

# **Discover the Music in the Landscape, Explore the Origin of Life——Preliminary Exploration of the Creative Characteristics of Liang Lei's A Thousand Mountains, A Million Streams**

**Ding Liu<sup>1,\*</sup>, Zhenhong Huang**

<sup>1</sup>South China University of Technology Art College, Guang Zhou, Guangdong, China

\*liuding@scut.edu.cn

**Keywords:** Liang Lei; Orchestral Music; A Thousand Mountains; A Million Streams; Huang Binhong

**Abstract.** A Thousand Mountains, A Million Streams is a work performed by Liang Lei<sup>1</sup> for the orchestra from 2016 to 2017. The work is influenced by Huang Binhong's<sup>2</sup> landscape paintings. Through the color changes between different instruments in the orchestra, the image of the natural landscape in people's minds is outlined, and the image is paved in the order of monologue and narrative. Into the middle, it presents the composer's unique thinking about the relationship between human beings and nature, human beings and culture.

"A Thousand Mountains, A Million Streams" was commissioned by the composer Liang Lei in 2016 by the Boston Modern Orchestra Project and Artist Director Jill Rose, and was generously donated by the Jebidi Foundation's new music committee to Robert Amory and The work of Zheng Yingcao. On April 21, 2018, the Boston Modern Orchestra premiered at the Jordan Music Hall of the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, USA. The second part of the work, 《A Million Streams》 was on October 27, 2018 in Qingdao Borans. A retrospective exhibition of the Chinese Symphony Works of Le Grand Theatre and the domestic premiere of the sixth China Symphony Music Season.

Among Liang Lei's many works, there are many themes based on pen and ink, landscapes, and nature. For example, the chamber music "Brush-Stroke" (2004) influenced by two traditional Chinese painters Pan Tianshou and Huang Binhong. The Chinese calligraphy strokes influenced the creation of "Winged Creatures: A Cadenza for Harpsichord" (2006), and "Hearing Landscapes" (2014) influenced by natural sceneries and Huang Binhong's landscape book, etc. The family's landscape feelings also reflect the composer's preference for Chinese landscape painting techniques.

So, in this latest masterpiece "A Thousand Mountains, A Million Streams" with the theme of landscape, how does the composer present the mountains and mountains, the healing and healing of water, how to express his inner voice, and how to progress in layers? The orchestra's tone change, and Yuan Yuan voluntarily spread it out? These questions have caused the author to think about many phenomena in this work.

"A Thousand Mountains, A Million Streams" is composed of "A Thousand Mountains" and "A Million Streams". In the "A Thousand Mountains" paragraph, the composer uses the lexical view of music to explore people's views on the natural landscape and the human "landscape". Destruction and the unique thinking about the relationship between human beings and nature, human beings and culture. This paragraph can be regarded as the stage of establishing the image of "A Thousand Mountains". In the paragraph "A Million Streams", the composer tries to pass "Water" describes it vividly, and heals the "A Thousand Mountains" that has been destroyed.

## **1. A Thousand Mountains Destruction— A Process from Self-Fiction to Reality**

In the "A Thousand Mountains" paragraph, according to the music form and the title of the composer, it can be divided into two structures, A and B, each of which contains 6 parts (refer with Figure 1). The author thinks that the composer will be "freehanded" The two different Chinese and Western painting spirits of "and realism" are integrated into the creation of the "A Thousand

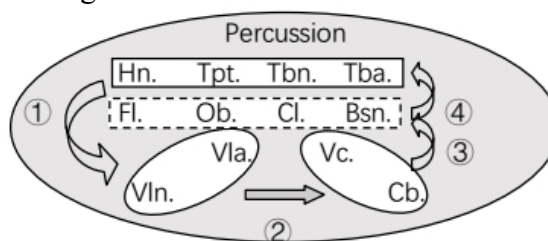
Mountains" paragraph. The combination of freehand and writing corresponds to the gongbi; the realism is connected to the concrete and the abstract. The composer's personal experience is related to the exchange and integration of Eastern and Western cultures in his music. He tends to define himself as a "neither Chinese nor Western" composer. "I respect Western culture very much, but I do not follow It; I love Chinese culture very much, but I don't rely on it."<sup>3</sup>

structure	section	title	Duration (minutes)	Spiritual subject	Acoustic characteristics
A	1	Mountains in Darkness and the Piercing Light	3:31	Freehand	<div>False</div> <div></div> <div>real</div>
	2	Mountains Gradually Draw Closer	2:29		
	3	Song	1:15		
	4	Flying Clouds	1:02		
	5	Admonition: the Breaking Down of Landscapes	2:22		
	6	Opening the Inner Eyes	2:39		
B	7	Vibration and Pulsations	1:09	Realistic	
	8	Ethereal Lights and Distant Mountains mountains	0:31		
	9	Mountains Breathing	0:31		
	10	Mountains in Motion	0:23		
	11	Mountains Take Flight	0:47		
	12	The Shredding of Landscapes	2:03		

**Figure 1.** Two structures in the "A Thousand Mountains" paragraph

### 1.1 Shadow of the Mountain—Outline the Lines

At the beginning of A Thousand Mountains, the composer brought people into an unreal scene surrounded by nature. The tone of the same tone alternates between different instrument groups, simulating the sound of wind across the valley, surrounding the mountain peaks, and far away. The strange sound effects (refer with Figure 2). When the wind of nature blows A Thousand Mountains, the sounds will be different according to the shape, depth, etc. of the mountains. The structure can hear the sound of the sound, echoing the high and low range. Contrast and swiftness on the sound, rapid and leisurely contrast and change.



**Figure 2.** Playing position chart

It can be seen from Figure 2 that according to the playing position of the symphony band, the sound of Percussion surrounds the string group, wood group and brass group instruments. The order of sound between the instrument groups is: Brass group—Violin And the Viola—Cello and Double bass—Wooden tube group—Copper tube group, forming a picture of echoes around the mountains, using the phase method to outline the peak lines.

In the structure, you can hear the sound of the sound, the high and low range echoes, and the contrast and change of the tone are quick and light. In the brass group, by speaking to the horn, according to the length and tone of the brass instrument itself, The sounds made by nature will be different. In the string group, the direction of the sounds made by beat dislocation, acoustic position and instrument tone is from left to right. Other instruments use the method of stippling to imitate other creatures in A Thousand Mountains. The sound makes people feel as if they are in the mountains of nature. What is overwhelming is the pure tone flow and the texture changes densely.

In the second part of A Thousand Mountains (Mountains Gradually Draw Closer), the composer used "multiple sounds"<sup>4</sup> to develop his musical thinking. Each tone has its own "multi-voice" tone texture. Through the conversion of tone, performance, velocity, time and other parameters in different parts, we can weave a complex and changeable tone around a tone. Texture.

When entering A Thousand Mountains, the composer led us deep into the mountains and strolling through the mountains, sometimes hearing the sound of wind and water, and sometimes the noise of small animals; looking up at the sky, feeling the changes in the clouds, sometimes light and sometimes thick, like mountaineers A Thousand Mountains has experienced the transformation of A Thousand Mountains scenery. But in the viewing, it was found that A Thousand Mountains has been destroyed by its predecessors and has been broken. In the fifth part of A Thousand Mountains (Admonition: the Breaking down of Landscapes), the use of percussion instruments has been strengthened and accumulated. The momentum, advancing in the middle of the rhythm counterpoint, depicting the small stones constantly rolling down with the sound of the wooden fish, A Thousand Mountains is already alerting people.

In the sixth part of A Thousand Mountains (Opening the Inner Eyes), the real "master mountain" appeared in A Thousand Mountains, which is the theme of "flowers". The phonetic shape is the "Kangshan" of Panhu, which sets off and surrounds the "Main Mountain".

Entering the depths of A Thousand Mountains, we will open our inner eyes to feel the sound of A Thousand Mountains and resonate with the sound until we become an overlap with each of its strokes and ink splashes.

## **1.2 The Soul of the Mountain—Gradually Collapse**

The closer you are to A Thousand Mountains, the more sounds you feel. The mountains are breathing, singing, and roaring; the landscape is vibrating, pulsating, and dancing; A Thousand Mountains needs the shout of light; A Thousand Mountains is agitating, expanding, rising, grinding, wavering, stretching and Flowering and so on. These sounds are developed by the composer by means of orchestration from thinning to thick, thin to thick.

In the eleventh part of A Thousand Mountains (Mountains Take Flight), the composer depicts the speeding of mountains and rivers by means of fast and dense sound patterns, frequent changes in the instrument set, etc., and is catching up with ecstatic energy and precision, because human activities are Damage to the natural environment, coupled with global warming, the ocean will rise, and the ice sheet will melt, causing severe damage to A Thousand Mountains.

Just at the climax of the development of music, the A Thousand Mountains in front trembled, shook, collapsed, shattered into pieces, and suddenly destroyed. Here, the entire piece of music was torn, and the A Thousand Mountains in the upper part was also When it is torn, it is also a symbol of our destruction and destruction of the natural landscape and our cultural landscape. In this part, the composer basically uses unison and strum to depict A Thousand Mountains's destruction. This kind of explosive power, such as shaking the ground, finally fell into the "bottom of the valley", and announced the end with soft Timpani.

## **2. A Million Streams · Healing— A Voice From Healing to Reconstruction**

"Broken Landscape" immediately entered the "A Million Streams" paragraph. Here, "A Thousand Mountains" experienced great damage, everything withered, landslides ... The composer wanted to explore and heal from the soul and soul "A Thousand Mountains's "trauma. In his mind, the best "solution" to heal the pain is the source of all water—a kind of" soft and quiet sound from the drizzle of the Jiangnan water village".

In this paragraph, the composer overlaps in the string part with special playing methods such as overtone plucking in the treble zone, free jitter of the bow rod, and free stirring of the bowed strings, simulating the free fall of the raindrops and tenderness. Water-like sound and image, from the heart, run in, wash, and heal "A Thousand Mountains" little by little.

In the third part of A Million Streams (Landscape's Heartbeat Returns), rain brings life back to

the landscape, and A Thousand Mountains restores a gentle heartbeat.

At the end of the work, the composer ends with an instrumentalized human voice. This is the "heartbeat of the landscape" he hopes to retrieve, to restore our cultural and natural homeland, and return it to life.

## Summary

"A Thousand Mountains, A Million Streams" is another masterpiece of Liang Lei's "Landscape Series". He continues the creative concept of composer's home music calling for the lost culture. In his works, there is a direct reference to the traditional folk music represented by the folk song "Flower". The material also has the ancient literati spirit (creation concept) of Chinese landscape paintings predicted by the "acoustic pen and ink" technique; both poetic depictions of natural landscapes and remodeling and sublimation of the life course. Let the listeners alternate the tone of different instrument groups. Feel the illusory scene of being in nature in a single sound, comprehend the approaching sound space of mountains in a multi-sounding composition technique, outline the peak line of "Main Mountain" in the pen and ink picture surrounded by peaks, Describe the process of the collapse of thousands of mountains, reconstruct the landscape of life in the drops of water ... All the layout of the work is highly consistent with the idea, picture, and feelings of the work. Various sounds and paintings, landscapes and life, reality and ideals, etc. Under the nourishment of his own "temperature", a kind of self-sublimation is formed. This is a process of self-refinement and self-summation by the composer himself, which puts his core on the spiritual core of traditional Chinese culture and Chinese landscape painting. Solution to the "literati music" presented in a way out, this is his interest; he is also a lifelong pursuit.

"A landscape painting is actually a projection of the ideal landscape, a landscape that is freely recreated from the" interior "of the soul through internal experience, capture, and sedimentation. Therefore, a landscape painting has a close-up, middle-range, and long-range view there are also traces of mountains and rivers, and the reflection and overlap of the past, present, and future at different times.<sup>5</sup>Liang Lei's music has already reached the forefront of philosophy and aesthetics. It is a modern remodeling of the classic Chinese aesthetics. I hope Liang Lei can write more new fusion music and find the heartbeat of the mountains and rivers in the cement forest that is row after row. And the spiritual land of the Chinese.

## References

- [1] Memories of Xiaoxiang (for alto saxophone and tape). Lei Liang.2003
- [2] The Tuning of the world. Schafer RM. The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment. 1994
- [3] "The Music of Lei Liang". Everett, Yayoi Uno. Liner notes for Brush-stroke Mode Records.2009
- [4] Harvard Dictionary of Music. Willi Apel.1970
- [5] Garden Nine (for 2 sopranos,6 altos,3 tenors,1 baritone, piano and 2 pairs of rocks). Lei Liang 1996