

## Gong Yi's Role in Preserving Literacy and Transmission of Guqin Music for Cultural Sustainability

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### ABSTRACT

The research investigates Gong Yi's preservation of literacy and the transmission of Guqin music for cultural sustainability. As a skilled performer, instructor, and inventor, Gong Yi has been instrumental in preserving ancient Guqin practices while advancing their musical and educational evolution. His comprehensive study, polished playing techniques, and use of innovative approaches have expanded the expressive potential of the Guqin, securing its ongoing significance in modern music. In addition to his performance, Gong Yi has devoted decades to Guqin education, guiding students in conservatories, foreign institutions, and public outreach initiatives. His educational tools and multimedia teaching resources have rendered Guqin music more accessible to varied audiences. Moreover, his lobbying efforts led to the Guqin being recognized as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2003, enhancing its global cultural importance. Gong Yi has significantly impacted the sustainability of Guqin music through a harmonious blend of preservation and creativity. His work illustrates how personal commitment may influence the course of intangible cultural heritage, guaranteeing its preservation for future generations and promoting worldwide appreciation.

**Key words:** Guqin Music, Gong Yi, Cultural Sustainability, Literacy Preservation, Music Transmission

### INTRODUCTION

The Guqin, one of the oldest plucked instruments globally, has been a fundamental aspect of Chinese culture for over 3,000 years. In addition to serving as a musical instrument, it represents significant cultural, philosophical, and aesthetic qualities, embodying self-cultivation, intellectual refinement, and harmony with nature. The Guqin has historically been linked to Chinese intellectuals and literati, functioning as a medium for introspection, creative expression, and moral development (Cai & Tai, 2018). Notwithstanding its revered reputation, the dissemination of Guqin music has encountered considerable obstacles, especially in contemporary times. Social developments, globalization, and evolving cultural priorities have decreased traditional Guqin literacy and its accessibility for younger generations. Nonetheless, committed players and instructors have persistently endeavored to preserve the instrument's tradition (Ding & Gerhard, 2004). Gong Yi is crucial in preserving, innovating, and transmitting Guqin music, guaranteeing its continuance for future generations.

Gong Yi is acknowledged as one of the most prominent Guqin masters of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. His contributions encompass performance, instruction, and musical invention, profoundly influencing the sustainability of Guqin literacy (Chen, 2010). His profound comprehension of the traditional

Guqin repertoire, attained through extensive instruction with distinguished masters, has allowed him to conserve conventional playing approaches and uphold the authenticity of historical works. Simultaneously, he has adopted creative methods in Guqin performance and instruction, including modern musical techniques and procedures, while safeguarding its traditional integrity (Chen & Boonsrianun, 2024; Kurin, 2004). His effect transcends professional musicianship, enhancing educational outreach and rendering the Guqin more accessible to academic institutions and amateur lovers alike.

This study investigates Gong Yi's contribution to the preservation of Guqin literacy and transmission and its wider implications for cultural sustainability. It emphasizes the importance of individual cultural custodians in preserving intangible cultural property by examining their efforts in protecting traditional Guqin practices, creating new playing ways, and enhancing teaching methodologies (Huang & Yang, 2024; Yang et al., 2024). The research examines the alignment of his work with current cultural preservation measures, particularly the incorporation of the Guqin into modern music education and performance settings.

The Guqin's ongoing evolution in the contemporary landscape necessitates a critical equilibrium between preservation and adaptation for its viability. This research seeks to elucidate methods for revitalizing and effectively transmitting traditional

musical legacy, utilizing Gong Yi's lifelong commitment as a case study. This research enhances dialogues on music education, the preservation of intangible cultural heritage, and the changing significance of traditional arts in modern society.

### Research Objectives

- To investigate Gong Yi's role in preserving literacy and transmitting Guqin music for cultural sustainability.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### The Origin of the Guqin

The Guqin is among the earliest musical instruments in China, formerly known as “Qin,” “Jade Qin,” or “Yao Qin.” It is sometimes referred to as the “Seven-String Qin.” It was formally designated as “Guqin” in contemporary times to differentiate it from other musical instruments. Many historical sources allude to the Guqin, and some old instruments have been conserved for ages or perhaps millennia. The initial reference to the Guqin is found in *The Book of Songs*, China's oldest poetry anthology, produced some 2,500 years ago. Scholars largely concur that the Guqin possesses a historical lineage exceeding 3,000 years, consistent with historical documentation, since an instrument must have a substantial historical trajectory to be featured in such an important work (Yin, 2024; Feng et al., 2019).

Archaeological findings further corroborate the Guqin's ancient origins. Historical sources, including *The Book of Songs* and *Records of the Grand Historian*, indicate that the Guqin originated from the ancient Yao and Shun dynasties. In 2016, the oldest recorded seven-stringed Guqin was excavated in Guojia Temple in Zaoyang, Hubei Province. This discovery, around 2,700 years old, has prolonged the verified history of the Guqin by roughly 300 years. The instrument underwent evolution, although its standardized configuration—comprising seven strings and thirteen “Hui” (marking dots)—was established during the Wei and Jin Dynasties and has remained consistent since the Tang Dynasty (Leman et al., 2009; Liu, 2022).

### Composition and Fabrication of Guqin

The Guqin fabrication method comprises two primary phases: carpentry and painting. The woodworking procedure involves contouring the Guqin to a predetermined shape, excavating the soundbox, and uniting the front and rear panels (Figure 1). The painting phase entails encasing the soundbox in gauze to avert distortion, applying many coats of lacquer combined with antler powder for enhanced durability and resonance, and ultimately, polishing, affixing accessories, and tuning the instrument (Yu et al., 2021).

### Prevalent Styles of Guqin

Wu Zhizhai *Guqin Music* enumerates over 50 Guqin genres, although several have diminished in popularity. Contemporary Guqin styles encompass the Zhongni style, linked to Confucius and Confucian thought; the Fuxi style,

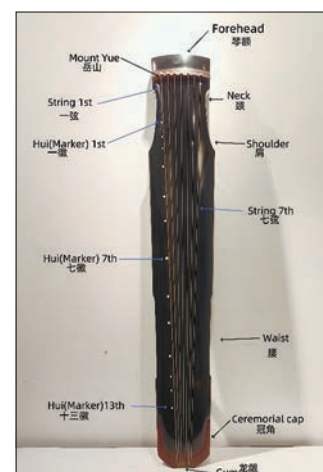
derived from the legendary figure Fuxi and reminiscent of a phoenix; the Hundun style, grounded in the philosophical notion of primordial chaos and characterized by an oval form; the Lianzhu style (Figure 2), marked by curved arcs that evoke interconnected pearls; and the Luoxia style, showcasing wavy lines that resemble a vibrant sunset (Kouwenhoven, 2015; Liu, 2022).

### Guqin in the Zhongni and Fuxi Styles

The Zhongni-style Guqin (Figure 3), associated with Confucius, exemplifies Confucian principles of moderation and harmony, rendering it one of the most esteemed and conserved Guqin styles. The Fuxi-style Guqin (Figure 4) is purportedly developed by Fuxi, with its shape influenced by a phoenix. The Fuxi-style Guqin, notable for its profound cultural importance and visual allure, has been extensively embraced and continues to significantly influence the history of Guqin design (Liu, 2022).

### Unique Artistic Attributes of Guqin Music

Guqin music is characterized by its creative attributes, profoundly embedded in ancient Chinese aesthetics and



**Figure 1.** Front of Guqin  
Source: Cheng Li, fieldwork (2024)



**Figure 2.** Lianzhu style Guqin  
Source: Cheng Li, fieldwork (2024)



**Figure 3.** Zhongni style Guqin  
Source: Cheng Li, fieldwork (2024)



**Figure 4.** Fuxi style Guqin  
Source: Cheng Li, fieldwork (2024)

philosophical concepts. The pieces exhibit a straightforward yet profound melodic structure, highlighting harmony and balance in alignment with traditional Chinese principles. This engenders a sublime and contemplative quality that has historically attracted researchers and intellectuals. The Guqin's elongated and flat design generates a rich, resonant tone, predominantly focused in the middle and lower tonal registers. This distinctive timbre amplifies the instrument's reflective and meditative essence (Shen et al., 2022).

A distinctive characteristic of Guqin music is its incredibly flexible and fluid beat. The beat harmonizes effortlessly with the player's respiration and emotional condition rather than conforming to strict metrical structures. This focus on flexibility enables artists to express profound feelings, mirroring the historical ambitions of ancient scholars in their quest for spiritual enhancement. Influenced by Zen philosophy, Guqin music encapsulates clarity, subtlety, lightness, and distance, promoting detachment from worldly preoccupations and emphasizing aesthetic and ethical principles (Zou et al., 2022).

Playing the Guqin transcends ordinary musical practice, serving as a means of intellectual and spiritual maturation. It

is a conduit for interacting with Zen ideals, cultivating moral integrity, and enhancing mental and physical well-being. Playing surpasses technical execution, providing a comprehensive perspective on life and creative expression. Guqin music, deeply rooted in Zen and ancient Chinese philosophy, is a potent medium for introspection, creative refinement, and cultural preservation (Henbing & Leman, 2007).

### Research Theory

The main aim of this study is to analyze Gong Yi's contribution to the preservation of literacy and the transmission of Guqin music for cultural sustainability. This research uses ethnomusicological theory to bridge gaps in comprehending Guqin music's cultural and educational transmission. Ethnomusicology offers a solid theoretical framework for thoroughly investigating Gong Yi's contributions, revealing insights into the historical continuity and modern adaptation of Guqin traditions (Cottrell, 2010; Mu, 2003). This methodology facilitates a comprehensive examination of the interaction of music, culture, and education, underscoring the importance of Gong Yi's contributions to preserving this intangible cultural legacy.

### METHODOLOGY

This study utilizes a qualitative research methodology, using ethnomusicological techniques to investigate Gong Yi's function in safeguarding literacy and conveying Guqin music for cultural sustainability. The technique has three essential components: fieldwork, historical analysis, and interviews with Guqin practitioners, students, and researchers. These methodologies offer an extensive comprehension of Gong Yi's contributions from historical and contemporary viewpoints.

### Ethnographic Research

Fieldwork is important to this study, enabling direct interaction with Guqin practitioners, students, and researchers. Participant observation was undertaken at many Guqin performances, masterclasses, and workshops to study Gong Yi's pedagogical techniques and performance practices. This involved participating in Guqin lessons, analyzing pedagogical methods, and monitoring student involvement. The study included trips to institutions where Gong Yi has taught, such as the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, to assess the influence of his educational contributions.

### Historical and Archival Inquiry

A historical analysis examined the evolution of Guqin literacy and transmission, emphasizing Gong Yi's contribution to conserving old practices while promoting innovation. Archival data, comprising historical records, instructional texts, and recordings of Gong Yi's performances, were analyzed to situate his impact within the greater evolution of Guqin music. Sources like books, journal articles, and official reports on preserving intangible cultural assets were



examined to ascertain how Gong Yi's contributions correspond with national and worldwide initiatives in cultural sustainability.

### Interviews and Expert Testimonies

Semi-structured interviews were performed with Guqin scholars, students, and musicians who had either studied under Gong Yi or have been impacted by his contributions. These interviews aimed to obtain direct insights into his pedagogical philosophy, creative methodologies, and influence on the Guqin community. Specialists in ethnomusicology and intangible cultural heritage were also engaged to assess Gong Yi's contribution to the preservation of Guqin music.

### Data Analysis

The gathered data were examined using thematic analysis, emphasizing main topics such as Guqin preservation, educational transmission, innovation in playing skills, and the convergence of tradition and modernity. A comparative analysis evaluated Gong Yi's accomplishments compared to other notable Guqin musicians and educators. This approach emphasized the distinctiveness of his approaches and their importance within the larger framework of Guqin sustainability.

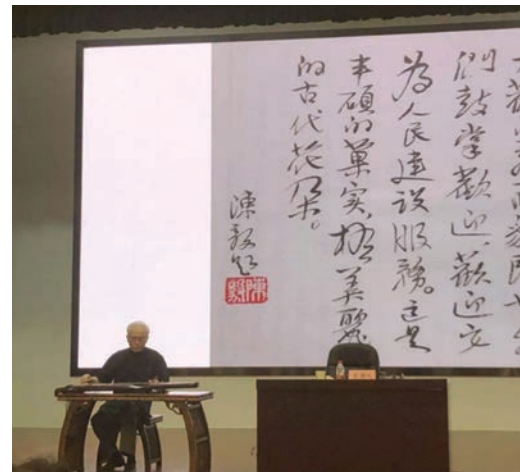
This research employs analytical methodologies to comprehensively analyze Gong Yi's involvement in the preservation and transmission of Guqin music. The integration of fieldwork, historical research, and interviews provides a comprehensive perspective on his contributions to the cultural sustainability of the Guqin heritage.

## RESULTS

### Preservation and Transmission of the Basic Performance Techniques of Gong Yi in Guqin Music

The Guqin's basic performance techniques revolve around the coordinated use of both hands, resulting in its distinctive and rich tonal qualities. The right hand is primarily responsible for plucking the strings to produce sound and employing various techniques, such as plucking, flicking, and sweeping, to create tonal variations. Simultaneously, the left hand presses specific markers, known as Hui, on the fretless fingerboard, adjusting the pitch and timbre of the sound. This interplay between the hands allows the Guqin to produce a wide range of expressive sounds, from sustained melodies to intricate harmonic effects (Figure 5).

Gong Yi has played a crucial role in refining and expanding these fundamental techniques, contributing to developing a more sophisticated Guqin performance system. Through his mastery and innovation, he has introduced new methods of right-hand plucking and left-hand manipulation, allowing for greater tonal precision, dynamic range, and expressive depth. His extensive research and teaching have helped preserve traditional playing techniques while advancing contemporary Guqin performance. Combining these refined techniques forms the foundation for a vast repertoire



**Figure 5.** Gong Yi is teaching guqin playing techniques  
Source: Cheng Li, fieldwork (2024)

of Guqin playing methods, emphasizing subtle tonal shifts, dynamic contrasts, and emotional nuance. Gong Yi's contributions highlight the instrument's technical complexity and reinforce its status as a profound musical and philosophical expression medium, as shown in Table 1.

### Activities for Preservation and Transmission of Gong Yi in Guqin Music

#### Period 1970–1979

The 1970s were challenging for traditional Chinese arts, including the Guqin. During this time, Gong Yi worked at the Shanghai Film Orchestra as both a Guqin soloist and a double bass player, demonstrating his versatility and strong musical foundation. Notably, in 1974, he contributed to the "Guqin Zheng and Se Working Group," where he undertook the innovative task of transposing Peking Opera melodies onto the Guqin. His performance of Fachang Huanzi marked the first instance of using the Guqin to emulate human vocal techniques, a groundbreaking achievement that expanded the instrument's expressive range.

In 1975, Gong Yi participated in an international cultural exchange in Australia and New Zealand, where he performed on the Sanxian and Guqin. His performances introduced Chinese traditional music to global audiences, establishing his reputation as a versatile and skilled musician.

#### Period 1980–1989

In the 1980s, Gong Yi's career flourished with domestic and international recognition. In 1983, he attended the third National Guqin Academic Experience Exchange Meeting in Yangzhou, engaging with legendary Guqin figures such as Zhang Ziqian and Gu Meigeng. His active participation in this event underscored his growing prominence in the Guqin community.

In 1987, Gong Yi performed his first Guqin recital in the United Kingdom at Kingston University, marking a significant step in the international promotion of Guqin music. His performances captivated audiences, bridging

**Table 1.** Jianzi Pu names and their corresponding playing technique descriptions

Jianzi Pu's name	Instruction of playing technique
Mo	- The right index finger plays inward.
Tiao	- The right index finger plays outward.
Gou	- The right middle finger plays inward.
Ti	- The right middle finger plays outward.
Da	- The right ring finger plays inward.
Zhai	- The right ring finger plays outward.
Tuo	- The thumb of the right hand plays outward.
Bo	- The thumb of the right hand plays inward.
Daa	- When playing with the right hand, the left thumb presses on the string at the specified Marker (Hui) to produce Anyin or lightly touches the string to produce an overtone.
Shi	- When playing with the right hand, the left index finger presses on the string at the specified Marker (Hui) to make Anyin or lightly touches the string to make an overtone.
Zhong	- When playing with the right hand, the middle finger of the left hand presses on the string at the specified Marker (Hui) to make Anyin or lightly touches the string to make an overtone.
Ming	- When playing with the right hand, the ring finger of the left hand presses on the string at the specified Marker (Hui) to make Anyin or lightly touches the string to make an overtone.
San	- The base pitch of the empty string is produced when the right hand plays and the left hand does not touch the string.
Fan	- When the left hand lightly touches the string at the designated marker (Hui), the right hand produces an overtone.
Anyin	- When playing with the right hand, without marking the overtone, the left ring finger presses the sound of the string.

cultural gaps and fostering a global appreciation for this ancient instrument.

### **Period 1990–1999**

In the 1990s, Gong Yi further advanced his international career. In 1994, he participated in the International Appreciation of Famous Chinese Guqin Music in Beijing, performing alongside esteemed artists like Wu Wenguang and Cheng Gongliang. In 1998, he held his first solo recital in Yokohama, Japan, showcasing the Guqin to Japanese audiences and promoting cultural exchange.

The same year, Gong Yi became the first Guqin artist to perform at the Vienna Musikverein, a world-renowned concert venue. International audiences widely acclaimed his rendition of Da Hujia, recognizing the Guqin as a Chinese tradition and cultural heritage symbol. This milestone solidified his role as a leading ambassador of Guqin art globally.

### **Period 2000–2010**

In 2001, Gong Yi performed at the “Chinese New Year Concert in the Year of the Snake” at the Vienna Musikverein, further enhancing his international profile. In 2009, he served as a judge for the CCTV Folk Instrumental Music TV Competition, which, for the first time, included Guqin as a category. This inclusion marked a significant step in promoting the Guqin as a vital component of Chinese folk music.

### **Period 2010–2024**

Despite his advanced age, Gong Yi contributed to Guqin's art well into the 2010s. In 2016, he held the Haishang Qinyun Gong Yi Guqin solo concert in Changsha, Hunan Province, showcasing his mastery to enthusiastic audiences. In 2018, he performed his last solo recital in Hong Kong, delivering a high-level performance that reflected decades of dedication and expertise.

In 2020, Gong Yi participated in the Dunhuang Folk Musical Instrument Factory's 60th-anniversary concert, performing alongside the Central Chinese Orchestra. That same year, he joined the “Sizhu Chunqiu Concert” with other esteemed musicians, captivating audiences with his artistry and spirit.

### **Gong Yi's Major Publications**

Gong Yi has dedicated decades to the Guqin's research, performance, and teaching, producing a wealth of publications that reflect his extensive experience and profound understanding of the instrument. His works encompass instructional materials, theoretical studies, and performance recordings, contributing significantly to the preservation and dissemination of Guqin. In 1998, he released the teaching video Introduction to Guqin, a notable resource for beginners. In 1999, he published Guqin Playing Method, an instructional guide systematizing traditional techniques while incorporating modern pedagogical insights. His 2011 publication, New Score of Guqin, provides updated musical notations and arrangements, bridging traditional repertoire with contemporary needs.

In 2015, Gong Yi authored Exploration of Guqin Music, a reflective work that delves into Guqin artistry's historical, philosophical, and technical aspects. To celebrate his six decades of dedication to the instrument, his scholarly and practical contributions since 1963 were compiled into Gong Yi Guqin Discipline Collection, published in 2020. This comprehensive collection encapsulates over 60 professional literary articles. It is an invaluable resource for Guqin researchers and enthusiasts, emphasizing his innovative teaching methodologies and deep cultural insights, as shown in Table 2.

### **Gong Yi's Guqin Teaching Abroad**

In 1987, the School of Music at Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in the United Kingdom introduced a Guqin course and invited Gong Yi to teach it. Students from various

countries, including the United States, Ireland, Romania, and Germany, enrolled in the course. As many foreign students were primarily intrigued by Chinese Guqin music, the curriculum was simplified compared to the professional Guqin courses offered in Chinese conservatories.

Gong Yi has dedicated decades to Guqin education, mentoring students from diverse backgrounds in China and abroad. His students include Guqin experts, conservatory professors, professional musicians, representatives of Guqin culture worldwide, and amateur enthusiasts passionate about the instrument (Figure 6).

### Teaching Video Materials Published by Gong Yi

Over the years, Gong Yi has contributed significantly to Guqin education by producing teaching video materials that serve as valuable resources for learners worldwide. These materials have been crucial in introducing and preserving Guqin performance techniques, as shown in Table 3.

### Guqin Music and Cultural Sustainability by Gong Yi

Cultural sustainability is essential for the preservation and ongoing significance of intangible cultural assets. Gong Yi has been instrumental in facilitating the transmission and evolution of Guqin music in contemporary times. His efforts encompass performance, teaching, invention, and advocacy, rendering Guqin music more accessible to modern audiences while maintaining its profound historical and philosophical value.

Gong Yi's contributions to cultural sustainability are evident in several significant domains. He has committed his career to preserving the traditional Guqin repertoire and performance styles. Educated by esteemed Guqin masters, he has preserved ancient compositions, enhancing performing techniques while preserving their authenticity. His dedication to cultural preservation has contributed to protecting vital aspects of Guqin artwork that may otherwise be forgotten.

**Table 2.** Books published by Gong Yi

Year	Book Title
2002	- Guqin playing method
2010	- Guqin grade examination collection
2011	- New score of guqin
2020	- Gong yi guqin discipline collection

Simultaneously, Gong Yi has championed innovation, acknowledging that cultural sustainability necessitates adaptation to modern surroundings. He has created novel Guqin playing techniques, broadening its expressive capacity and incorporating influences from other plucked instruments like as the Pipa and Guzheng. His efforts in orchestral partnerships have facilitated the Guqin's engagement with many musical traditions, expanding its audience and reinforcing its significance in contemporary society (Figure 7).

In addition to teaching, Gong Yi has vigorously advocated acknowledging the Guqin as a significant cultural treasure. His performances and cultural contacts have familiarized foreign audiences with the instrument, reinforcing its status as an internationally acknowledged art form. His lobbying led to the Guqin being recognized as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2003, underscoring its importance as a cultural asset (Figure 8).

Gong Yi's contributions to Guqin music reflect a paradigm of cultural sustainability that harmonizes preservation with creativity. He has preserved the instrument's original nature while promoting its evolution in modern situations, thus securing its longevity for future generations. His work illustrates how a single musician may impact the longevity of intangible cultural property, facilitating its ongoing progress while respecting its historical foundations.



**Figure 6.** Gong Yi teaches guqin performance at SOAS London, UK

Source: Cheng Li, fieldwork (2024)

**Table 3.** Teaching video materials published by Gong Yi over the years

Year	Title	Description
1992	Introduction to Guqin	- The earliest audiovisual material for Guqin instruction was initially available in videotape format. This instructional video provided a foundational introduction to Guqin music, covering basic playing techniques, historical context, and cultural significance. It played an important role in spreading awareness of Guqin music beyond traditional learning methods.
2015	Exploration of Guqin music	- A more in-depth educational resource focusing on Guqin performance's artistic and technical aspects. This video explores advanced playing techniques, musical interpretation, and the evolution of Guqin styles, making it an essential resource for both beginner and professional players.





**Figure 7.** Techniques: “Pa Yin”  
Source: Cheng Li, fieldwork (2024)



**Figure 8.** Performance of the Guqin by Gong Yi  
Source: Cheng Li, fieldwork (2024)

## DISCUSSION

Gong Yi's contributions to the preservation, literacy, and transmission of Guqin music for cultural sustainability are anchored in tradition and creativity. His efforts have guaranteed the Guqin's relevance in modern society while preserving its historical and cultural importance. Gong Yi has been instrumental in preserving this intangible cultural legacy via performance, teaching, and invention.

Gong Yi's endeavors to maintain Guqin literacy mainly focused on protecting traditional practices and repertory. Instructed by distinguished masters, he has perfected and conveyed the playing techniques of many Guqin schools, including Guangling, Mei'an, and Sichuan. His diligent methodology in safeguarding ancient compositions and performance skills has guaranteed the continuation of Guqin music during a period when other traditional arts

are experiencing deterioration (Wang, 2003; Jirajarupat & Yinghua, 2023). Through the documentation and execution of traditional compositions, Gong Yi has established a significant resource for modern musicians and future generations.

Besides preservation, Gong Yi has profoundly impacted the dissemination of Guqin music via education. His career as a professor at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music has cultivated a new generation of artists, with several pupils emerging as prominent performers and lecturers. His instructional techniques integrate traditional Jianzi Pu notation with Western staff notation, enhancing the accessibility of Guqin music for pupils from various musical backgrounds (Chang et al., 2024; Zhou & Chuangprakhon, 2023). Moreover, he has broadened his pedagogical efforts outside traditional academic environments by facilitating workshops, seminars, and community initiatives to involve amateur musicians and aficionados (Qiuxiao, 2022; Chen & Seekhunlio, 2024). His combined strategy—cultivating professional talent and promoting public interest—has been important in preserving Guqin music across several dimensions.

A vital element of Gong Yi's contributions is his endeavor to modernize Guqin performance while preserving its artistic integrity. He has innovated new playing techniques, borrowing influence from instruments such as the Guzheng and Pipa to enhance the Guqin's expressive potential (Gaywood, 1996; Zou et al., 2022). His symphonic collaborations and use of the Guqin in modern musical contexts have expanded the instrument's audience, securing its ongoing significance. These advances illustrate that cultural sustainability entails not static preservation but a dynamic equilibrium between tradition and change.

## CONCLUSION

Gong Yi's enduring commitment to Guqin music has significantly influenced its preservation and propagation. By harmonizing tradition with invention, he has guaranteed that the Guqin persists as a dynamic and progressive art form rather than a mere artifact of history. His contributions to education, performance, and advocacy underscore the vital role of cultural stewards in preserving intangible cultural heritage.

Gong Yi's case highlights a crucial principle in cultural sustainability: Effective preservation initiatives must extend beyond mere documenting and restoration; they must also encompass active transmission, creativity, and public involvement. As cultural traditions such as the Guqin confront the problems of modernization, individuals like Gong Yi exemplify the coexistence of flexibility and inventiveness with historical authenticity. His work offers a significant framework for preserving traditional arts in an increasingly dynamic environment.

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