' *glissandi*. The only voice that protrudes through the texture is the bass drum, which has three iterations of two adjacent swells (m. 231-232; 234; and 240-241) followed by a single swell of lesser volume (m. 242-243). This gesture is like an echo of the enormous climax of Winter.

Ex. 43. Bass Drum Swell (m. 234)



After the final bass drum swell, the unpitched singing abruptly cuts off. Its sudden absence is masked by a timpani with bowed cymbal on the drumhead and simultaneous pedal *glissandi*. In the last measure, the harp presents a prominent and resonant statement of the *Ba Ban* Theme. It is clear that in Section 5, the overwhelming *yin* energy is represented by unpitched, diffused sound. Therefore, there is no better way to end the piece than with the focused timbre of the harp, serving as the infant pearl of *yang*.

## CONCLUSION

### **Final Comparison of Chen Yi's *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra* and the Traditional Cycle of the Seasons**

In traditional Chinese philosophy, the four seasons are seen as the result of interaction between *yin* and *yang*. Each seasonal cycle has a *yin* phase and a *yang* phase. The *yang* phase begins on the winter solstice (December 21 or 22), which is precisely in the middle of winter.<sup>61</sup> *Yang* energy grows throughout the spring and halfway into summer, where it culminates in the summer solstice (June 20 or 21). At this point, *yin* is reborn and *yang* withdraws. *Yin* energy gathers strength throughout autumn and continues to grow until the winter solstice, at which point *yang* energy is reborn, *yin* energy begins a rapid decline, and the cycle begins anew. *Yin* and *yang* energy can be translated musically as intensity. Through measuring the overall dynamic intensity on every beat and tracking its flow, one can clearly see how Chen Yi matches the traditional cycle and how she takes liberties with it.

Chen Yi's Spring is characterized by increasing intensity with *yang* characteristics, such as a strong sense of pulse, rhythmic drive, and powerful, accented lines. This matches spring in the traditional cycle, which is characterized by rising *yang* in the form of increasing daylight hours. Chen Yi's Summer witnesses a further increase in intensity, a large, culminating climax, and a decline of intensity brought about by

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<sup>61</sup> Throughout this section, the author is referring to Chinese seasons, which differ from their western counterparts. In China, spring is from February 4 to May 5, summer is from May 6 to August 7, autumn is from August 8 to November 7, and winter is from November 8 to February 3.

thinning instrumentation. This matches summer in the traditional cycle, which is characterized by rising, culminating, and collapsing *yang*. This wave of *yang* energy is represented by daylight hours increasing until their maximum length at the summer solstice and then declining.

Chen Yi's Autumn has both similarities to and departures from the traditional cycle. In keeping with the cycle, Chen Yi's Autumn is full of *yin* characteristics. It sharply contrasts with the Spring section, which has qualities of rising *yang*. Sectional divisions in Spring are clear and decisive; in Autumn, they are masked and clouded. In Spring, there is a clear pulse throughout with a feeling of forward drive; Autumn is primarily beatless with an ethereal sense of timelessness. Other differences between Autumn in Chen Yi's composition and autumn in the traditional cycle include the flow of intensity (or energy) and the length of proportions. In the traditional cycle, autumn features a consistent rise of *yin* energy. Chen Yi's Autumn represents a relatively small increase and subsequent decrease in overall intensity. Furthermore, all seasons in the traditional cycle should be equal in length. In *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Full Orchestra*, Autumn is roughly the same length as Spring and Summer combined. Reasons for these departures will be discussed shortly.

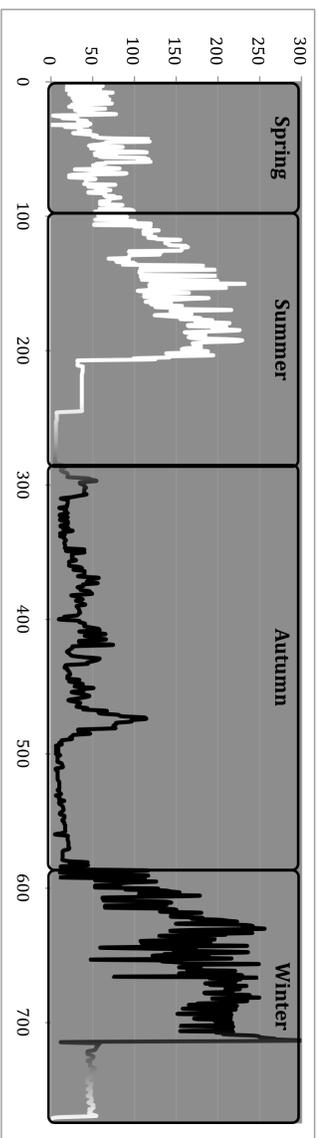
Chen Yi's Winter contains a forceful increase in intensity, a culminating, bombastic climax, and an immediate drop in intensity realized through quieter dynamics. This parallels winter in the traditional cycle, which features an expansion, culmination, and sudden contraction of *yin*. *Yin* energy is realized through the increasingly long nighttime hours, which reach their maximum length during the winter solstice and decline immediately after. One difference between the orchestra piece and the traditional

cycle is that in the latter case, the climax of *yang* during the summer solstice and *yin* during the winter solstice is equal in strength. In Chen Yi's composition, Winter's climax is stronger than the climax of Summer.

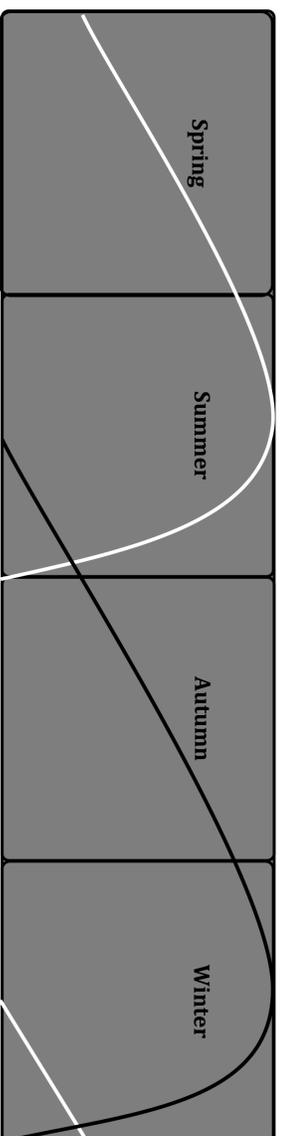
Ex. 44 and 45 are side-by-side comparisons of the overall intensity flow of *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra* and the *yin/yang* energy flow within the traditional cycle of the seasons. White represents *yang* and black represents *yin*. In Ex. 44, the horizontal axis represents time in seconds and the vertical axis represents overall intensity measured as the sum of dynamics in every staff. Notice that:

- 1) The overall flow of intensity in Chen Yi's Spring, Summer, and Winter generally matches the flow of *yin* or *yang* energy in the traditional cycle.
- 2) The intensity in Chen Yi's Autumn rises slightly and then falls, while *yin* energy in the traditional cycle consistently rises.
- 3) Chen Yi's Autumn is much longer than autumn in the traditional cycle.
- 4) The climax in Chen Yi's Winter is much higher than the climax of her Summer section, while the climax of winter and summer in the traditional cycle are equally strong.

Ex. 44. Intensity Flow of *Si Ji* (Four Seasons) for Orchestra



Ex. 45. *Yinyang* Energy Flow within the Traditional Cycle of the Seasons



The reason for the inconsistency is likely musical rather than philosophical. The considerably longer Autumn section has a slower tempo marking than the flanking seasons of Summer and Winter. This is reminiscent of symphonic form: fast/slow/fast. Spring and Summer together form the fast section; Autumn stands on its own as the slow section; and the increasingly high tempo markings of Winter represent a gradual return to the quick tempo of the beginning. From this perspective, Section 5 of Winter would be the coda. Furthermore, Chen Yi's composition has two primary peaks of intensity (found respectively in Summer and Winter), the first less intense than the second. If the first climax were more intense than the second, the ending would seem weak and unsatisfying. Here, one can see that Chen Yi is not attempting to write a treatise on the flow of energy within the dualist structure of the universe; she is composing a piece of music. Instead of attempting to replicate the traditional cycle of the seasons, she received inspiration from it.

### **Final Reflections**

Chen Yi is a historically important composer whose music has had an enormous impact on the field of bicultural music in America. Recognized by critics around the globe, she has received prestigious awards and has had major performances by internationally acclaimed orchestras. Other Chinese-American composers who have had had a major influence in this area are Tan Dun, Zhou Long, and Bright Sheng. All of these great composers have two common traits: First, all completed doctoral degrees in composition at Columbia University under the guidance of Chou Wen-Chung and

excelled in contemporary compositional technique. As a result, their compositions could be analyzed purely on the basis of musical elements such as melody, rhythm, and harmony using traditional 20<sup>th</sup>-century analytical techniques. Second, they still reach back to their cultural heritage in a majority of their pieces, creating an entirely different layer of meaning.

Analysis of such music must keep both worlds in mind. Ignoring cultural elements or touching on them in a superficial manner neglects the unique characteristics which sets this group of composers apart. Ignoring elements of contemporary western art music will also impede a bicultural understanding. In my analysis, I examined the flow of energy in *Si Ji (Four Seasons) for Orchestra* and compared it to the traditional Chinese form. This is a primarily philosophical consideration; however, I translated “energy” as intensity, a musical element that can be measured, quantized, and objectively analyzed. Furthermore, while I did not perform an exhaustive pitch-based or rhythmic analysis, I did show how both of those elements worked together to effect intensity flow.

Music that fuses elements of two or more cultures has the ability to alter one’s state of mind, temporarily transporting the listener into a different world. Needless to say, this music will continue to fascinate audiences well into the future, and as the world becomes smaller through the use of new technology and better transportation, bicultural composers will surely continue to create cross-cultural masterpieces. It is essential that when composers and theorists bring such compositions to the public, they do not ignore cultural characteristics or fixate on the exotic other. Audiences must have the opportunity to understand the music as it is: a rich and unique melding of two worlds.

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## APPENDIX A. GLOSSARY

- Si Ji* (Four seasons) A cyclical form used as an analogy in many of the schools of thought throughout Chinese history.
- Yi Jing* (*I-Ching*, Book of Changes) An ancient Chinese book of divination that was developed primarily during the Zhou Dynasty (1122-770 BCE).<sup>62</sup> Concepts within serve as the bedrock of Chinese religions such as Confucianism and Daoism.
- Daoism (Taoism) a Chinese school of thought centered around two texts: *Daodejing* (*Tao-Te Ching*) and *Zhuangzi* (*Chung Tzu*), both written sometime before the Qin dynasty (221 BCE). The central concern of Daoism is the ineffable *Dao*, the origin and substance of the universe.<sup>63</sup>
- Qi* Daoist concept of universal, active energy
- Yin, Yang* Competing forces or opposite forms of energy, which constantly work against each other. When *yin* increases, *yang* decreases; when *yang* increases, *yin* decreases.<sup>64</sup>
- Ba Ban* A Chinese folk tune and musical form in which phrases are divided into various beat groupings.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Irene Eber, *Introduction from Lectures on the I Ching: Constancy and Change*, by Richard Wilhelm (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), *xix*.

<sup>63</sup> Karyn Lai, *An Introduction to Chinese Philosophy*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 73.

<sup>64</sup> Liu JeeLoo, *An Introduction to Chinese Philosophy*, 7.

<sup>65</sup> Walter-Wolfgang Sparrer, "Chinese Concert Music – Chen Yi and the Music of China," Roche Commissions, *Roche* (Roche, 2005), 41.

## APPENDIX B. CONSENT LETTERS

From: "ChenYi@aol.com" <ChenYi@aol.com>  
 Subject: **Re: Dissertation on Si Ji (permission of using score excerpts)**  
 Date: October 13, 2009 3:25:27 PM EDT  
 To: Timothy A Stulman <tstulma@bgsu.edu>

Dear Tim: Thanks for your message. I am granting you the permission of using excerpts from the score of my Si Ji for orchestra in the publication of your dissertation. Best wishes, Dr. Chen  
 Please extend my warm greetings to Dr. Shrude and other professors and friends at BGSU. p.s.

In a message dated 10/13/09 9:45:08 AM, [tstulma@bgsu.edu](mailto:tstulma@bgsu.edu) writes:

Dear Dr. Chen,  
 This semester, I have the pleasure of spending a lot of time studying Si Ji for full orchestra. The more I study it, the richer it becomes. There are so many layers of meaning.

Dr. Shrude just reminded me that I need to secure your permission to use excerpts of the score in my dissertation for the examples. Could you respond to this email if you agree to allow me to do so?

With great appreciation and admiration,

Sincerely,

Tim

\*\*\*\*\*

Timothy Stulman  
 Graduate Assistant, Composition  
 D.M.A. Candidate in Contemporary Music  
 College of Musical Arts  
 Bowling Green State University  
 Bowling Green, OH 43403  
 Email: [tstulma@bgsu.edu](mailto:tstulma@bgsu.edu)  
 \*\*\*\*\*

On Oct 15, 2007, at 9:07 PM, ChenYi wrote:

Dear Tim: So very happy to hear from you!!!! Yes, it's my honor to share my experience in composing Si Ji with you. You certainly have my permission to do the research on the piece (with interview and recording). Thanks for your support!!!! Looking forward to working together with you very soon. Best wishes, Chen Yi

In a message dated 10/15/07 2:24:18 PM, [tstulma@bqnet.bgsu.edu](mailto:tstulma@bqnet.bgsu.edu) writes:

Hello Dr. Chen,

(By the way, is your surname Chen or Yi? I wasn't sure if you used the American format or the Chinese.)

I'll be in charge of taking you from here to there during the festival. Again, I really look forward to meeting you and hearing your music live. It's such an honor.



**CARL FISCHER**  
SINCE 1872

June 2, 2010

Timothy Stulman  
1520 Clough St. #179  
Bowling Green, OH 43402

Dear Mr. Stulman,

Carl Fischer, LLC, on behalf of the Theodore Presser Company, hereby grants you permission to include the excerpts listed below from the copyrighted musical work SI JI (FOUR SEASONS) by Chen Yi in a dissertation you are preparing for The College of Musical Arts at Bowling Green State University.

Excerpts to be included:

m. 1 (strings)  
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m. 41 (woodwinds only)  
m. 59 (brass)  
m. 61 (oboes, trumpets)  
m. 67 (oboes, trumpets)  
m. 105-108 (flutes)  
m. 137-140 (I, II violins)  
m. 141 (Bass Clarinet)  
m. 178 (strings)  
m. 217 (brass)  
m. 229 (flute)  
M. 234 (bass drum)

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