

Qiuxiao Buyue

Strolling Under the Moon in the Autumn Evening is a piece recorded only in the Xilutang Quintong of 1549 in pre-modern manuscripts. Being set in the extremely rare Biyu Diao 碧玉調 tuning, this piece is seldom played past and present. This piece was brought back into attention when Yao Gongbai 姚公白 made a recording of this piece and it became a part of the “Old 8” recordings.

The piece was composed by Liu Shilong 柳世隆 of Southern Qi,

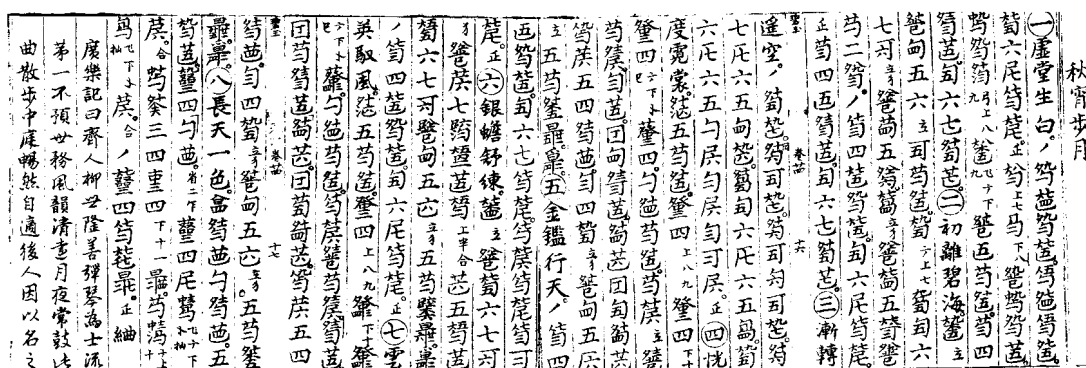


Su Liupeng (1798-1862),
Carrying Qin in the Moonlit Night
(Portion of horizontal scroll)

秋
宵
步
月

one of the Six periods during the first Age of Disunion in 5th Century China. The *Guangyue Ji* 《廣樂記》 writes: “...Liu Shilong was proficient with the qin, and is ranked first among the literati. His attitude of not being troubled by worldly matters brings him to play this piece on a moonlit night, as if taking a leisurely stroll in the garden. Its light-heartedness leads his followers to name this piece as such.”

The primary challenge of this piece is in preparing the instrument in the right tuning prior to playing the piece itself. Unlike other tunings, Biyu Diao must be adjusted by using stopped notes on pressed strings, and requires the player to have great precision in its process (as the tuning process is irreversible and one has to restart from standard tuning if he or she fails in the middle). Otherwise, this is an excellent piece and relatively easy to play.



秋宵步月 Strolling Under the Evening Autumn Moon

From Xilutang Qintong (1549)

Score by Juni Yeung

Biyu Tuning 碧玉調 (-1, 4, 6; +3^[1/2])

[illegible]

Tuning Method:

1. Press @ 10.8 of string IV, match with open string VI. Tune string VI.
Make sure you do this exactly! This step is critical.
2. Press @ 10 of string IV, match with open string VI. Tune string IV.
3. Match string I with string VI.
This can be done with open string 6 with pressed 7th *hui* @ string I, or harmonic @ 10th *hui*.
4. Tighten string III to match string IV.

Lesson Pointers

- This tune is selected primarily as a challenge to your tuning skills. Can I maintain the balance of the instrument's strings?
- Can my hand and mind work in the mirrored environment of harmonics in the mid-upper register (5th *hui* and up)?
- Previously, barring only requires one string to be pressed while simply covering the others in preparation. Now can I press on two strings at the same time, and slide without losing the tone?