



# Great Sound and Hopeful Sound — On the Modern Music Aesthetics in the Violin Piece "Empty"

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**Abstract:** The existence mode of music is a dual practice activity which includes the unity of human social practice and music aesthetic practice. This way of existence is a necessary premise for the theoretical study of music aesthetics. From the perspective of modern music aesthetics, the traditional music ideology and culture will be discussed with the violin piece "Empty" written by contemporary Chinese composer Qu Xiaosong in 1979 to explore the music aesthetics of "big sound and sound", so as to promote the transformation of traditional excellent culture in modern times.

**Keywords:** Da Yin Xi Sheng, violin music, "Empty", modern music aesthetics

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## Foreword

The violin piece "Empty" is the original point of Qu Xiaosong's musical creation of "silence", and it is his common sense of emotion and interest in his personal interest in music aesthetics. It is also a refutation of a phenomenon developed in a modern society divided by competition and self-interest. Culture is the soul of a country and a nation, and building a modern socialist country in an all-round way must have a cultural foundation and guarantee.

## 1. The relationship between "big sound and sound" and music

In ancient China, "music" was not "music" in the present sense, but acted on human activities and expressed human factors. It is a relative constraint, "showing ritual with music", which has become a symbol of ancient Chinese humanistic order. This kind of "music" covers a kind of synaesthesia of ancient Chinese art, and it is the integration of "poetry, song and dance" of traditional Chinese excellent culture, which embodies the spirit of Chinese art. It is an important factor in the composition of the theoretical system of Chinese classical aesthetics.

The relatively independent aesthetic activities and corresponding special aesthetic discussions of traditional Chinese aesthetics appeared in the Wei and Jin Dynasties, and their origins can be traced back to the pre-Qin era. Compared with the later independent aesthetic ideas, they were more or less greatly influenced by the ideas of the masters. From the perspective of music aesthetics, the realization of "music" is based on the return of people's inner simplicity and natural temperament. This kind of "pleasure" has the attributes of natural inaction, peace and tranquility. It is a unified aesthetic realm that emphasizes the unity of man and nature, me and things.

## 2. The relationship between modern music and aesthetics

The formation and development of aesthetics in each era reflects the basic spirit and overall style of aesthetics in that era. Modern aesthetics uses the latest research results related to modern neurophysiology, psychology, philosophy, phenomenology, etc. with a new perspective and method. It reveals the causes and mechanisms of the colorful aesthetic phenomena in real life, the laws of the formation and changes of aesthetic psychology in the human subconscious, and the methods of applying aesthetic laws in art, education and daily life. Its research is based on a large number of "practical senses" in people's music aesthetic practice activities.

Modern music generally refers to the product of Western music around the 20th century, not the music works that existed throughout the 20th century. It takes "non-traditional music composition techniques" and "non-traditional chorus functions" as its theoretical system, and pursues more breakthroughs and innovations in timbre, rhythm, musical form, harmony, and texture. Then, it gradually formed a kind of characteristics of tonal ambiguity, polytony, atonality and so on.

## 3. "Da Yin Xi Sheng" in the violin song "Empty"

The violin piece "Empty" is a work created by Chinese contemporary composer Qu Xiaosong in 1979. His works are widely performed all over the world and are called "Master of Silence" and "Master of Temperance" by Western music

critics. "Empty" is an early work of Qu Xiaosong when he was studying in the composition department of the Central Music School, and he returned to the mountains in his hometown of Guiyang, Guizhou. "Hearing myself in the silence of this deep mountain, at this moment it extends infinitely in the past and the future", [1] is the excavation and in-depth thinking of the propositional form of "quietness".

This "Tao" is a kind of "Tao" that Qu Xiaosong perceives when facing the deep mountain valley. As the ontology of the universe, this "Tao" means "infinity"; To use as a functional meaning means "empty". This kind of "emptiness" does not mean "nothingness", but a dynamic process in which "nothingness" generates "being", which has a process similar to life activities. From the perspective of modern music aesthetics:

(1) The beauty of this "big sound and hopeful sound" cannot be grasped by human senses. It is the same realm as "Tao". This kind of beauty needs to be directly comprehended with the human mind. As described by Zhuangzi, a realm of "taking the righteousness of heaven and earth, and distinguishing between six qi, so as to travel endlessly" is a realm of unity between heaven and man, a state of magnificence and lofty beauty.

(2) This kind of "big sound and sound" is the philosophical basis of the artistic category "image" and "artistic conception" that carry this classical Chinese aesthetics. It expresses the rich meaning that "emptiness and tranquility" can be seen infinitely in limited or even very good "images", that is, what Yan Yu of the Song Dynasty said in "Poems of Canglang·Poetry Analysis": "An antelope hangs its horns, and there is no trace to be found.

(3) The beauty of this "big sound and sound" is also the highest state of art that Qu Xiaosong pursues. Art is essentially a kind of creation, which is a conscious and purposeful activity. What Qu Xiaosong created based on nature and objective reality is a kind of "second nature". A "product" created by someone to serve others is a "product" that reflects both objective reality and subjective ideals.



Figure 1. "Empty" Score Fragment 1

For example, Fragment 1 of the music score of "Empty" in the picture above, the voice of the Western music violin enters with a slow and long melody, and in a gradual way, it creates a kind of "empty and quiet" artistic conception of time and space. This "empty stillness" expresses three levels:

The first is the "natural stillness" of deep mountains and valleys in nature, which represents a real image and an artistic image derived from nature.

The second is the form of natural beauty that is simple, perfect, and authentic, and the form of natural beauty that has not been artificially carved.

The third is a kind of virtual image reflected in life, which has a certain ambiguity. It means that when dealing with the relationship with nature, people should respect nature, conform to nature, and on this basis, imitate nature and act according to the laws of nature.



Figure 2. "Empty" Score Fragment 2

For example, Fragment 2 of the music score of "Empty" in the above figure, in the development of the violin melody, a comparison of the ups and downs in the vocal range has been strengthened. And it uses an enhanced progressive contrast of octave two-tone to create a dynamic sense of "life". This kind of polyphony with a sense of "life" is different from the lace variation of traditional Chinese music melody in the palace key, and it is a polytonal form.

From the "nothingness" of "empty and quiet" to "life", it is a state of mind. From the perspective of modern science, it is only by removing the subjective consciousness of one's own cognition of the world and reaching a state of emptiness and emptiness, one can receive enough information to analyze the real law of changes in things. In fact, this kind of space not only depicts the material world we live in today, but also builds the spiritual world according to specific cultural needs. And to a certain extent, it is social, and the structure of this space is multi-dimensional:

- (1) Space practice, which means that its foundation is a way of human perception of the world;
- (2) Spatial representation, which means that its foundation is a way of human imagination or thinking about the world;
- (3) Spatial representation means that its foundation is a way of life of the human body in this world.

The violin piece "Empty" made with the help of Western instruments is not simply a copy of modern Western music. It is an innovation and continuation of the Chineseization of current music, which is inclusiveness and diversity under the concept of diachronic and synchronic diversity. "...in the fertile soil of ethnic music elements 'through in-depth exchanges with Western music, a Chinese modern music with the essence of Chinese culture is created'".

## Epilogue

The existence mode of music is a dual practice activity which includes the unity of human social practice and music aesthetic practice. Taking the works of modern composer Qu Xiaosong as an example to analyze, is to enhance and deepen our understanding of our own cultural and historical situation. It describes the presentation of Chinese excellent traditional culture in modern music and art works, and provides reference for the inheritance and development of contemporary Chinese music creation and development.

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