

Exploring the Creative Pathways of Quanzhou Beiguan Music and Dance

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ABSTRACT

Quanzhou Beiguan is a traditional music genre prevalent in Quanzhou City, Fujian Province, which was inscribed in the first batch of the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of China upon approval by the State Council of the People's Republic of China in 2006. This study, grounded in the disciplinary perspective of dance, systematically investigates the creative pathways for Quanzhou Beiguan music and dance. In response to the dilemmas confronting the transmission of Quanzhou Beiguan, this research aims to explore how the expressive power and creativity of dance art can be leveraged to provide new modalities for the revitalization of this traditional music. Through literature review and field investigation, this study systematically demonstrates the feasibility of creating Quanzhou Beiguan music and dance works, analyzes issues such as insufficient mutual understanding between Beiguan and dance communities, the mismatch between the scale of music and dance performance and stage conditions, and the singularity of dance creation forms. Finally, it proposes targeted development strategies, thereby expanding the application of dance art in intangible cultural heritage transmission and offering a reference for cross-disciplinary artistic research that embodies both cultural depth and contemporary aesthetics.

Keywords: Dance Creation, Intangible Cultural Heritage, Quanzhou Beiguan, Quanzhou Beiguan Music and Dance, Traditional Music

1. Introduction

In August 2021, the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the General Office of the State Council issued the Opinions on Further Strengthening the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage, establishing the principle of "prioritizing protection, emphasizing rescue, ensuring rational utilization, and promoting transmission and development" for Intangible Cultural Heritage (hereinafter referred to as "ICH"), thereby providing a legitimate

foundation for innovative integration of ICH. In November 2022, the People's Government of Quanzhou Municipality, Fujian Province, promulgated the Administrative Measures for the Minnan Cultural Ecology Conservation Area in Quanzhou City, which proposes to "support the rational utilization of resources such as immovable cultural relics, historical buildings, industrial heritage sites, and tourist attractions to provide venues for the preservation, research, promotion, display, and exchange of representative projects," thereby offering institutional safeguards for the presentation of creative outcomes derived from ICH. As a national-level ICH item, Quanzhou Beiguan is rooted in the fertile cultural soil of Minnan and embodies musical characteristics resulting from the convergence of northern and southern traditions^[1]. However, Beiguan currently confronts challenges including a dearth of successors, singular modes of performance, and a confined audience demographic. Concurrently, the sustained growth of cultural tourism in Quanzhou and the proliferation of contemporary digital media present novel opportunities for the creation of Beiguan music and dance in this era.

Existing literature indicates that the integration of dance and music possesses a profound theoretical foundation in terms of historical evolution, intrinsic expression, and formal interaction^{[2][3][4][5]}, and has yielded substantial practical outcomes in folk activities, classroom pedagogy, and stage performance^{[6][7][8]}. Regarding the ontological study of Beiguan, scholars have systematically investigated its origins and shared characteristics across Fujian and Taiwan^{[9][10]}, analyzed its musical morphology, material composition, and the aesthetic style resulting from the amalgamation of northern and southern elements^{[11][12]}, and elucidated contemporary transmission dilemmas and collaborative preservation models^{[13][14]}. Nevertheless, existing research predominantly concentrates either on general theories of music-dance integration or on the ontology of Beiguan music itself, without examining the fusion of Beiguan music and dance as an organic totality.

This study, adopting a disciplinary stance rooted in dance studies, systematically explores the creative pathways for Quanzhou Beiguan music and dance. Through feasibility assessment, problem analysis, and the formulation of creative strategies, it seeks to employ dance art to broaden the contemporary expressive scope of Beiguan, augment its artistic appeal and communicative efficacy, and furnish a point of reference for cross-artistic ICH integration.

2. Feasibility of Integrating Quanzhou Beiguan with Dance

2.1 The Imperative for Innovative Transformation of Beiguan Music

To rigorously examine the practical foundations for the creation of Quanzhou Beiguan music and dance, this study undertook empirical observation of the current existential circumstances of Quanzhou Beiguan. To acquire primary source material, the author consulted the list of

representative ICH transmitters published on the China Intangible Cultural Heritage Website and established contact with Liu Zongxun, a national-level transmitter of Quanzhou Beiguan, subsequently conducting an interview and field investigation at his residence in Quangan District, Quanzhou City.

Prior to the interview, Mr. Liu introduced the Beiguan rehearsal room within his home, where musical instruments were arranged in an orderly manner and, reportedly, students frequented for practice, indicating the continuity of transmission activities. However, the demographic composition of the current learning cohort exhibits imbalance, predominantly comprising middle-aged and elderly individuals, with scant participation from younger generations. Even among the few children who attend, their involvement is often driven by transient curiosity or parental arrangement, with very few demonstrating long-term commitment; the vast majority discontinue their studies after the fourth grade due to academic pressures. Despite the tuition-free and ongoing nature of the pedagogical activities, Quanzhou Beiguan nonetheless confronts a generational discontinuity in transmission, signifying its insufficient appeal to the younger demographic and underscoring the necessity for innovative transformation to revitalize its vitality. Following the site visit, the author conducted an in-depth, two-hour interview with Mr. Liu. He recounted the history of Beiguan's introduction to Quanzhou City, shared his personal journey in learning Beiguan, and offered his perspectives on its current state of preservation, concurring that Quanzhou Beiguan presently necessitates innovative transformation. When the author inquired whether dance art could serve as a vehicle for such transformation, Mr. Liu expressed unequivocal affirmation.

Figure. 1. Interview and Field Investigation Site with a National-Level Transmitter of Quanzhou Beiguan



Building upon the shared recognition of the need for innovative transformation, the author sought further guidance on how to align Beiguan music with dance creation, encompassing aspects such as the selection of dance genres, stylistic comprehension, and repertoire

recommendations. Regarding dance genres, Mr. Liu posited that Beiguan's repertoire is not monolithic and that dance need not be confined to a singular category; distinct pieces may be rendered through appropriate dance forms. Stylistically, he noted that Beiguan embodies both the openness and clarity characteristic of northern traditions and the subtlety and melodiousness of southern ones. Melodies originating from the Jianghuai region feature crisp, decisive rhythms, lending themselves to choreography with broader movement amplitude and greater emphasis on spatial presence, whereas more delicate pieces are better suited to graceful, supple choreography; accordingly, the dance style should reflect a synthesis of firmness and yielding. In terms of repertoire recommendations, Mr. Liu suggested Cailian Qu (Lotus Gathering Song) and Fuchuan Boge (Fuchuan Boat Ballad). The former, with its graceful melody and strong pictorial sensibility, narrates the refined pleasure of lotus gathering, readily adaptable into evocative dance works suitable for professional performance. The latter extols the vigor of shipbuilders and mariners of the harbor town, inherently imbued with the rhythm and strength of work chants; choreography could distill authentic labor movements such as hoisting sails, rowing oars, and hauling cables, thereby manifesting the essential spirit of the "Fuchuan" ICH item.

In summary, through field investigation and in-depth interviews, this study corroborates the tangible imperative for innovative transformation inherent within Beiguan music. The limited appeal of traditional Beiguan to younger demographics portends increasing difficulties for its transmission absent innovation. Dance art constitutes an efficacious modality for realizing this transformation, capable of converting auditory musical experience into an audio-visual performance, thereby rendering the content and emotion of the music more directly perceptible and allowing this venerable musical genre to be presented with renewed visage^[15].

2.2 Congruence Between Dance and Beiguan Music

The congruence between dance and Beiguan music was substantiated during the author's field observation of routine rehearsals conducted by the Quangang District Beiguan Orchestra. At the rehearsal venue, traditional instruments such as the suona and the seven-tone gong exhibited their archaic charm, while certain pieces integrated elements of Western instruments like the electronic keyboard and cello. The electronic keyboard enriched the harmonic texture of the melody, and the cello's sonorous bass register complemented the brightness of the traditional instruments, resulting not in timbral dissonance but rather in a more robust and dimensional expressiveness of Beiguan music. This demonstrates that Beiguan music is not rigidly confined to tradition but possesses considerable inclusivity and potential for fusion, capable of organic synthesis with diverse artistic elements, thereby establishing a foundation for the incorporation of dance.

In the process of listening to multiple classic Beiguan pieces, the author, through meticulous

analysis of melodic contour, rhythmic variation, and emotional expression, further discerned its high degree of suitability for dance creation. The melodies of Beiguan music embody both the open, robust qualities of northern music and the graceful, nuanced characteristics of southern music. Such richly varied melodic attributes can furnish clear emotional direction and stylistic grounding for the design of dance movements. Concurrently, Beiguan music features diverse rhythmic patterns, encompassing both regular, steady tempi and complex rhythms characterized by alternating speeds and dynamic contrasts. This rhythmic variation aligns precisely with the kinetic requirements of dance, enabling choreographers to design corresponding bodily movements based on rhythmic undulations, thereby achieving synchronous resonance between auditory and visual perception. Furthermore, Beiguan music often possesses distinct narrative and pictorial qualities, depicting labor scenes or expressing sentiments of quotidian life. Such concretized musical content can be translated into narrative threads for dance, rendering otherwise abstract musical emotions palpable through corporeal language and allowing audiences, while appreciating the elegant melodies, to deepen their comprehension of the music's inherent meaning through choreographed movement.

Moreover, the author's observation of Beiguan stage performances provided practical validation of the inherent necessity and congruent value of integrating dance with Beiguan music. The live performance format predominantly featured an instrumental ensemble positioned rearward accompanying a solo vocalist at the front, with stage design highlighting cultural markers such as "National-Level Intangible Cultural Heritage" and "Tianzi Chuanyin" (Imperial Transmission of Sound). However, the majority of the audience only paused briefly, with those remaining for the entire duration being chiefly middle-aged and elderly individuals, while younger attendees were conspicuously sparse. This phenomenon vividly illustrates the palpable limitations of purely musical Beiguan performances in engaging a broad audience, particularly younger demographics, thereby corroborating, from another perspective, the practical necessity of enriching Beiguan's expressive modalities and broadening its audience reach.

Figure. 2. Scene of a Traditional Stage Performance of Quanzhou Beiguan



Therefore, the congruence between dance and Beiguan music is manifested not only in their natural artistic compatibility but also embodies a confluence of practical exigency and developmental synergy. From an artistic essence perspective, the melodic diversity, rhythmic richness, and narrative imagery of Beiguan music form an innate resonance with dance's requirements for movement design, emotional articulation, and narrative structure; their integration facilitates a complementary synergy between auditory and visual arts. From a developmental standpoint, the inherent inclusivity of Beiguan music permits the incorporation of dance elements. Given that purely musical Beiguan performances encounter tangible communicative challenges, the inclusion of dance can serve as an effective means to surmount these limitations, engendering an artistic form of enhanced expressive power and communicative reach.

2.3 Analysis of Existing Beiguan Music and Dance Case Studies

A systematic review and integrated analysis of extant case studies pertaining to Beiguan music and dance reveal that current attempts at integrating Quanzhou Beiguan with dance remain at a nascent stage. The 2016 collaborative creation *Guo Taiwan* (Crossing to Taiwan), jointly produced by Beiguan practitioners from Quangan and Taiwan, was selected for the Fujian Literary and Artistic Development Fund project overseen by the Publicity Department of the Fujian Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China. As a work enjoying significant official recognition and cultural influence, its creative background draws upon the shared cultural roots of Beiguan in Fujian and Taiwan, employing artistic fusion to re-enact the historical migration across the strait and the associated cultural transmission. The work possesses distinct cultural narrative value in its thematic conception. However, dance functions merely as an auxiliary expressive device within this production, interwoven with theatrical performance and other art forms, thereby failing to fully harness the capacity of dance to visualize and concretize Beiguan music.

Within folk and campus settings, the integration of Beiguan and dance primarily manifests in the singular format of song-accompanied dance. Previously, Beiguan clubs at several secondary schools in Quangan District, Quanzhou City, had experimented with incorporating dance accompaniment elements into instrumental Beiguan performances during rehearsals. Although representing a relatively rare precedent in Beiguan performance practice, the presentation format nevertheless relegated dance to a subordinate, supplementary role vis-à-vis the traditional instrumental rendition. Similarly, in cultural exhibitions and performances held within Quangan District, works predominantly adopted the song-accompanied dance format. While these performances utilized stage-enhancing costumes and props, the choreographic design remained rudimentary, consisting largely of simple bodily movements synchronized with the music. In these existing works of song-accompanied dance, despite attempts to merge dance with Beiguan

performance, the creative potential of dance was considerably simplified.

Collectively, these cases substantiate the feasibility of integrating Beiguan music with dance while simultaneously underscoring the continued necessity for further creative exploration in music and dance. Encompassing diverse contexts such as professional collaboration, campus outreach, and folk exhibition, these examples provide crucial empirical reference points for identifying challenges and refining pathways in the creation of contemporary Quanzhou Beiguan music and dance works.

3. Challenges in the Creation of Quanzhou Beiguan Music and Dance

3.1 Insufficient Mutual Comprehension Between Beiguan and Dance Communities

Despite the inherent imperative for innovative transformation within Beiguan music and its demonstrable congruence with dance, a paucity of talent capable of interdisciplinary integration persists in practice. This deficit stems not solely from a quantitative shortage of personnel but rather from cross-domain cognitive barriers, imbalances in professional competencies, and a lack of creative impetus—factors significantly contributing to the superficial nature of existing Beiguan music and dance fusion endeavors.

From the perspective of the Beiguan transmission community, few practitioners concurrently possess professional proficiency in dance creation, and there exists a limited inclination towards proactive integrative innovation; the prevailing tendency favors the preservation of Beiguan's original performance modalities. The core energies of the Beiguan transmission community are concentrated on the perpetuation and refinement of instrumental technique and vocal stylization. Years of specialized practice have engendered a relatively fixed perception of Beiguan's traditional modes of presentation. Within the cognition of most Beiguan specialists, the essential value of Beiguan resides in the melodies, qupai (labeled melodies), and cultural connotations of the music itself, whereas dance is regarded as an entirely distinct artistic domain. They possess neither an understanding of the fundamental logic of dance choreography nor knowledge of how to translate Beiguan's musical rhythms and emotions into corporeal language. This professional demarcation results in a situation where, even if the feasibility of dance integration is acknowledged, there is scant proactive engagement in practical exploration; practitioners are more inclined to adhere to the model of purely musical performance. Consequently, the creation of Beiguan music and dance lacks a core impetus originating from within the Beiguan field.

Among the minority of Beiguan practitioners who have attempted integration with dance, the resulting works tend to be formally simplistic due to a deficiency in dance creation skills and experience, thereby failing to fully leverage the artistic agency of dance to enhance Beiguan's appeal. While these creators possess intimate familiarity with the characteristics of Beiguan

music, they lack formal training in dance creation, mastering neither fundamental dance techniques nor specialized knowledge concerning rhythmic adaptation, spatial formation choreography, and emotional expression through movement. Their creative output thus remains confined to the superficial model of song-accompanied dance, with choreography largely comprising simple, repetitive gestures, incapable of adequately rendering the musical qualities they intimately know into compelling dance expression. This may even foster misconceptions regarding the efficacy of dance integration, thereby further diminishing attempts at such fusion.

From the perspective of the professional dance community, current practitioners exhibit comparatively limited awareness of Beiguan music. Consequently, Beiguan music is seldom proactively selected as source material for choreographic creation, resulting in a predicament wherein creative capacity exists but lacks specific creative direction. Local dance practitioners predominantly concentrate on creating works set to more widely disseminated music, deriving their creative material from classical literature, universalized emotional themes, or broadly recognized regional cultural symbols, with scant attention directed towards Beiguan, a local ICH musical genre of Quanzhou. Research conducted among local dance professionals in Quangang District revealed that the majority of choreographers had merely heard the name "Beiguan" but possessed insufficient knowledge regarding its cultural connotations, melodic characteristics, aesthetic style, and other core attributes. Owing to this unfamiliarity with Beiguan's unique qualities, practitioners are unable to accurately grasp the logic of its adaptation to dance, nor can they readily excavate creative inspiration from Beiguan music; consequently, they naturally refrain from incorporating it into their creative agendas.

3.2 Conflict Between Performance Scale and Stage Suitability

While the inherent congruence between Beiguan music and dance provides an artistic foundation for integrated creation, the considerable performance scale characteristic of the Beiguan orchestra itself engenders a conflict with the spatial requirements of dance presentation on stage. This practical constraint limits scenarios wherein Beiguan orchestras and dancers can perform concurrently, constituting a significant impediment to the normalized development of Beiguan music and dance. When conceptualizing works, creators must prospectively consider the feasibility of performance venues; if it is apparent that the majority of potential venues cannot accommodate the requisite spatial demands, choreographic design may be deliberately simplified, thereby precluding more innovative corporeal expression within Beiguan music and dance.

The rich instrumentation and substantial ensemble size of Beiguan music dictate its fundamental spatial requirements for performance. Based on field observations of rehearsals and performances by the Quangang District Beiguan Orchestra, the number of performers typically

ranges between ten and fifteen individuals. During stage presentation, these instruments are further arranged according to traditional configurations, with lead instruments occupying the central area of the stage and accompanying instruments distributed to the flanks. Factoring in the space required for musicians' performance actions and instrument placement, a complete Beiguan orchestra, once positioned on stage, tends to occupy the majority of the available area, leaving minimal surplus space to accommodate additional performance elements. This inherent characteristic—numerous instruments, a sizable personnel contingent, and extensive spatial footprint—means that the Beiguan orchestra itself imposes specific demands on stage dimensions, and the introduction of dance elements consequently engenders spatial conflict.

The artistic expression of dance relies upon adequate space for corporeal movement. Whether the extended reach required for a solo performance or the spatial demands of formation transitions in a group dance, the stage must provide sufficient area to accommodate the choreography. According to envisioned creative models for Beiguan music and dance, if a solo dancer is integrated, the dancer requires an independent performance area to fully execute bodily movements and convey emotional expression. If a group dance involving five to eight performers is choreographed, the dance ensemble alone would necessitate over half of the available stage area. When combined with the spatial requirements of the Beiguan orchestra's instruments and personnel layout, this places heightened demands on both the width and depth of the stage. However, in grassroots settings such as rural festivals or community cultural events, stages are frequently small, temporary constructions. After deducting the space occupied by the Beiguan orchestra, any moderately expansive movement by a dancer risks contact with instruments or musicians, not only compromising performance quality but also posing potential safety hazards. When both the Beiguan orchestra and dancers appear on stage simultaneously, the stage can appear excessively crowded, severely constraining choreographic formations and bodily extension, thus preventing the full display of dance's artistic merits. Only professionally equipped stages associated with large-scale events may potentially satisfy the spatial requirements for concurrent performance by a Beiguan orchestra and dancers. Such venues, however, cannot provide a normalized platform for Beiguan music and dance. More pervasive performance contexts—rural events, community showcases, small theater productions—due to limited stage dimensions, often necessitate the omission of dance elements during the creative phase, resulting in a reversion to the traditional format of purely musical Beiguan performance.

In summary, the conflict between the performance scale of the Beiguan orchestra and the spatial prerequisites of dance impedes the full realization of their inherent congruence in practical creation, constituting a salient impediment to the normalized advancement of Beiguan music and dance. Grassroots performance contexts, which serve as vital arenas for Beiguan transmission and dissemination, cannot adequately present Beiguan music and dance due to spatial

constraints. This not only restricts creative expression but also hinders this emergent art form from reaching broader audiences, thereby further attenuating the communicative potential of Beiguan music and dance.

3.3 Monolithic Forms of Dance Creation and Aesthetic Disjuncture

Despite the emergence of exploratory cases in Beiguan music and dance, these endeavors generally exhibit issues of formal monotony in dance creation and a discernible disjuncture from contemporary aesthetic expectations, manifest in the following specific aspects.

First, there is a conspicuous absence of autonomous dance works. In extant fusion cases, the majority of productions fail to clearly establish the independent artistic identity of dance. Dance functions as a subordinate element to theatrical or instrumental performance, or serves merely as superficial atmospheric embellishment, thus failing to fully actualize the expressive agency and aesthetic value inherent to the art of dance itself. The representative music and dance work *Guo Taiwan (Crossing to Taiwan)*, while rich in performance content, clear in thematic articulation, and precise in conveying the cultural significance of the shared Minnan-Taiwan Beiguan heritage, nonetheless, from the perspective of dance creation per se, allocates dance only a partial role within the overall production. Other, simpler works of song-accompanied dance merely incorporate a limited number of bodily movements to enhance the presentation of instrumental Beiguan performance, lacking an independent choreographic theme; dance serves predominantly as visual ornamentation for the work. Moreover, some previously complete music and dance works are difficult to locate in video archival form for dissemination due to the passage of considerable time. Consequently, there currently exists a deficit of independent Beiguan music and dance works capable of realizing the visualization and concretization of Beiguan music through the medium of dance.

Second, there is a lack of creative exploration integrating established dance genres. Within the current landscape of Beiguan music and dance creation, the selection of dance styles exhibits notable limitations, failing to fully exploit the potential for synergy between diverse dance genres and Beiguan music, resulting in comparatively narrow artistic expression. There has been neither an incorporation of Chinese classical dance, which could manifest Beiguan's aesthetic characteristic of blending firmness and yielding, nor an engagement with the movement vocabularies of traditional Chinese opera dance forms, such as those from Puxian Opera or Liyuan Opera, which could reflect its cultural heritage of north-south amalgamation. Furthermore, there is a distinct lack of experimental integration with modern or popular dance idioms. In existing creative instances, grassroots popularization efforts in folk and campus settings predominate, with choreographic arrangements generally remaining at a superficial, simplistic level. Movement design predominantly relies on basic hand gestures and simple

stepping patterns, with scant evidence of extended bodily lines, dynamic variation, or choreographic structures tailored to the rhythmic fluctuations and emotional modulations of Beiguan music. Such fusion works consequently lack artistic resonance and affective power.

Finally, the application of technology lags considerably. In an era characterized by digitization and intelligent systems, technologies such as AI (Artificial Intelligence), AR (Augmented Reality), and VR (Virtual Reality) have been extensively deployed within artistic creation domains, offering diverse possibilities for the innovative expression of traditional music and dance. Contemporary younger audiences exhibit a preference for diversified modes of artistic consumption, including short-form video content and virtual performances. Yet, Beiguan music and dance creation has not adequately embraced technology-enabled creative modalities, rendering it unable to satisfy the expectations of modern audiences, particularly younger demographics, for immersive and interactive artistic experiences.

The monotony of form and the lag in aesthetic expression deprive Beiguan music and dance of the capacity to engage in dialogue with the contemporary cultural milieu. Within the broader context of ICH revitalization and transmission, if Beiguan music and dance cannot transcend formal constraints and align with modern aesthetic sensibilities, it will encounter difficulty in genuinely capturing public attention, much less achieving sustainable creative evolution and development.

4. Creative Strategies for Quanzhou Beiguan Music and Dance

4.1 Grounding Dance Creation in the Specific Attributes of Beiguan Music

The creative core of Quanzhou Beiguan music and dance resides in the profound integration of Beiguan music and dance. If detached from the cultural genes and artistic particularities of Beiguan music, such fusion will inevitably remain superficial. Grounding creation in the specific attributes of Beiguan music necessitates, crucially, dismantling the cognitive barriers between the specialized communities of Beiguan and dance practitioners. By fostering mutual comprehension, the quality of music and dance creation from both groups can be enhanced, enabling dance works to more effectively resonate with the music's rhythm, emotional tenor, and cultural essence^[16].

For the Beiguan specialist community, their expertise lies in a profound understanding of Beiguan music's *qupai* structure, rhythmic cadence, emotional expression, and cultural provenance—an indispensable foundation for dance creation. However, the majority of Beiguan practitioners lack proficiency in dance skills, rendering them unable to translate their deep musical understanding into corresponding choreographic language. To address this, foundational knowledge of dance creation can be disseminated in a targeted manner to assist the Beiguan

community in bridging the translational gap between music and dance. In the process of elucidating the core logic of music and dance creation, emphasis should be placed on the principles governing the alignment of dance movement with musical rhythm^[17]. For instance, the robust rhythms characteristic of Beiguan pieces in the Jianghuai style may correspond to larger amplitude, more forceful bodily movements, whereas the melodious, sinuous melodies of Minnan-style pieces are better suited to nuanced, graceful corporeal expression. Additionally, basic principles of spatial formation choreography should be introduced, enabling Beiguan practitioners to comprehend how changes in dance formation can articulate the sectional structure and emotional progression of Beiguan music.

For the professional dance community, which possesses systematic choreographic skills and corporeal expressive techniques but often lacks familiarity with the cultural and artistic specificities of Beiguan music, a deepened understanding of Beiguan music is a prerequisite for creation. Firstly, familiarity with the cultural connotations of Beiguan music is essential. Dance creators can achieve this through archival research, field visits, and consultation with Beiguan practitioners. By comprehending Beiguan's historical trajectory—originating from the Jianghuai region and subsequently integrating Minnan and Puxian cultural influences—choreographers can grasp its characteristic north-south fusion, a cultural genotype that can inform the stylistic orientation of the dance. Secondly, meticulous analysis of Beiguan music's artistic features is required, focusing particularly on melodic contour, rhythmic patterns, and the narrative content of specific pieces. Finally, dance creators should engage in regular communication with Beiguan practitioners, continuously soliciting their input throughout the creative process to ensure that the design of dance movements adheres both to the principles of dance artistry and remains faithful to the essential qualities of Beiguan music, thereby achieving the objective of genuine music-dance integration.

Enhancing the choreographic and bodily expressive capabilities of the Beiguan community will enable works they conceive to convey the core essence of Beiguan music with greater precision. Deepening dance creators' comprehension of Beiguan music will ensure that the resultant music and dance works align more closely with the fundamental nature of Beiguan art. Through this bidirectional enhancement involving both the Beiguan specialist and dance professional communities, the creation of Quanzhou Beiguan music and dance can be genuinely anchored in the specific attributes of Beiguan music, thereby circumventing innovation divorced from cultural foundations while simultaneously overcoming the constraints of rigid adherence to convention, and upon this basis, accomplishing the transformative translation from musical emotion to corporeal language.

4.2 Utilizing Recorded Versions to Accommodate Varied Performance Contexts

One of the central dilemmas confronting the creation of Beiguan music and dance pertains to the need to accommodate the considerable performance scale of the Beiguan orchestra, which creates a conflict of suitability with the limited stage space available in grassroots performance venues. In the traditional mode of live instrumental performance, the large ensemble configuration and the spatial demands of diverse instrument placement restrict the area available for dancers' bodily movement, thereby constraining choreographic conception. The adoption of recorded versions of Beiguan music as dance accompaniment not only fundamentally resolves this issue of contextual adaptation but also yields multiple additional advantages at both artistic and dissemination levels, thereby laying groundwork for the future promotion of Beiguan music and dance.

A significant value conferred by the use of recorded versions in Beiguan music and dance creation is the circumvention of spatial limitations inherent to the stage, affording music and dance presentations enhanced contextual versatility. Stages for grassroots cultural events are frequently temporary structures, limited in area and modest in facilities, ill-equipped to meet the demands of concurrent performance by a Beiguan orchestra and dancers. By employing recorded accompaniment, dance creators need no longer contend with the sizable contingent of musicians and instruments required for a live orchestra configuration. The musical accompaniment can be delivered solely through audio playback equipment, thereby fully preserving the traditional aesthetic of the music while simultaneously liberating stage space entirely. Dancers may freely execute bodily extensions, fully realizing choreographic intentions, thereby enabling audiences to appreciate a complete dance work while simultaneously experiencing the entirety of the Beiguan musical piece.

Flexibility in volume adjustment constitutes another salient advantage of utilizing recorded versions. During live performance, the volume of a Beiguan orchestra is subject to the acoustic properties of the instruments, performance dynamics, and the acoustics of the venue, rendering precise control challenging. In smaller dance studios or rehearsal halls, live instrumental performance can often be excessively loud, potentially disrupting the concentration of dancers during creation and rehearsal. Conversely, in expansive outdoor settings or boisterous festival environments, the sound of live performance may be overwhelmed by ambient noise. Recorded versions permit flexible volume regulation via audio equipment, enabling precise calibration according to the specific characteristics of the performance context. Furthermore, audio processing techniques can be employed to optimize sound quality, balancing the relative prominence of different instrumental sections, thereby conveying the melodic layers of Beiguan music with greater clarity to the audience. This facilitates more precise synchronization between dance movement and musical rhythm, thereby enhancing the overall artistic effect.

Moreover, the portability of recorded audio files facilitates the analysis and creation of Beiguan music and dance. Audio files can be readily stored and transported using mobile tools such as USB flash drives or smartphones, eliminating the need for complex setup procedures or the assembly of Beiguan performers. This allows dance creation to proceed in diverse venues. Dance creators can repeatedly rehearse the coordination of movement and musical rhythm, thereby gaining a deeper, more nuanced appreciation of Beiguan music's characteristics. In contexts of cross-regional exchange, recorded versions can serve as cultural vectors for Beiguan music and dance, facilitating creative and dissemination activities in disparate locales and thereby amplifying the reach and influence of Beiguan art.

The adoption of recorded versions as accompaniment for Beiguan music and dance does not constitute a replacement for traditional live instrumental performance; rather, it introduces an additional performance modality tailored to meet specific practical, contextual requirements. In settings of significant import—such as major professional productions or cultural exchange events—the concurrent stage presentation of a live orchestra and dancers can still exemplify the highest artistic caliber of Beiguan music and dance. In grassroots contexts, however, recorded versions, owing to their inherent flexibility, serve as a vital support mechanism for the development of Beiguan music and dance.

4.3 Developing Autonomous Dance Works and Digital Expression

To transcend the current limitations of formally monolithic fusion works and align Beiguan music and dance with contemporary aesthetic sensibilities, it is imperative to utilize autonomous dance works as primary vehicles. While steadfastly preserving the defining characteristics of Beiguan music, exploration into the integration of established dance genres with Beiguan music should be pursued. Concurrently, the creative horizon should be broadened through the incorporation of digital technologies, enabling the resulting music and dance works to retain their traditional essence while simultaneously achieving innovative modes of expression.

Currently, not only is there a deficiency of independent, complete dance works, but the prevailing modes of dance presentation are also notably uniform, often relegated to a subordinate, decorative adjunct to musical performance, failing to fully harness the expressive potential of corporeal language. Hence, the development of autonomous dance works is necessary—works wherein dance transcends its ancillary status to become the primary expressive vehicle embodying the cultural significance of Beiguan music, thereby realizing a reciprocal enhancement of both music and dance. Beiguan music itself is characterized by a fusion of northern and southern cultural elements, its melodies possessing both the delicate, sinuous grace of Nanyin (southern music) and the impassioned, bold vigor of Jianghuai tunes. This inherent plurality furnishes a broad spectrum for adaptation and integration with diverse

dance genres. Among these, traditional Chinese opera dance forms offer exemplary means to manifest Beiguan's hybrid cultural substratum. The agile, restrained grace of Puxian Opera's "walking without disturbing the skirt" and the elegant, refined corporeal nuances of Liyuan Opera can both serve as choreographic source material, rendering Beiguan's distinctive regional cultural character more readily perceptible. Furthermore, the aesthetic of Chinese classical dance—characterized by a synthesis of firmness and suppleness—exhibits a high degree of congruence with the aesthetic aspirations of Beiguan music. The flowing beauty of circular, curvilinear movement can articulate the gentle, protracted lyricism of Nanyin-inflected melodies, while vigorous leaps and emphatic punctuations can resonate with more impassioned rhythmic passages, achieving precise emotional consonance between bodily motion and musical sentiment, and thereby affording the cultural allure of Beiguan music a more multi-dimensional presentation through the medium of dance.

Additionally, digital technologies are pioneering new modalities for the creation of Beiguan music and dance, with animated dance offering possibilities to transcend physical limitations. For instance, AI technology can be leveraged to generate a diverse array of virtual dancer archetypes, ranging from classically styled figures donning traditional attire and executing historically informed movement to contemporary "Q-version" (chibi-style) characters incorporating elements of popular culture. Choreographing these digital avatars can lower the threshold of engagement for younger audiences. Within the creative *mise-en-scène*, virtual environments thematically resonant with the work's content can be integrated, thereby rendering the cultural connotations of Beiguan music more intuitively accessible through animation. AR and VR technologies can construct immersive expressive spaces within the creative process. VR technology can liberate the performance from the confines of a physical stage, crafting virtual environments wherein the manipulation of light and shadow enhances the mood and narrative dimensions of the dance. AR technology facilitates the real-time integration of virtual elements with live performance, augmenting the stereoscopic impact of the dance work. The application of digital technologies can imbue Beiguan music and dance works with attributes aligned with contemporary aesthetic preferences from the very inception of the creative phase, thereby diversifying and expanding the pathways for music and dance creation.

In summary, by grounding creative practice in Beiguan's characteristic synthesis of northern and southern elements and its aesthetic of balancing firmness and yielding, mining choreographic resources from multiple dance genres to produce autonomous dance works, and simultaneously harnessing digital technologies such as AI, AR, and VR to enrich modes of dance expression, it is possible to both safeguard the core traditions of Beiguan and cultivate new forms resonant with contemporary tastes, ensuring the perpetuation of Beiguan music and dance's unique allure through innovation.

5. Conclusion

This study, adopting the perspective of music and dance creation, furnishes a novel, cross-artistic integrative pathway for the revitalization and transmission of Quanzhou Beiguan, a national-level intangible cultural heritage item. The research has substantiated the practical feasibility of integrating Beiguan music with dance through analysis of developmental imperatives within Beiguan, points of congruence between music and dance, and examination of extant practical cases. It has further demonstrated that the music-and-dance format possesses the capacity to effectively surmount the pragmatic bottlenecks currently hindering the dissemination of traditional Beiguan. Presently, the creation of Beiguan music and dance has yet to coalesce into a mature creative system, necessitating further efforts by creators to anchor their work in the distinctive attributes of Beiguan music and to produce more sophisticated, formally innovative music and dance works. Future research will continue to advance the profound integration of Beiguan with multiple dance genres, leverage digital technologies to expand dissemination contexts, stimulate ongoing creative renewal in Beiguan music and dance, and thereby contribute to the creative transformation and innovative development of intangible cultural heritage.

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