

REVITALIZING LILING FOLK SONGS: VOCAL PERFORMANCE PRACTICES AND MUSIC EDUCATION-ORIENTED INNOVATIONS

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Abstract: This study investigates the vocal performance practices of Liling folk songs, a representative form of traditional music from Hunan Province, China, with the overarching aim of preserving and revitalizing this unique regional intangible cultural heritage. The research is guided by three core objectives: (1) to document and analyze the original stylistic and structural characteristics of Liling folk songs; (2) to re-arrange and reinterpret selected traditional works through modern compositional techniques and contemporary performance strategies; and (3) to create and present new folk-inspired compositions that extend the cultural and educational value of Liling music traditions. To achieve these aims, a comprehensive methodology was adopted, integrating literature review, ethnographic fieldwork, interviews with local culture bearers, and practice-based musical experimentation. The findings reveal that Liling folk songs are distinguished by their pentatonic-based modal systems, speech-like melodic contours, and expressive vocal timbres that reflect the region's linguistic and cultural identity. Through creative re-arrangement, traditional pieces such as *The Song of Persuasion for Marriage* and *Mountain People Love to Play Dongdong Pan* were transformed into concert-ready formats that preserve their cultural essence while embracing innovative orchestration and stage presentation. In addition, original compositions—including *The Flowering Family of Spring* and *I Am Waiting for You in Liling*—were created by drawing inspiration from local poetry, cultural symbols, and musical aesthetics. These works were presented in the themed concert *New Sound of Ancient Ballads* using a lecture-performance model, which enhanced audience engagement and deepened cultural understanding. Expert evaluations and audience satisfaction surveys confirmed the effectiveness of this approach in fostering renewed interest in Liling's folk heritage. The study concludes that vocal performance can simultaneously serve as a tool for cultural preservation, artistic innovation, and educational dissemination. It further advocates sustainable strategies such as interdisciplinary collaboration, integration of folk song studies into music curricula, and the development of evaluative frameworks for practice-based research to ensure the continued vitality of Liling folk traditions.

Keywords: Liling folk songs; vocal performance; practice-based research; folk music innovation; intangible cultural heritage; modern arrangement; cultural transmission

1. Introduction

Liling folk songs, as an important branch of the rich musical heritage of Hunan Province, China, embody the historical memory, aesthetic values, and social customs of the local community (Zhao et al., 2024). Hunan Province, located in south-central China, has a population of approximately 66 million people, with over 60% living in urban areas (Hunan Provincial Government Report, 2025). Despite rapid modernization, folk music traditions remain vital markers of local identity. According to man Ou and Zhu (2025), Hunan's folk songs can be broadly categorized into work songs, ritual songs, and love songs, reflecting both the daily lives and cultural ethos of the people. Within this regional

tradition, Liling folk songs are particularly distinctive, combining elements of Han culture with linguistic and stylistic influences from Jiangxi and Hakka communities.

Sung predominantly in the Liling dialect and built upon pentatonic scales, these songs exhibit natural melodic beauty and speech-like phrasing. Historically, they were closely tied to agricultural labor, community rituals, and expressions of love, thereby functioning as an oral archive of social life. For instance, labor songs were often improvised to coordinate rhythm during tea-picking or farming, while lyrical love songs conveyed themes of longing, parting, and courtship. Collectively, these musical forms encapsulate the lived experience of the local population, providing insights into both individual emotion and collective memory.

However, modernization and globalization pose severe challenges to the vitality of these traditions. Surveys indicate that fewer than 20% of young people in Hunan can sing local folk songs fluently (Yang, 2016), and the intergenerational transmission of musical knowledge has weakened as local dialect usage declines. The popularity of mainstream popular music and the dominance of global media further marginalize traditional practices (Siwen & Jamnongsarn, 2024; Zhang & Xiao, 2023). Although local governments and cultural institutions have promoted festivals, competitions, and educational initiatives, scholars emphasize that such efforts have limited long-term effectiveness without systematic integration into formal music education and innovative performance strategies (Du, 2024; Tang, 2021). This highlights the urgent need to re-examine Liling folk songs not merely as static cultural relics but as dynamic, living traditions that require revitalization to remain relevant in contemporary contexts.

In this regard, Liling folk songs hold significant potential as resources for both cultural preservation and educational innovation. They can foster cultural literacy, strengthen community identity, and enhance intercultural dialogue, aligning with broader national goals of intangible cultural heritage preservation (Li et al., 2024; Li, 2013). Their melodies and lyrics embody not only artistic qualities but also social values and emotional depth, making their revitalization essential for sustaining cultural diversity. Preserving them is not simply safeguarding the past; it is a dynamic process of creative reinterpretation that responds to the cultural and educational needs of today's society.

Accordingly, this study is guided by three interrelated objectives:

- 1) To study Liling folk songs in Hunan Province, China.
- 2) To analyze Liling folk songs performance.
- 3) To publish vocal performance base on Liling folk songs in Hunan Province, China.

2. Literature review

2.1 Theoretical Foundations

The analysis of Liling folk songs requires a framework that can account for both the structural properties of music and the cultural meanings it conveys. Within this framework, the study of musical elements such as melody, rhythm, harmony, texture, and timbre offers a necessary point of departure. Scholars in music theory have long emphasized that the close examination of these parameters enables a precise description of stylistic traits and performance practices (Meyer, 1996; Sarath, 2013). In the case of Liling folk songs, such analysis highlights their simplicity of melodic contour, strong

rhythmic organization, and speech-like phrasing, features that distinguish them from both Western tonal repertoires and other regional folk traditions.

The prominence of pentatonic and modal structures in Liling folk songs further necessitates a modal and pentatonic perspective. By focusing on scale systems and tonal colors outside the framework of functional harmony, this approach makes it possible to explain the unique expressive character of Chinese folk traditions. When combined with structural analysis, modal theory reveals how melodic and tonal choices are intertwined with regional identity and oral transmission (Atcherson, 1973; Haines, 2001).

Yet an adequate account of Liling folk songs cannot rely on structural analysis alone. From the perspective of ethnomusicology, music is best understood in relation to the cultural practices and social institutions in which it is embedded (Harrison, 2012). This orientation illuminates the role of folk songs in agricultural labor, wedding ceremonies, and communal rituals, showing how they function as expressions of collective memory and markers of social identity.

Beyond the cultural context of performance, attention must also be given to the semiotic dimension of music. As Perlovsky (2010) and Feld and Fox (1994) argue, music functions as a system of signs that communicates emotions, values, and cultural narratives. In this sense, Liling folk songs can be read as a “cultural language,” encoding symbolic meanings that extend beyond their immediate sonic material. This symbolic dimension is closely related to theories of music and emotion, which investigate how rhythm, melody, and harmony elicit affective responses (Hevner, 1935). The expressive power of love songs or farewell songs, for instance, lies not only in their melodic content but also in their capacity to evoke emotional resonance among performers and listeners.

The interpretive scope of this research is further deepened by hermeneutics, which treats music as a text capable of bearing historical, social, and existential meanings. Through hermeneutic inquiry, themes of longing, separation, and resilience within Liling folk songs can be understood as articulations of cultural memory rather than mere artistic motifs (Bryant, 2005). Such interpretation allows for a dialogue between musical form and cultural substance, situating folk performance at the intersection of aesthetic expression and lived experience.

Taken together, these theoretical perspectives form a multi-layered framework for the present study. Structural and modal analysis provides clarity about the internal organization of Liling folk songs; ethnomusicology situates them within their cultural matrix; semiotics and emotion theory explain their communicative and affective power; and hermeneutics opens interpretive pathways toward their deeper historical and cultural significance. The integration of these approaches ensures that the study of Liling folk songs encompasses not only their sonic architecture but also their role as vessels of meaning, identity, and memory.

2.2 Research Status

The study of Chinese folk songs and their role in cultural education has been widely recognized as an important aspect of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Within this field, a considerable body of scholarship has highlighted the pivotal function of educational modernization in the transmission of traditional culture. The integration of folk song resources into formal curricula has been regarded as a key means of reinforcing cultural identity and countering the hegemony of Western pedagogical paradigms (Davis,

2005; Li & Ismail, 2025). By embedding regional music traditions into classroom teaching, music education has been positioned not only as a vehicle for skill development but also as a vital mechanism for cultivating national cultural confidence (Campbell, 2002; Yunkun, 2024).

Beyond the pedagogical sphere, research on Chinese folk songs as musical and cultural phenomena has expanded significantly over the past two decades. Earlier studies concentrated on musical forms, stylistic features, and performance techniques, thereby treating folk songs primarily as sonic artifacts (Liu, 2003; Xu, 2018). More recent scholarship, however, has increasingly shifted toward interdisciplinary perspectives, emphasizing their functions as vehicles of social memory, expressions of community identity, and mediums of cross-cultural interaction (Li, 2013; Li & Ismail, 2025). This transition reflects a broader trend in ethnomusicology, where folk songs are no longer confined to the realm of “traditional” art but are understood as dynamic cultural practices that continuously adapt to historical and social change.

Attention has also been given to the modes of dissemination and representation of folk songs in contemporary society. The expansion of stage performances has been recognized as a strategy to enhance their artistic visibility, while higher education has been identified as a crucial context for cultivating both appreciation and performance skills among younger audiences (Gibbons, 1998; Lange, 2010). In parallel, the rise of digital platforms and cultural tourism has created new channels for recontextualizing traditional music, offering possibilities for wider dissemination and commercial sustainability (Zheng et al., 2023). Studies on the digital mediation of folk songs have demonstrated how livestreaming and online archives contribute to revitalization, although concerns have also been raised about the risks of over-commercialization and cultural dilution (Li & Ismail, 2025; Zhang, 2023).

From a broader perspective, the academic discourse on folk songs demonstrates a dual orientation. On one side, emphasis has been placed on safeguarding authenticity and protecting regional characteristics, reflecting the influence of UNESCO’s framework on intangible cultural heritage (Lázaro Ortiz & Jiménez de Madariaga, 2022). On the other side, scholars have increasingly explored innovation, hybridization, and intercultural exchange, recognizing that sustainable preservation requires adaptation to contemporary cultural and educational environments (Ariza-Colpas et al., 2024; Erlewein, 2017). Such a dialectic between tradition and modernity has been consistently foregrounded as the central challenge for the future of folk song studies.

Overall, the existing literature reveals that Chinese folk song research has evolved along three main trajectories: the institutionalization of folk traditions within educational systems, the reinterpretation of their cultural significance in interdisciplinary contexts, and the diversification of their modes of presentation in both physical and digital spaces. These developments collectively provide a solid theoretical and methodological foundation for the present study on the vocal performance of Liling folk songs, while also underscoring the urgent need to balance authenticity, innovation, and audience engagement in their continued transmission.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design and Participants

The study adopted an integrated design that links documentary research, ethnographic inquiry, and practice-based experimentation in order to address the structural, performative, and educational dimensions of Liling folk songs. Within this design, qualitative evidence was prioritized and complemented by small-scale quantitative evaluation drawn from audience surveys. Participants were recruited by purposive and chain referral to ensure informational richness: (a) Liling folk-song practitioners and tradition bearers; (b) musicologists and ethnomusicologists with regional expertise; and (c) folk artists and cultural workers engaged in preservation and community programming. In addition, two local experts in folk music and cultural heritage provided external assessments of accuracy and appropriateness. Audience members attending the research concert were invited to complete a satisfaction questionnaire on site. Informed consent and confidentiality were observed throughout.

3.2 Research Scope

The scope centered on Liling folk songs in Hunan Province and covered three presentational modalities—original renderings, re-arranged versions, and newly composed works—crossed with three genre categories—labor songs, folk ballads, and love songs. A representative repertoire was curated to secure stylistic and functional coverage.

Original renderings: The Flower Gathering (labor), The Song of Persuasion for Marriage (folk ballad), Ghost Song of Love (love).

Re-arranged versions: Mountain People Love to Play Dongdong Pan (labor), re-settings of The Song of Persuasion for Marriage and Ghost Song of Love.

New compositions: New Flower Gathering, The Flowering Family of Spring (folk ballads), and I'm Waiting for You in Liling (love).

The practice component culminated in a lecture-performance titled New Sound of Ancient Ballads (also presented as Ancient Ballads with New Voices), structured into three sets aligned with the three modalities, with an overall duration of 1 hour 45 minutes in a university auditorium/concert-hall setting and simultaneous livestreaming to extend access and document reception.

3.3 Data Collection Tools

A multi-instrument toolkit was employed to triangulate sources and perspectives.

Documentary corpus: historical records, books, dissertations, peer-reviewed articles, and ethnomusicological studies relevant to Liling folk songs, used to establish theoretical and historical baselines.

Semi-structured interview guide: aligned to four issue clusters—comparative features of Liling versus other Hunan traditions; vocal technique and expressive nuance; safeguarding and transmission strategies; and the need for adapting formats to contemporary audiences.

Music-analytical rubric: dimensions for structural analysis (melodic contour and pentatonic/modal design), textual prosody and semantics, and performance practice (vocal timbre, ornamentation), with a comparative lens for traditional vs re-arranged versions (harmonic/rhythmic modifications, orchestration, expressive devices).

Field-observation protocol: participation in live performances, festivals, and community events involving Liling folk music; notes on staging, audience interaction, and instrumental/vocal adaptations; audiovisual documentation to capture situational nuance.

Audience satisfaction questionnaire: a two-part instrument (demographics; satisfaction) using a five-point Likert scale across ten indicators—venue suitability, management/service, scheduling, performance quality, aesthetic enjoyment, satisfaction with original set, satisfaction with re-arranged set, satisfaction with new-composition set, perceived cultural significance, and intention to attend future events—plus an open-ended prompt for additional comments.

3.4 Research Procedures and Content

The research unfolded in linked phases to ensure methodological coherence. Documentary analysis established the conceptual frame and informed repertoire selection. Interviews with practitioners, scholars, and cultural workers generated first-hand accounts of stylistic identity, historical narrative, and contemporary transmission. Repertoire items were vetted with local experts for cultural accuracy and performative appropriateness before rehearsal. The lecture-performance presented the three modality-based sets in sequence, each introduced with concise scholarly commentary to connect musical features with cultural context. During and immediately after the event, audience questionnaires were administered; fieldnotes captured staging details, audience engagement, and observable adaptations (e.g., instrumental color, vocal ornamentation, tempo and dynamic shaping). Post-event debriefs consolidated expert feedback and performer reflections for later analysis.

3.5 Data Analysis

Qualitative data from interviews and observations were coded inductively to derive themes around distinctive features of Liling folk songs, traditional vocal techniques and their stylistic significance, reception and adaptability in modern contexts, and audience preferences regarding presentation styles. Music-analytical comparisons examined traditional and re-arranged versions with attention to melodic/scale design, harmonic and rhythmic alteration, orchestration, and expressive devices. Survey responses were summarized using means and standard deviations for global and indicator-level satisfaction, proportional comparisons for preferences across the three modalities, and keyword frequency analysis of open-ended comments to surface salient perceptions.

3.6 Quality Assurance

Credibility was strengthened through multi-source triangulation (documents, interviews, observation, analysis, surveys), expert checking of repertoire accuracy and appropriateness, and cross-validation between analytical findings and audience/expert evaluations. Procedural transparency—repertoire criteria, analytic dimensions, and reporting templates—was maintained to support replicability and transfer to educational and concert-programming settings.

4. Results

4.1 Findings for Objective 1: Liling Folk Songs

The combined corpus of documentary materials, semi-structured interviews, and participant observation yielded a coherent profile of Liling folk songs. Historical records,

regional song collections, and prior studies were read alongside fieldnotes from local performances and festivals; these were triangulated with interview data from representative inheritors and practitioners (e.g., Yuan Mengling, Xiao Weiqi, Guo Jing) and a local researcher/score recorder (Shi Xiaolin). This multi-source approach made it possible to distinguish widely attested traits from venue- or performer-specific idiosyncrasies, and to trace how stage standardization and digital circulation have recontextualized performance in recent decades (See Appendix Table 1).

Musically and linguistically, the repertoire is rooted in an agrarian lifeworld and articulated through a pentatonic/modal language in which Yu and Zhi functions predominate. Dialectal prosody in the Liling speech community—often described locally as six-tone—conditions melodic contour, cadence points, and the balance between syllabic setting and light melisma, producing a recognizable speech–song continuum. Lexical items with local semantic color are musically foregrounded: the affectionate “gui/ghost” in love lyrics is regularly highlighted by pitch inflection, brief appoggiaturas, or portamento-like slides; paralinguistic lining words (e.g., *ya/ye*) extend phrases, intensify affect, and cue responsorial entries. These features operate as stylistic invariants across pieces and performance contexts.

Genre organization aligns with social function rather than purely stylistic taxonomy. Labor songs coordinate collective work or pace individual effort; they favor concise texts, formulaic refrains, and call-and-response, and they admit mimetic bodily gestures derived from work praxis. Folk ballads carry narrative and calendrical content—seasonal cycles, local lore—and tend toward strophic forms with gently varied repetitions; melodic motion is predominantly conjunct and pastoral imagery is common. Love songs enact courtship and intimate dialogue through antiphonal duets or responsorial textures, deploying easily memorized motives with strategic leaps at phrase peaks to heighten expressivity. Across genres, meters are predominantly duple at *Andante tempi*, while textures are chiefly homophonic with occasional heterophonic thickening in communal singing. Where staged semi-dance realizations occur, the movement vocabulary remains functional and mimetic—rowing, planting, or tea-picking gestures—rather than abstract choreography (see Fig. 1 for representative costume idioms).





Figure 1. Typical dress

Performance practice converges on clear diction, natural timbre, and a high-bright projection suited to outdoor delivery. Singers commonly employ a chest–head mix to secure both carrying power and flexibility; decorative tones are used sparingly and are tightly text-driven. Local descriptive categories such as “high cavity” (a ringing, slightly falsetto-tinged production) and “flat cavity” (a fuller, speech-proximate tone) are applied situationally to match venue size and text affect. Instrumentation in traditional contexts centers on erhu, dizi, pipa, and light percussion; pedagogical or staged versions may add guzheng or piano to stabilize pitch and support blended textures. Lead-and-chorus formats and male–female dialogue duets are common, with solo renditions used for reflective narrative stanzas.

Historically, Liling sits on the Hunan–Jiangxi cultural corridor and exhibits cumulative contact effects. Migrations in the Ming–Qing and Republic eras, including Hakka influences, encouraged lexical borrowing, prosodic particularities, and a taste for narrative directness. The mid-twentieth century saw collection, arrangement, and staged re-presentation of emblematic items, accelerating a shift from local utility to public art; late-twentieth and early-twenty-first centuries introduced school-based teaching, festival and competition circuits, and digital platforms that now mediate access even as everyday dialect use declines. Informants consistently noted this double movement: attenuation of vernacular environments alongside new forms of visibility and archiving.

In comparative perspective within Hunan, kinship with neighboring traditions was acknowledged, yet distinctiveness was repeatedly linked to narrative density, concise melodic language, and colloquial textual delivery. Compared with opera-tinged repertoires such as Huagu opera zones or minority-inflected idioms in western Hunan, Liling items tend to exhibit a narrower ambitus, slower mean melodic motion, and a premium on intelligibility, thereby facilitating oral transmission and audience participation. These traits help explain the ease with which pieces move between everyday performance and staged presentation without losing their communicative clarity.

Safeguarding practices identified by interviewees and observed in the field cluster around four domains: curricular insertion (school courses, graded songbooks, children’s choir materials), systematic audio–video archiving (scores, recordings, contextual metadata), government-supported showcases (competitions, festivals, cultural weeks), and digital platforms that extend audience reach and encourage participatory circulation. Opportunities for adaptation were broadly welcomed on the condition that the modal

nuclei, dialectal identity, and textual integrity remain intact. Successful rearrangements were described as those that treat orchestration as coloristic augmentation—adding harmonic coloring, timbral contrast, and rhythmic layering—without displacing prosodic alignment or pentatonic pitch cells; conversely, over-commercialization and excessive stylistic hybridization were cited as risks to be avoided.

These findings supply the analytic baselines for the subsequent chapters. The modal–prosodic constraints and functional genre logic identified here inform both the structural analysis in Objective 2 and the curatorial design in Objective 3, where the repertoire is rendered through three presentational modalities—original renderings, rearranged versions, and newly composed works—and then evaluated for stylistic fidelity, cultural appropriateness, and audience reception.

4.2 Findings for Objective 2: Performance Analysis and Development

Cross-item analysis confirms a tightly bounded idiom: conjunct melodic motion punctuated by targeted leaps at phrase peaks; stable duple meters at *Andante* tempi; homophonic textures occasionally thickened heterophonically in communal contexts; and ornamentation that mirrors dialectal inflection. Within this envelope, the three presentational modalities—original renderings, rearranged versions, and newly composed works—diverge not by abandoning the idiom but by reallocating musical salience (melodic nucleus versus coloristic layers), which in turn shapes projection, contrast, and dramaturgical pacing.

In the original set (*The Flower Gathering*, *The Song of Persuasion for Marriage*, *Ghost Song of Love*), modal coherence and syllabic text setting anchor the vocal line. *The Flower Gathering* centers on a D-Yu pentatonic nucleus ($\approx$ G–A–B–D–E), 2/4 at *Andante*, with strophic variation and cadential returns to modal finals; melismas occur sparingly at line ends to underline textual imagery. *The Song of Persuasion for Marriage* employs C-Zhi pitch cells (C–D–F–G–A) in a dialogic layout whose rhythmic profile imitates natural speech through sixteenth-note runs followed by notated “breathing” pauses; cadences stabilize on Zhi–Gong functions to preserve intelligibility during antiphonal exchanges. *Ghost Song of Love* is a love duet in call-and-response (a draft misstatement describing a mother–daughter dialogue was corrected during analysis); the piece uses Zhi-type material with small-interval contour and selective fourth/fifth ascents at emotional apexes, while dialectal lexemes such as “gui/ghost” are foregrounded by brief portamento or *appoggiaturas*. In all three, the prosodic alignment—one note per syllable except for text-driven elongations—functions as a style-preserving invariant, and the vocal production favors clear diction and a high-bright projection supported by a chest–head mix.

Rearranged versions retain pentatonic pitch cells and thematic contours while introducing harmonic coloring, orchestral timbres, and rhythmic layering. *Mountain People Love to Play Dongdong Pan* (A-Yu) maps work-gesture periodicity onto 4/4 with percussion patterns inspired by *Da Chun Luo Gu*, adding stratified ostinati beneath the original call-and-response; octave displacements and timbral counterlines in winds/strings heighten the climactic B-section without exceeding the song’s ambitus logic. The rearranged *Persuasion* and *Ghost Song* keep primary melodies intact, allow ≤ 1 non-pentatonic passing pitch per phrase as coloristic inflection, and use orchestral families to distribute narrative roles (woodwinds for commentary, harp for arpeggiated

support, low strings for harmonic grounding). Syncopation and dotted patterns are deployed mainly at inter-phrase junctures to maintain prosodic clarity inside phrases. These moves increase spectral breadth and local contrast while preserving modal nuclei, cadential habits, and speech-song continuity.

The new compositions proceed by idiom-conserving derivation rather than stylistic rupture. New Flower Gathering models an A–A1–B–A2 design on D-Yu, with children’s-choir suitability driving phrase length, tempo, and tessitura; percussive mallets (glockenspiel/woodblock) emulate folk drumming while strings provide gentle ostinati to support collective singing. The Flowering Family of Spring blends G-pentatonic melodic cells with pop-inflected verse–chorus periodicity (Moderato, 4/4), maintaining parallel-thirds choral writing for warmth and memorability; electronic pads are used as a soft-edged timbral bed rather than as a structural harmonic driver. I’m Waiting for You in Liling returns to D-Yu in 2/4 Andante ($\approx J=80$), preserves the narrow-leap contour of the source idiom, and assigns climactic imagery (porcelain/fireworks metaphors) to orchestrational swells, brief added-sixth/ninth sonorities, and registral expansion; the pentatonic cadential grammar remains intact, ensuring that narrative lyricism is carried by melody rather than by harmonic novelty.

Functionally, rearrangement and new composition enhance projection (through registral and timbral expansion), contrast (via layered ostinati and orchestrational color), and pacing (through sectional growth and interludes) without eroding stylistic identity when three constraints are observed: (1) modal nuclei remain audible in every phrase; (2) prosodic alignment is kept within a syllabic frame except at text-motivated elongations; and (3) emblematic motives retain their contour and cadential destinations. Under these constraints, innovation levers—percussion stratification, counterline writing, limited passing-tone color, and dynamic arches—proved effective. The overall dramaturgical arc across the three sets places expository clarity in the originals, sonic breadth in the rearrangements, and narrative closure in the new works, a sequencing that audiences recognized as both stylistically faithful and emotionally legible.

To operationalize the cross-item analysis summarized above, Table 1 presents a compact, like-for-like matrix across the nine works. Parameters are normalized so that modality (original/rearranged/new), genre function, modal/pitch cells, meter/tempo, vocal ambitus, cadential habits, prosodic rules, and salient textural/orchestrational features can be compared at a glance. The labeling for Ghost Song of Love reflects the corrected classification as a love duet in call-and-response form.

Table 1. Comparative matrix (nine items, key musical parameters)

Work	Modality	Genre	Mode / Pitch Cell	Meter / Tempo	Ambitus (voice)	Cadential habit	Prosody rule	Texture / Orchestration (salient)
The Flower Gathering	Original	Labor	D-Yu (G–A–B–D–E)	2/4, Andante	≈ 11 –12th	Returns to Yu/Gong	Syllabic; melisma at line	Homophonic; erhu/dizi/pipa; light perc.

The Song of Persuasion for Marriage	Original	Ballad (dialogic)	C-Zhi (C–D–F–G–A)	2/4, Andante (≈♩=65)	≈ M9	Zhi→Gong	ends Speech-like sixteen th runs + rests	Homophonic; duet antiphony
Ghost Song of Love	Original	Love duet	Zhi-type	2/4, Andante	moderate	Zhi final with speech slides	Syllabic + portamento on “gui”	Homophonic; call-and-response
Mountain in People Love to Play Dongdong Pan	Rearranged	Labor	A-Yu	4/4, Andante	expanded in B	Ostinato-framed	Syllabic dominance	Percussion stratification; wind/strings counterlines
Persuasion (rearranged)	Rearranged	Ballad	C-Zhi (±1 passing tone/phrased)	2/4, Andante	similar	Preserved	Preserved	Orchestral color; harp/woodwinds commentary
Ghost Song (rearranged)	Rearranged	Love duet	Zhi nucleus (±1 passing tone/phrased)	2/4, Andante	slightly broader	Preserved	Preserved	Choir/piano or chamber orch.; dynamic arches
New Flower Gathering	New	Labor-derived	D-Yu	2/4, Andante	child-friendly	Preserved	Syllabic	Mallets + strings ostinati; children’s choir
The Flowering Family of Spring	New	Ballad/children	G-pentatonic	4/4, Moderato (≈♩=96)	C4–G5	Verse/chorus finals	Syllabic; parallel 3rds	Pads + piano + light perc.; pop-periodicity

I'm Waitin' g for You in Liling	New Love D-Yu	2/4, Andante ($\approx J=80$)	$\approx 11-12$ σ closures	Yu/Gon	Syllabi , select icaps at peaks	Orchestral swells; added 6/9 coloration s
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To make explicit what is preserved and what is transformed across modalities, Table 2 maps style-preserving constraints (derived from the modal-prosodic profile and interview testimony) against the specific “innovation levers” used in rearrangements and new compositions. The quantitative limits (e.g., ≤ 1 non-pentatonic passing tone per phrase) functioned as design rules in this project to prevent stylistic drift.

Table 2. Transformation map (original → rearranged / new)

Dimension	Style-preserving constraint	Rearrangement lever	New-work lever
Pitch language	Pentatonic nucleus audible each phrase	≤ 1 non-pentatonic passing tone per phrase; no change to cadential finals	New motives built from same cell; cadences remain modal
Prosody	One-note-per-syllable baseline	Syncopation between phrases, not inside key words	Child-choir scansion; pop-periodic stresses align with text
Rhythm / Groove	Duple meter; Andante baseline	Ostinati, dotted figures at interludes	Verse-chorus periodicity; light syncopation
Texture	Homophonic core	Coloristic counterlines; register doubling	Pads/arpeggios as bed; melody remains forward
Form	Strophic/periodic	Interludes/codas; sectional growth	Through-composed within A–A1–B–A2 or V–C–V

For rehearsal planning and stage realization, Table 3 translates the analysis into practical checkpoints. Each row states what to verify and a simple pass criterion (musical/engineering), enabling conductors, arrangers, and sound engineers to test stylistic fidelity and audience intelligibility during run-throughs and sound checks.

Table 3. Practical checks for stylistic fidelity (stage & rehearsal)

Checkpoint	What to verify	Pass criteria
Cadences	Final tones match Yu/Zhi grammar	$\geq 90\%$ phrases resolve to modal functions
Diction	Text intelligibility over ensemble	Consonant clarity at phrase onsets; SNR (voice:ensemble) $\geq +6$ dB
Balance	Voice vs. percussion/low strings	No masking of 1–3 kHz band; peaks

Ornament	Portamento/appoggiaturas are text-led	ducked by -2~-3 dB No gratuitous runs; ornaments only on semantic pivots
Ambitus	Leaps match idiom & tessitura	Peak notes occur at textual/emotional apexes only

4.3 Findings for Objective 3: Publication and Dissemination

The lecture-performance New Sound of Ancient Ballads operationalized the practice component of this study and functioned as a dissemination pilot. The curatorial arc mapped directly to the research pathway—original renderings → rearranged settings → newly composed works—so that audiences could first hear stylistic baselines and then experience controlled innovation. The 1 h 45 min program took place in a university auditorium/concert hall with a simultaneous livestream; narration between items supplied historical context, modal-prosodic cues for listening, and brief demonstrations of dialectal inflection. This design connected scholarly explication to performance practice without interrupting musical flow.

Expert written evaluations from two local authorities converged on three points. First, artistic integrity was recognized where modal nuclei, prosody, and emblematic motives remained audible despite orchestrational expansion. Second, educational value was judged high for dialogue-based pieces and children-suitable items, which lend themselves to classroom adoption and choir training. Third, cultural relevance was strongest when musical themes intersected identifiable local symbols (e.g., porcelain), suggesting targeted deployment in cultural-tourism programming. In short, differentiated channels were recommended: percussion-driven labor items for festivals, dialogic/children's repertoire for curricula, and symbol-rich love narratives for cultural showcases.

Audience evaluation comprised 120 valid questionnaires (five-point Likert; ten indicators). Mean scores exceeded 4.6 on all items; the highest were intention to attend future events (4.91) and perceived importance of Liling folk songs (4.89), indicating strong engagement and cultural salience. Descriptive inspection of open-ended comments aligned with these results: the lecture-performance format and artistically conservative but coloristic rearrangements were praised; constructive requests focused on longer cultural introductions, clearer voice-instrument balance in select rearranged numbers, and larger stage space for choir-dance combinations. These findings were immediately cycled through a PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) loop that documented planning assumptions, execution, assessment, and follow-up actions. Correctives prioritized enhanced sound checks and mixing guidelines (speech-song intelligibility as a first principle), expanded program notes (glossary and brief song histories), and venue optimization for multi-segment staging.

Dissemination, in this model, is not limited to a single event but proceeds along three coordinated rails. The concert rail establishes stylistic credibility and gathers public feedback; the education rail converts repertoire into teachable modules (strophic originals, dialogic ballads, child-choir new works) with clear prosody-melody alignment; the cultural-tourism rail communicates local identity through repertoire whose texts embed regionally legible symbols (e.g., porcelain and seasonal labor). The expert crosswalk and audience responses together delineate a pragmatic allocation of works to contexts while

retaining one stylistic rule across channels: innovation is admissible only insofar as modal nuclei, prosody, and cadential grammar remain intact. The follow-up plan records these constraints as operational standards for the next presentation cycle.

Descriptive statistics for the ten audience indicators are reported in Table 5, which substantiate the claims of high engagement and perceived cultural salience; expanded curatorial mapping, expert channel recommendations, comment-to-action coding, the full PDCA register, dissemination packages, and next-cycle KPIs are provided in Appendix 2 for auditability and reuse.

4.4 Synthesis

Taken together, the enquiry delineates a presentation-and-preservation framework in which style-preserving constraints—audible pentatonic/modal nuclei (primarily Yu and Zhi), dialect-led prosody with syllabic baseline, and cadential grammar—are held constant while innovation levers—orchestral color, rhythmic layering, registral doubling, and dramaturgical pacing—are applied in bounded ways. Evidence from documentary sources and interviews establishes the stylistic ground: a Han agrarian repertoire whose narrative density, clear diction, and bright outdoor timbre are bound to dialectal prosody. Music-analytic cross-item results show that when rearrangements and new works retain modal pitch cells and prosodic alignment, conjunct melodic motion and strophic/periodic thinking continue to read as “Liling,” even under expanded timbral envelopes. The concert pilot then tests this proposition publicly: expert reports endorse artistic integrity where the modal nucleus and text intelligibility remain foregrounded, and audience scores (means > 4.6 across ten indicators, with 4.89 for perceived importance and 4.91 for willingness to attend again) indicate both cultural salience and receptivity to curated change. Open comments do not reject innovation per se; they ask that it be mediated by longer cultural introductions and protected by better vocal balance and staging—requests that align with the same style-preserving constraints.

On that evidential basis, actionable pathways crystallize without forcing a single channel to carry all aims. A concert pathway uses a three-set arc—original → rearranged → new—to make the invariants audible before presenting controlled transformation; a curricular pathway converts dialogic ballads and child-suitable new compositions into teachable modules where prosody guides scansion and melodic contour; a cultural-tourism pathway deploys symbol-rich love narratives and porcelain-themed texts for identity communication. Each pathway is governed by the same rule: innovation is admissible insofar as modal nuclei, prosody, and cadences remain intact and intelligible. The PDCA loop operationalizes this rule as production standards (scripted lecture segments and glossary; mandatory balance rehearsals with target SNR for vocals; venue/stage zoning for mixed forces) so that dissemination scales without stylistic drift.

The synthesis also specifies boundary conditions that limit creative latitude in service of authenticity: non-pentatonic tones may enter as passing coloration at phrase level but not at cadence; syncopation may articulate inter-phrase links but should not distort key lexemes; ornament must remain text-led (e.g., portamento on dialectal pivots such as *gui*). Within these bounds, rearrangement and composition demonstrably enhance projection, contrast, and pacing while preserving identity, a claim strengthened by the correction of source inconsistencies (e.g., *Ghost Song of Love* treated and performed as a love duet in call-and-response, not a mother–daughter dialogue).

Two forms of contribution follow. Substantively, the study offers a repeatable recipe for revitalizing regional song traditions that couples ethnomusicological fidelity with contemporary production practice. Methodologically, it models a closed evidence loop that begins with style profiling, proceeds through analysis-informed design, and returns via expert and audience evaluation to codify house rules for future cycles. At the same time, limitations are recognized: a single-locale sample and one-venue pilot constrain generalization; Likert summaries provide breadth rather than fine-grained perception data; and expert evaluation, while authoritative locally, is not yet multi-site. Future work should therefore pursue longitudinal, multi-venue replication; add acoustic telemetry (e.g., median voice-to-ensemble SNR captured at front-of-house) and item-level listening tests; expand the digital archive with synchronized score–audio–dialect annotations; and pilot teacher-facing materials in real classrooms with pre/post micro-assessments of modal/dialect awareness.

In sum, the findings warrant a cautious but optimistic claim: Liling folk songs can sustain stylistic identity while engaging contemporary audiences, provided that innovation remains audibly anchored to mode, prosody, and cadence, and that dissemination is routed through differentiated channels whose production practices encode those anchors. This is not a static preservation stance but a governed evolution—one that treats authenticity as a set of audible constraints rather than an injunction against change.

5. Discussion and conclusion

5.1 Discussion

This study undertook an integrated enquiry into Liling folk songs that coupled documentary analysis, ethnographic interviewing and observation, music-analytical comparison, and practice-based prototyping through a lecture-performance. The corpus spanned three genre functions (labor, ballad, love) and three presentational modalities (original renderings, rearranged versions, and new compositions). Analysis of scores, recordings, and field notes, triangulated with interviews with representative inheritors and local researchers, yielded a stable stylistic profile: pentatonic/modal nuclei dominated by Yu and Zhi functions; a speech–song continuum governed by dialectal prosody; conjunct melodic motion punctuated by targeted leaps at phrase peaks; duple meters at Andante tempi; and homophonic textures with occasional heterophonic thickening in communal settings. Practice experiments then tested whether coloristic expansion and dramaturgical pacing could be introduced without eroding identity. Audience (N = 120) and expert evaluations confirmed that innovation was accepted where modal nuclei, prosodic alignment, and cadential grammar remained audible, and flagged mix balance and contextual framing as areas to standardize in future cycles.

Theoretical significance and contribution

Structural analysis of musical elements (Müller, 2015), modal/pentatonic perspectives on Chinese idioms (Adorno & Paddison, 1982), ethnomusicological embedding in social life (Harrison, 2012), semiotic framing of musical meaning (Molino et al., 1990), emotion-theoretic accounts of affective induction (Reisenzein, 2022), and hermeneutic interpretation of cultural memory (Lotman, 2019). Much of this scholarship either (a) describes structure without specifying operational thresholds for idiom

preservation, or (b) theorizes context and meaning without translating those insights into actionable design rules for performance and pedagogy.

The present study's chief theoretical contribution is to make authenticity audible by formalizing a style-preserving innovation (SPI) rule-set that can be tested and falsified in performance. Three invariants emerged as necessary conditions for “sounding Liling”: (1) modal nuclei—pentatonic pitch cells (Yu/Zhi) must remain perceivable in every phrase, with cadences resolving to idiomatic finals; (2) dialect-led prosody—a syllabic baseline governs scansion, with melisma and portamento permitted only at text-motivated pivots; and (3) cadential grammar—phrase endings conform to locally legible closure habits. Within these constraints, innovation levers—orchestral coloring, rhythmic layering, registral doubling, and dramaturgical pacing—can expand projection and contrast. By turning broad theoretical positions into parameterized constraints (e.g., allowing ≤ 1 non-pentatonic passing tone per phrase as coloristic inflection, placing syncopation between phrases rather than inside key lexemes), the study operationalizes the interface between analysis, cultural meaning, and current dissemination debates. This bridges, rather than merely juxtaposes, structural, ethnographic, semiotic, and affective accounts: the prosody-first constraint links directly to ethnolinguistic identity; the cadential grammar frames semiotic “closure”; and the retention of modal pitch cells explains why affective responses remain anchored even under timbral modernization.

A secondary theoretical contribution concerns method in ethnomusicology and practice-based research. Instead of inferring acceptance from abstract norms, the project closed an evidence loop: profile $\rightarrow$ design $\rightarrow$ public test $\rightarrow$ evaluation $\rightarrow$ standards. The PDCA cycle and the quantified audience response (means > 4.6 ; 4.89 for perceived importance; 4.91 for willingness to attend) demonstrate how stylistic hypotheses can be trialed and refined in the wild, complementing field description with experiment-like feedback while remaining ethically situated within the community.

Practical significance and guidance for stakeholders

Because the same invariants that preserve style also predict reception, the findings translate directly into actionable guidance.

Educators (primary, secondary, higher-ed, community choirs). Adopt a prosody-guided sequencing: (i) strophic originals (e.g., *The Flower Gathering*) for modal listening and diction drills; (ii) dialogic ballads (*The Song of Persuasion for Marriage*) for two-part antiphony and speech-rhythm musicianship; (iii) child-suitable new works (*The Flowering Family of Spring*) for ensemble confidence and cultural vocabulary. Provide leadsheets in pentatonic notation, basic IPA/romanization with dialect tips, and rehearsal tracks that model syllabic scansion. Assess with short pre/post prompts on modal/dialect features and simple rubrics for text intelligibility.

Performers, arrangers, and sound teams. Use the SPI rule-set as a design checklist: keep phrase-level modal cells audible; reserve passing-tone color for interior motion; place syncopation at inter-phrase joints; ornament only at semantic pivots (e.g., *gui*). In rehearsal and FOH mixing, prioritize speech-song intelligibility with a target voice:ensemble SNR $\geq +6$ dB, tame percussion peaks by 2–3 dB in rearranged items, and confirm that $\geq 90\%$ of phrases close on idiomatic finals. Sequence programs as original $\rightarrow$ rearranged $\rightarrow$ new to render invariants audible before presenting change.

Cultural managers and policy makers. Build a two-track visibility + survivability plan: (i) periodic showcases mapped to repertoire function—percussion-driven labor items for festivals; dialogic/children’s pieces for curricula and community choirs; symbol-rich love narratives for cultural-tourism sets; (ii) a dialect-aware archive (score–audio–context metadata; synchronized lyric–prosody annotations) to stabilize transmission. Guard against over-commercialization by embedding the SPI constraints in commissioning briefs and grant guidelines; require program notes that explain mode, prosody, and lexemes to educate audiences while they listen.

Methodologically, the study also corrects source inconsistencies uncovered during analysis: Ghost Song of Love functions as a love duet in call-and-response, not a mother–daughter dialogue. This clarification aligns textual semantics, vocal staging, and prosodic treatment across both original and rearranged versions, tightening the evidential base on which the SPI rules rest.

5.2 Conclusion

This research documented the stylistic ground of Liling folk songs, designed and tested rearrangements and new works under explicit modal–prosodic constraints, and piloted a lecture-performance as a dissemination and evaluation platform. The core finding is that Liling identity remains audible under bounded innovation: when pentatonic/modal nuclei, dialect-led prosody, and cadential grammar are preserved, orchestral color, rhythmic stratification, and dramaturgical pacing can enhance projection, contrast, and audience engagement without stylistic drift. Expert appraisals emphasized artistic integrity, educational value, and channel-specific deployment; audience data indicated high satisfaction and strong cultural salience, with constructive requests that have already been folded into production standards (mix balance, extended cultural introductions, stage zoning).

Contributions. Substantively, the study provides a replicable recipe for revitalization that couples ethnomusicological fidelity to contemporary production practice. Theoretically, it advances Chapter-2 debates by converting broad claims about structure, context, meaning, and affect into parameterized, testable constraints—a concrete account of authenticity as an audible set of conditions rather than a static ideal. Methodologically, it models a closed evidence loop (profile → design → public test → evaluation → standards) that others can adapt to parallel regional traditions.

Limitations. The enquiry is localized (one region), performance-context specific (one venue/format), and evaluatively modest (two expert reports; a 120-respondent convenience sample with Likert breadth rather than perception depth). Some orchestrational textures relied on MIDI realizations rather than live symphonic forces, and no acoustic telemetry (e.g., FOH SNR logging) was captured to correlate mix targets with perception.

Future research. Next steps include multi-venue replications with larger and more diverse expert panels; controlled listening tests on prosody intelligibility and modal salience under varying orchestrational loads; acoustic telemetry during performances to validate balance standards; longitudinal classroom pilots using the proposed modules with pre/post learning measures; expansion of a dialect-aware digital archive (score–audio–lyric alignment); and cross-regional comparisons to refine the SPI rule-set for

other Han traditions and to map tolerance thresholds for passing-tone color, syncopation placement, and ornament density.

In closing, preservation is framed here not as stasis but as governed evolution: a living practice in which constraints make continuity audible and innovation legible, enabling Liling folk songs to speak clearly to contemporary audiences while remaining themselves.

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Appendix 1

Expert	Role / Affiliation	Q1. Similarities & Differences with Other Hunan Folk Songs	Q2. Singing Style (Vocal Skills & Expression)	Q3. Safeguarding & Inheritance	Q4. Performance Forms for Contemporary Audiences
Yuan Menglin	Representative inheritor of Liling folk songs (Hunan)	Lyrics are down-to-earth and narrative-driven,	Natural delivery with minimal ornamental	Make young people willing to learn and sing:	Enrich exposure via short videos and folk-song documentaries; organize ICH

	ICH); 4th-generation inheritor of <i>Ghost Songs</i> ; renowned female singer in Liling	depicting daily life, labor scenes, love stories, and local customs; compared with other Hunan areas, Liling songs place stronger emphasis on storytelling and lived atmosphere.	figures; avoids excessive technical display; a speech-song (“rap-combination”) tendency that prioritizes textual clarity.	introduce Liling folk songs into school curricula and textbooks; use the internet for dissemination.	(“non-genetic”) activities to enable direct interaction between inheritors and youth, enhancing experiential engagement.
Xiao Weiqi	Representative inheritor of Liling folk songs (Hunan ICH); 4th-generation inheritor of <i>Ghost Songs</i> ; renowned male singer in Liling	Distinct local color with pronounced labor-culture traits, especially in work and pastoral songs; melodies are predominantly pentatonic, smooth, and lively.	High, loud, and clear timbre; chest-head mix for projection and outdoor suitability; labor songs show passionate, uninhibited affect, while love and narrative songs are softer and more euphemistic, emphasizing fluid phrasing and natural melodic rise-and-fall.	Strengthen music education in schools and communities so youth encounter Liling songs early; organize more government/institution-backed competitions and performances to bring the repertoire into public view.	Combine modern arrangements and instrumental accompaniment to suit contemporary stages while preserving the song’s nature.
Guo Jing	Representative inheritor of Liling folk songs	Compared with other Hunan traditions,	More colloquial, with emphasis on	Establish systematic audio, video, and textual	Appropriate adaptation is acceptable, but avoid over-

Shi Xiaolin	(Hunan ICH); 5th-generation inheritor of <i>Ghost Songs</i> ; renowned male singer in Liling	Liling songs feature concise musical language and stronger narrative expression; unlike opera-tinged Hengyang <i>Huagu</i> or minority-colored Xiangxi styles; melodies move more slowly with a narrower range, aiding oral transmission	lyric expression over voice modification ; labor songs have evident rhythmic drive, whereas love songs are delicate and emotionally implicit.	archives; publish books on Liling folk songs to support study and creation by future scholars and musicians.	commercialization that would erode cultural value; consider integrated performances with drama or dance to enhance stage presentation.
	Researcher, Liling Cultural Center; Liling folk-song score recorder; erhu performer	Hallmarks are “oral” and “local” character; unlike religiously tinged Qidong fishing-drum or Yueyang lake-fishery songs; closer to farming culture with strong local flavor in lyrics.	Clear pronunciation, natural timbre, relatively stable melodic lines—readily accepted across age groups.	Propose establishing a dedicated fund for Liling folk-song research and dissemination under ICH protection; encourage young musicians to participate and reinterpret songs in modern ways.	Promote cross-border collaborations, e.g., linking folk songs with popular culture (film, animation) to reach wider audiences.

Appendix 2. Consolidated Tables for Publication and Dissemination

Block	Entry / Row Heading	Subfield	Value
Program map and research alignment	Originals	Representative items	<i>The Flower Gathering; The Song of Persuasion for Marriage; Ghost Song of Love</i>
		Research function	Establish stylistic baselines (modal nuclei, prosody, cadences)
		What the audience learns	How Liling idiom sounds before intervention; how text and dialect shape melody
	Rearrangements	Representative items	<i>Mountain People Love to Play Dongdong Pan</i> ; rearranged <i>Persuasion</i> ; rearranged <i>Ghost Song</i>
		Research function	Test coloristic expansion without stylistic drift
		What the audience learns	What can change (timbre, layering) vs. what must remain (mode, prosody, cadences)
	New works	Representative items	<i>New Flower Gathering; The Flowering Family of Spring; I'm Waiting for You in Liling</i>
		Research function	Demonstrate idiom-conserving creation for education and outreach
		What the audience learns	How new music carries the idiom into classrooms, festivals, tourism
	Percussion-driven labor items	Recommended channel	Festivals / community events
		Rationale	High kinetic energy, call-and-response participation, strong outdoor projection
		Recommended channel	School curricula / choir training
Expert recommendation crosswalk (repertoire → channel)	Dialogic ballads & children-suitable items	Rationale	Clear prosody, teachable forms, classroom alignment
		Recommended channel	Cultural-tourism showcases / themed concerts
	Symbol-rich love narratives	Recommended channel	Regional symbolism (porcelain, dialectal lexemes), narrative appeal
		Rationale	
	Venue appropriateness	Mean (out of 5)	4.73
	Service satisfaction	Mean (out of 5)	4.76
Audience evaluation (N = 120; five-point Likert)	Time arrangement	Mean (out of 5)	4.68

Thematic synthesis of open comments → actions	Performance quality	Mean (out of 5)	4.85
	Aesthetic enjoyment	Mean (out of 5)	4.87
	Original folk songs	Mean (out of 5)	4.81
	Rearranged folk songs	Mean (out of 5)	4.79
	Newly composed songs	Mean (out of 5)	4.83
	Recognition of importance	Mean (out of 5)	4.89
	Willingness to attend	Mean (out of 5)	4.91
	Cultural context depth	Representative need	“More background and stories.”
		Action	Expand pre-concert talk; add printed glossaries and song notes
	Voice–instrument balance	Representative need	“Vocals masked in some rearrangements.”
PDCA action register		Action	Stricter sound-check; target SNR (voice:ensemble) $\geq +6$ dB; gentle ducking on peaks
	Stage space for mixed forces	Representative need	“Crowded in choir-dance scenes.”
		Action	Larger stage or re-zoned blocking; staggered entries; reduce on-stage footprint
	Plan	Concrete step	Scripted lecture-performance with timed slides & glossary
		Status for next cycle	Adopt as standard pre-show pack
	Do	Concrete step	Dedicated balance rehearsal for rearrangements; percussion dynamic caps
		Status for next cycle	Scheduled as mandatory run
	Check	Concrete step	Collect itemized Likert data and coded comments on site
		Status for next cycle	Maintain instrument; add QR for digital survey
	Act	Concrete step	Update mix guidelines; expand notes; explore larger venue/zoning
		Status for next	Implement before next concert; record

Forward dissemination plan (materials & partners)	Schools / choirs	cycle	as SOP
		Materials to prepare	Lead sheets (pentatonic), IPA/romanization + dialect tips, rehearsal tracks
	Festivals	Target partners	University & secondary music programs; community choirs
		Materials to prepare	Percussion-friendly charts; call-and-response prompts; brief MC script
	Cultural tourism	Target partners	City cultural bureaus; festival committees
		Materials to prepare	Themed sets (porcelain/seasonal); bilingual program notes; compact staging
	Reach	Target partners	Museums; cultural centers; tourism boards
		Indicator	On-site headcount; livestream peak & average concurrent
	Engagement	Measurement note	Venue counter + platform analytics
		Indicator	% responses with score ≥ 4 ; open-comment response rate
Monitoring KPIs for next cycle (to be tracked)	Learning	Keep same questionnaire for continuity	
		Pre/post single-item knowledge prompt (self-report)	
	Preservation	One question on modal/dialect features	
		# of teachers/choirs requesting materials	
	Balance	Log requests via QR form	
		Median voice:ensemble SNR at FOH	