



Musical Characteristics and Inheritance of Sichuan Opera in Chengdu, China

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Abstract

Background and Aim: Chuan Opera, originating in Chengdu and rooted in the cultural traditions of the Bashu region, is a significant form of traditional Chinese opera known for its distinctive musical structure, performance techniques, and regional flavor. This study focuses on 25 key informants, including performers, educators, and inheritors in the Chengdu area, to analyze the musical characteristics of Chuan Opera and investigate its inheritance practices. Furthermore, it explores how these traditional elements can be creatively integrated into modern popular music to facilitate cultural innovation and continuity.

Materials and Methods: This research adopts a qualitative approach grounded in ethnomusicological and cultural preservation theories. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and field observations with Chuan Opera performers, educators, and inheritors in Chengdu. The study also examined representative musical works and contemporary adaptations incorporating Chuan Opera elements. A comparative analysis of traditional and modern forms was conducted to identify patterns of continuity and transformation.

Results: Findings reveal that the musical characteristics of Chuan Opera include five primary vocal styles (Gaoqiang, Kunqiang, Huqinqiang, Danxi, and Dengdiao), flexible rhythmic structures, and the integration of Sichuan folk music. Instruments are categorized into civil, such as erhu, pipa, and military, such as gongs, drum groups, forming a complex yet expressive soundscape. In terms of inheritance, a notable shift is observed from the traditional master-apprentice model to modern systems involving formal education and online platforms. Additionally, the incorporation of digital media and elements from popular music has become increasingly common. These hybrid forms are exemplified in creative works such as "New Voices of Chuan Opera" and "Watching a Chuan Opera," which successfully combine operatic vocal techniques with pop music aesthetics.

Conclusion: The research concludes that while Chuan Opera retains its core musical identity, its sustainable development requires strategic adaptation to contemporary cultural contexts. This study proposes strategic measures for sustainable preservation through policy reform, education, and digital innovation. These recommendations aim to support both cultural continuity and innovation, providing a theoretical and practical reference for interdisciplinary efforts in preserving and transforming local opera traditions.

Keywords: Chuan Opera; Chengdu; Musical Characteristics; Cultural Inheritance; Popular Music Integration

Introduction

Chuan Opera, known in Chinese as "川剧" (Chuānjù), is a vibrant and multifaceted form of traditional Chinese opera that emerged from the cultural heartland of Sichuan Province, particularly Chengdu. As one of China's most representative regional operatic traditions (Lam, 2022), Chuan Opera embodies a unique artistic integration of music, language, literature, costume, acrobatics, and facial artistry. Its core musical and performative features, such as the five distinct tune types (Gaoqiang, Kunqiang, Huqinqiang, Danxi, and Dengdiao), the use of Sichuan dialect, exaggerated stage expressions, and signature stunts like face-changing and fire-spitting, have long captivated audiences and symbolized the cultural richness of the Bashu region. However, rapid urbanization, globalization, and the dominance of mass media and digital entertainment have posed challenges to the transmission and relevance of traditional art forms such as Chuan Opera. Audience interest, especially among younger generations, has sharply declined (SIWEN & Jamnongsarn, 2024). The traditional master-apprentice inheritance model is gradually being replaced by institutionalized and digital education.

Despite these challenges, recent developments in cultural preservation and creative industries have sparked renewed interest in the revitalization of Chuan Opera through cross-genre innovation. One particularly promising avenue has been the integration of Chuan Opera's musical characteristics into modern popular music. This hybridization strategy seeks not only to preserve core elements of the operatic





tradition but also to reinterpret and modernize its expressive capabilities for contemporary audiences. Such efforts align with broader trends in cultural heritage studies, which emphasize the importance of "living heritage", the ongoing adaptation and relevance of traditional practices within current social contexts.

The city of Chengdu serves as the birthplace and contemporary hub of Chuan Opera, playing a central role in this cultural renaissance. Government initiatives, such as the revitalization of the Tian Qingyuan Chuan Opera Performing Arts Center and university programs, have supported the opera's preservation and evolution. Simultaneously, artists, educators, and producers have developed innovative projects (Mingyue & Chiang,2024) such as "New Voices of Chuan Opera" and "Rouge Button, "which blend traditional singing techniques with pop, R&B, and electronic music styles.

This study aims to explore the intersection of tradition and modernity by investigating three main areas: the musical characteristics of Chuan Opera, the current inheritance mechanisms in Chengdu, and its creative integration into modern popular music. Rather than merely documenting transformation, it seeks to understand how Chuan Opera survives and evolves in a digitally mediated, consumer-driven, and youth-oriented society.

Previous studies have mainly focused on isolated aspects such as musical characteristics, cultural policies, or heritage documents. However, there is still a huge academic gap in comprehensive, integration-focused ethnomusicological analysis, especially in terms of how musical characteristics and inheritance mechanisms interact in the contemporary urban context and how to innovatively connect them with modern popular music. To fill this gap, the theoretical framework of this study draws on ethnomusicology, cultural heritage theory, and popular music research. Methodologically, this study adopts qualitative research methods, including field surveys, interviews with inheritors and musicians, and analysis of musical works that embody the integration of traditional opera and modern music.

This study aims to deepen the understanding of how traditional opera forms are inherited and transformed in the context of cultural life in the 21st century. It provides a model of culturally responsive innovation. While being faithful to traditional art forms, it actively explores contemporary creative possibilities.

Objectives

This study aims to examine the transformation and preservation of Chuan Opera in Chengdu through a multidisciplinary lens, focusing on the interconnected process of musical structure, cultural transmission, and contemporary application. The specific objectives are:

1. To analyze the musical characteristics of Chuan Opera in Chengdu by:
 - ❖ Identifying core vocal styles, including Gaoqiang, Kunqiang, Huqinqiang, Danxi, and Dengdiao.
 - ❖ Examining instrumentation, rhythmic and melodic structures, and the use of the local Sichuan dialect.
 - ❖ Assessing how these musical elements contribute to Chuan Opera's regional identity and artistic distinctiveness.
2. To investigate current practices and challenges in the cultural transmission of Chuan Opera by:
 - ❖ Exploring shifting inheritance models, including the traditional master-apprentice system, institutional education, and digital platforms.
 - ❖ Analyzing the roles of policy frameworks, educational institutions, and community-based initiatives.
 - ❖ Evaluating the impact of modernization on intergenerational knowledge transfer and sustainability.
3. To explore the integration of Chuan Opera elements into modern popular music by:
 - ❖ Analyzing hybrid musical works that blend traditional operatic techniques with popular genres such as pop, R&B, and hip-hop.





- ❖ Investigating the motivations, creative methods, and audience reception of these integrative practices.
- ❖ Assessing how such fusion contributes to both cultural preservation and innovative expression.

Literature review

Sichuan opera in Chengdu, China, has been the subject of interdisciplinary academic research in ethnomusicology, cultural heritage studies, and regional performing arts. Existing literature mainly explores three key areas: the musical characteristics of Sichuan opera, the cultural inheritance mechanism of Chengdu, and the recent attempts to integrate Sichuan opera with modern popular music genres. However, most existing studies tend to be descriptive and lack theoretical integration or comparative depth. This review critically evaluates the existing literature and identifies the gaps that this study attempts to fill.

Musical Characteristics of Chuan Opera: The music of Chuan Opera is widely recognized for its structural complexity and distinct regional identity. Five principal vocal styles Gaoqiang, Kunqiang, Huqinqiang, Danxi, and Dengdiao—constitute its core vocal repertoire, each conveying unique emotional and dramatic functions (Li, 2020; Lim, 2010). Gaoqiang, the most representative style, is lauded for its improvisational freedom and emotive intensity, while Kunqiang offers a more lyrical and refined tone. Instrumentation is classified into civil and military categories, comprising traditional Chinese instruments such as erhu, pipa, suona, gongs, and drums (Dams, 2017). Linguistically, the opera incorporates Sichuan dialect, further rooting it in the cultural identity of the Bashu region (Chabrowski,2022).

Most of these studies provide a static overview of traditional musical forms, rarely examining how these musical elements have evolved or adapted in a syncretic modern context. The comparative relationship between traditional performance structures and their transformed expressions in popular music remains underexplored. This study fills this gap by analyzing and comparing traditional musical forms and reinterpreted musical forms, focusing on vocal arrangement, instrumentation, and melodic dynamics.

Inheritance and Transmission Mechanisms: Traditional Sichuan opera is passed down through the master-apprentice system and is deeply rooted in the learning environment of the family or troupe. Contemporary research finds that this model is shifting, and institutionalized training programs, online platforms, and community initiatives have begun to replace or supplement this oral tradition (Wang et al., 2024; Chen, 2024). National and local policies, including the designation of Sichuan opera as a national intangible cultural heritage in 2006, have promoted investment in preservation through educational programs, venue revitalization, and archival records (UNESCO, 2003; Wang and Qiao, 2018).

Most policy-oriented studies focus on infrastructure development but fail to assess the effectiveness of institutional or digital mechanisms in promoting sustainable intergenerational knowledge transfer. This study contextualizes how different channels (formal education, grassroots initiatives, and digital media) interact and influence the maintenance of performance integrity.

Integration into modern popular music. Recent scholarship has recognized the growing popularity of Sichuan opera incorporating contemporary music genres as a form of cultural innovation and audience development (Siwen & Jamnongsarn, 2024; Fain & Wagner, 2014). Projects such as “New Voices of Sichuan Opera,” “Rouge Button,” and “Watching Sichuan Opera” demonstrate how the vocal techniques and visual aesthetics of traditional opera are integrated into pop, R&B, and electronic music forms. Scholars argue that this cross-genre integration reflects a broader strategy of cultural revitalization. Current literature often views this integration as a cultural phenomenon rather than a musical transformation. Musical analysis of the structural, rhythmic, and harmonic elements of these hybrid works and traditional works is severely lacking. This study, through comparative analysis of some musical works, focuses on how the melodic grammar, instrumental instruments, and narrative functions of Sichuan opera are preserved, transformed, or weakened in modern adaptations.

In summary, while existing research provides valuable insights into the traditional practices and cultural significance of Sichuan opera, it does not fully capture the transformations taking place at the intersection of tradition and innovation. There is a lack of critical reflection on how musical identity is



negotiated in hybrid forms, and no research to date has systematically compared the musical aspects of traditional Sichuan opera and its popular musical adaptations. By filling these gaps, this study enhances the relevance of the existing literature and provides original empirical data and theoretical interpretations for the sustainable transformation of regional opera traditions in the contemporary cultural context. Research Concept and Framework as follows:

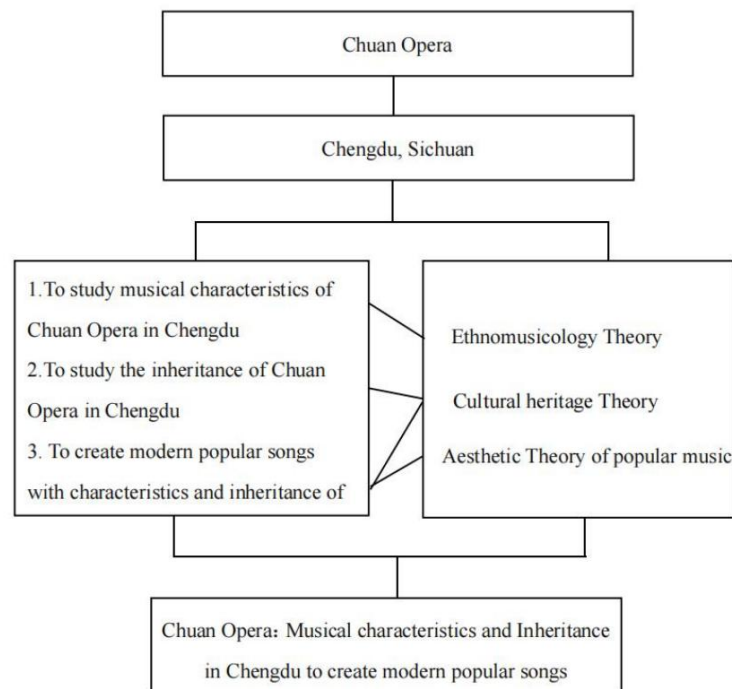


Figure 1 Concept and Framework

Methodology

This research adopts a qualitative research method grounded in ethnomusicology and cultural heritage theory. The methodology aims to deeply explore the structure of traditional Sichuan opera music and the evolution of its inheritance and innovation within the contemporary Chengdu context.

Research Design and Data Collection: This study utilizes a qualitative case study design to comprehensively analyze the musical characteristics, inheritance systems, and contemporary adaptations of Chengdu Sichuan opera. Primary data were collected through multiple qualitative techniques, including field observations, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups. These methods were integrated into a cohesive research process, focusing on collecting insights directly from practitioners and stakeholders in Chengdu.

Field observations included attending Sichuan opera rehearsals, public performances, educational workshops, and community events. Detailed notes documented musical techniques, audience reactions, and the contextual environment of each observation.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather in-depth insights from performers, scholars, educators, and music producers about musical structures, inheritance mechanisms, and hybrid creative processes. An interview guide, developed according to the ethnomusicological theoretical framework, was employed to ensure consistency and accuracy in questioning and alignment with research objectives. Each interview lasted approximately 60-90 minutes. Focus group discussions engaged young music creators and performing arts students to understand their interactions with traditional opera and their views on integrating Sichuan opera into modern popular music.



Research Field and Participants: The research was conducted in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, historically and contemporarily the center of Sichuan opera. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on their direct involvement with Sichuan opera performance, education, or its modern transformation. The 25 participants included renowned local opera artists, inheritors of national intangible cultural heritage, Sichuan opera educators and scholars, contemporary musicians and producers, governmental and cultural policymakers, as well as audiences and community members.

Data Analysis: Thematic analysis was utilized to interpret the collected qualitative data. Interviews and focus groups were transcribed verbatim, and open coding was conducted to identify recurring concepts related to musical characteristics, inheritance strategies, and integration methods. Axial coding then established connections between these themes.

Ethnomusicological analysis was further applied to interpret musical information. Specifically, musical analysis involved transcription of key excerpts, melodic and tonal mapping, rhythmic segmentation, and identification of improvisational patterns, which allowed a nuanced understanding of Sichuan opera's unique musical characteristics.

Research validity and reliability were enhanced through triangulation of multiple data sources and methods, member checking with key informants, and peer reviews by academic advisors and Sichuan opera experts. Detailed descriptions provided contextual richness, and informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity were maintained throughout. The study received ethical approval from Khon Kaen University's Ethics Committee and adhered strictly to institutional guidelines for qualitative research.

Timing of Data Collection: Fieldwork was conducted over six months from March to August 2024, covering significant traditional performances and contemporary adaptations, thus ensuring a comprehensive and timely understanding of Sichuan opera's current state and innovations.

Results

The results of this study are presented in three parts, aligning with the research objectives: (1) the musical characteristics of Chuan Opera in Chengdu, (2) the current forms and challenges of its cultural inheritance, and (3) the integration of Chuan Opera elements into modern popular music. Each part is based on a thematic analysis of qualitative data collected through interviews, observations, and document review.

Musical Characteristics of Chuan Opera in Chengdu

Vocal Techniques and Styles Chuan Opera incorporates five primary vocal styles: Gaoqiang, Kunqiang, Huqinqiang, Danxi, and Dengdiao, collectively known as the "Five Voices of Chuan Opera." A senior performer emphasized, "In Gaoqiang, we freely adjust melodies on stage to reflect immediate emotional responses from the audience." During live performances at Shufeng Yayun, field notes recorded that the singer frequently demonstrated spontaneous melodic improvisation in response to audience interactions, illustrating the expressive flexibility intrinsic to Chuan Opera.

Interviewee	Statement
Performer A	"Gaoqiang allows us to express emotions freely, making each performance unique."
Performer B	"Kunqiang melodies require refined techniques, capturing delicate emotional nuances."

Instrumentation and Ensemble Structure: Chuan Opera employs civil instruments (erhu, pipa, sanxian, yueqin, dizi) and military instruments (drums, gongs, cymbals, ban boards). A percussionist described, "We closely watch actors and adjust our rhythms instantaneously, creating a dynamic musical conversation." Observations from rehearsals recorded frequent interactions between instrumentalists and actors, such as immediate rhythmic adjustments to actors' movements, reflecting the collaborative essence of performances.





Interviewee	Statement
Instrumentalist A	“Percussion guides dramatic pacing; we anticipate actors' gestures and movements.”
Instrumentalist B	“Civil instruments blend smoothly with percussion, crafting the opera’s distinct musical texture.”

Melodic and Rhythmic Features

Melodies in Chuan Opera exhibit modal diversity and rhythmic flexibility. During rehearsals at Chengdu Chuan Opera Art Center, field notes indicated seamless synchronization between actors and musicians, achieved without fixed notation but rather through auditory cues. An actor explained, “Our rhythms adapt naturally according to the dramatic needs of the story, adding authenticity and immediacy to our performances.”

Interviewee	Statement
Actor A	“Melodic flexibility helps us portray deeper emotional realism.”
Actor B	“Rhythmic freedom keeps the performance vibrant and responsive to live dynamics.”

Cultural Inheritance of Chuan Opera in Chengdu

Shifting Models of Transmission: Traditional master-apprentice models within troupes are increasingly supplemented or replaced by formal education, community workshops, and digital platforms. An inheritor reflected, “Younger people prefer structured education or digital formats now; apprenticeships are rare.” Field notes from observations at the Chengdu Chuan Opera Art Center confirmed that younger generations are actively engaging in structured classes and online instructional content.

Interviewee	Statement
Inheritor A	“Institutionalized education helps standardize training, but it reduces personal mentorship.”
Inheritor B	“Digital platforms broaden our reach significantly, making Chuan Opera more accessible globally.”

The role of Institutions and Policy for Initiatives like the Tianqingyuan Performing Arts Center Revitalization Plan provides essential support for preserving Chuan Opera. A policymaker highlighted, “Our strategy prioritizes 'living heritage,' preserving tradition while embracing innovation.” Field observations at public performances noted sustained community engagement, especially evident in teahouse performances attracting diverse audiences.

Interviewee	Statement
Policy Maker A	“Government support is vital; it helps sustain the art while adapting to modern audience needs.”
Policy Maker B	“Our focus is to ensure that Chuan Opera remains relevant and appealing through innovative programs.”

Community and Media-Based Inheritance

Digital platforms, especially Douyin (TikTok China), effectively engage younger audiences. A performing arts student noted, “Watching opera clips online feels accessible and casual, significantly lowering barriers to traditional art forms.” Field notes documented strong youth attendance and positive reactions to digitally streamed performances, highlighting enhanced accessibility and engagement.





Interviewee	Statement
Student A	“Social media has introduced me to traditional opera, sparking my interest in learning more.”
Student B	“Online content makes it easier for us to explore opera casually, integrating it naturally into daily life.”

Integration into Modern Popular Music

Creative Fusion Projects show projects like “New Voices of Chuan Opera” that integrate traditional Gaoqiang vocals with contemporary genres such as hip-hop. A music producer remarked, “Our goal is respectful integration—keeping the essence of opera while appealing to contemporary listeners.” Field notes from live shows indicated enthusiastic audience responses, particularly younger spectators actively engaging with performances.

Interviewee	Statement
Producer A	“Integrating opera into popular music creates new forms of cultural dialogue.”
Audience Member	“These adaptations have made traditional Chuan Opera appealing and accessible to our generation.”

Discussion

Musical characteristics and inheritance of Chuan Opera in Chengdu, and explored its integration into modern popular music. The findings reveal that while Chuan Opera remains deeply rooted in traditional vocal techniques and regional identity, it is undergoing significant transformations in both its modes of transmission and its expressive form. This discussion section interprets these findings through the lens of ethnomusicology, cultural heritage theory, and creative industries studies.

Tradition and Transformation in Musical Characteristics, rich diversity of vocal styles in Chuan Opera, particularly Gaoqiang, Danxi, and Huqinqiang, demonstrates the system’s flexibility and expressive power. These styles are not only musical forms but also carriers of emotional nuance and cultural memory. As the results showed, the use of improvisation in Gaoqiang performances exemplifies what Merriam (1964) referred to as music’s function as emotional expression tied to cultural context. Instrumentally, Chuan Opera’s civil and military ensemble structure reflects a sophisticated musical logic rooted in ritualistic and performative needs. The blending of melodic instruments with percussive cues allows for dramatic synchronization and supports the theatrical function of the genre. These features reinforce the opera’s performative authenticity, a key concept in ethnomusicology that denotes the alignment between musical form and cultural function. Traditional master-apprentice models persist; they are increasingly supplemented or even replaced by institutionalized education, policy interventions, and digital inheritance models. This supports the idea of “living heritage,” as proposed by UNESCO (2003), where cultural traditions are not static relics but dynamic processes subject to adaptation and innovation.

The role of public institutions in Chengdu, such as the Chengdu Chuan Opera Art Center and universities, has been pivotal in creating structured spaces for both preservation and experimentation. These organizations help formalize knowledge once transmitted informally, thus expanding access to previously restricted domains of cultural practice. Furthermore, the use of online platforms and social media reflects broader cultural trends toward digitally mediated knowledge transmission. The findings align with Hafstein’s (2009) argument that digital tools can democratize heritage access and support intergenerational dialogue, especially in urbanized societies. Innovation Through Fusion: Risks and Rewards, the integration of Chuan Opera into modern popular music introduces a dual trajectory: it revitalizes interest among younger audiences while also provoking debates about artistic purity and authenticity. The hybrid works, such as “New Voices of Chuan Opera” and “Rouge Button,” exemplify the concept of cultural hybridity (Canclini, 1995), where traditional and contemporary elements are fused to produce new, contextually relevant expressions.





This hybridization is not merely cosmetic. It involves deep structural reconfigurations—including changes in tempo, harmonic layering, lyrical reinterpretation, and performance staging. These innovations invite a reimagining of opera not as a rigid tradition, but as a flexible cultural system capable of evolving within the demands of modern media environments. At the same time, this transformation raises concerns about cultural dilution and the loss of symbolic meaning. Critics argue that pop adaptations risk simplifying or commodifying complex traditions. However, this study supports a more optimistic view: that thoughtful, respectful adaptation can act as a cultural bridge, connecting heritage with contemporary sensibilities and global audiences.

The case of Chuan Opera in Chengdu offers insights into how traditional performing arts can be repositioned within 21st-century cultural ecosystems. Key implications include that Policy support is essential not only for funding performances but also for developing educational curricula, documentation systems, and collaborative platforms for creators. Community engagement, especially through participatory performance and audience interaction, remains vital to sustaining emotional and cultural connections.

Creative industries can be allies in heritage preservation, provided they are guided by cultural sensitivity and collaborative practice. Strategic integration of opera into popular music does not signal the abandonment of tradition but rather its re-contextualization in a form that resonates with new generations. This supports the idea of cultural resilience, where heritage adapts—not dissolves—under changing social conditions.

Conclusion

The fusion of musical characteristics and performance grammar, Chengdu Sichuan Opera retains a rich performance system, covering the fusion of vocal and instrumental music, rhythmic drama, and dialect rhythm, and is deeply rooted in the Bashu cultural environment of Sichuan. The study confirmed its core characteristics: fusion of vocal and body techniques, percussion-based rhythms, glissando-modulated melodies, and the timbre of the Sichuan dialect. These elements constitute a dynamic performance grammar that is both academically significant and culturally resonant.

In-depth understanding of the inheritance model, ethnomusicological research shows that Sichuan Opera inheritance has transformed from the traditional master-apprentice inheritance model to a diversified ecosystem covering educational institutions, community troupes, and digital platforms. This multi-channel model not only ensures the continuity of inheritance but also brings innovation and new tension to the authenticity of art. This study emphasizes that contemporary inheritance is not passive replication, but a dynamic coordination between tradition and modernization.

Integration of original works with modern pop music, this study is the first to rigorously record and analyze original works such as "New Voices of Sichuan Opera", "Rouge Button" and "Watching Sichuan Opera", which authentically integrate the modal system, singing techniques, instrumental timbre, and dialect of Sichuan Opera with modern pop music frameworks (such as R&B, hip-hop, and electronic music). The original works show a specific and replicable model of "living heritage," not a decorative appropriation, but a functional integration that conveys both narrative and musical logic. They establish a new paradigm for how the opera tradition can develop without losing cultural integrity.

Theoretical and practical significance, the research provides an interdisciplinary framework that integrates musical structure, cultural heritage, and policy practice, and regards Sichuan Opera as both an academic research object and a living cultural phenomenon.

The research provides some practical insights: in education, adopting integrated courses in formal and informal settings; in cultural heritage policy, supporting community participation, creative collaboration, and digital communication; in cultural planning, advocating standards that balance innovation and authenticity.

Rather than being a static relic, Chengdu Sichuan Opera is presented in this study as a dynamic, evolving art form capable of sustained development through adaptive innovation. Unlike previous studies that simply categorize musical styles, this study proposes a living cultural heritage model: documenting





structural traits, mapping the ecology of inheritance, and showing how tradition and modernity merge in tangible artistic outcomes. Doing so affirms opera's ability to remain relevant in the 21st century, rooted in local traditions while being open to creative change.

Recommendation

To ensure the sustainable inheritance and creative transformation of Sichuan opera in contemporary society, and in combination with the strategic conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to provide a comprehensive roadmap for future development:

Recommendation of policy: Establish a government-funded Sichuan opera digital archive by 2026. The government should allocate special funds to establish a digital archive system that records Sichuan opera scores, singing techniques, performance videos, and oral histories, and open it to the public for education, research, and creative reuse. Implement a cultural heritage subsidy policy and introduce a tiered subsidy system to support both traditional Sichuan opera groups and modern fusion projects that integrate opera with pop music, thereby stimulating innovation while protecting the original flavor of Sichuan opera. Legislate to include Sichuan opera in school curricula and pass local legislation to require that Sichuan opera appreciation and performance be included in primary and secondary education in Chengdu and Sichuan Province by 2027.

Recommendation of education: build a multi-level Sichuan opera talent team, establish joint training programs between universities, conservatories, and Sichuan opera schools, and combine formal teaching, apprenticeship, and digital courses to ensure the intergenerational inheritance of Sichuan opera. Organize Sichuan Opera summer camps and competitions for teenagers. Every year, Sichuan Opera youth summer camps and creative competitions for primary and secondary school students and college students are held, focusing on traditional repertoires and cross-genre (popular drama) works. Publish open-access educational materials. Work with local educators and opera practitioners to produce and distribute open-access textbooks, digital modules, and audio-visual teaching materials on the music, language, and cultural characteristics of Sichuan Opera.

Recommendation of creativity and innovation, fund commissioned creations that integrate Sichuan Opera with popular music. Launch an annual funding program to fund composers, producers, and performers to create modern pop songs and stage works that incorporate authentic Sichuan Opera elements and premiere the selected works at major art festivals. Establish a Sichuan Opera Creative Incubator. Set up an incubator project to support interdisciplinary teams to develop innovative cultural products (such as musicals, movies, games) and reinterpret Sichuan Opera for new audiences. Hold the "Sichuan Opera + Popular Culture" International Forum. Regularly hold forums to bring together scholars, artists, and industry leaders to share best practices, explore development trends, and jointly create new forms of modern evolution of Sichuan Opera.

Recommendation of digital technology, by 2027, an interactive Sichuan opera learning platform will be created. A web and mobile platform driven by artificial intelligence will be built to provide interactive courses, virtual masterclasses, and creative mixing tools, allowing users to learn and experience Sichuan opera music and performance styles. Start digitizing and simplifying Sichuan opera performances, and work with major streaming platforms to broadcast high-quality Sichuan opera performances (traditional and fusion) around the world using multilingual subtitles, VR/AR enhancement technology, and audience engagement analysis. Apply big data and artificial intelligence to audience development, use data-driven methods to analyze audience preferences, optimize Sichuan opera programming, marketing, and community promotion, and ensure close relevance to younger and more diverse audiences.

Recommendation of internationalization, establish international exchange and touring programs, establish long-term exchange agreements with international music schools, opera houses, and cultural institutions, select Sichuan opera artists to perform abroad, and invite international artists to Chengdu to carry out cooperative projects. Participate in international art festivals and music festivals, and regularly hold Sichuan opera performances at major international art festivals (such as the Edinburgh Art Festival





and the Shanghai International Art Festival) to showcase classic and innovative works. Launch multilingual Sichuan Opera digital content, produce, and disseminate multilingual Sichuan Opera documentaries, mini courses, and creative video content, and promote them on global platforms such as YouTube, Coursera, and UNESCO Digital Heritage Channel.

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