

THE BRIDE WITH WHITE HAIR

by
WEI ZHANG

A THESIS

Presented to the School of Music and Dance
and the Division of Graduate Studies of the University of Oregon
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Music

June 2023

THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

Student: WEI ZHANG

Title: The Bride with White Hair

This thesis has been accepted and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Music degree in the School of Music and Dance by:

David Crumb	Chair
Timothy Pack	Core Member
Robert Kyr	Core Member

and

Krista Chronister Vice Provost for Graduate Studies

Original approval signatures are on file with the University of Oregon Division of Graduate Studies.

Degree awarded June 2023

© 2023 WEI ZHANG

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons
Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs (United States) License.



THESIS ABSTRACT

Wei Zhang

Master of Music

School of Music and Dance

June 2023

Title: The Bride with White Hair

The Bride with White Hair is a three-movement chamber piece composed for flute and string quartet. The music is a homage to the famous Chinese martial arts novel *The Bride with White Hair* by Liang YuSheng. The protagonist of the novel is a strong, brave, and talented woman who comes to realize who she really is and what she wants to accomplish in life. The moral of the story is that all women of the world should learn to love and respect themselves before falling in love with others.

CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME OF AUTHOR: Wei Zhang

GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOLS ATTENDED:

University of Oregon, Eugene, OR

Hubei University of Technology, Wuhan, Hubei

DEGREES AWARDED:

Master of Music in Composition, expected 06/2023, University of Oregon

Bachelor of Music in Composition, 06/2021, University of Oregon

Bachelor of Science, Civil Engineering, 06/2015, Hubei University of Technology

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Music Tutor, Lane Community College, 01/2017 - 06/2018

Program Editor, Advertising Creator, Copywriter, 01/2013 - 06/2014

GRANTS, AWARDS, AND HONORS:

FN – Close Musical Fellowship - \$6700/year, University of Oregon, 2022-2023

*DGE Global Corners International Graduate Student Scholarship - \$2000/year,
University of Oregon, 2022 - 2023*

FN – Close Musical Fellowship - \$5800/year, University of Oregon, 2021 - 2022

Harvey E Lee Grad Scholarship - \$3000/year, University of Oregon, 2021 - 2022

Talented Grant Scholarships – \$1200/year, Lane Community College, 2017 - 2018

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my advisor, David Crumb, for his invaluable guidance and support throughout my master's program in Music Composition. His expertise and encouragement helped me to compose this thesis.

I would also like to thank Timothy Pack and Robert Kyr for serving on my thesis committee and providing helpful feedback and suggestions. Their insights and guidance were instrumental in helping me to shape my research and compose this thesis.

I am grateful to the School of Music and Dance for providing me with the opportunity to conduct my research and for all of the resources and support they provided.

I am deeply thankful to everyone who has supported me throughout this process. Without your help and guidance, this thesis would not have been possible.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
THE BRIDE WITH WHITE HAIR	
I. She's born.....	8
II. Awaken.....	15
III. Self-realization	23
APPENDIX:PROGRAM NOTE	31

The Bride with White Hair

I. She's born (降生)

WEI ZHANG

Flute $\text{♩} = 68$

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

10 $\text{♩} = 88$

Fl.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

16

Fl.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

22

Fl.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

mp mf mp mf

Detailed description: This system contains measures 22 through 27. The Flute part is silent. The Violin I part features a melodic line with triplets and a quintuplet. The Violin II part has a rhythmic accompaniment. The Viola part continues the rhythmic accompaniment. The Violoncello part provides a harmonic foundation with sustained notes and dynamic markings of *mp* and *mf*.

28

Fl.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

f mp mf mp mp mf

Detailed description: This system contains measures 28 through 33. The Flute part enters with a melodic line marked *f*. The Violin I part has a melodic line with triplets and dynamic markings of *mp* and *mf*. The Violin II part has a rhythmic accompaniment marked *mp*. The Viola part has a rhythmic accompaniment marked *mf*. The Violoncello part provides a harmonic foundation with sustained notes and dynamic markings of *mp* and *mf*.

34

Fl.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

mf mp mf mp

Detailed description: This system contains measures 34 through 39. The Flute part has a melodic line with triplets. The Violin I part has a melodic line with dynamic markings of *mf* and *mp*. The Violin II part has a rhythmic accompaniment. The Viola part has a rhythmic accompaniment. The Violoncello part provides a harmonic foundation with sustained notes and dynamic markings of *mp* and *mf*.

39

Fl. *rit.* *p*

Vln. I *mp* *mf* *p*

Vln. II *mf* *mp* arco

Vla. *mf* *mp* arco

Vc. *mf*

A tempo

44

Fl. *mf* *mf*

Vln. I *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

Vln. II *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

Vla. *sub. p*

Vc. *p*

48

Fl. *mf* *mf*

Vln. I *f* *p*

Vln. II *p* *f* *mp*

Vla. *mp* *p*

Vc. *mp* *f*

53

Fl.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

57

Fl.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

62

Fl.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

78

Fl. *mf* *f* *p*

Vln. I *mf* *f*

Vln. II *mf* pizz.

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp* *mf* *f*

83 *rit.* *A tempo*

Fl. *f*

Vln. I *p* *mf* *p*

Vln. II *mf* *f* pizz. *mp*

Vla. *mf* *p*

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

89

Fl. *mf* *mf* *p*

Vln. I *mf* *f*

Vln. II *mf*

Vla. *mp* *f* *mp*

Vc. *mf*

94

Fl. *mp* *mf* *mp* *rit.*

Vln. I *mf* *f* *mp* *mp*

Vln. II

Vla. *p*

Vc. *mp* *mf* *p*

99

Fl. *p* *mf* *f* *rit.* *A tempo*

Vln. I *f* *mp* *mf*

Vln. II *p* *pizz.*

Vla. *p* *pizz.*

Vc. *mp*

106

Fl.

Vln. I *mp* *mf* *p* *mp*

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

111

Fl.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

rit.

mf *f* *pp*

p *f* *p*

mp *mf* *pp*

mp *mf* *pp*

mf *p*

II. Awaken - the day she meets him

(觉醒)

♩ = 96

Fl.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

mp *mf* *f* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *f*

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

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

mp *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

8

Fl.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

mp *mp* *mf* *f* *mp* *mp* *mf*

f *f*

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

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

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

15

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

Vln. I *f* *f* *f*

Vln. II *p* *mp* *mp* *mp* *mf* *p*

Vla. *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Vc. *mp* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

22

Fl. *mf* *f*

Vln. I *f* *p*

Vln. II *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Vla. *mf* *mp* *p* *mp*

Vc. *mp* *mf*

28

Fl. *p* *mf* *f*

Vln. I *f*

Vln. II *p*

Vla. *p* *mp*

Vc. *mp*

accel. ♩ = 120

34

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

Vln. I *p* *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. *f* *mp*

38

Fl. *f*

Vln. I *mp*

Vln. II *mf* *f*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *p* *mp*

42

Fl. *mp*

Vln. I *p*

Vln. II *p*

Vla. *p*

Vc. *f*

45

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

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

48

Fl. *mp* *mp*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

51

Fl. *mp* *f* *mp*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. *f*

54

Fl. *mp* *mf*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. *mf*

57

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

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. *f* *mf* *f*

60

Fl. *mf* *mp* *f*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. *mf*

63

Fl. *p mp f*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. *mf f mp f*

67

Fl. *mp f*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. *mp f*

71

Fl. *rit. p mp*

Vln. I

Vln. II *mf p*

Vla. *mf p*

Vc. *mp p mp p*

rit. $\text{♩} = 108$

76

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

Vln. I *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p*

Vln. II *p* *mp* *mp* *p* *mf*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

83

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

Vln. I *p* *mp* *mp* *p* *mp* *mp*

Vln. II *f* *f*

Vla. *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

Vc. *mf* *mp* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

91

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

Vln. I *mp* *mp* *mp* *f*

Vln. II *mp* *mf* *p* *p* *mp*

Vla. *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *p* *p* *mp*

Vc. *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

97

Fl. *f* *mf* 3

Vln. I *mf* *mf*

Vln. II *mp* *p* *p*

Vla. *mp* *p*

Vc. *mp* *mf* *mp*

100

Fl. *mp* *f* 5

Vln. I *f* *mp*

Vln. II *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

Vla. *mp* *p* *mf*

Vc. *mp* *mf* *mp*

104 *meno mosso*

Fl. *mf* *f* *mp*

Vln. I *f* *mf* *p*

Vln. II *p* *mp* *p*

Vla. *mp* *p*

Vc. *mf* *p*

III. Self - Realization

(Black hair to White hair)

♩ = 120

Musical score for measures 1-9. The score is for five instruments: Flute (Fl.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The time signature is 3/8. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 120. The dynamics range from *ff* (fortissimo) to *mf* (mezzo-forte). The music features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes with accents.

Musical score for measures 10-18. The score is for five instruments: Flute (Fl.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The tempo is marked as ♩ = 102. The score includes a *rit.* (ritardando) marking and a *ritenuto* marking. Dynamics include *f* (forte), *mp* (mezzo-piano), *p* (piano), and *pp* (pianissimo). The music features a melodic line in the flute and a harmonic accompaniment in the strings.

Musical score for measures 19-22. The score is for five instruments: Flute (Fl.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The tempo is marked as ♩ = 96, which then changes to ♩ = 102. The score includes an *accel.* (accelerando) marking. Dynamics include *f* (forte), *p* (piano), and *mp* (mezzo-piano). The music features a melodic line in the flute and a harmonic accompaniment in the strings.

29

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

Vln. I *f* *f* *f* *f* *p*

Vln. II *p* *mf* *mp* *f* *p*

Vla. *f* *f* *f* *f* *p*

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

35

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

Vln. I *f* *p*

Vln. II *f* *p*

Vla. *f* *p*

Vc. *mf* *f*

40

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

Vln. I *f* *p*

Vln. II *f* *p*

Vla. *p* *f* *p*

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

45

Fl.

mp mp mf mf mp f

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

p

49

Fl.

f

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

f

54

Fl.

mp

Vln. I

f

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

p

59 $\text{♩} = 96$

Fl. *mf* *f*

Vln. I *f*

Vln. II *f*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f*

66 *rit.* $\text{♩} = 60$

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

Vln. I *f* *p* *pizz.* *mp* *mf*

Vln. II *mp*

Vla. *mp* *mf* *p* *mp*

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

75

Fl. *mf* *f*

Vln. I

Vln. II *p*

Vla.

Vc. *p* *mp*

82

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

Vln. I *arco* *mf* *f* *mf*

Vln. II *p*

Vla. *p*

Vc.

87

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

Vln. I *f* *mp*

Vln. II *mp*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mf* *mp*

94

Fl. *rit.* *accel.* $\text{♩} = 72$ $\text{♩} = 96$ $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$

Vln. I *f* *mp* *p*

Vln. II *p*

Vla.

Vc. *mf* *mf*

101

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

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla. *p*

Vc. *f* *mf* *f*

105

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

Vln. I *f* *p*

Vln. II *f* *p*

Vla. *f* *p*

Vc. *mf*

110

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

Vln. I *f*

Vln. II *f*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f* *mf*

115

Fl. *mf* *mp* *f*

Vln. I *p*

Vln. II *p*

Vla. *p*

Vc. *f* *p*

119

Fl. *f*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. *f* *p*

123

Fl. *mp* *mf*

Vln. I *f*

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

128 *ritenuto* $\text{♩} = 60$ *rit.*.....

Fl. *f*

Vln. I *f* *mf* *f*

Vln. II *f* *mf* *f*

Vla. *f* *mf*

Vc. *f*

134

Fl. *p*

Vln. I *pp*

Vln. II *pp*

Vla. *f* *pp*

Vc. *mp* *p*

Background of the story

The bride with white hair, whose original name is Lian Nishang, is a female character who is the main character in a Chinese martial arts novel written by Liang Yusheng, titled *The Bride with White Hair*. It tells the story of the cool autumn of the 43rd year of the Wanli (Lunar Calendar) of the Ming Dynasty. Zhuo Zhonglian, the governor of Yungui, left office and returned to his hometown of northern Shanxi. When passing through the Sichuan-Shanxi border, he was robbed of most of his property by Lian Nishi, the “Jade Raksha,” a female green forest thief who robbed the rich and helped the poor. Geng Shaonan, a disciple of Wudang who was accompanied by the escort, had the second finger of his left hand cut off, as a punishment for his arrogance. Lian Nishang has since formed a grudge with the Wudang sect. The people rebelled against the court, subordinates betrayed their superiors, and treacherously betrayed the country. The spirit of resistance and freedom was intertwined, which was the spirit of that era.

Ways in which the story inspires me

The author describes Lian Nishang an independent female—an image that is rare during that time. As a female, I totally admire this character, since I first read the novel when I was ten years old. There are **three points** what I’ve learnt from Lian Nishang:

- Female consciousness

As a strong woman, she shows her independence by paying her own way; mentally, she is a maverick, and no one can restrain her: her independent spirit is also reflected in the fact that she does not live her life by the standards of others. Li Zicheng, who was a king in the Ming dynasty, wanted to give Li Nishang a position in the court, but she refused to accept it, because she wanted to maintain her freedom as a woman. She had fallen in love with Zhou Yihang, a commoner, and continued to refuse the king so that she would not be forced to fight her lover. These difficult circumstances resulted in her beautiful black hair turning completely white.

- Women’ self-awareness

Lian Nishang is very proud to be a courageous individual. She knows and loves what she is

doing and that is something different from the other women of her time. If a woman thinks that she is just someone's wife or mother, then she will never really become her true self.

- Women' sense of autonomy

It is precisely because of her self-awareness that Lian Nishang has a healthy sense of self-esteem. Thus, men and women are very balanced in her inner world, which empowers her to control her own life. She pursues love with courage because she thinks that women also have the right to choose their own husband.