

# The Study of Overseas Performance and Dissemination of Guangdong Han Opera

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**Abstract:** Known as the “Southern Peony”, Guangdong Han Opera is elegant and extraordinary, displaying its unique color and brilliance in the land of Guangdong. This paper focuses on analyzing the status of Guangdong Han Opera’s overseas performances and dissemination, exploring the main challenges faced in international performances, and offering reflections and suggestions on how to promote Guangdong Han Opera overseas in the context of intangible cultural heritage protection.

**Keywords:** Guangdong Han Opera; Performances; Dissemination

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## 1. Introduction

Han Opera originated in the 17th century in Hubei Province. Following several waves of population migration from north to south in ancient China, it gradually spread into Hakka regions and entered Guangdong during the Qianlong period of the Qing dynasty. After arriving in Guangdong, Han Opera blended with local Hakka and Lingnan cultures, eventually forming what is now known as Guangdong Han Opera. When a regional opera form reaches maturity, it often begins to extend its reach outward, either toward economically prosperous metropolitan centers or by permeating neighboring areas, such as the performances of eastern Guangdong Han Opera in western Fujian. It may also spread to regions with similar or shared local environments, as seen when the ‘Waijiang Opera’ (Waijiang Xi) of eastern

Guangdong accompanied migrants to Southeast Asia and took root there. In addition, there exists another form of dissemination, purely cultural exchange, that falls under the broader category of transmission, though it no longer carries the original intent of commercial competition in performance. Examples include Guangdong Han Opera’s visits to Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan, and Singapore in the new era for cultural exchange performances. The following discussion will focus on analyzing the overseas performances and dissemination of Guangdong

Han Opera, examining the major challenges it has encountered in international communication in the new era, and offering constructive reflections and recommendations.

## **2. Overseas performance and dissemination of Guangdong Han Opera**

### **2.1. Performance of “Waijiang Opera” in Taiwan in the late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China**

During the late Qing and early Republic periods, as Guangdong Eastern “Waijiang Opera” reached a high level of artistic maturity, the increasing competition in the local area led various “Waijiang Troupes” to seek markets outside their region. Taiwan, being geographically close to the southeastern coast, became an important destination for the foreign performances of Guangdong Eastern “Waijiang Troupes”. The troupe Lao Fushun, Letian Cai, and Rongtian Cai all performed in Taiwan. Lao Fushun’s performance in Taiwan ended in failure from an economic perspective, but it paved the way for future Guangdong Eastern opera troupes. Letian Cai’s troupe, arriving in Tainan in September of the second year of the Xuantong reign encountered losses of over 2,000 yuan after a month of performances. However, after moving to Gaoxiong and Pingdong, they performed *The Revenge by Killing Her Son* in Donggang, Pingdong, which became very popular and reversed the earlier downturn. Despite difficulties in Tainan, Letian Cai’s performance helped further introduce Guangdong Eastern “Waijiang Opera” and promoted greater understanding of Chinese Xiqu in Taiwan. Following Lao Fushun and Letian Cai, Rongtian Cai performed in Taiwan in August 1924, funded by the Keelung Lianxing Company, and performed in northern Taiwan to avoid the routes of the earlier troupes <sup>[1]</sup>. At the time, Jingju had already established a strong presence in Taipei, and when Rongtian Cai performed there, the reaction was less enthusiastic.

From available information, during the late Qing and early Republic periods, “Waijiang Troupes” such as Lao Fushun, Letian Cai, and Rongtian Cai performed in Taiwan. Despite the challenges and limited success, these performances were significant attempts at cross-cultural exchange.

### **2.2. The dissemination of Guangdong Han Opera in southeast Asia**

During the late Qing and early Republic, many immigrants from the Chaoshan and Hakka regions of Guangdong went to Southeast Asia to work or engage in trade due to economic hardship <sup>[2]</sup>. The distribution of Chinese populations in Southeast Asia varied, with Singapore having 76% of its population of Chinese descent, Malaysia 36%, and Thailand 14%. As a result, various regional Chinese Xiqu, including Guangdong Han Opera, spread to Southeast Asia with emigrant communities. As early as 1908 and 1924, the troupes Lao San Duo and Rongtian Cai performed in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand. Chinese Xiqu plays an important cultural role in the Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia, particularly in an ethnically diverse environment. Xiqu based on regional dialects has, to some extent, become an important tool for cultural identity within the ethnic group <sup>[3]</sup>. Guangdong Han Opera undoubtedly serves as a vital link for Hakka Chinese communities in Southeast Asia, maintaining their cultural identity and regional connection.

### **2.3. Performances of Guangdong Han Opera in Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan, and Singapore in the new era**

During the 1980s, as people gradually emerged from the shadow of the Cultural Revolution, China’s literary and artistic circles ushered in a new period of development. The Guangdong Han Opera Troupe, based in Meizhou, the heartland of the Hakka people, worked not only on organizing, rediscovering, and performing traditional

repertoires and conducting research on Han Opera history, but also actively sought opportunities to engage in cultural exchanges with Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan, and Southeast Asia. Among these, the troupe's visits to Hong Kong in 1982, Singapore in 1983, and Taiwan in 1997 stand out as significant milestones in this period of overseas exchange.

### **2.3.1. Performances in Hong Kong**

In June 1982, a 60-member delegation led by Liang Suzhen and Yu Gengxin traveled to Hong Kong to perform six classic Han Opera pieces: *Qin Xianglian*, *The Lantern Case*, *The Promotion of Xu Jiujing*, *Asking for a Husband*, and *Crossing the Pass by Sea Boat*. These performances were warmly received by Hong Kong audiences and garnered high praise. In particular, *Qin Xianglian* was described as having “captivated Hong Kong audiences. As *Hong Kong Wenhui Newspaper* reviewed: “The actors delivered emotionally charged and vivid performances, rendering this well-known drama gripping and heartfelt, and winning rounds of enthusiastic applause from the more than a thousand spectators. According to statistics, a total of 124 articles and 84 stage photos were published across various newspapers and periodicals, indicating the remarkable enthusiasm and appreciation that Hong Kong audiences held for Guangdong Han Opera at the time<sup>[4]</sup>.

### **2.3.2. Performances in Singapore**

On July 18, 1983, at the invitation of the Singapore National Theatre and with the support of the Nanyang Hakka Association, a 60-member Guangdong Han Opera delegation led by Liang Suzhen traveled to Singapore for a series of performances. The troupe staged their productions at the Singapore National Theatre, which had a seating capacity of 4,000, giving seven performances over twelve days. The program featured several classic pieces, including *The Promotion of Xu Jiujing*, *The Lantern Case*, and *Qin Xianglian*, as well as two sets of excerpts (Zhezi Xi). The first set included *The Romance in the Cupboard*, *The Guilty Son Yunlang*, *The Meeting of the Father-in-Law and the Daughter-in-Law*, and *Yang Paifeng*. The second set featured *Crossing the Pass by Sea Boat*, *Asking for a Husband*, *Sworn Brotherhood Through the Wall*, and *Shi Qian Steals a Chicken*.

In total, the troupe held six gala performances and seven full shows, attracting more than 21,000 spectators. The performances were enthusiastically received by local audiences, especially members of the overseas Hakka community, and sparked a strong media response<sup>[5]</sup>. Singaporean newspapers, both in Chinese and English, published a total of 92 reviews, reports, and interviews, along with 98 accompanying photographs. Major dailies such as the *Singapore Morning News* (Xinzhou Zaobao) and the *Singapore Evening News* (Xinzhou Wanbao) carried extensive coverage of the event, reflecting the high praise and widespread acclaim Guangdong Han Opera received from local audiences.

### **2.3.3. Performances in Taiwan**

On April 3, 1997, a 42-member Guangdong Han Opera delegation led by Liang Suzhen and Yu Gengxin traveled to Taiwan for a series of cultural and artistic exchange performances. Over a period of 12 days, the troupe presented seven performances across five cities, Taichung, Taipei, Hsinchu, Miaoli, and Zhongli. To ensure the artistic quality of the tour, the Guangdong Han Opera Theatre made thorough preparations in both cast selection and repertoire planning. The performing lineup represented the theatre's finest artists, including Fan Kaitai, Li Xianhua, Wu Yanxian, Xie Renchang, as well as younger actors such as Zhang Guangwu and Chen Xiaoping. The program featured large-scale historical plays such as *Qin Xianglian* and *The Promotion of Xu Jiujing*, along with

excerpted scenes (Zhezi Xi) including *Asking for a Husband*, *Testing the Wife*, and *Romance in the Cupboard*, as well as several musical and dance pieces showcasing Hakka folk culture.

The performances in Taipei and Miaoli, particularly of *The Promotion of Xu Jiujing*, drew full houses. Many audience members were experiencing Guangdong Han Opera for the first time and were deeply impressed by Wu Yanxian's masterful portrayal of Xu Jiujing. Each performance concluded with prolonged and enthusiastic applause, reflecting the strong emotional connection established between the troupe and the Taiwanese audience.

In the new era, the overseas performances organized by the Guangdong Han Opera Theatre were primarily purely artistic exchanges. However, judging from their long-term impact, the significance of these performances for the international dissemination of Guangdong Han Opera has gradually diminished. According to available data, during the first fifteen years of the 21st century, Guangdong Han Opera's overseas dissemination did not achieve the level of activity or prosperity that had been anticipated. In terms of both the number of overseas tours and the geographical range of performances, it fell into sharp contrast with the vibrancy shown by other local opera genres. For instance, during the first decade of this century (2000–2009), the number of overseas tours by Fujian regional operas increased substantially. Fujian troupes undertook 325 overseas visits over ten years, an average of 32.5 tours per year, including 43 performances of Gezai Opera, 24 of Min Opera, 58 of Gaojia Opera, 23 of Liyuan Opera, 49 of Fujian Chaozhou Opera, and 106 of Fujian Puppet Opera. Such a contrast and disparity inevitably prompts reflection: Why has Guangdong Han Opera's overseas dissemination slowed down or even fallen behind other regional opera forms in the new era? What problems have emerged in this process, and how might they be addressed? The following section will focus on these key questions and challenges.

### **3. Major challenges facing the overseas dissemination of Guangdong Han Opera**

#### **3.1. Lack of overseas promotion and collaboration**

In today's era of rapid technological and economic development, the overseas promotion of Guangdong Han Opera faces significant challenges, most notably its limited communication methods and the absence of systematic international cooperation mechanisms. Professor Fu Jin of the National Academy of Chinese Theatre Arts once pointed out: "The obstacles in the international cultural exchange of Chinese opera do not lie in its artistic content, but in the lack of effective channels and methods of dissemination" A successful example can be seen in the commercial performances organized by the National Academy of Chinese Theatre Arts at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in the United States in September 2015, which set an exemplary model for the overseas operation and dissemination of Chinese Xiqu. In that year, Professor Zhang Huoding performed two full-length Jingju classics, *The Legend of the White Snake* and *The Kylin Purse*, at Lincoln Center. Ticket prices ranged from \$20 to \$170, with no complimentary tickets offered, and the majority of the audience were non-Chinese. The two performances achieved remarkable success, drawing wide attention from both domestic and international media. To ensure the performances resonated with mainstream American audiences, the Ministry of Culture of the People's Republic of China, the China Arts and Entertainment Group, National Academy of Chinese Theatre Arts, and Lincoln Center jointly collaborated on the production and publicity efforts. Additionally, five public lectures on Chinese Xiqu were held at New York University and other institutions to deepen cultural understanding. In contrast, Guangdong Han Opera lacks comparable international promotion, mature overseas mechanisms, and relies on overly simple and limited methods of dissemination.

### **3.2. Shortage of professionals for overseas dissemination**

Another major obstacle to the international promotion of Guangdong Han Opera is the lack of professionals familiar with the operation mechanisms of overseas art markets. It is essential to cultivate international arts management personnel through a combination of “bringing in” and “going out”, that is, inviting experts to China for training and sending local professionals abroad for study and exchange. The overseas performance market typically operates according to the laws of the global art economy. Without a clear understanding of these operational mechanisms, it becomes exceedingly difficult for Guangdong Han Opera to enter and sustain itself in the international market. The success of a performance depends not merely on the attendance rate but fundamentally on box office revenue, that is, how many audience members are willing to pay to see the show. Therefore, the overseas dissemination of Guangdong Han Opera requires both cross-cultural communication specialists in traditional Chinese theatre and arts management professionals familiar with foreign markets. Only with such talent can the path of Guangdong Han Opera’s international dissemination become broader and more sustainable.

### **3.3. Difficulty in gaining recognition from mainstream overseas audiences**

Achieving genuine appreciation for Guangdong Han Opera among foreign audiences remains a complex and gradual process. Unlike Western forms such as musical theatre or grand opera, Guangdong Han Opera embodies a distinct aesthetic system characterized by symbolic performance, stylized vocalization, and culturally specific narrative conventions. These features, while central to its artistic integrity, often pose challenges to cross-cultural understanding. Gaining acceptance and emotional resonance from Western audiences thus requires time, strategy, and cultural translation rather than mere exposure. As Professor Yin Hong has observed, the success of Chinese art forms in the international arena can be evaluated through the following three key indicators:

- (1) Whether the art form gains entry into mainstream performance venues;
- (2) Whether it reaches mainstream audiences beyond diaspora communities;
- (3) Whether it captures the attention of mainstream media and critical discourse.

Regrettably, Guangdong Han Opera has not yet succeeded in achieving substantial visibility within these “three mainstreams”. According to interviews with the Guangdong Han Opera Heritage Research Institute, foreign audiences often exhibit a far greater sense of unfamiliarity and distance toward Han Opera than toward Cantonese Opera, another major theatrical tradition from the same province. This comparative gap underscores not only Han Opera’s lower degree of international exposure, but also the historical asymmetry in cultural branding between different regional theatre forms. Indeed, before Mei Lanfang’s celebrated visit to the United States in the 1930s, many Americans mistakenly believed that “Chinese theatre” referred exclusively to Cantonese Opera, a misconception shaped by early immigrant communities and the predominance of Cantonese troupes in North American Chinatowns. This historical bias, compounded by the absence of sustained international promotion and institutional support, has continued to limit Guangdong Han Opera’s presence in global cultural circuits. As a result, the genre often remains misidentified or overshadowed by the better-known Cantonese Opera, preventing it from establishing a distinct identity in the global imagination.

Overcoming this challenge requires a multifaceted approach, one that integrates academic exchange, digital storytelling, and cultural diplomacy. Beyond performing for overseas Chinese communities, Guangdong Han Opera must find ways to engage mainstream cultural festivals, international art institutions, and interdisciplinary collaborations. Establishing partnerships with museums, universities, and media organizations could enhance

visibility and provide interpretive frameworks that contextualize Han Opera's aesthetics for non-Chinese audiences. In the long term, such efforts can help reposition Guangdong Han Opera as not merely a regional art form, but a living embodiment of Chinese cultural diversity and creative vitality, capable of conveying universal human emotions through its uniquely local expression.

## **4. Reflections on the overseas dissemination of Guangdong Han Opera**

In the present era that emphasizes the protection of intangible cultural heritage, how to preserve and transmit Guangdong Han Opera, a traditional art form with a history of over 300 years, has become both the mission and the driving force for all who are devoted to this art. The following are several reflections and suggestions concerning the international dissemination of Guangdong Han Opera.

### **4.1. Cultivating artists with distinctive artistic styles**

Chinese Xiqu has always been an actor-centered art form, where the charisma, skill, and artistic individuality of the performer are the core driving forces that shape both the performance and its reception. The audience's emotional connection with the art depends largely on the performer's ability to embody symbolic meaning through gesture, voice, and rhythm. As scholars have observed, "Whether it is theatre, dance, music, or any other art form, it reaches the hearts of audiences through individuals, through stars. The global outreach and influence of Chinese traditional culture is, at its core, a process of personalization." This insight highlights the central role of performer individuality in cultural dissemination. The future development and global communication of Guangdong Han Opera therefore hinge upon the cultivation of artists with distinctive personal styles, those who not only master the traditional performance system but can also translate its spirit into universally resonant artistic expression.

Historically, every era of Chinese opera has been shaped by the emergence of outstanding performers who redefined artistic standards and expanded the reach of their respective genres. The influence of figures such as Mei Lanfang in Jingju, Yue Meiti in Yue Opera, and Hong Xiannu in Cantonese Opera demonstrates that individual artistry can serve as a cultural bridge between China and the world. These artists did not simply replicate tradition; rather, they interpreted and reimagined it, embodying a fusion of classical technique and personal creativity that allowed international audiences to perceive the human and aesthetic depth behind formal stylization.

For Guangdong Han Opera, this calls for a comprehensive talent development strategy that emphasizes both traditional training and contemporary adaptability. On one hand, performers must acquire a solid foundation in vocal technique, gesture vocabulary, and character archetypes, internalizing the conventions that define the art form's aesthetic grammar. On the other hand, they should be encouraged to cultivate individual interpretive styles, engage with interdisciplinary art forms, and participate in cross-cultural collaborations. For example, through workshops with international directors, musicians, or stage designers. Such exposure can inspire innovative ways to express Han Opera's cultural essence while maintaining fidelity to its artistic core.

Moreover, as the world increasingly turns toward digital and visual media, Guangdong Han Opera needs artists who can also act as cultural ambassadors in virtual environments, through documentary films, online performances, educational platforms, and international festivals. The ability to perform for both a live and digital audience expands the boundaries of traditional stage art, turning each performer into a living node of intercultural exchange.

Ultimately, cultivating artists with distinctive styles means fostering both mastery and vision, the mastery to

preserve the refined tradition of Guangdong Han Opera and the vision to reinterpret it for the modern world. When performers become embodied storytellers who project cultural confidence and emotional truth, Guangdong Han Opera will not only survive as a regional art form but also flourish as a global cultural language, communicating Chinese aesthetics and humanistic values to audiences across continents.

## **4.2. Developing representative repertoires for overseas dissemination**

At the heart of the inheritance of Chinese Xiqu lies the preservation and renewal of its repertoire, the living repository of artistic creativity passed down through generations. The repertoire embodies the cumulative wisdom of playwrights, performers, and directors, serving as the primary vehicle through which the expressive techniques, aesthetic values, and moral ideals of traditional opera are conveyed. For Guangdong Han Opera, repertoire is not only a collection of plays but also a cultural archive that reflects the spiritual temperament and social history of the Lingnan and Hakka regions. As a regional theatre form, Guangdong Han Opera's vitality and continuity depend on its ability to balance the safeguarding of classical works with the creation of new plays that resonate with contemporary audiences. This dual strategy, "preserve tradition while fostering innovation", is crucial to ensuring that the art remains dynamic and relevant both domestically and internationally.

### **4.2.1. Revitalizing classical works**

The selection and revival of classical plays that encapsulate the essence of Han Opera are essential for establishing its international identity. According to The 50th Anniversary Performance Record of the Guangdong Han Opera Theatre, the troupe has staged 241 productions since its founding, comprising 175 classical plays and 66 modern ones. While this record demonstrates a remarkable breadth of repertoire, the number of traditional masterpieces that remain in active rotation has declined significantly in recent years. This decline underscores the need to systematically curate and reinterpret works such as *Qin Xianglian*, *The Lantern Case*, and *The Promotion of Xu Jiujing*. These plays represent the artistic nucleus of the Han Opera tradition, combining narrative richness, melodic elegance, and moral instruction. Through refined direction, modern stage technology, and enhanced dramaturgy, these works can be revitalized to appeal to international audiences without compromising their traditional spirit.

### **4.2.2. Audience-oriented repertoire strategies**

Different regions exhibit distinct audience preferences that demand tailored programming strategies. In Southeast Asia, where a large proportion of the population has Cantonese and Hakka roots, audiences show a strong attachment to traditional dramas. These plays, which emphasize filial piety, righteousness, and moral virtue, are both entertaining and didactic. Their familiar dialects and narrative motifs enable overseas Chinese communities to connect emotionally with their ancestral culture. In contrast, in Europe and North America, audiences tend to value aesthetic spectacle and performative innovation. For these viewers, shorter plays or excerpts (Zhezi Xi), featuring dynamic singing, stylized combat, and expressive gestures, serve as ideal entry points. Through these condensed yet artistically rich pieces, spectators can grasp the core techniques of Han Opera, its rhythmic recitation, musical precision, and choreographic symbolism, without linguistic barriers. Such differentiation acknowledges that effective cultural transmission requires sensitivity to the sociocultural context of reception. A repertoire that aligns with local expectations while retaining its artistic integrity will have greater communicative power.

### 4.2.3. Integrating tradition and innovation

To sustain its development, Guangdong Han Opera must pursue creative synthesis between its traditional artistic conventions and contemporary expressive forms. The principle of “balancing inheritance and innovation” should serve as the guiding philosophy: On one hand, the art must adhere to the ideal of “inheritance without rigidity”, revitalizing time-honored stories through new thematic interpretations, cross-genre collaborations, and contemporary performance aesthetics. On the other hand, it must uphold “innovation without losing roots”, ensuring that experimentation remains grounded in the classical vocabulary of Han Opera, its singing styles, role categories, and cultural symbolism. In practical terms, integrating local characteristics and Hakka cultural motifs into new creations can enhance the authenticity and regional identity of Guangdong Han Opera on the global stage. For instance, modern adaptations that draw from Hakka folk tales, regional legends, or social themes could both preserve cultural specificity and demonstrate artistic relevance. Ultimately, developing representative repertoires for overseas dissemination is not merely a matter of artistic selection, it is a strategic act of cultural translation and heritage renewal.

## 4.3. Overcoming language barriers

Even for audiences who have some degree of familiarity with Chinese Xiqu, understanding the emotional subtleties, narrative logic, and aesthetic conventions of Guangdong Han Opera often remains elusive. Viewers tend to rely primarily on visual spectacle, the colorful costumes, stylized gestures, and musical rhythm, to derive partial comprehension. However, without a linguistic and cultural frame of reference, the deeper layers of the Xiqu, its poetic language, symbolic expressions, and philosophical undertones, can remain inaccessible. To achieve genuine intercultural appreciation, language mediation is not supplementary but essential.

A landmark example comes from Mei Lanfang’s 1930 tour of the United States, during which his close collaborator Qi Rushan prepared a bilingual introductory booklet on Jingju. The text, translated into English and distributed among American audiences and theatre critics, explained the conventions, character types, and symbolic gestures of Chinese opera. This initiative not only enhanced comprehension but also laid the foundation for meaningful dialogue between Chinese and Western theatrical traditions. The success of Mei Lanfang’s performances demonstrates that translation and contextual explanation are pivotal in bridging aesthetic and cultural gaps.

For Guangdong Han Opera to achieve similar international resonance, linguistic accessibility must be treated as the cornerstone of its global strategy. Translation specialists, ideally with dual expertise in Chinese theatre studies and intercultural communication, should be engaged to render librettos and performance texts into major world languages, English, French, Japanese, and others. Such translations should strive for accuracy, fluency, and artistic sensitivity, while making the meaning intelligible to foreign readers and viewers.

In addition to textual translation, multimodal interpretation methods can be incorporated to deepen understanding. For example, bilingual subtitles, interactive program booklets, and digital glossaries of Han Opera terminology can guide audiences through key scenes and lyrics. Online platforms could host annotated scripts, behind-the-scenes videos, and expert commentaries, enabling global audiences to learn about the art form beyond the theatre space.

Moreover, translation in this context should not be viewed merely as a linguistic transfer, but as a form of cultural translation, an act of negotiation between artistic systems and worldviews. As scholars of intercultural theatre have observed, successful translation requires balancing faithfulness to the source culture with accessibility

for the target audience. In this sense, the translator becomes a co-creator, shaping the cross-cultural reception of Guangdong Han Opera.

Through such multi-layered efforts, combining linguistic precision, aesthetic mediation, and technological innovation, foreign audiences can move beyond surface-level appreciation to experience the emotional power, lyrical grace, and symbolic richness of Guangdong Han Opera. Only by dismantling language barriers can this traditional art truly enter the global cultural conversation, allowing its timeless beauty to resonate across languages and civilizations.

#### **4.4. Understanding and adapting to the dynamics of the international market**

The needs and preferences of overseas audiences are key factors that must be fully considered in the dissemination of traditional opera. Only when the content of Guangdong Han Opera aligns with the cultural context and market demands of the host country can it achieve effective communication and be genuinely appreciated by foreign audiences. The overseas performance and promotion of Guangdong Han Opera should therefore follow scientific principles of the international performance market, adopting targeted marketing strategies and engaging experienced theatrical agents. Collaborating with local Chinese art associations, providing appropriate financial support, and supplementing these efforts with expert guidance are all effective ways to enhance Han Opera's international visibility. For example, in the United States, especially in the San Francisco Bay Area, where there are numerous Chinese cultural organizations, Guangdong Han Opera could be promoted through community-based lectures, demonstration performances, and university events. Such initiatives could help introduce the art form to the American public and nurture new enthusiasts. A successful precedent is the *Youth Edition of The Peony Pavilion*, which became a landmark case of commercially viable Chinese Xiqu abroad. In July 2006, Pai Hsien-Yung (Bai Xianyong) delivered a series of public lectures on Kunqu at universities in California, introducing its history and aesthetics while organizing interactive sessions between actors and local audiences. Altogether, twelve demonstration events were held, significantly increasing public awareness and appreciation. In today's environment, the overseas dissemination of Guangdong Han Opera must also integrate new media and digital marketing strategies.

### **5. Conclusion**

Honored as the “Peony of the South,” Guangdong Han Opera has withstood the passage of more than three centuries, weathering social upheavals, cultural transformations, and artistic transitions, yet it continues to radiate a distinctive brilliance that embodies the spirit and resilience of southern Chinese culture. In 2008, its inclusion in China's National Intangible Cultural Heritage List not only recognized its profound artistic and historical value but also affirmed its irreplaceable position within the broader landscape of Chinese traditional theatre. Today, in an era characterized by global connectivity, digital transformation, and cultural pluralism, Guangdong Han Opera faces both challenges and opportunities in its overseas dissemination. On one hand, the shrinking of traditional audiences, the dominance of globalized entertainment media, and the lack of specialized international promotion mechanisms have limited its visibility abroad. On the other hand, the rapid development of digital media, virtual platforms, and cross-cultural exchange initiatives provides new momentum and innovative pathways for its revival. To ensure the sustainable development of Guangdong Han Opera, it is crucial to combine preservation with innovation, to protect its classical essence while reimagining its expression through contemporary aesthetics.

and technology. Future efforts should emphasize multilingual translation and subtitling, digital archiving and visualization, and international artistic collaborations, allowing the art form to speak across linguistic and cultural boundaries. Equally important is the cultivation of a new generation of artists and scholars who possess both a deep understanding of traditional performance techniques and a global perspective on cultural communication. By integrating academic research, international cooperation, and creative practice, Guangdong Han Opera can continue to flourish, transforming from a regional cultural treasure into a vibrant participant in the global dialogue of performing arts.

Ultimately, the enduring vitality of Guangdong Han Opera rests not only in the preservation of its melodies and movements but also in its ability to convey human emotions and universal values that transcend geography and time. With sustained governmental support, the dedication of Han Opera practitioners, and the growing interest of international audiences, we can confidently anticipate a renewed springtime for Guangdong Han Opera, one that will see its unique elegance and profound charm blossom once again on the world stage. In today's era of economic globalization and information integration, Guangdong Han Opera faces numerous difficulties and challenges in its overseas dissemination. Nevertheless, with the strong support and attention of governmental institutions and the persistent dedication of generations of Han Opera artists, there is every reason to believe that this treasured art form will once again experience a revival, renewing its unique charm and timeless brilliance on the world stage.

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## Disclosure statement

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