

Songs from the Chinese

by

Richard St. Clair

for Soprano, Flute, String Bass, and Piano

(2005)

San-ch'ü Poems from China's Yüan Dynasty

English Translations by Wayne Schlepp

Lyrics: Chinese poems in the volume, *San-ch'ü: Its Technique and Imagery* by Wayne Schlepp

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Program Note
by Wayne Schlepp

San-ch'ü is the song verse which arose out of the folk songs of northern China during the early years of the thirteenth century, when China was under Mongol rule. The freshness and spontaneity of the form attracted many gifted writers in whose hands it evolved into literary verse. When the songs were introduced into the South after the reunification of China by Kublai Khan, their novelty delighted southern writers and they enjoyed great popularity throughout the remaining years of the Yüan dynasty.

Songs from the Chinese

Duration: ca. 15 minutes

for Soprano, Flute, String Bass, and Piano

Lyrics: Yuan Dynasty Chinese Poems

translated by Wayne Schlepp

I. A Waterfall Revisited

Poet: Ch'iao Chi (1280-1345)

Richard St. Clair

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Moderato $\text{♩} = 92$

Flute

pp

Solo Bass *

p

Soprano

mp

The loom of the

Piano

p

con Pedale

6

Fl.

6

S.Cb.

6

S

sky has stopped work - ing, the moon shut-tle rests; The

6

Pno.

* Sounds an octave lower than written

11

Fl.

11

S.Cb.

11

S

stone cliff ho-vers the silk-like snow is cold,

Pno.

15

Fl.

15

S.Cb.

15

S

Threads of ice car-ry-ing rain hang from the

Pno.

20

Fl.

20

S.Cb.

20

S.

sky; It will ne - ver dry up in a thou - sand years, the

Pno.

25

Fl.

25

S.Cb.

f *p*

25

S.

dew is cold and I quail in my thin clothes.

25

Pno.

28

Fl.

S.Cb.

leggiero

S

It is like a white rain-bow

Pno.

31

Fl.

f *p*

S.Cb.

S

drink ing at a stream, like a jade dra - gon des - cend - ing the

Pno.

Leo.

5

35

Fl.

35

S.Cb.

35

S

moun - tain;

35

tranquillo, legato

p

Pno.

*

41

Fl.

41

S.Cb.

41

S

And like, like snow by the riv - er bank fly - ing

41

Pno.

46 *p* *espr.*

Fl.

S.Cb.

S

un - - - der a clear sky.

Pno.

Ped. *

II. Rain

Poet: Unknown

Allegretto ♩ = 84

52 *sempre marcato* *mp*

Fl.

52 *sempre marcato* *Pizz. p*

S.Cb.

52 *mp*

S

Out - side the win-dow rain sounds cease - less-ly,

56

Fl.

56

S.Cb.

56

S

Be - side my pil-low tears fall from my sighs.

60

Fl.

S.Cb.

S

Sound - ing rain, fal - ling tears urge on one an - oth - er.

64

Fl.

S.Cb.

S

The rain sound adds to grief, Tear - drops pro - voke more

68

Fl.

S.Cb.

S

sighs. As man - y tears are by my pil - low as rain - drops out - side my

72

Fl.

S.Cb.

S

win - dow.

III. Reminiscences

Poet: Liu T'ing-hsin (fl. 1368)

8

77 *Con moto, ritmico* ♩ = 78

S *f* Let - ters flecked with gold,

Pno. *f* *Con moto, ritmico*

81 linked rings of white jade, re - mind me and a - rouse my re - grets o - ver a -

Pno. *sfz* *sfz*

85 gain, that the best time of my life grows drab. *mp subito*

Pno. *mp subito*

89 The sun sets, wind is *mp*

Pno. *f* *mp*

9
94

S

soft on the em - broi - dered cur-tain, the dawn of the wil - low

Pno.

100

S

scat - ters;

Pno.

cresc.

104

S

ff

Tears fall rain spat - ters the

Pno.

ff

109

S

green silk win - dow the pear blos - som bursts.

Pno.

sfz

113

S

Pno.

molto ritard.

sfz

Red. sempre

117

a tempo

mp

S

the bro - cade is pat-terned in the bou - doir, spring grows

Pno.

mp a tempo

123

S

old, the ap - ri - cot with - ers. *mp* A -

Pno.

130

3 *3* *ritard.*

S

las, the hard-heart-ed has nev-er re-turned. *meno mosso, ritard.*

Pno.

mp *pp*

legato con Pedale

IV. Sorrow of Parting

Poet: Wang Ting (fl. 1246)

Sostenuto, ma con moto $\text{♩} = 64$

Fl. 135

S.Cb. 135 Arco *mp*

S 135 *mp*

Pin - ing a-way and still pin - ing,

Fl. 139

S.Cb. 139

S 139

sor - row ad - ded on sor - row.

Fl. 143

S.Cb. 143

S 143

Pin - ing and sor - row,

Fl. 146

S.Cb. 146 *mf*

S 146 *mf*

when will it end now that past joys wane? Clouds hov-er on the peaks of

149

Fl.

S.Cb.

S

mf

Ch'u,

152

Fl.

S.Cb.

S

mp

mp

mp

And the jade flute has stopped play-ing in the south cham-ber.

155

Fl.

S.Cb.

S

ritard.

molto ritard.

p

V. In the Country

Poet: Unknown

Moderato $\text{♩} = 84$

Fl. 158 *p*

S 158

Pno. 158 *mp* *mf*

Fl. 161

S 161 *mf*
Sweet - ly the deft birds' voi - ces blend,

Pno. 161

Fl. 164

S 164
Light - ly the white moths flut - ter.

Pno. 164

167

Fl.

S

Pno.

Bus - i - ly the bees fly through the flow - ers,

170

Fl.

S

Pno.

chat - ter - ing the swal - lows seek nests.

173

Fl.

S

Pno.

Frol - ick - ing we look for the sweet - est herbs,

Detailed description: This musical score is for measures 167 through 173. It features three staves: Flute (Fl.), Soprano (S), and Piano (Pno.). The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The Soprano part includes lyrics. The Piano part consists of a right-hand melody and a left-hand accompaniment. Measure 167 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The Soprano part begins with the lyrics 'Bus - i - ly the bees fly through the flow - ers,'. Measure 170 continues the Soprano part with 'chat - ter - ing the swal - lows seek nests.'. Measure 173 begins with 'Frol - ick - ing we look for the sweet - est herbs,'. The Flute part features intricate melodic lines with many beamed sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The Piano part provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines in both hands.

176

Fl.

S

Pno.

And there is laugh - ter in lanes out - side the town.

179

Fl.

S

Pno.

181

Fl.

S

Pno.

mf

p

mf

p

$\frac{3}{4}$

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score, page 15, for a piece in 3/4 time. It features three staves: Flute (Fl.), Soprano (S), and Piano (Pno.). The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 176-178) shows the flute playing a melodic line with grace notes and slurs, while the piano provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and eighth-note patterns. The soprano part has the lyrics 'And there is laugh - ter in lanes out - side the town.' The second system (measures 179-180) shows the flute continuing its melody, while the soprano and piano parts are mostly rests. The third system (measures 181-183) concludes with a final flourish for the flute and piano, marked with dynamics *mf* and *p*, and a 3/4 time signature.

VI. The Haunt of Idle Clouds

16

Poet: Ch'iao Chi (1280-1345)

Moderato ♩ = 80

Fl. 184 *mp* 3 *tr*

S 184 *mp*

The Haunt of Id - le Clouds:

Fl. 188 3 *tr*

S 188

what does one want, com - ing to a re -

Fl. 192 3 3 *tr*

S 192

treat in the clouds? In the Haunt of Id - le Clouds to

Fl. 196

S 196

lie a - mong the clouds, and while a - way the time.

Fl. 200 3 3 *tr*

S 200

I won - der a - bout the pur - pose of life;

17

204

Fl.

S

The no - ble are not quite as no - ble as I,

208

Fl.

S

The rich not quite as rich as I, Ho, ho, they laugh at

212

Fl.

S

me and I laugh ha ha ha ha ha ha

216

Fl.

S

ha ha.

VII. Complaint

18

Poco allegro $\text{♩} = 92$
Pizz.

Poet: Unknown

221

S.Cb.

S

Pno.

f *sfz* *sfz*

I thought when he had-n't been there for two or three days,

223

S.Cb.

S

Pno.

f *sfz* *sfz*

When he walks in the door I'll real-ly bawl him out!

225

S.Cb.

S

Pno.

f *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

He'll come o-ver to me full of ex-cus - es,

S.Cb. *f* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

S 227 *3* *3* *3*
Splut-ter-ing, mak-ing no sense, stut-ter-ing

Pno. 227 *f* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

S.Cb. 229 *mp*

S 229 *mp*

Pno. 229 *mp*

S.Cb. 230

S 230 *3* *3* *3* *3* *3* *3*
The slip-per-y dev-il will try to worm out of it, how can an-y-one trap him?

Pno. 230

231 Arco

S.Cb.

S

Pno.

231

plaintively

I can't des-cribe how I long for him to ask for my fav-ors;

233

S.Cb.

233

S

233

Pno.

But I'll put him out of mind,

235

S.Cb.

235

S

and when I've got ov - er it I'll tell him we're through.

Pno.

The image shows a musical score for three parts: S.Cb. (Soprano Contrabass), S (Soprano), and Pno. (Piano). The score is for measure 235, which is the final measure of a phrase. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The S.Cb. part has a whole note G2. The S part has a vocal line with lyrics 'and when I've got ov - er it I'll tell him we're through.' The Pno. part has a piano accompaniment with eighth notes and a whole note chord at the end.

21
237

S.Cb.

S

Pno.

If we're through, we're through, but

239

S.Cb.

S

Pno.

e-ven if he's sor-ry I won't be ab-le to tell whe-ther he real-ly means it.

241

S.Cb.

S

Pno.

But then he bold-ly came up and asked me how I'd been,

Pizz.

f

242

S.Cb.

S

Pno.

243

S.Cb.

S

Pno.

mf 3

and all I could do was smile back, keep my tem-per for

244

S.Cb.

S

Pno.

p *f* *p* *mp*

fear he'd get an-gry, So

p *f* *p*

con Pedale

23
245

S.Cb.

S. *wistfully*

Pno.

when he leaves and does - n't come back a - gain for a

246

S.Cb.

S.

Pno.

cou - ple of days, I'll be look - ing for some - one to

247

S.Cb.

S.

Pno.

go and hunt him up.

senza ritard. Arco

senza ritard.

Red.

VIII. The Sequestered Garden

24

Poet: Unknown

♩ = 70

Sostenuto, ma poco grazioso

Fl. 249 *sfz* 3 *sfz* *mf* Flutter-tongue

S.Cb. 249 *sfz* 3 *sfz* *mf*

S 249 *f*

Pno. 249 *f* *p* Sostenuto, ma poco grazioso The se-quest - ered

Fl. 254 *mp cresc.* 3 *f* *mp* Fl-t.

S.Cb. 254 *mp cresc.* 3 *f*

S 254 gar-den is dis-turbed by the flight of bees, *f*

Pno. 254 *mp cresc.* 3 *f*

Fl.

S.Cb.

S

Pno.

258

mp

p

Pizz. *p*

mp

The pom - e-gran - ate have bloomed in count - less blos - soms.

mp

p

r.h.

l.h.

r.h.

l.h.

Fl.

S.Cb.

Arco

S

Pno.

262

262

262

262

A sweet me - lon is o - pened.

266

Fl.

S.Cb.

S

Pno.

Tea made from new leaves;

270

Fl.

S.Cb.

S

Pno.

I reck - on the years on my fin - gers...

27

Fl. 274

S.Cb. 274

S 274

Pno. 274

f *p*

This sum-mer, too, has passed.

IX. Fat Couple

Poet: Wang Ting (fl. 1246)

$\text{♩} = 114$
Poco allegro, giocoso

Fl. 280

S.Cb. 280

S 280

A fat Mis - ter Shuang Made

Fl. 283

S.Cb. 283

S 283

off with a fat Miss Su;
The two of them just like great big

286

Fl.

S.Cb.

S

bears, Their mad af-fair done, they puffed for a while at Yu-chang;

290

Fl.

S.Cb.

S

In bed they were a pair of el-e-phan-tine love birds; And when they

294

Fl.

S.Cb.

S

cou-pled their bel - lies went ka - pung!

X. Autumn Sadness

Poet: Chou Wen-chih (d. 1334)

 $\text{♩} = 46$

Moderato, non troppo mosso

298

Fl.

mp

298

S.Cb.

Pizz.

mp

S

mp

Ting - tang, ting - tang,

Pno.

p

298

Leo.

302

Fl.

302

S.Cb.

302

S

eave bells' rat - tling - brat - tling noise,

Pno.

302

305

Fl.

305

S.Cb.

S

Kree - kirr, kree - kirr, crick - ets chirp - ing - chir - ring

Pno.

molto legato

307

Fl.

307

S.Cb.

S

cry, Drip - ping, drip - ping

Pno.

309

Fl.

309

S.Cb.

309

S

fine rain fal - ling - flow - ing mur - murs,

309

Pno.

311

Flutter-tongue

Fl.

f *p*

311

S.Cb.

f *p*

311

S

rust - ling, rust - ling, -

311

Pno.

f *p*

314

Fl.

S.Cb.

S

wu - t'ung leaves lisp - ing whis - per - ing fall;

Pno.

Red.

317

Fl.

S.Cb.

S

I'll nev - er get to sleep! Nev - er

Pizz. *p*

Pno.

320

Fl.

320

S.Cb.

320

S

get to sleep! All a - lone, ly - ing

320

Pno.

323

Fl.

323

S.Cb.

323

S

on the sol - i - tar - y pil - low

323

Pno.

326

Fl.

326

S.Cb.

326

S

in si - lence, in si -

326

Pno.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 326 through 329. The Flute (Fl.) part begins in measure 326 with a half note G4, followed by a quarter rest, then a half note A4, and a quarter rest. The Saxophone (S.Cb.) part has a whole rest throughout. The Singer (S) part has a whole rest in measure 326, followed by a quarter rest, then a half note G4, a quarter note A4, a half note B4, and a quarter note A4. The Piano (Pno.) part has a whole rest in both staves throughout.

330

Fl.

330

S.Cb.

330

S

lence, in si - - - lence,

330

Pno.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 330 through 333. The Flute (Fl.) part has a whole rest in measure 330, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note A4. The Saxophone (S.Cb.) part has a whole rest throughout. The Singer (S) part has a whole rest in measure 330, followed by a quarter rest, then a half note G4, a quarter note A4, a half note B4, and a quarter note A4. The Piano (Pno.) part has a whole rest in both staves throughout.

334

Fl. *p* *dimin.* *pp* *mf* *pp*

334

S.Cb. *Arco p* *pp*

334

S in si - - - lence.

334

Pno. *p* *Red.*