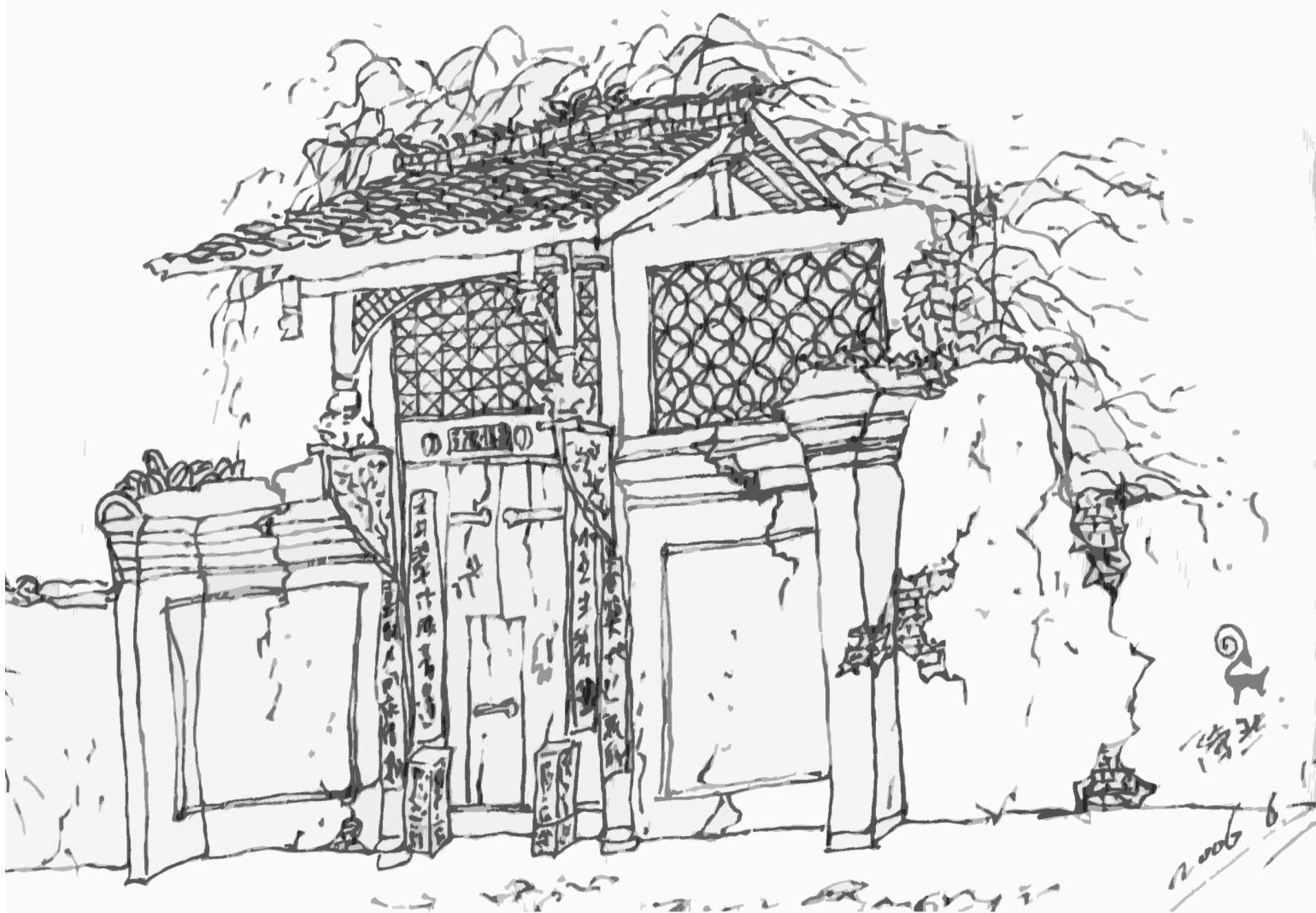


Two Sichuan Folk Songs (2002)

*arranged for prepared piano
by Erik Griswold*



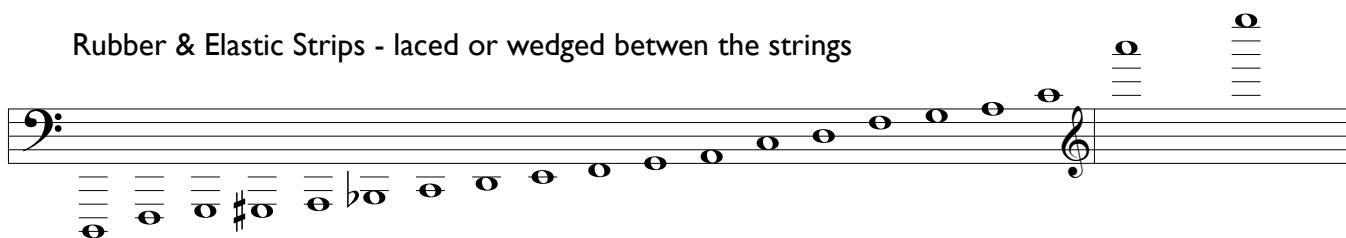
cover image by Chen Ran

Two Sichuan folk songs (2002)

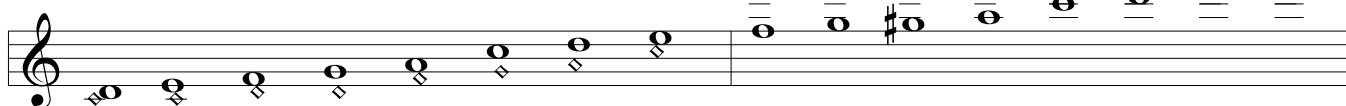
arranged for prepared piano

Piano preparations

Rubber & Elastic Strips - laced or wedged between the strings



Single-Bolt wedged between two of the three strings
Undertones should be tuned to D pentatonic scale
(the lower pitches given below are just a guide)



Single- Screw wedged between two of the three strings
place the strings' mid point or first harmonic. Screws
should be slightly loose to give a metallic "ping"

Notes on the materials and preparation method:

Rubber & Elastic Strips

In the bass register, for single and double strings, use short pieces of soft rubber (almost foam rubber) about 2 cm wide and 3 mm thick. For triple strings, use flat rubber elastic strips about 2.5 cm wide and 1 mm thick. These should be applied at either end of the strings as follows: 1) laced under single strings, 2) wedged in between pairs of double strings, or 3) laced under the middle of the triple strings. This affects a muting of upper harmonics and percussive attack.

Bolts

Machine Bolts coated with electrical tape. The bolts should fit as precisely as possible between the triple strings (3 or 4 mm are common sizes that work well). They should be 1 inch / 24 mm long. To apply them position a standard screwdriver between the strings, **gently twist the strings apart and place the bolt**. Then, testing the pitch on the keyboard, **carefully slide the bolt to tune** the undertones to the D Pentatonic scale (as indicated above)

Screws

1 1/4 inch / 40 mm long drywall or chipboard screws screwed between pairs of triple strings. To apply them gently screw them between the strings at their midpoint or first harmonic.

Program Note:

These Sichuan folk song arrangements were shaped by Erik Griswold's experiences in Chengdu during the winter of 2001-02. "Bitter Vegetables, Bitter Yinyin" is reminiscent of the Afro-American spiritual, "Motherless Child." The character, Yinyin, is abandoned in the asbestos mining town of Shimian in Sichuan Province and the song tells of her loneliness and despair. The prepared piano, invented by John Cage in 1940, uses mutes of various materials wedged between the strings of a grand piano completely transforming its sound characteristics and endowing each note with a unique timbre. In preparing the piano with rubber, bolts and screws, Griswold has literally coaxed a Chinese orchestral ensemble out of the instrument, the high notes suggesting the pipa (lute), the middle and lower registers, the qin (7-stringed zither) and gu zheng (17-stringed zither) respectively. - Margaret Leng Tan

www.erikgriswold.org

Bitter vegetables, bitter Yinyin

Trad. Sichuan
Arr. Erik Griswold
(2002)

Very Slow and quietly intense - molto rubato

The musical score is written for a piano and consists of four systems of staves. The first system is in 3/4 time and features a melodic line in the right hand with dynamics *ppp*, *p*, and *ppp*, and a bass line with triplets and a *ped.* marking. The second system continues the melodic line with a *mp* dynamic and includes a key signature change to one sharp (F#) and a time signature change to 4/4. The third system returns to 3/4 time and features a melodic line with a *mp* dynamic and a bass line with triplets and a *ped.* marking. The fourth system continues the melodic line and includes a key signature change to two sharps (F# and C#) and a time signature change to 3/4. The score is characterized by its slow tempo, quiet intensity, and the use of triplets and pedaling.

Harp-like

pp *mf* *pp*

Accel. *Rit.*

Led.

continue dynamic swells *Percussive* *mf* *f* *mf*

Accel. *Rit.*

Singing *mf* *Led.* *Led.* *Led.* *Led.* *continue dynamic swells*

Accel. *Rit.*

Led. *Led.* *Led.* *simile*

Accel. *Rit.*

Accel. *Rit.*