

HOH CHUNG SHIH

ARTIST · COMPOSER · GUQIN PERFORMER · RESEARCHER

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BIOGRAPHY

Hoh Chung Shih is a Singapore-based composer, guqin performer and researcher whose practice, since his composition studies began in 1989, has explored relationships between sound, bodily movement, notation, materiality and performance. His works create situations in which musical relationships emerge through actions, constraints and encounters rather than being fully predetermined. They have been presented across Asia, Europe and the Americas, at festivals including 38e Rugissants (France), Osterfestival Tyrol (Austria), Romanischer Sommer Köln (Germany), June in Buffalo (USA) and the International Computer Music Conference.

Since 1996, his study of the guqin with Ji Zhiqun and Xu Yunheng has grown into a research practice on jianzipu notation, embodied knowledge and musical time, published in *Studia Instrumentorum Musicae Popularis* and, forthcoming, the *Asian-European Music Research Journal*. Increasingly this research turns back on his composing: how notation acts upon the body, how performers sense the moment to act, and how works change as they pass between people, materials and media. He holds a PhD in Composition from the University at Buffalo and has served as President of the Composers Society of Singapore since 2016.

EDUCATION & ARTISTIC STUDY

- 2000–2006** **PhD in Music Composition, Presidential Fellow** · University at Buffalo, USA
Composition studies with David Felder and computer music studies with Cort Lippe
- 1996–present** **Guqin Practice and Research** · Private Study
Studies with Ji Zhiqun: Gong Yi and Wu Wenguang lineage repertoire; Xu Yunheng: Guangling School
- 1989–1992** **BMus (Hons), First Class, Singapore Government Scholar** · King's College London, UK
Composition studies with David Lumsdaine; musicology studies with Arnold Whittall

SELECTED RECENT WORKS & PRESENTATIONS

- 2026** ***Veiling Time Shift Laboratory***
Multidisciplinary work for guqin, viola and immersive haptic-visual environment; with Christoven Tan and Yeo Ker Siang
Asian Civilisations Museum, Singapore
- 2026** ***far'fallen***
Collaborative micro-opera/performance with Marco Schindermann, Ashton Phillips and Betsy Lohrer-Hall
Deep Attunement series; White Point Nature Preserve, California, USA
- 2025** ***Distancing Etude***
For orchestra; Tokyo Symphony Orchestra
Asian Composers League Festival, Closing Concert, MUZA Hall, Kawasaki, Japan
- 2025** ***Dance Fantasia: Chromatic Eccentric Weaves***
For microtonal electric keyboard and melodica; BL Duo
AngelicA International Music Festival, Bologna, Italy
- 2024** ***Vita Brevis, Ars Longa***
For string orchestra; Orquesta Marga Marga
Festival Puente, Teatro Municipal de Viña del Mar, Chile
- 2022–23** ***Luminous Clouds I–III***
Series bringing guqin, viola, gamelan and percussion into material and performative encounter; with Alicia de Silva, Thow Xin Wei, Derek Koh and Christoven Tan
Asian Civilisations Museum, Singapore (III, 2023); Solo International Performing Arts Festival, Indonesia (II, 2022)
- 2017–23** ***secret music one***
Spatial performance for five instrumentalists
SETTS, Esplanade Recital Studio, Singapore (2017); TACETi Ensemble, BACC Bangkok (2020) and TCDC, Thailand (2021); weird aftertaste, Aliwal Arts Centre, Singapore (2023)
- 2022** **八板芭的散曲 (*Babanba*)**
For mixed ensemble of Chinese and Western instruments; C-Camerata Taipei
National Recital Hall, Taipei, Taiwan

- 2018–22** **Frissons (series)**
 Later works in the series begun in 2006: *Frissons IV* for viola and 8-channel tape; *cs: {i'impulses (s:capricorn+taurus) frissons i}* for viola and piano (2019); *Frissons V* for viola and two keyboards (2021), triggered through the score of *Reef Weave*; with Christoven Tan
 Studio Zero, Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts, Australia (IV, 2018); Esplanade Recital Studio, Singapore (cs:, 2019); The Arts House, Singapore (V, 2021); *Babel*, Lunchtime Concert Series, LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore (IV, 2022)
- 2019–20** **Reef Weave**
 For solo piano (2019); version with video (2020) with Churen Li, Aaron Andrew Ang and Timothy Tan, commissioned with National Arts Council funding
 Foo Mei Yi, Yong Siew Toh Conservatory (2020); video premiere, 25 November 2020

EARLIER WORKS & INTERNATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

- 2012–13** **Parts (series)**
 Including *Parts* for trombone and piano (2012): uncoordinated parts, each bar the length of one breath, timing discovered between the players
 Duo Amrein/Henneberger, Thailand International Composition Festival, Mahidol University, and Southeast Asian tour (2012); *Parts / Yuan*: Ensemble Mosaik, PGVIM, Bangkok (2013); Ensemble Reconsil, Vienna (2015); piano trio version, ISI Yogyakarta (2022)
- 2007** **Mountain Bright (山明)**
 For large ensemble of 14 players
 University of Redlands, USA, dir. Co Nguyen (2007); Asian Composers League Festival, cond. Robert Casteels, Yong Siew Toh Conservatory Concert Hall, Singapore (2013)
- 2006** **Frissons I–II**
 For solo violin; the first works of the *Frissons* series
 Kia Hui Tan; Exxon-Mobil Explorations in the Arts Series, NIE/NTU, Singapore
- 2000s–10s**
 Music at the Anthology Festival (USA); June in Buffalo (USA); 38e Rugissants (France); Osterfestival Tyrol (Austria); Romanischer Sommer Köln (Germany); International Computer Music Conference (Spain); ACM SIGGRAPH 25th Anniversary Concert (USA); Zeppelin 2008 Sound Art Festival (Spain); Musicacoustica 2008 (China); Sound and Music's The Cutting Edge (UK); Yogyakarta Contemporary Music Festival 2010 (Indonesia); Hanoi New Music Festival (Vietnam)

RESIDENCIES

- 2019** **International Gugak Workshop**
 National Gugak Center, Seoul, South Korea
- 2015** **Composer in Residence**
 Mount Holyoke College, USA; commissioned *Hi-Lo Fide-Lio* for the Mount Holyoke Symphony Orchestra

SELECTED PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

- 2026** Hoh Chung Shih and Xu Yunheng. "Approaching a Multi-Modal Analysis in Guqin Music." *Asian-European Music Research Journal* 18. Forthcoming.
- 2025** Hoh Chung Shih and Xu Yunheng. "Beyond Private and Public: The Continuum of Interpretations in Guqin Music." *Studia Instrumentorum Musicae Popularis*, New Series 9. Berlin: Logos, 205–240.
- 2023** Hoh Chung Shih. "The Ideals of Nature in Guqin Performance Practice: The 7-String Chinese Zither." *Studia Instrumentorum Musicae Popularis*, New Series 8. Berlin: Logos.
- 2021** Hoh Chung Shih. "Guqin Playing Now: Re-inventing the Past as a Creative Way of Sustaining an Instrumental Practice." *Studia Instrumentorum Musicae Popularis*, New Series 7. Berlin: Logos, 21–34.

SELECTED CONFERENCE PAPERS & INVITED TALKS

- 2026** **PANEL The Sound of Now in Asia: Trends in New Music**
 Tongyeong International Music Festival Contemporary Music Forum, South Korea
- 2025** **PAPER Beyond Public and Private: The Transcendental Secrets of Guqin Performance**
 25th Symposium, ICTMD Study Group on Musical Instruments, New York; 8th Lisbon Conference: Chinese Music and Musical Instruments, Portugal
- 2024** **PERFORMER / SPEAKER Spaces and Spacings: Guqin, Contemporary Music, Me**
 Asian Studies and Music Departments, Catholic University, Santiago, Chile
- 2023** **PAPER Identities of Works in Guqin Music and Authenticities in Performance Practice**
 25th International CHIME Conference, Heidelberg Centre for Asian and Transcultural Studies, Germany

- 2023** **PAPER** **The Ideals of Nature in Guqin Performance Practice**
23rd Symposium, ICTM Study Group on Musical Instruments, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2022** **LECTURE** **Composer-Performer Partnership**
36th Asian Composers League Festival, with ISCM World New Music Days 2022, Christchurch, New Zealand
- 2021–22** **LECTURE** **Composition as Organized Performance**
Yong Siew Toh Conservatory, NUS (2021); Indonesia Institute of the Arts Yogyakarta (2022)
- 2021** **LECTURE** **Composing Oneself**
International Symposium “Traditions in Transition”, Princess Galyani Vadhana Institute of Music, Thailand
- 2020** **LECTURE** **Touching Sounds, Instrument as Music**
MA Arts Pedagogy and Practice, LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore
- 2019** **LECTURES / MASTERCLASSES** **Contemporary composition and artistic practice**
Universities and conservatories in Seoul, Taipei, Kaohsiung, Stuttgart and Lübeck

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- 2016–present** President, Composers Society of Singapore
- 2024, 2026** Festival Director, Singapore Composers Festival
- Member, Composers and Authors Society of Singapore. Selected jury service: Asian Composers League Festival Young Composers Competition (2022, 2025); 3rd Singapore International Guqin Invitational Tournament (2021).

SELECTED GRANTS, SCHOLARSHIPS & RECOGNITION

Tan Kah Kee Postgraduate Scholarship · National Arts Council Singapore — Presentation and Participation, Market and Audience Development, and Capability Development Grants · Asia-Europe Foundation Mobility First! Grant · Goethe-Institut Singapore Travel Grant · Presidential Fellowship, University at Buffalo · Singapore Government Scholarship, King's College London

Complete list of works, performances and recordings: chungshih.info