

如是山房 (Ru Shi Shan Fang) and the Center for World Music (世界音乐中心) present  
**Way of the Qin: a *guzhin* study retreat and cultural tour of China**  
July 16 - August 6, 2009\*

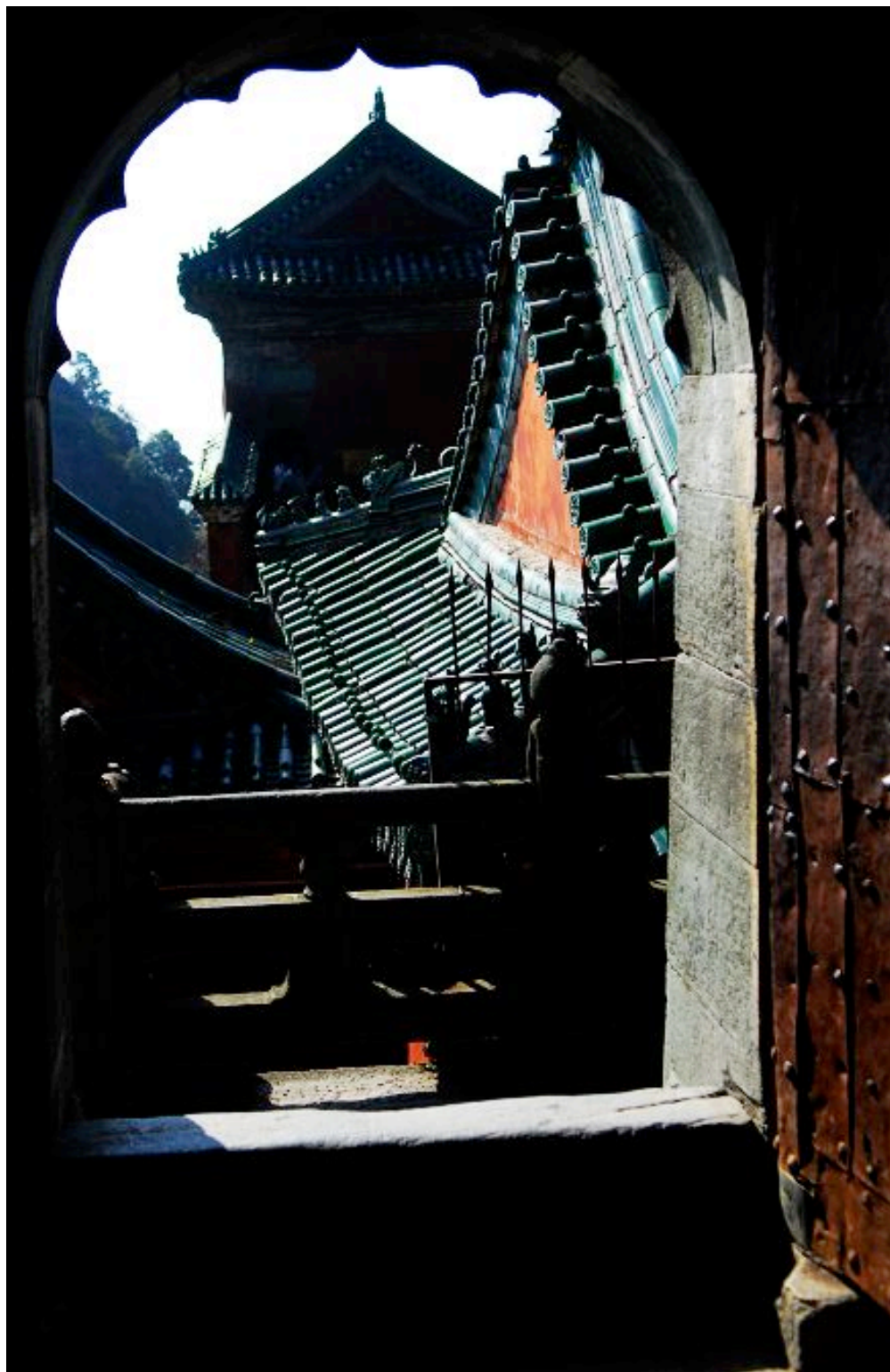
琴韵

古琴与中国文化之旅

七月十六日到六月六日

Mt. Wudang, Hubei, China

\*for those coming from America, the trip will begin on July 15 2009



## Philosophy and Goals

It has often been said that the best way to know a culture is through its music. It is the purpose of Way of the Qin to immerse travelers--both foreign and Chinese--in traditional culture through active study of, and participation in, traditional music, performing arts, *tai ji*, and literature while residing in some of China's most beautiful and historical sites.

An arched doorway on Wudangshan.



# The Qin



伯牙鼓琴圖 “Boya Plays the Qin” (from [www.silkqin.com](http://www.silkqin.com))

The *guqin* (written “古琴,” and often referred to simply as “*qin*”) is arguably the best instrument through which to learn Chinese culture. This rare and venerable instrument has been an important part of Chinese history, lore, poetry, art, and literature for more than three thousand years. Tradition says Confucius himself played and wrote music for the *guqin*. Its long and continuous history, combined with a sophisticated notation system in use since the sixth century CE, has allowed much of this rich and profound music to exist to the present day.

For more information on the qin visit [www.silkqin.com](http://www.silkqin.com)

## The Program: *guqin* study

As the main purpose of the trip is learning Chinese culture through music, each participant will receive lessons on the *guqin*. Throughout the journey, there will be daily individual and group lessons, as well as lectures, discussions and performances. No experience is necessary and all levels, from beginner to advanced will receive personalized instruction.



Tea ceremony at Ru Shi Shan Fang



Wang Peng playing *guqin*

Travelers may elect to focus on other activities rather than *qin* study. There will also be opportunities to study other Chinese instruments, such as the *xiao*, an end-blown bamboo flute, the art of *tai ji*, (commonly known as “tai chi” in English), and tea ceremony.



# The Program: concerts and gatherings



Confucius playing *qin*

For millennia the *guqin* was never played in public. Listening to it is considered an art in itself. The usual performance setting for *qin* music, then, is the *yaji* (雅集), or “elegant gathering.” At a *yaji*, *qin* players and listeners get together in a small, intimate group and play for each other. It is an inclusive event in which most attendees, students and masters, will participate as players and listeners.

Way of the Qin will feature several *yaji*. These will allow participants to experience the art of the *qin* in its most traditional setting while also providing a chance to meet and hear *qin* players from each locality we visit.



Since the early 1900s, *qin* has also been featured in public concerts. Although it might be impossible for performers at such events to communicate their music to audience members as intimately as in the *yaji*, these performances allow the public to experience the artistry of a master player.



John Thompson (back left) at his first *qin* recital

Way of the Qin will also feature two large-scale concerts. One will be held in Beijing and the other in Nanjing. These concerts will feature the artistry of Ka Woo Hyun and John Thompson, along with a few other elite-level players.



Meng Juan Juan plays at a 5.12 benefit concert

# Itinerary: Beijing

北京

7/16 - Arrive in Beijing, rest.

7/17 - Visit the workshop of Wang Peng, renowned *qin* maker, learn how *qins* are made, borrow *qins* to use for trip. (<http://www.juntianfang.com>)

雅集 (elegant gathering) at 如是山房 (Ru Shi Shan Fang) with Beijing *qin* players.



Wang Peng with one of his *qin*

7/18 - Sightseeing in Beijing ("the Forbidden City," Tiananmen square, and the Summer Palace).

Evening concert featuring the artistry of Ka Woo Hyun and John Thompson.

7/19 - Sightseeing around Beijing (Great Wall and vicinity).

Depart for Mount Wudang.



Participant in a *yaji* at Ru Shi Shan Fang



## Itinerary: Wudangshan

The Wudang mountain range stretches 400km across northern Hubei province. Its 72 jagged peaks, the tallest of which reaches an altitude of 1800 meters, have since ancient times served as retreats for Daoist monastics who constructed monasteries and pavilions high on craggy summits. Many of these monasteries have been continuously inhabited since the Tang dynasty. Wudangshan figures importantly in Chinese history and literature.

武当山



Wudangshan

It was here that Zhang Sanfeng, a Song dynasty monk, developed the Wudang style of martial arts, as he watched a snake and a magpie locked in battle. It was from this style of martial art that the art of *tai ji* was born. It is still practiced there today. Wudangshan, literally “the martial mountain,” so named for the prowess of its monks in the martial arts, was the retreat of emperors and hideout of outcasts. Today, Wudangshan is perhaps the only place in China where Tang Dynasty ritual music has been preserved and is still played by its monks. It is here, in the vast silences of the craggy heights that the group will spend eight days studying *qin*, learning *tai ji*, and exploring.





7/20-7/29 - The group will live on Heavenly Pillar Peak (天柱峰), taking daily *qin* lessons and classes, and studying *tai ji* with the monks of Wudangshan. In the evenings there will be talks by the group leaders.

Each day, the group will also explore some of the various temples and pavilions high on the peaks of Wudangshan.

Highlights include: 淨乐宫 Jing Yue Gong, Wudang's main hall; 玄嶽门 Xuan Yue Men, "the gate of profundity"; 玉虚宫 Yu Xu Gong, "the celestial palace"; 太子坡 Tai Zi Po, "the prince's terrace"; 南岩 Nan Yan, "the south cliffs"; 紫霄宫 Zi Xiao Gong, "purple sky palace"; 香炉诸峰 Xiang Lu Zhu Feng, "Incense Burner Peak"; and 宝珠峰 Bao Zhu Feng, Precious Pearl Peak.







In the foothills of Wudangshan

7/29 - The group will leave Wudangshan in the evening and travel by night to the town of Hangzhou (杭州).



# Itinerary: Hangzhou



杭州

Hangzhou's famous West Lake

7/30 - Sightseeing in Hangzhou (West Lake, its surrounding peaks and ancient monuments).

Evening *yaji* and dinner with *qin* players of Hangzhou.

7/31 - Explore Hangzhou in the morning. In the evening, depart for Suzhou (苏州).

## Itinerary: Suzhou

8/1 - Visit and explore Suzhou.

The group will stay overnight in Suzhou and explore this ancient city, famous for its Confucian temples and monuments, beautiful canals, and cultural history.

## Itinerary: Nanjing

8/2-8/4 - Visit Nanjing.



Nanjing at night

苏州



A canal in Suzhou

南京

In Nanjing, the group will have a *yaji* with The Nanjing *Qin* Society. John Thompson, Ka Woo Hyun, and some renowned local *qin* players will put on a major recital featuring *qin* music connected with this historic city.

8/4 - Return to Beijing.



# Itinerary: Beijing

8/4 - Having returned to Beijing in the afternoon, the group will have some free time to explore and shop on their own.



Peking opera



Chinese shadow puppets

8/5 - On the last day in Beijing--and in China--the group will attend some rare performances of shadow puppetry and Peking opera.

8/6 - Leave Beijing: return home.



# Map

The journey is marked in red on the map below.

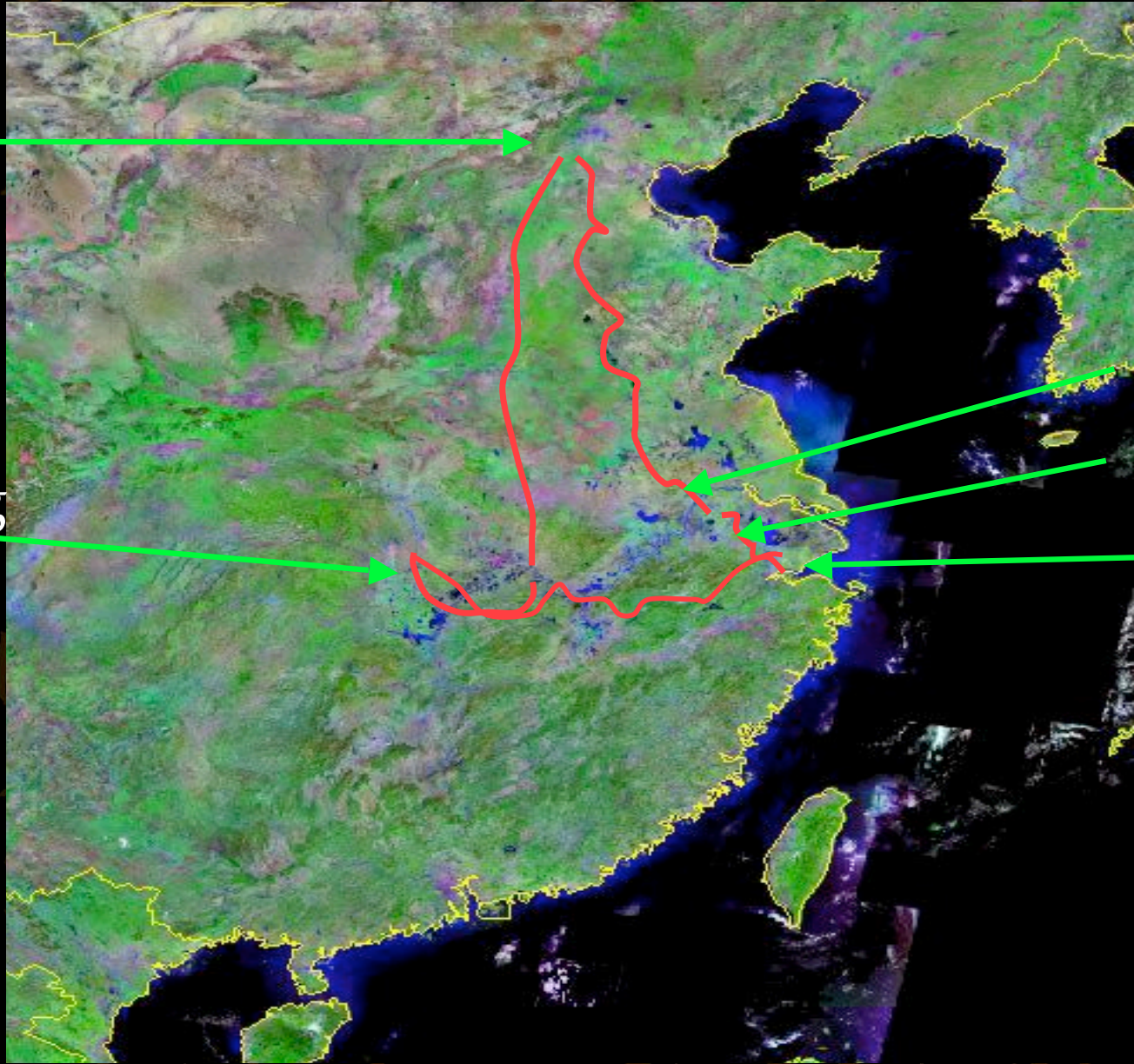
Beijing

Mt. Wudang

Nanjing

Suzhou

Hangzhou



Copy and paste the following URL into your browser window to follow the itinerary on google maps:

<http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?ie=UTF8&hl=en&msa=0&msid=116026558082930365148.000468ca95d5e745e64d5&ll=35.317366,117.817383&spn=18.319664,31.157227&t=h&z=5>



## Teachers and leaders

贾禹铨

Ka Woo Hyun (Xuan Jiayu), senior *qin* teacher on the journey, holds a Ph.D. in philosophy from Peking University and is currently a senior academic advisor there for research on *guqin*. In addition, he runs 如是山房 (Ru Shi Shan Fang), an organization dedicated to the study, practice, and promotion of the *qin*, and is well-known within Chinese *qin* circles. Originally from Korea, Dr. Hyun first pursued Chinese culture in Taiwan, attending Furen University. Developing an interest in researching *guqin* he left Taiwan and went to Beijing University, where he specialized in *guqin* aesthetics. His *qin* playing, informed by his years of research, is considered as having a unique aesthetic.







唐世璋

John Thompson, the other senior teacher, is the best-known musician giving historically informed *guqin* performances, having personally reconstructed over 150 melodies published in 15th and 16th century handbooks. After a college degree in Western musicology (early music) and graduate studies in ethnomusicology, he began in 1974 to study the modern *guqin* tradition from Sun Yü-Ch'in in Taiwan, but since 1976 he has focused on early repertoire. In 1992 the National Union of Chinese Musicians invited him to Beijing as the focus of a seminar on reconstructing music from the earliest surviving *guqin* handbook, Shen Qi Mi Pu (1425 CE). While based in Hong Kong as artistic consultant to the Festival of Asian Arts he performed throughout East Asia, and published seven CDs of his musical reconstructions as well as four books of music transcriptions. Since moving to New York in 2001 he has continued to perform, research and lecture on the *guqin*. His website, [www.silkqin.com](http://www.silkqin.com), receives over 8,000 hits a day, mostly from people in China listening to his recordings, and is the most comprehensive English-language source of information on this instrument.





## 王鹏

Wang Peng is one of the top *qin* makers in China today. Way of the Qin is sponsored in part and guided by him and his workshop: Jun Tian Fang. He will supply all of the *qin* to be used by students on the journey. He is the executive director of the Chinese Musical Instrument Makers Association. He holds a B.A. from Shenyang music conservatory in *guqin* making. He is a virtuoso player of the *guqin* and is also a celebrated master maker of *qin*. In recent years, many of the world's great *guqin* masters have come to love his *qin* and use them in performance in the world's great music halls. His *qin* are known for their rich and resonant sound.





Alexander Khalil, Ph.D., is an ethnomusicologist, performer, and composer. He has been involved with the study of *guqin* since his first research trip to China in 1999, when he began study with Zeng ChengWei, a master of the Sichuan style of playing. In 2004 the *Qin* club at UCSD, the only collegiate *guqin* club in the United States, formed under his guidance. He has been teaching performance practice, history, and aesthetics of *guqin* at the University of California, San Diego since 2006.

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Meng Juan Juan began studying *qin* in 2001 under Ka Woo Hyun, as a member of the Peking University *qin* club. She is currently a Ph.D. candidate at University of California, San Diego in economics. She has been teaching for the *qin* club at UCSD since 2005.







Dunshi cao: "withdrawing from society" painting by Bai Yunli  
www.silkqin.com

## Rates:

\$3100.00 per person.

### Included in this rate:

Airfare to and from China,\* all travel within China, all lodging,\*\* meals on Wudangshan, all lessons in *qin*, *tai ji*, tea ceremony, and admission to all scheduled concerts.

### Not included in this rate:

Travel insurance, visa or passport fees, and meals other than on Wudangshan.

## Contact:

For reservations or further information:

Dr. Alexander Khalil  
alexkhalil@gmail.com  
619.654.1868

\*Airfare will be adjusted for those flying from American cities other than Los Angeles or San Diego. For information on joining the trip from outside the United States please contact Dr. Khalil.

\*\*Travelers may need to share rooms or pay a slightly higher rate at certain locales.