CHEN YIHAN

VANISHED THROUGH TIME

THREE ART SONGS IN OLD CHINESE

for soprano and piano

2015

CYH MUSIC
VANISHED THROUGH TIME

Dedicated to Nai-Chia Chen

PROGRAM NOTES:
The text of this song cycle is taken from “Shijing” (Classic of Poetry), the oldest collection of Chinese poetry, comprising 305 works of various origins dating from the 11th to 7th centuries BCE. Even though many of the poems may have originally been folk songs, they seem to have been edited by the learned, for they are highly polished and are rather consistent stylistically and metrically throughout the collection.

Written in the language of what we now consider to be Old Chinese (the classic language spoken roughly during the 13th - 3rd century BCE), almost all of the poems rhymed at the time, consisting of end rhymes as well as internal rhymes. While some the rhymes still rhyme in the modern varieties of Chinese, many of them have ceased to rhyme in Middle Chinese (the medieval language whose phonology was first documented in 601 CE). Thus the collection has become an important work for providing linguistic evidence for reconstructing Old Chinese.

In this song cycle, I have used, with permission, the most recent and perhaps the most accurate reconstruction of Old Chinese to date by Sinologists William H. Baxter and Laurent Sagart in their most recent book “Old Chinese – A New Reconstruction”, which was published by Oxford University Press in 2014.

The title “Vanished Through Time” reflects on the gradual extinction of this ancient language, the inevitable disappearance of the ways of life and thinking suggested in these poems, and with the common theme of love present in the three poems selected for this song cycle, the ever changing state of both the material and the spiritual.

TEXT:

1. Moonrise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Chinese</th>
<th>Old Chinese Reconstruction in IPA</th>
<th>English Translation (James Legge and Chen Yihan)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>月出皎兮</td>
<td>ŋʷat tkʰut kʰiew gʰe</td>
<td>The moon rises in her brightness;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>佼人僚兮</td>
<td>krʰawʔ niŋ rʰiew gʰe</td>
<td>How lovely is that beautiful lady!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>舒窈纠兮</td>
<td>ña ʔiewʔ kewʔ gʰe</td>
<td>Slowly, in your veiled silhouette,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>勞心悄兮</td>
<td>rʰiaw səŋm tsʰiewʔ gʰe</td>
<td>How anxious is my toiled heart!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>月出皓兮</td>
<td>ŋʷat tkʰut kʰuʔ gʰe</td>
<td>The moon rises in her splendor;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>佼人儔兮</td>
<td>krʰawʔ niŋ ruʔ gʰe</td>
<td>How attractive is that beautiful lady!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>舒優受兮</td>
<td>ña ʔuʔ duʔ gʰe</td>
<td>Slowly, in your graceful silhouette,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>勞心懮兮</td>
<td>rʰiaw səŋm sʰuʔ gʰe</td>
<td>How agitated is my toiled heart!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
月出照兮


c\^w\^ at tk\^b\^ ut taws g\^e

The moon rises and shines;

俊人燎兮

kr\^aw\^? ni\^n\^ raws g\^e

How brilliant is that beautiful lady!

舒天绍兮

ja ?aw daws g\^e

Slowly, in your sensuous silhouette,

努力伤兮

r\^aw s\^m ts\^k\^um\^t g\^e

How miserable is my toiled heart!

2. Nascent Reeds

蒹葭苍苍

k\^e m\^k\^ra ts\^k\^a\^j ts\^k\^a\^j

The reeds and rushes are deeply green,

白露为霜

b\^rak pr\^ak\^s\^a\^j sra\^j

And the white dew is turned into hoarfrost.

所谓伊人

sq\^h\^ra\^? c\^w\^ats ?ij ni\^n\^j

The man of whom I think,

在水一方

dz\^\^\^ a\^? stur\^? ?it pa\^j

Is somewhere about the water.

溯洄从之

s\^n\^\^-aks c\^w\^a\^j dzon\^j ts\^z\^\^\^-a\^j

I go up the stream in quest of him,

道阻且长

k\^l\^\^-u? tsra\^? ts\^h\^a\^? ntran\^j

But the way is difficult and long.

溯游从之

s\^n\^\^-aks nru dzon\^j to

I go down the stream in quest of him,

宛在水中央

?q\^\^-or\^? dz\^\^\^-a\^? stur\^? tru\^n\^ a\^j

And he is right in the midst of the water.

蒹葭萋萋

k\^e m\^k\^ra ts\^h\^a\^j ts\^h\^a\^j

The reeds and rushes are luxuriant,

白露未晞

b\^rak pr\^ak\^s\^a\^j mats q\^h\^a\^j

And the white dew is not yet dry.

所谓伊人

sq\^h\^ra\^? c\^w\^ats ?ij ni\^n\^j

The man of whom I think,

在水之湄

dz\^\^\^ a\^? stur\^? to m\^\^\^-r\^\^-a\^j

Is on the margin of the water.

溯洄从之

s\^n\^\^-aks c\^w\^a\^j dzon\^j to

I go up the stream in quest of him,

道阻且跻

k\^l\^\^-u? tsra\^? ts\^h\^a\^? ts\^z\^\^-a\^j

But the way is difficult and steep.

溯游从之

s\^n\^\^-aks nru dzon\^j to

I go down the stream in quest of him,

宛在水中坻

?q\^\^-or\^? dz\^\^\^-a\^? stur\^? tru\^n\^ drij

And he is on the islet in the midst of the water.

蒹葭采采

k\^e m\^k\^ra s\^n\^\^-a\^j s\^n\^\^-a\^j

The reeds and rushes are abundant,

白露未已

b\^rak pr\^ak\^s\^a\^j mats g\^o\^?a\^j

And the white dew is not yet ceased.

所谓伊人

sq\^h\^ra\^? c\^w\^ats ?ij ni\^n\^j

The man of whom I think,

在水之涘

dz\^\^\^ a\^? stur\^? to s\^\^-c\^\^-r\^\^-a\^j

Is on the bank of the water.

溯洄从之

s\^n\^\^-aks c\^w\^a\^j dzon\^j to

I go up the stream in quest of him,

道阻且右

k\^l\^\^-u? tsra\^? ts\^h\^a\^? c\^w\^a\^?

But the way is difficult and twisted.

溯游从之

s\^n\^\^-aks nru dzon\^j to

I go down the stream in quest of him,

宛在水中沚

?q\^\^-or\^? dz\^\^\^-a\^? stur\^? tru\^n\^-t\^\^-a\^j

And he is on the island in the midst of the water.
3. Kudzu Grows

葛⽣蒙楚
kʰət srəŋ mʰoŋ sʰraʔ
The kudzu grows, covering the thorn trees;

鼓蔓于野
ram mans ʰʷa laʔ
The vine spreads all over the wild.

予美亡此
laʔ mɾajʔ maŋ tsʰejʔ
My beautiful is no more here;

誰與獨處
duj caʔs dʰok tʃʰaʔ
With whom can I dwell? - I abide alone.

葛⽣蒙棘
kʰət srəŋ mʰoŋ kɾək
The kudzu grows, covering the jujube trees;

鼓蔓于域
ram mans ʰʷa ʰʷrək
The vine spreads all over the tombs.

予美亡此
laʔ mɾajʔ maŋ tsʰejʔ
My beautiful is no more here;

誰與獨息
duj caʔs dʰok sak
With whom can I dwell? - I rest alone.

⾒枕粲兮
kʰroŋ tʃəmʔ tʃʰars ʰ⁵e
How beautiful was the pillow of horn!

錦衾爛兮
kʰəmʔ kʰem rʰən ʰ⁵e
How splendid was the embroidered coverlet!

予美亡此
laʔ mɾajʔ maŋ tsʰejʔ
My beautiful is no more here;

誰與獨旦
duj caʔs dʰok rʰən
With whom can I dwell? - Alone I wait for the morning.

夏之⽇日
ghiʔaʔ tə nik
Through the long days of summer,

冬之夜
tʰuŋ tə caks
Through the long nights of winter,

百歲之後
pʰɾak sqʰats tə ʰoʔ
Till the lapse of a hundred years,

歸於其居
kʰʷajʔ a ʰʊ ʰən kʰəs
When I shall go home to his abode.

冬之夜
tʰuŋ tə caks
Through the long nights of winter,

夏之日
ghiʔaʔ tə nik
Through the long days of summer

百歲之後
pʰɾak sqʰats tə ʰoʔ
Till the lapse of a hundred years,

歸於其室
kʰʷajʔ a ʰʊ ʰən stʰit
When I shall go home to his chamber.
**Performance Notes:**

**Soprano:**
1. **gliss.:**
   - glissando
   - should begin as soon as the note is initiated
   - heavily weighted
   - the main focus is on the changing of pitch in between the two pitches

2. **port.:**
   - portamento
   - only at the end of the note
   - expressive
   - lightly weighted
   - the main focus is on the two main pitches

3. **grace notes:**
   - before the beat

4. **:**
   - a reference point in a serie of glissandi
   - should not linger on the note

5. **:**
   - a prolonged consonant

6. **:**
   - tremolo on a single pitch
   - in the throat
   - similar to early-Baroque style *trillo*

**Piano:**
1. **:**
   - tremolo on a single pitch
   - varied rhythm, like Morse code
   - the speed of the tremolo should be determined by the context, such as the register, dynamics, emotional needs, etc.

2. **:**
   - tremolo on multiple notes
   - if there are two notes, it is performed as a trill, with the bottom note played first
• if there are three notes, it is performed as a repeated arpeggio, with the direction of from bottom to top

3. grace notes:
   • before the beat

Duration: ca. 15 min.
for Nai-Chia Chen

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for soprano and piano

Text from Shijing

Old Chinese reconstruction by
William H. Baxter
Laurent Sagart

Music by Chen Yihan

1. Moonrise

\[ \text{Lento espressivo} \]

\[ \text{mp} \]

\[ \text{ppp} \]

\[ \text{mf} \]

\[ \text{p} \]

\[ \text{pp} \]

\[ \text{rit}. \]

\[ \text{a tempo} \]

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2. *Nascent Reeds*

\[= 32-40\]

Lento espressivo e con molto rubato

wet pedaling, but not muddy
從之宛在水中央
change pedal to the harmony
3. KUDZU GROWS

Adagio quasi recitativo

\[ \text{dzoŋ tə} \quad \text{kal'u tsra tsʰa_ cʰa_} \]

\[ \text{sŋʔaks_ nru_ dzoŋ tə_} \quad \text{ʔor dzʰo stur trun_ tə_} \]

\[ \text{kʰat sreŋ_ (ŋ) m'oŋ_ sra_} \]

\[ \text{p} \]

\[ \text{p} \]

\[ \text{d} = 60-72 \]

\[ \text{d} = 60-72 \]
Più mosso

\( \text{\textit{Più mosso}} \)

\( \text{\textit{Più mosso}} \)
Andante molto espressivo

\[ \text{f} \]  \[ \text{mf} \]  \[ \text{ff} \]  \[ \text{q=69} \]

Do not interrupt the pedal
Do not show the changing of harmony