

Kathleen Su 苏伟婷 encountered the Guqin at the age of 16 when she came across the Hugo recordings of master *Wu Zhaoji* 吴兆基 in a music shop in Singapore's Chinatown. Her connection to the music was immediate and profound, but as she couldn't find anyone teaching or selling the Qin in Singapore, she learnt the Guzheng instead. Like a seed, the sound of the Qin remained dormant for 20 years within her as she pursued academic studies abroad, first in archaeology and then in cultural anthropology. At the age of 38, after finishing 2 years of Ph.D. anthropological fieldwork in India, Kathleen went to Thailand where she entered into the intensive practice of Buddhist *Samatha-vipassanā* (concentration-and-mindfulness) meditation. The attainment of meditative absorption resulted in the destruction of all worldly ambitions and desires except one - the youthful desire to learn the Guqin. In 2012, Kathleen returned to Singapore and looked for a Qin teacher. For 2 years, she learnt Qin under Zhong Zhiyue 钟之岳, a student of the *Guangling Qin Pai* 广陵琴派 lineage holder *Dai Xiaolian* 戴晓莲 laoshi at the Shanghai Conservatory, who had just come over to Singapore. Within a year and a half of learning, even though she had yet to master the Qin, Zhong laoshi gave Kathleen her first student to teach. In order to teach that student properly, she began to learn small tunes herself and to formulate more systematic ways of Guqin instruction. As a mature learner of Qin, and one who had chronic physical ailments that caused stiffness and pain, Kathleen found Qin learning to be difficult and the current state of Guqin pedagogy to be relatively undeveloped, lacking in particular effective means to help mature learners like herself suffering from physical rigidity to more easily master Guqin movements. Abandoning formal learning, Kathleen began to pursue a direct means of connection to the instrument and the music by drawing on her life experience including in Buddhist mindfulness meditation and somatic movement education, as well as by studying the recordings of the old masters and the ancient scores. Along the way, she also benefitted immensely from the occasional guidance of *Dr. Kee Ji Koon* 纪志群 of the *Yushan Qin Pai* 虞山琴派, and the instruction of *Zhang Peiyou* 张培幼 laoshi of the *Wumen Qin Pai* 吴门琴派. Today, Kathleen's approach to Guqin playing and pedagogy priorities naturalness 自然 obtained through a return to tension-free bodily alignment, as well as the mindfulness of body and instrument. She enjoys helping students learn Qin without pain and effort, while continuing to study the Qin in her own intermittent ways.