

History of the instrument

This instrument, the Guzheng, is one of the oldest traditional Chinese instruments amongst others such as the Er-hu and Pi-pa. Because of its ability to produce a great variety of music, it is considered a significant Chinese Musical instrument.

The Guzheng has existed since 300BC - 500BC. As that period was also around the Qin dynasty, this instrument has been commonly known as the 'Qin-Zen'. Thus up to date, this instrument has a history of around 2500 years.

It started with 5 strings, and people had thought it to have evolved from a bamboo-made instrument, which only had five strings, called the 'Zhu'. But 'Zhu' was a percussion instrument, whilst the Guzheng is a plucking instrument.

Until the end of the warring states, which was around 200AD, the QinZen had already developed to be 12 strings. From then on, the Guzheng continued its evolution.



During the Tang Dynasty, the Guzheng had 13strings; but in the last dynasty, the Qing dynasty, it had 16 strings; and up till today, the 21string Guzhengs are commonly used.

Thus, the Guzheng has been passed on to all corners of China after all these years. With such, people *of each provincial culture and tribe* have put in a lot of effort and wisdom to write music for this instrument. Thus, each Guzheng piece differs technically, as each piece depicts a different background and culture. (For example the Mongolian, Guangdong, Shandong, etc, would differ with one another musically and technically)

Brain Teasers !!

Choose one or more of the following:-

1. How many strings does the guzheng have?
 8
 21
 14
2. Which of the following has been used to describe the guzheng as well?
 Chinese piano
 Chinese harp
 Chinese flute
3. How long has the guzheng been around for?
 100 years
 800 years
 2500 years
4. Draw lines of the following names with the right instrument



Zhong-Ruan



Er-Hu



Guzheng