

Twelve Landscape Views, I. Guqin & Cello (2012)

This work is the first of twelve in a series of duets for guqin and western instruments. Having studied guqin performance and improvisation as a Fulbright Fellow in Beijing, I have spent a considerable amount of time exploring ways to integrate the aesthetic and musical language of the guqin with my language of composition in the West. These duets are designed to explore direct relationships between the idiomatic instrumental language of guqin Western instruments by transferring techniques from guqin onto its paired Western instrument in the duet and vice versa. From a larger aesthetic perspective, the duets are also meant to be reflections on an ink scroll painting titled Twelve Landscape Views by the great Song Dynasty painter Xia Gui. Song Dynasty was the height of landscape painting in China, reaching the most sublime expression of the ephemerality and pervasiveness of the Dao in aesthetics in China. The great voids of space and the elusive boundaries of villages, mountains and lakes in these paintings express the great space of nature and the universe, which is the Dao, and what these collection of duets reflect upon.