

# Analysis of the Artistic Expression in The Pop Music *Hua Tian Cuo*

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**Abstract:** 100 years ago the school music song was born. Chinese people quoted foreign tunes and added Chinese lyrics to sing them. 100 years later a large number of Chinese singers sang Chinese songs in European and American styles. This paper centers on the study of Wang Leehom's song *Hua Tian Cuo*, mainly exploring the artistic expression of Chinese style in his song.

**Keywords:** Chinese, Pop Music, R&B, Artistic Expression.

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## 1. Introduction

After the defeat in the Sino-Japanese War in 1894, the education system was changed in the attempt to save the country, and the school music songs were introduced from Japan, and the second climax of musical exchange between China and foreign countries began[1]. Quoting foreign tunes and filling in the Chinese lyrics, and sung in the new-style school at that time, which was the beginning of new music in China in modern times. Take Li Shutong's Song Bie written in 1915 as an example, the Chinese lyric uses a variety of parting imagery, rich in layers and beautiful in mood, full of the author's strong emotions for his friends, which can only be deeply experienced by the nation through the author's writing; it is the result of a blend of Chinese and Western cultures, and is a historical product of that era. The years 2000-2010 were the climax of the development of Chinese pop music, and the interplay with European and American pop music reached an unprecedented level, with a large number of excellent songs emerging during this period. The representative figures include Jay Chou, Wang Lihong, Lin Junjie, etc. Because most of the music education from childhood is western music, their music has the shadow of western music, but can be closely combined with Chinese culture, creating the "Chinese style" songs with high popularity in the 21st world.

*Hua Tian Cuo* is performed by Wang Leehom, which is included in his album *Gai Shi Ying Xiong* In 2006. According to Baidu's encyclopedia, Wang received the MusicRadio China Top Chart Award for Best Song Arrangement, Best Producer, and Best Male Vocal Performance at the Hong Kong Golden Sail Music Awards. In 2007, the song won the Best Video Award at the 7th Music Chart Awards .

Wang Leehom was born in New York City, he is a Chinese pop singer, music producer, actor and director, and graduated from Williams College. Since he was a child, he has been studying violin and piano, and has a deep background in Western music. Entering Williams College One year later, he changed his major from biology to music and Asian studies. The *Long De Chuan Ren* is the work of Wang Lihong's uncle Li Fujian, after hearing the song he boldly combined European and American pop music with traditional Chinese culture, which was the beginning of his Chinese-style songs. The Chinese style songs under his pen have popularity and most of the albums involve Chinese style theme songs within them.

## 2. The Artistic Expression Contained in The Lyrics

The lyrics describe the scene of a young girl lighting a candle in an old-fashioned house and waiting for her beloved all night long, with the light revealing a hint of loneliness through the paper window. The landscape is faded, like the master's emotional world from color to black and white, uninteresting, gloomy, cups and plates staggered in front of the eyes, the heart is bleak and who to say, only Dukang to solve a thousand sorrows. The story of *Hua Tian Cuo* is a Peking opera, which is based on *Water Margin*. Found in Baidu search, *Hua Tian* originally means a farmland where flowers are grown, and the *Hua Tian Cuo* is a series of things that happen in a flower-growing town by mistake, in the Flower Field Festival. Mr. Chen Zhenchuan, the lyricist, quoted the term *Hua Tian Cuo* to write about the protagonist's entanglement and financing of an emotion, knowingly making a mistake, and his inner torment, but hoping to get the lover's understanding and forgiveness. Love is beautiful but short can not be eternal, the final result may not be satisfactory, forgive the amorous interruptions, just hope that the lover can leave a fragment about themselves in the memory. The lyricist's interpretation of traditional Chinese culture is evident throughout the song. Without the accumulation of overly flamboyant rhetoric, it makes people to enter the illusion of the song.

## 3. The Artistic Expression Contained in The Melody of The Song

R&B (Rhythm & Blues) originated in the United States, is a fusion of jazz, gospel and electronic blues music as one of the music styles[1]. Wang Lihong's experience growing up abroad has given him his own insights into this culture. The song *Hua Tian Cuo* is an entry-level attempt of Wang Lihong's "chinked out" style of music, which adds the twists and turns of Chinese music and opera to the R&B style. The word "chinked out" is controversial because the word "chink" is discriminatory against yellow people, but he added "ed" at the end of the word. The word "chinked out" is controversial because the word "chink" is discriminatory against the yellow race, but he added "ed" at the end of the word to represent the past, representing the days of yellow humiliation. In his own opinion, this style of music is positive and hopeful, to prove that Chinese music can also reach the world stage.

R&B song beats usually appear in 4/4 time, and the song repeats some phrases and sentences several times. r&b music is different from traditional white pop music, and the rhythmic grumbles emphasize the 2nd and 4th beats in a section, which is a very fresh rhythmic effect [2]. This piece is the result of internalizing the R&B style of music by not strictly using the blues scale, but instead replacing it with the Chinese pentatonic scale.

The song starts with a Guzheng (Chinese zither) melody as the introduction, which has a quiet meaning and sets the tone of the song in Chinese style. Then a singing Erhu(urheen) melody is used as the second introduction, which follows the Chinese musical tone of the first introduction.

The main song is based on the Chinese pentatonic scale, mixed with the rhythm of R&B, with tight vocals and a rap music style. The chorus is a combination of R&B vocals, transposition and Chinese opera, which is soft and yet dynamic. The melodic line is smooth with the use of multi-chord composition. In the use of one-word polyphony, a word in the lyrics can be exaggerated. The form of one word occupying many musical notes appears, giving the word a flamboyant expression [3]. This technique is often found in Peking Opera, Kunqu and other genres, and has a lyrical function that makes the song richer and more vivid. The repetition of "Mistakes were made in the field of flowers" is an important musical feature of R&B music. This melody shows the author's clever fusion of R&B and opera singing. Most Chinese R&B songs sound like a large proportion of European and American styles, but this one has a greater proportion of traditional Chinese styles, highlighting the beauty of traditional Chinese rhythms.

The interlude uses percussion instruments from the Peking Opera accompaniment and combines them with the melody played by Erhu. The rhythm is light and the mood is more melancholic than the second introduction of the piece. The silky smooth phrase again leads to the melody of the main song. The second main song is a variation and development of the first main song, not just a repetition, which enriches the content and adds artistry to the song, while taking up the musical style of the first main song. After the main song, it enters the second chorus section.

After two choruses the song enters the bridge section, in which the author uses polyphonic harmonies and R&B transitions to give a boost to the mood of the song. At the end, the chorus melody appears again, with a soprano turn, pushing the song to its highest mood. The piece ends with a clear rhythmic arrangement that leaves you wanting more.

#### 4. Artistic Expression in Music Videos

The music video appears branded cell phones, but without any inconsistency, and plays a connecting role in the whole plot. the male protagonist in the music video wears headphones and "travels" to the Beijing opera set, the flower girl on stage is in a beautiful posture, beautiful and moving. The male lead and the female lead of the flower girl carry out a beautiful encounter, flower girl costume and modern dress interspersed, giving people a sense of time and space disruption. The music video ends with the flower girl also

"traveling" to modern times and meeting the male lead again as a modern person.

The MV uses a variety of traditional Chinese elements, in the scene building, you can see the Beijing opera scene, the use of traditional Chinese architecture interior wind screen, and the screen embedded with flowers, birds and trees, a common type of Chinese screen, presenting a harmonious beauty, the beauty of tranquility. In the music video, a pair of butterflies are used to accompany the pair of cups, reminiscent of the moving love story "Liang Zhu", giving the encounter a more beautiful promise. The music video is an enchanting experience.



(Image source web video screenshot)

#### 5. Conclusion

The whole song Hua Tian Cuo brings the creator's understanding and love of Chinese culture, whether from the lyrics, melody or music video production, and is one of the representative works of R&B Chineseization, R&B plus theatrical singing, which is not a kind of inheritance and innovation of traditional arts. With the popularity of pop music and high circulation, it also brings the traditional culture carried in the songs to the young people, thus enhancing the nation's attention to traditional skills. So far, the team of Chinese-style songwriters has been growing, and we expect more excellent works to appear to inherit and carry forward the excellent traditional arts.

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