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The Characteristics of the Vocal Repertoires in Caidiao Opera in Guilin City, Guangxi Province, China

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Abstract:
This article project entitled "The Characteristics of the Vocal Repertoires in Caidiao Opera in Guilin City, Guangxi Province, China" aimed to 1) understand the mode and tonality of vocal repertoires in Caidiao Opera; 2) study the melody, beats, structural characteristics and the use of "Lining Words" of vocal repertoires in Caidiao Opera; The study employed the qualitative research methodology, documentary studies and field studies in Guilin city Guangxi province to collect the data of the Caidiao opera. The Caidiao opera also known as "Diaozi (tune)", and "Diaozixi (Diaozi)". It is a local traditional opera in Guilin City, Guangxi Province, China. This research has a certain guiding significance to understand and study the music of Caidiao opera.

Keywords:
Vocal Repertoires; Caidiao Opera; Guilin City

1. Introduction

Caidiao opera is a local traditional opera in southern China. *Caidiao* opera is also known as "*Diaozi* (means tune)", "*Cai Cha* (*Cai* means pick; *Cha* means tea-leaves)", "*Hua Gu* (*Hua* means flower; *Gu* means drum)", "*Hua Deng* (*Hua* means flower; *Deng* means lantern)", "*Shua Mudan* (*Shua* means play, *Mudan* means peony)", "*Na Huo Hai* (refers to one type lining words)". It is a comprehensive folk performance art. The music of *Caidiao* opera includes vocal and instrumental repertoires. The instrumental repertoires refer to the melody played only by musical instruments, without words. The vocal repertoires refer to songs with words. The mode composition of *Caidiao* opera belongs to the pentatonic mode of traditional Chinese music. *Caidiao* opera belongs to "*Lian Qu Ti*". Most of the singing and playing music in traditional Chinese opera belongs to the "*Lian Qu Ti*". The so-called "*Lian Qu Ti* (*Lian* refers to connect, *Qu* means melody, *Ti* refers to form)" is to connect all kinds of individual pieces of melodis and songs selectively and skillfully, and then to sing and perform.

"*Caidiao* opera originated in the late Qing Dynasty and early Ming Dynasty. It is popular in the northern, central, northwestern and southwestern regions of Guangxi province, as well as towns and villages in Hunan, Yunnan province and Guizhou province near Guangxi province." (He 2021) "In 2006, *Caidiao* opera was list-

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ed in the fisrt batch of national intangible cultural heritage list published by the State Council of China (Serial number and project name: IV-76 *Caidiao* Opera) ". (Sheng 2016)

The singing characteristics of *Caidiao* opera is a symbolic symbol in the music of *Caidiao* opera, it reflects the cultural information of the local people. "The music of *Caidiao* opera originates from life and is an artistic means for local people to express their feelings." (Qin Yang, Li Donghai, Liyi, 2022) "Culture, created by human beings, goes along with symbols. Symbols have a lot to do with our lives, and thus are signals for communication." (Eunjoo Hong 2018)

"Introducing national intangible cultural heritage "*Caidiao*" into campuses and exploring practical ways to promote the development of school characteristics through curriculum construction, environmental creation, innovative practice, scientific research assistance, and other means." (Gan Qun, Huang Guixiang, 2023)

This research has a certain guiding significance to understand and study the music of *Caidiao* opera. And is conducive to the promotion of the knowledge of *Caidiao* opera.

2. The Mode And Tonality of Vocal Repertoires in Caidiao Opera

The mode composition of *Caidiao* opera belongs to the pentatonic mode of traditional Chinese music. Pentatonic mode, or pentatonic scale, is the scale of Chinese music. The five notes are named as: "*Gong*", "*Shang*", "*Jue*", "*Zhi*", "*Yu*". They are roughly equivalent to the roll-calls of Western music: "do", "re", "mi", "sol", "la".

Move the five notes into an octave in high and low order, and the names of the five notes are as follows:

do re mi sol la

The pitch interval between them: between "*Gong*" and "*Shang*" is major second; between "*Shang*" and "*Jue*" is major second; between "*Jue*" and "*Zhi*" is minor third; between "*Zhi*" and "*Yu*" is major second; between "*Yu*" and "*Gong*" is minor third.

"*Gong*" is a national mode with "*Gong*" pitch as the main tone. The structure of pentatonic mode is as Figure 1:



Figure 1. This pentatonic scale was edited by the author.

"*Shang*" is a national mode with "*Shang*" pitch as the main tone. The structure of pentatonic mode is as Figure 2:



Figure 2. This pentatonic scale was edited by the author.

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"*Jue*" is a national mode with "*Jue*" pitch as the main tone. The structure of pentatonic mode is as Figure 3:



Figure 3. This pentatonic scale was edited by the author.

"*Zhi*" is a national mode with "*Zhi*" pitch as the main tone. The structure of pentatonic mode is as Figure 4:

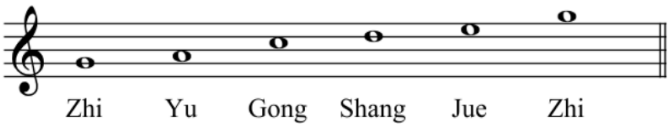


Figure 4. This pentatonic scale was edited by the author.

"*Yu*" is a national mode with "*Yu*" pitch as the main tone. The structure of pentatonic mode is as Figure 5:

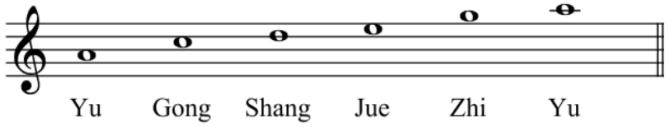


Figure 5. This pentatonic scale was edited by the author.

On the basis of pentatonic scale, the fourth and seventh level notes similar to western music major scale occasionally appear in music, which are generally in an unimportant position or belong to passing notes.

The modes of "*Zhi*" and "*Shang*" are more frequently used in *Caidiao* opera. For example, "*Xuehua Piao* (refers to snow floating)" is the "*Zhi*" mode (As shown in Figure 6), and "*Pan Hua* (refers to talk about flowers)" is the "*Shang*" mode (As shown in Figure 7). After that is "*Yu*" mode and "*Gong*" mode. For example, "*Zou Ma Diao* (*Zou* refers to walk, *Ma* refers to horse, *Diao* refers to melody)" is the "*Yu*" mode (As shown in Figure 8), and "*Kuakua Diao* (*Kuakua* means exaggerated behavior, *Diao* refers to melody)" is the "*Gong*" mode (As shown in Figure 9). "*Jue*" mode is seldom used. For example, "*Lu Qiang Qi* (refers to the seventh *Lu* melody)" is the "*Jue*" mode (As shown in Figure 10).

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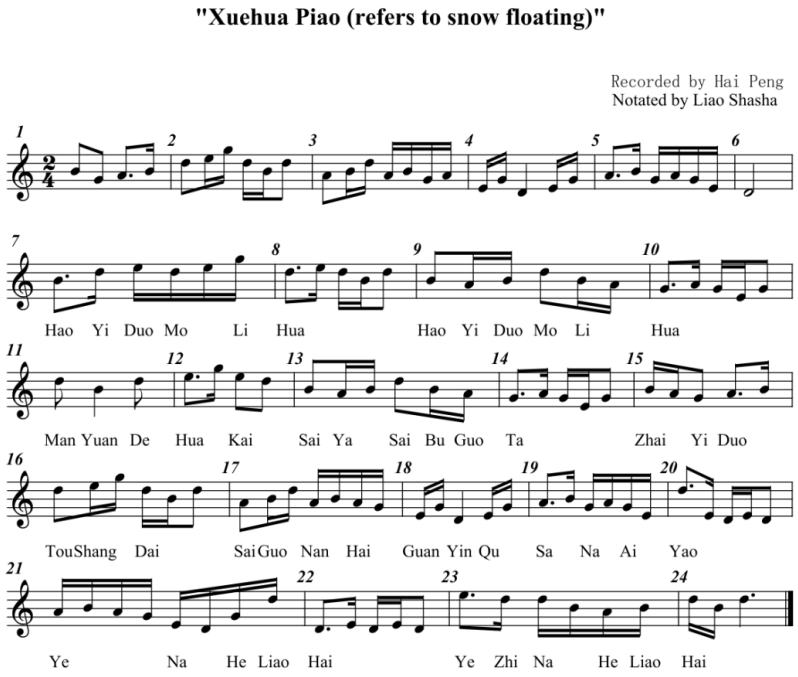


Figure 6. Music score example "Xuehua Piao (refers to snow floating)" (Zhang Guangxiong, Cai Dingguo, "A Hundred Traditional Repertoires of Caidiao Opera", 1981)

The meaning of the text: The flowers in the garden can't compete with it. If you take one and wear it on your head, it's better than Nanhai Guanyin Bodhisattva. (*Na Ai Yo, Ye Na He Le Hai, Ye Na He Le Hai*)



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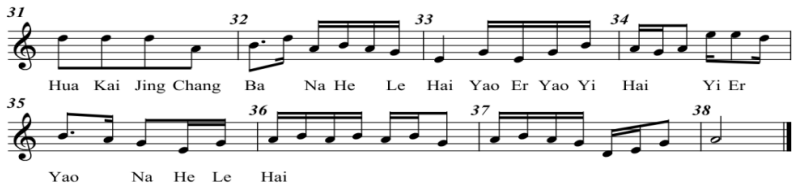


Figure 7. Music score example "Pan Hua (refers to talk about flowers)" (Zhang Guangxiong, Cai Dingguo, "A Hundred Traditional Repertoires of Caidiao Opera", 1981)

The meaning of the text: What flower is small when it blooms, what flower is big when it blooms (*Na He le Hai*), what flower blooms (*Zhi Na He Hai*), and what flower is long when it blooms (*Na He le Hai Yi Er Yo*).

When the hot pepper blooms, it is small, when the peony blooms, it is big (*Na He le Hai*), and when the lotus blooms (*Zhi Na He Hai*), it has a long neck (*Na He le Hai Yi Er Yo*). (*Na He le Hai*)

"Zou Ma Diao (walk horse tune)"



Figure 8. Music score example "Zou Ma Diao (Zou refers to walk, Ma refers to horse, Diao refers to melody)" (Zhang Guangxiong, Cai Dingguo, "A Hundred Traditional Repertoires of Caidiao Opera", 1981)

The meaning of the text: The mountains are full of tea trees and flowers (*Yo*). The butterfly is picking flowers (*Na Li Na He Hai*), (*Hei Ya Hai Hai He*). The girl is picking tea (*Yo Yi Yo*), (*Yi Ma He Zi Yi Yi Na He Yi He Hai*). The girl is picking tea (*Yo Yi Yo*).

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Figure 9-1. Music score example "Kuakua Diao (Kuakua means exaggerated behavior, Diao refers to melody)" (Zhang Guangxiong, Cai Dingguo, "A Hundred Traditional Repertoires of Caidiao Opera", 1981)



Figure 9-2. Music score example "Kuakua Diao (Kuakua means exaggerated behavior, Diao refers to melody)" (Zhang Guangxiong, Cai Dingguo, "A Hundred Traditional Repertoires of Caidiao Opera", 1981)

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The meaning of the text: Mother: I sit with the sole in my hand and pretend to make shoes. It's hard to be a mother. I always worry about my children (*Ai Yo*). Craftsman: I sit by with an awl in my hand. I pretend to be an expert. I want to talk to the girl. The old woman looks at me all the time (*Ai Yo*). Girl: I sit by with silk thread in my hand. I pretend to embroider. But I really don't want to pretend (*Ai Yo*).

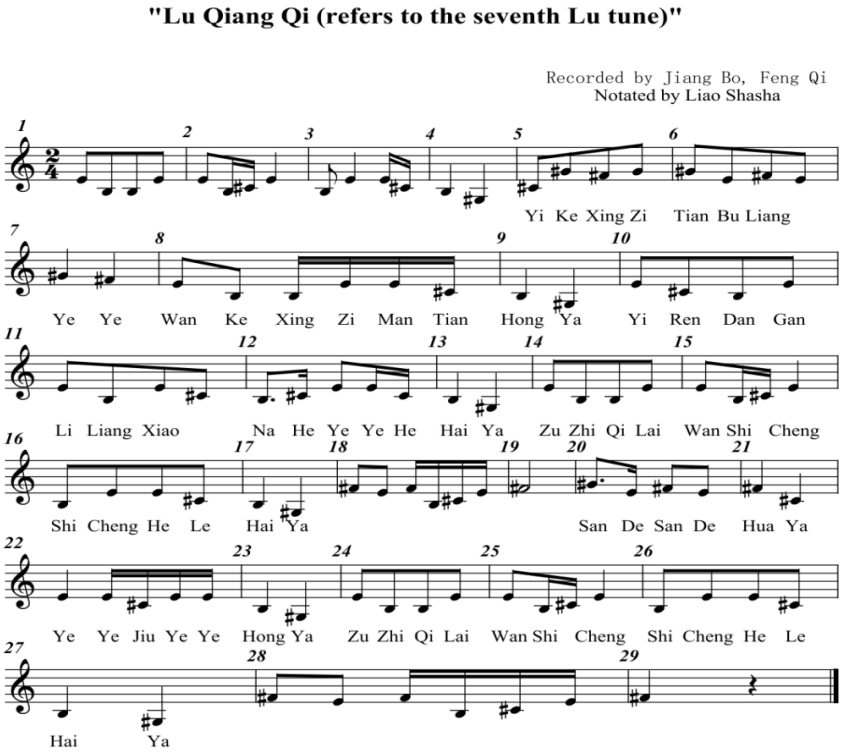


Figure 10. Music score example "Lu Qiang Qi (refers to the seventh Lu melody)" (Zhang Guangxiong, Cai Dingguo, "A Hundred Traditional Repertoires of Caidiao Opera", 1981)

The meaning of the text: One star is not bright, ten thousand stars are red all over the sky.

3. The Melody, Beats and Structural Characteristics of Vocal Repertoires in *Caidiao* Opera

3.1 Melody and Beats

The most common melodies are degrees progression of major second, minor third and major third. (As shown in Figure 11)



Figure 11. This pentatonic scale was edited by the author.

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These melodies are the important elements to form the unique style of *Caidiao* opera music. The rhythm of *Caidiao* opera music: mostly 2/4, or 4/4 beat.

3.2 The Structural Characteristics of Vocal Repertoires in Caidiao Opera

Most of the vocal repertoires in *Caidiao* opera belong to the one-part form.

The first type: Beats: The beats of the front and the back phrases are basically the same. Melody: The melodies of the front and the back phrases are different. Cadence: The cadences of the front and the back phrases are different. Example: "*Wu Zi Suban* (*Wu* means five, *Zi* refers to word, *Suban* refers to pour out)". (As shown in Figure 12).

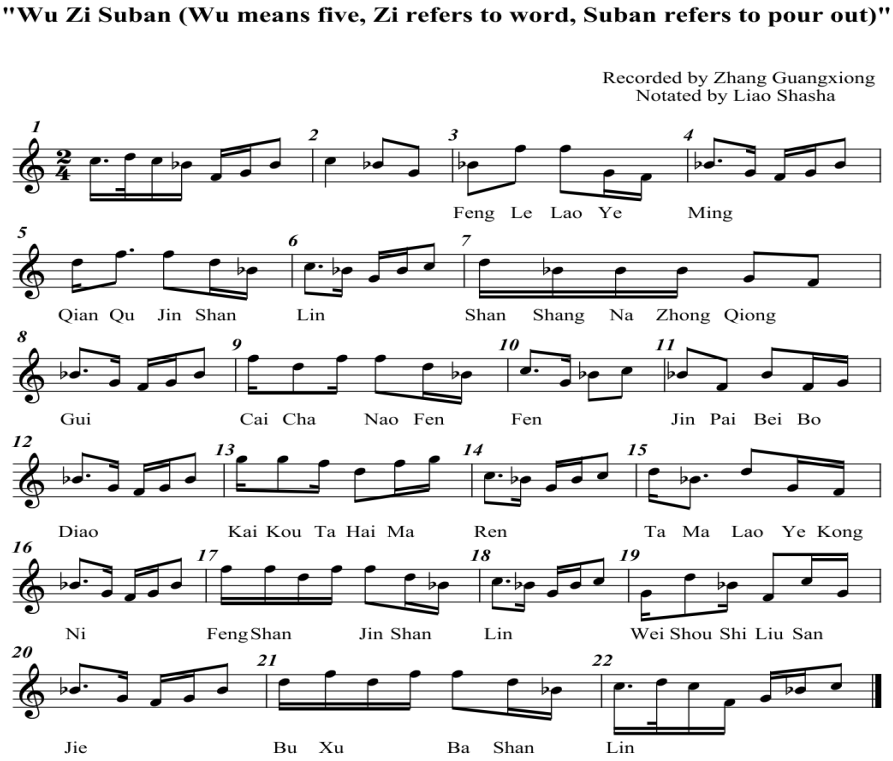


Figure 12. Music score example "Wu Zi Suban (Wu means five, Zi refers to word, Suban refers to pour out)" (Zhang Guangxiong, Cai Dingguo, "A Hundred Traditional Repertoires of Caidiao Opera", 1981)

The meaning of the text: At the master's command, he went to the mountain forest. The poor people on the mountain were busy picking tea. The forbidden card is pulled out, she still scolds when she opens her mouth, she scolds you, closing the mountain and forbidding the forest. It was Liu Sanjie who took the lead in the resistance. She was not allowed us to dominate the mountains.

The second type: Beats: The beats of the front and the back phrases are basically the same. Melody: The melody of the front and the back phrases are basically the same. Cadence: The cadences of the front and the back phrases are different. Example: "*You Ban* (*You* refers to sad, *Ban* refers to tune or melody)". (As shown in Figure 13).

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Figure 13. Music score example "You Ban (You refers to sad, Ban refers to melody)" (Zhang Guangxiong, Cai Dingguo, "A Hundred Traditional Repertoires of Caidiao Opera", 1981)

The meaning of the text: I'm afraid my mother's sarcasm will hurt my heart.

The third type: Beats: The beats of the front and the back phrases are different. Melody: The melodies of the front and the back phrases are different. Cadence: The cadence of the front and the back phrases are same. Example: "*Pan Hua* (refers to talk about flowers)". (As shown in Figure 7).

The forth type: Beats: The beats of the front and the back phrases are different. Melody: The melodies of the front and the back phrases are different. Cadence: The cadences of the front and the back phrases are different. Example: "*Zou Ma Diao* (*Zou* refers to walk, *Ma* refers to horse, *Diao* refers to melody)". (As shown in Figure 8).

The fifth type: Beats: There is no obvious structural relationship between the front and the back phrases, but from the emotional point of view of the melody, there must be the development of the second phrase in order to have a sense of integrity. Melody: There is no obvious structural relationship between the front and the back phrases, but from the emotional point of view of the melody, there must be the development of the second phrase in order to have a sense of integrity. Cadence: There is no obvious structural relationship between the front and the back phrases, but from the emotional point of view of the melody, there must be the

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development of the second phrase in order to have a sense of integrity. Example: "*Si Ji Tian* (*Si* means four, *Ji* refers to seasons, *Tian* refers to weather)". (As shown in Figure 14).

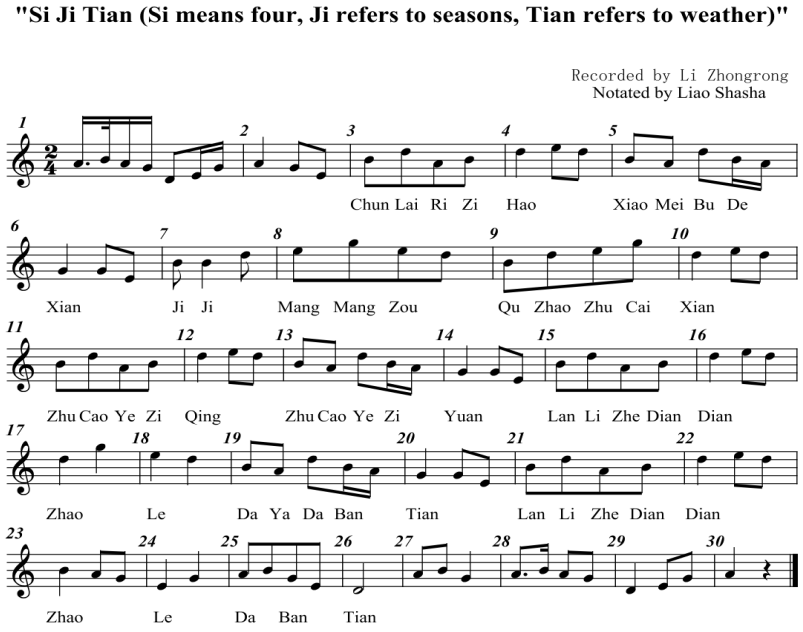


Figure 14. Music score example "Si Ji Tian (Si means four, Ji refers to seasons, Tian refers to weather)" (Zhang Guangxiong, Cai Dingguo, "A Hundred Traditional Repertoires of Caidiao Opera", 1981)

The meaning of the text: It's a good day in spring. I don't have time. I'm in a hurry to find pig vegetables. I've been looking for them for a long time. There are also some vocal repertoires belong to irregular periods, which are generally composed of more than two irregular phrases. For example, "*Kuakua Diao* (*Kuakua* exaggerated behavior means exaggerated behavior, *Diao* refers to melody)". (As shown in Figure 9)

4. The Use of "Lining Words" in *Caidiao* Opera

In the vocal repertoires of *Caidiao* opera, its text often use "lining words". These "lining words" greatly enrich the emotional expression of characters, and play an important role in the connection between sentences or paragraphs and highlighting the sense of termination. (As shown in Figure 6 ""*Xuehua Piao*")

The meaning of the text: What a beautiful jasmine flower! What a beautiful jasmine flower! The flowers in the garden can't compete with it. If you take one and wear it on your head, it's better than Nanhai Guanyin Bodhisattva. From the second beat of bar 19 to bar 24 (lining words): *Na Ai Yo, Ye Na Huo Liao Hai, Ye Zi Na Huo Liao Hai.* The words in the second beat of bar 19 to bar 24 have no actual meaning. They belong to lining words, which play a role in setting off the atmosphere and expressing the emotions of the performers.

This song is one of the aria of Hua Gu Mei (the name of a female role), which is selected from the Caidiao opera "A San Xi Gongdie (means A San joked with father-in-law)". The melody of this song is beautiful and the words are relaxing and cheerful. It is suitable to express a happy and lively mood. As shown in Figure 15, Mrs. Tang Jie, the inheritor of Caidiao opera, was performing.

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Figure 15. Mrs. Tang Jie (Caidiao opera inheritor of intangible cultural heritage) was performing Caidiao opera. Shooting time: July 28, 2024. Shooting location: No. 7 Furong Road, Diecai District, Guilin City, Guangxi

Use the lining words characteristics of singing constitute the style of the singing repertoires of *Caidiao* opera. Most of the vocal repertoires of *Caidiao* opera are lively, and the textes are humorous and interesting, and the emotional expression is simple and direct, which is close to people's life. The content is mainly folk stories. "Folk stories contain cultural and social messages that can be reflections on the people who support them. " (Pulumun Peterus Ginting 2019) It is not only the cultural symbol of the local people, but also the spiritual sustenance of the local people.

5. Conclusion

In a word, the vocal repertoires of *Caidiao* opera focuses on highlighting the living atmosphere. In order to better express the melody of character *Caidiao* opera, foil music is often used, and lining words are often used in text. The melody of the *Caidiao* opera is beautiful and joyful. The content is close to people's life and humorous. The art of *Caidiao* opera comes from life and is higher than life. It is an important symbol of Guilin people's art and culture. *Caidiao* opera is a cultural symbol reflecting people's living conditions in Guilin. Alan P. Merriam's book P63 of "The Anthropology of Music" said that, "Every music system is predicated upon a series of concepts which integrate music into the activities of the society at large and define and place it as a phenomenon of life among other phenomena.". (Merriam Alan P. 1964) With humorous stage language, singing and dancing performance form, and happy singing, the *Caidiao* opera gives full play to the entertainment function of local opera and fully reflects the national characteristics of Guilin.

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