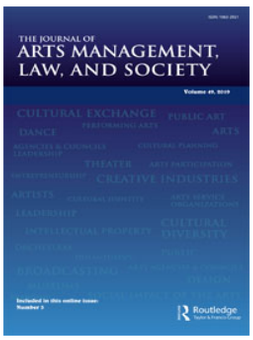

The Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society

ISSN: 1063-2921 (Print) 1930-7799 (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/vjam20

Arts Entrepreneurship in China: Exploring the Professional Career Development Model for Chinese Emerging Western Classical Musicians

Wen Guo & Margaret Jane Wyszomirski

To cite this article: Wen Guo & Margaret Jane Wyszomirski (2019) Arts Entrepreneurship in China: Exploring the Professional Career Development Model for Chinese Emerging Western Classical Musicians, The Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society, 49:3, 188-202, DOI: 10.1080/10632921.2018.1523764

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/10632921.2018.1523764

THE JOURNAL OF ARTS MANAGEMENT, LAW, AND SOCIETY
2019, VOL. 49, NO. 3, 188–202
https://doi.org/10.1080/10632921.2018.1523764

Arts Entrepreneurship in China: Exploring the Professional Career Development Model for Chinese Emerging Western Classical Musicians

Wen Guo and Margaret Jane Wyszomirski

Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

ABSTRACT

Artists' career management has become an urgent topic in the scholarship of arts administration and the creative economy in many Western countries. Although Chinese creative and cultural industries have also experienced significant attention and growth, the worklife experiences of Chinese cultural workers are rarely discussed in the international academic literature. Addressing that gap, this study investigates artistic careers and professional development of a small sample of emerging Western classical musicians in a Chinese second-tier city. We found similar patterns in career portfolios and strategies of career entrepreneurship between Western and Chinese musicians, although differing career opportunities and explicit career strategies seem related to local context.

KEYWORDS

Arts entrepreneurship; career strategy; Chinese classical musicians; portfolio career; venture creation

Existing literature on worklife and career paths of artists is based on the assumption and logic that are grounded in the Western institutional and cultural underpinnings. This article attempts to build connections between the prevailing knowledge on Western artists' careers and the less-studied Chinese artists' career trajectory by adapting the arts entrepreneurship theory of Ruth Bridgstock (2013) to a Chinese context. With a focus on the burgeoning concept of arts entrepreneurship, the article also introduces the impact of the immense political and social change in Chinese society, while portraying Chinese emerging musicians as a new generation of Chinese arts entrepreneurs under the theoretical framework of Bridgstock. The comparison between the career entrepreneurial experience of Western and Chinese emerging artists addresses the gap in Chinese arts administration studies and takes the Chinese national context into account as a means to examine the generalizability of the theory and situate the theory construction of arts entrepreneurship in global circumstances.

Career development of artists: Literature overview

Notable Western studies on the career development of artists have been undertaken in the United Kingdom, in Australia, and in the United States. Many of these studies have examined artist careers across art disciplines including visual artists, writers, designers,

CONTACT Wen Guo guo.434@buckeyemail.osu.edu Ohio State University, Arts Administration, Education and Policy, 231 Sullivant Hall, 1813 N. High St., 2nd Floor, Columbus, OH 43210, USA.

musicians, dancers, and actors (among others). Frequently, such studies involve large survey samples conducted on a national level (e.g., Strategic National Arts Alumni Project, 2012, 2013; Cunningham et al. 2010; Ball, Pollard, and Stanley 2010). There are also smaller localized studies (e.g., Dance/NYC 2007; Lendel et al. 2011). Alternatively, other studies have focused on artists in a single art form, even a specific genre within an art form (e.g., Jeffri and Throsby 2006; Jeffri and NEA 2003). While many studies involve survey research, others employ a more qualitative approach to understanding the "artworlds" (Becker 1976, 1982) in which artists pursue their careers and explore the many intermediaries and structures that influence artist careers. Many smaller case studies of artist worklife and careers have gathered information via personal interviews with small samples (e.g., Umney and Kretsos 2014; Martin 2007). Musicians, being one of the largest artist occupations and one with many well-established sub-specializations, have been the subject of numerous studies, large and small, national and local, quantitative and qualitative (e.g., Faulkner 1973; Burland 2005; Dobrow 2006).

A few generalizations emerge from the wide range of research on artist careers and worklife, and are broadly applicable to professional musicians—and will be explored in the discussion of our study:

- Full-time jobs are not the norm for most artists. Rather, artists' careers involve part-time work and self-employment (e.g., Bridgstock 2009).
- Many artists work in arts occupations both within and outside arts organizations, as well as in non-arts jobs outside of arts organizations (e.g., Throsby 1994).
- Many artists work in multiple arts-related occupations beyond creation and/or performance, such as arts education, arts management, criticism, and supplies and equipment (e.g., Lingo and Tepper 2013; Ball, Pollard, and Stanley 2010).
- Many artists find artistic work in various sectors of the economy—commercial, nonprofit, government, and community (e.g., Markusen 2006).
- Artists are apt to pursue self-employment and portfolio careers. Currently, they can live and work in all types of communities (e.g., Markusen 2013).
- Many, if not most, professionally trained classical musicians regard their ideal job to be a full-time position within a professional orchestra (e.g., Bennett 2008; Munnelly 2017).

Recognition of the pervasiveness of these patterns has led to recent interest in how artists form and manage such portfolio careers. On the one hand, this interest has framed the self-development of the artist career as a form of arts entrepreneurship (Bridgstock 2013; Beckman 2007; Chang and Wyszomirski 2015). Concurrently, the spread of concepts like creative industries, creative economy, and creative cities has revealed that the opportunity to construct portfolio careers is now possible for more artists in more locations than has historically been the case.

On the other hand, the literature has paid considerable attention to discussing whether and to what extent artist education and training provide them with the necessary skills and competencies to manage such portfolios in order to maintain a lifestyle of "flexicurity" (Murray and Gollmitzer 2012) — which is a condition with a stable income for living and a flexible schedule for creative production. Such flexicurity is

proposed as an alternative to the "financial insecurity, unsociable hours, injury and lack of practitioner diversity" characteristic of the precarious career trajectory of working artists (Bennett 2008, 121).

Our purpose is to provide insight into the relevancy of the Western-based literature to a local Chinese context by understanding the career development experiences of ten Chinese classical musicians. Thus, we look at similarities and differences that the Chinese experiences display in comparison to the aforementioned patterns generalized from Western-based research regarding artist worklife and career development. In addition, we elaborate on the comparison by analyzing a revealing localized case where the interviewed musicians were pursuing professional careers in a second-tier Chinese city.[1] The rapid growth of second-tier Chinese cities with first-class potential is making it a more common site for emerging artists but a context that is notably understudied in academic research on Chinese cultural policy and creative industries. With 7.8 percent of Chinese total population, 20.7 percent of GDP of China, and 18.8 percent of Chinese total consumption capacity (National Bureau of Statistics of China 2016), the second-tier cities provide alternative facilities, sophisticated consumers, and cultural ethos that begin to resemble those of major urban arts centers like Shanghai, Beijing, and Guangzhou. In addition, governments of Chinese second-tier cities also invest heavily in their creative cultural industries with both financial and policy support spurred by the creative cultural policy of the Chinese central government. These rising second-tier cities seek to offer new opportunities for Chinese artists to make a living and develop successful careers away from cities long perceived as Chinese arts capitals. Nevertheless, cultural scenes and artists in these second-tier cities rarely appear in English research. Such a local perspective allows us to explore how context may influence the opportunities for the assembly of portfolio careers according to the three approaches to arts entrepreneurship proposed by the Australian scholar Bridgstock (2013); namely, employability, enterprising dispositions, and venture creation.

Having been introduced in China more than two centuries ago, Western classical music—including symphony orchestra, chamber music, opera, ballet, etc.—has been deemed by the Chinese government to be a cultural indicator of an advanced civilization and a diplomatic language that is useful in communicating with the Western world (Melvin and Cai 2004). Although Chinese audiences still have a narrow understanding and limited access to the Western tradition of classical music, a domestic market for classical music and a value chain around it have been created under a series of Chinese economic, educational and cultural reforms over the past three decades. Nevertheless, the Chinese context is not as fully developed as the situation in the West, where the orchestral genre and institution originated. Over the past two to three centuries, the orchestra industry of many Western countries has built mature markets, extensive workforce training systems, widespread production systems, and effective infrastructures, particularly regarding concert venues, relevant cultural facilities, and financial support systems. Currently, Western professional classical musicians are challenged by the overall diminished popularity of classical music (National Endowment for the Arts 2015; American Symphony Orchestra League 1993). In contrast, Chinese professional classical musicians are exploring their career possibilities in an underdeveloped, but promising, domestic classical music market with a plethora of newly built grand theaters (Melvin

2012). In this market where the best orchestras have not "come close to match the world's best in power, beauty and precision" (*The Economist* 2016), both professionalism and entrepreneurialism are developing simultaneously among a new generation of musicians. The following research analysis seeks to explore the professional identities of Chinese local professional classical musicians and understand their everyday experience as arts entrepreneurs situated in the nexus of place, cultural policies, and Chinese social change of the past three decades.

Research methodology

In order to obtain a bottom-up perspective on the career development experiences of Chinese classical musicians, we conducted semi-structured interviews with ten selected emerging local musicians in a second-tier city, Wuxi, in Jiangsu Province between May 13 and May 27, 2015. Wuxi is a representative second-tier city in one of the wealthiest province in China: Jiangsu. In comparison with cultural hubs like Shanghai and Beijing, which are supported by top-notch artists, Wuxi, as a common second-tier city without a well-known contemporary cultural identity, offers an alternative site to observe the worklife style of Chinese emerging artists. The focus on emerging classical musicians reflects our interest in learning about artists in the process of developing their professional careers. Field notes and archived data, including academic literature, news reports, and government documents, were collected as additional data to contextualize the interview responses. This location was selected due to its less-developed classical music "industry" in comparison to first-tier cities with more mature classical music markets.

The research employed a non-probabilistic purposive sampling method, with which ten musicians were recruited for a two-hour semi-structured interview each. The following three-part selection criteria was used:

- Age: between 24 to 40 years old living in Wuxi, Jiangsu Province;
- Education: hold a Bachelor's degree or above in majors relevant to classical music, including music performance, music composition, music education, music conducting, recording engineering, musicology, music history or other related majors, from either Chinese or foreign higher education institutions;
- Professional Status & Earnings: primarily rely on their professional credentials, artistic skills, and music relevant knowledge to make a living.

Although an interview sample of ten respondents is small, it can be sufficient for our purposes. The population of professional Western classical musicians in China is very small and the same population outside the major cultural centers mentioned earlier is even smaller. In the absence of useful local workforce figures and national figures that often do not distinguish among types of musicians, we consulted with a local contact for this study—a local music teacher and performer who is well-connected to classical musicians in Wuxi and its surrounding area. Understanding the purpose of the research thoroughly, he helped us identify and recruit a sample of artists that aimed to reflect the diversity of the target population of interest. Experienced academic researchers in

qualitative studies suggest the ideal sample size range to be from ten to thirty persons (Goulding 1998; Padgett 2016) for qualitative interviews. Our sample size falls within this range. The findings were further validated by comparing them with raw data and presenting them to three key research participants (Corbin and Strauss 2008).

The rest of this article is organized in two major sections. Anchoring the three strategies of career entrepreneurship identified by Bridgstock in the Western context, we first introduce and analyze the lived experience of Chinese emerging classical musicians as local arts entrepreneurs. Secondly, we discuss the unique facets of Chinese classical musicians' career models situated in the Chinese context and the significant role a localized context plays in configuring strategies of artists' career entrepreneurship.

Artist career entrepreneurship: Bridgstock's three strategies

Bridgstock (2013) identified that employability and self-management, enterprising mindset, and venture creation are three key strategies of arts entrepreneurship. The three interconnected entrepreneurial dimensions of Chinese classical musicians are demonstrated by their perception of professionalism, the composition of their career portfolios, and their ambition of creating organizations to buttress their performing career in the following three subsections: portraits of Chinese emerging classical musicians, portfolio careers based on teaching and performing, and venture creation: starting a nonprofit professional orchestra.

Portraits of Chinese emerging classical musicians

Ten interviews were conducted with two female and eight male musicians who meet the recruitment requirement of the study. They all graduated from prestigious classical music programs, arts colleges, or conservatories in China or from similar foreign higher education institutions between 2004 and 2013. Their demographic information, including their self-identified professional identities, is listed in Table 1. Notice that all of the respondents identified themselves as having two occupations: one as a music teacher and the other as a freelance performer/composer. Thus, they do not expect to have a career characterized by one full-time position or a single music occupation. Implicitly, they are looking forward to a portfolio career.

During the interview process, these participants carefully described their identity as professionally trained performers with professional credentials, instead of as professional performing musicians. Most research participants did not deem themselves as professional musicians because they did not make a living by serving in a professional orchestra. However, they shared the self-efficacy[2] that the high standard of their training and educational credentials accorded them the artistic expertise to perform professionally. Relying on a stable income from music teaching and a network of like-minded peer musicians empowers the musicians to feel confident about the risks of having a standby performing career.

The demographic information shows that these emerging musicians have similar educational background and occupational options. During the interview process, many of them noted that their career expectations had changed during their college years. As

Table 1. Demographic information of research participants.

ID	Gender	Age	Occupations	Degree and Institution
1	Female	32	Private tutor and freelance performer	Bachelor of Music in Violin from Chinese tier-one music college
2	Female	30	Government employee in local cultural center, private tutor, and in-career MFA student	Bachelor of Music Composition from Chinese tier-two arts college
3	Female	34	College professor, private tutor and performer, and in-career MFA student	Bachelor of Music in Piano from Chinese tier-one music college
4	Male	25	Private tutor and freelance performer	Bachelor of Music in Piano from Chinese tier-two music college
5	Male	32	Private tutor and freelance performer	Bachelor of Music and MFA in Violin from Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine
6	Male	32	Music teacher at elementary school, private tutor, and freelance performer	Bachelor of Music in Clarinet from Chinese tier-one music college
7	Male	30	Private tutor and freelance composer	Bachelor of Music and MFA in Composition from Australian tier-one university
8	Male	21	Private tutor and freelance composer	Bachelor of Music in Clarinet from Chinese tier-two arts college
9	Male	32	College professor, private tutor, founder of a local nonprofit chamber music ensemble, freelance performer	Bachelor of Music in Violin and Ph.D. in Music Theory from Chinese tier-one music colleges; MFA in The Odessa National A. V. Nezhdanova Academy of Music
10	Male	26	Private tutor, nonprofit chamber music performer, and a partner of a local media start-up	Bachelor degree in Cello from Chinese tier-two arts college

some of the few outstanding students who gain admission into prestigious conservatories or music programs, they originally held the assumption that they would find a stable and permanent full-time job in one of the few professional symphony orchestras[3] (Tang 2013), mostly state-owned, after graduation, like previous generations. However, witnessing the few symphony orchestras and the struggle of older-generation musicians to survive the ongoing fundamental economic and social transformation and reform of Chinese society, the new generation of musicians demonstrate their self-management concern and changing perception about employability in the contemporary Chinese classical music scene. Being aware of the impossibility of working for the few existing symphony orchestras, they instead, looked to teaching as their primary source of income, since many of them had received training in music education as part of their college music programs. With the degree credential as a mark of their professionalism, they also expect to undertake freelance or part-time performance opportunities to maintain their performing skills and their identity as a performing artist.

Other than the fact that the possibility of employment is constrained by the underdeveloped cultural infrastructure for Chinese classical music, their changing perceptions of employability also come from their more expanded view of classical music than that of their predecessors. Many emerging musicians who had been exposed to the contemporary development of Western classical music by virtue of the opening policy of China in the late 1970s simply chose not to work in local government-run professional orchestras because they did not identify themselves with the bureaucratic culture and artistic philosophy of these orchestras.

Having changed their career expectations while keeping the dream of being a performing artist, the research participants of the study chose to begin their career and life in Wuxi. A number of interviewed musicians were either locally born in Wuxi or moved from cities in the Yangtze River Delta after graduation. Wuxi was considered as an ideal place for these musicians to live because of its affordability and spatial/social proximity to Shanghai and other culturally and economically vital cities in the region.

Portfolio careers based on teaching and performing

Although no official statistics for the labor force in the classical music industry and students in college music programs can be found, we can discern the scale of the industry and its workforce by looking at a number of related measures. In the decade between 1992 and 2003, the total number of college students graduating from all college arts programs in China doubled from 5,338 to 10,893 (National Bureau of Statistics of China 1993, 2003). However, the few established professional symphony orchestras in China indicate that symphonic employment opportunities are quite insufficient to absorb most of these emerging musicians. Thus, young, professionally trained classical musicians enter a highly competitive job market upon graduation. Full-time orchestra employability is out of reach for most of them, including the predominant number of graduates studying piano and violin (Kahn and Wakin 2007; Melvin and Cai 2004).

Even though a great number of music college graduates cannot find an orchestral job, many pre-collegiate learners of classical music are still preparing for the competitive entrance exams of conservatories or college music programs. The large scale of the music education industry is being transformed into an employment outlet for music college graduates who cannot find a performing job in orchestras. According to the *2016 Report of Chinese Music Industry*, more than 1.25 million people took music grade-level exams as an official recognition of their pre-college training, and about 138,000 students applied to music conservatories and related majors in China in 2015. Nearly 9,000 private music instruction training businesses provided education services for conservatory entrance exams and grade-level exams. In total, they grossed around 10 billion U.S. dollars in revenue in 2015 (Music Industry Promotion Committee 2016). With this surge of the pre-collegiate education market, the music training business for children (as well as adults), as both a career investment and as a form of avocational interest, constitutes a substantial part of the music industry of China. Many college graduates then flow into the lucrative music education market, which needs educators at different levels for a diversified set of customer segments. Thus, music teaching becomes a primary, and reliable, source of their income.

Taking advantage of a booming music education market, all research participants listed teaching as their primary income source. The income of the research participants from teaching and performing ranges from USD$ 30,800–153,840 per year. To emerging musicians who do not find a professional performing group, teaching is usually the most reliable way to make a living. Most research participants teach musical instruments or music theory in at least one of these three modes: music teachers or student band directors in local public or private schools or universities; owners and tutors of their own teaching studios; or teachers in training centers attached to musical

instrument retail businesses. Thus, music teaching occupational opportunities are more extensively structured than are music performing opportunities.

Formal teaching positions in pre-collegiate schools are very limited and usually require job candidates to pass a series of teacher certificate exams on general education theory and educational psychology. Another institutional choice for emerging musicians is in the training services of music retail companies. The increasing demand for musical instruments and music training drives the prosperity of musical instrument retail and music education businesses. Providing learning resources for clients who purchase musical instruments is a popular business model for music retailers in China. Large music retailers run their own music learning centers in local communities. The community-based, purchased-learning service chain offers a solution for clients who do not have access to private teachers. Although schools and retailer training centers usually do not offer competitive salaries and performing opportunities to these musicians, they do provide a reliable revenue stream, employment benefits, professional training opportunities, and most importantly, easy entry into the local music education market as young musicians seek to gain sufficient reputation to be hired by parents who want customized and professional training for their children.

All of the research participants teach privately, whether as private tutors, employees of schools, or contractors of musical instrument retail companies. One research participant who did not work for any institution runs a teaching studio focusing on professional music training rather than on basic music education. This teaching mode is considered an important way to discover and foster music talent. Helping students gain professional certificates and awards in formal music contests enhances the reputation of a musician as an effective music educator.

Being in the music education market is also an opportunity for local emerging musicians to develop a performing career. The thriving local music education market fosters a loosely connected network of classical musicians with professional training and performing experience in competent college music programs. As noted by one research participant: "This is a relatively small circle and we all know each other. We collaborate in occasional performing events and exchange information and opportunities with each other informally as friends .... I learned a lot through this kind of mutually beneficial relationship."

With strong self-efficacy, local musicians are willing to take risks and invest effort (Shane, Locke, and Collins 2003) into performing activities without a guaranteed financial return. Many research participants explicitly talked about their desire for live performance and their efforts to seek and create formal performing opportunities. Although some of these performing events and their sponsors do not always put artistic value as their priority, this is a valuable alternative for an emerging musician to retain his or her identity as a performing artist. The local musicians also exert a wider and deeper influence through educational performances for instrument retailers. Both musicians and instrument retailers recognize the entrepreneurial opportunity presented by annual student recitals at music training centers owned by music retailers. For example, a group of musicians teaching courses in the music learning center of a local retail company initiated a community chamber music concert series, which was sponsored by the retail company in 2015 and 2016. The retail company sponsored the concert series by providing musical instruments, rehearsal and performing space, and marketing the

concert series to local communities. Presenting the concert series under the name of a well-known piano manufacturer, the retail company used the concert series as a branding strategy for its retail and education business.

Musicians who taught in this retail company saw the concert series as a valuable opportunity to display their performing skills and maintain their artistic identity. In addition, by featuring some of their advanced students, the musicians not only demonstrated their own level of professionalism and teaching skills, but also helped their students gain stage experience. One research participant noted, "It is unlikely that you can teach students to perform if you do not have enough performing experiences." The concert series motivated parents who rarely attended Western classical music concerts to attend with their children, which greatly enhanced the children's learning experience. Driven by their ambition to perform, these local musicians rooted themselves in the local community through music education to foster their financial sustainability and their dual professional identity as music educator/music performer, which benefitted the market actors as well as the public.

Venture creation: Starting a nonprofit professional orchestra

Most government-run Chinese orchestras are located either in mega-cities or in provincial capital cities. Although Wuxi does have a new, 1.5-million-dollar grand theater, it does not have any government-run classical music ensembles or a symphony orchestra that is resident in the local grand theater. The absence of such performing arts structures in Wuxi has led local musicians to create such an organization in order to expand their job opportunities and to serve as a mechanism that can attract social recognition and financial support to add another revenue stream to their professional portfolios. Taking this initiative was necessary because China does not have an equivalent philanthropic and patronage system to its Western counterpart, with established professional support structures like nonprofit music ensembles and orchestras (Wyszomirski 2002). To provide a performing platform for local musicians, one research participant and his wife, who are both violinists, started planning for a local professional orchestra in 2010 with another cofounder, who is a lawyer. Although there is not a clear mission statement for this organization, the founder of the orchestra stated his goal for creating this orchestra: "This is a group for professional performers. I created this orchestra to fill a void in the classical market in Wuxi and give more opportunities for those with professional skills and passion to perform."

The teacher has taken advantage of various facets of his social status to pursue this venture. As a musician and a regionally well-known politically active intellectual with rich learning, performing, and arts advocacy experiences in top conservatories at home and abroad, he builds wide networks among local artists, intellectuals, and local government agencies. Realizing that professionalization and earned income generation can go hand in hand (Toepler and Wyszomirski 2012) in the Chinese context, the establishment of an orchestra represented an expansion of the commercial prospects available to Wuxi classical musicians. The other two founders then utilized their networks in local business and media communities to solicit private sponsorship and media coverage for the orchestra. The orchestra started performing as a chamber music ensemble in local schools and

theaters occasionally in 2010, and rapidly expanded to a regular series of both publicly and privately sponsored performing events. By late 2015, the new orchestra had also grown from a small ensemble to a group of more than fifty professional musicians.

Although most musicians interviewed in this study were qualified to perform in a professional orchestra due to their professional training, they had very few opportunities to develop their professional performance skills after graduation unless they found a position in a professional orchestra. The founding music teacher had rich resources in higher education and connections to outstanding performing groups at home and abroad. He often invites exceptional scholars and musicians to give master classes or to perform with the orchestra. Three interviewees who also play for the orchestra speak highly of the orchestra as a local professional effort, notwithstanding that they are only paid per performance. They appreciate these performances and orchestra rehearsals as "valuable career development opportunities" that they can hardly attain by themselves as self-employed private tutors or event performers. The professional orchestra made it possible for musicians who received professional training to maintain their artistic identity through regular performances, rehearsals, and collaborations.

Unlike nineteenth-century classical music orchestras in the US, which were tightly controlled by, and financially dependent on, wealthy, local, urban elites (DiMaggio 1982; Toepler and Wyszomirski 2012), the local classical music initiative in Wuxi was predominantly constituted and supported by local arts professionals, municipal funding programs, occasional corporate sponsorship, and individual donations. It was very difficult for a grassroots orchestra without a subscription season to be recognized as a professional establishment by funders and government agencies, not to mention sell tickets at a fair price. The founder of the orchestra was aware of the significance of a formal and professional identity for the management and future development of an orchestra originally established as a voluntary group.

The founders of the orchestra formally registered the orchestra as a "private non-enterprise" (Guo and Zhang 2013) organization with the local Department of Civil Affairs and Cultural Bureau, followed by a press conference for their first official concert in the local grand theater in 2015. The public validation of their professionalism inherent in this registration was a key asset for the young organization, even though the legal and tax responsibility and benefit of this type of organization are still not well-defined in China. In the same year, the orchestra also launched a youth orchestra and started planning for its first concert series to be performed by children. The orchestra, with its registered status, can apply for a grant from a local government dedicated to paying for local arts and cultural programs as a public cultural service. A registered private non-enterprise professional orchestra functions as a localized third way that creates performing jobs for professional musicians and provides public cultural goods for local communities by relying on various streams of funding and resources, but is managed independently from government institutions and commercial businesses (Guo and Zhang 2013).

Comparing the career development of Chinese and Western musicians

Reflecting on the generalizations we found in the Western literature on artist careers, we can see many similarities between the Western and Chinese musicians. Both groups

exhibit the overall pattern of part-time jobs with multiple employers, rather than a full-time job with a single organization. Both groups indicate that musicians work at jobs both within and outside arts organizations, especially educational ones, as well as across organizations that have different business models (commercial, voluntary, and non-profit). Musicians in both societies pursue more than one arts-related occupation and combine occupations, jobs, and job locations into self-structured professional careers in music (Wyszomirski and Chang 2017). Both Western and Chinese classical musicians are becoming more adept at pursuing high performance standards while accepting that an orchestral position is not the only indicator of professional success.

We then used the three career entrepreneurship strategies that Bridgstock identified to compare the lived experience of Chinese young classical musicians with the model that emerges from the Western literature and research on artistic career development. We found that Chinese musicians share similar career models with their Western counterparts. Teaching and performing constitute the primary parts of their portfolio careers. Bennett (2008) found that 97 percent of the Australian musicians who responded to her survey claimed that 87 percent of their time was spent on teaching. The trend was even more discernable in Britain, where many musicians believe that "their persona as a musician has been absorbed into that of a teacher" (Garnett 2014, 136). In the Chinese context, although Chinese musicians anchor their portfolio career in teaching, they have been trying to distinguish their performing persona from their teaching identity by emphasizing their employability as a performing artist endorsed by their professional educational credentials.

The entrepreneurial mindset of Chinese musicians comes from their self-confidence as qualified professional performers and their shared vision of the Chinese booming classical music market. The Chinese musicians recognize and create opportunities for themselves by adding value to their professionalism through educational practices in alignment with the interest of the music instrument business and the needs of local communities. As found by Bridgstock (2017) and Henry (2007), "being entrepreneurial" is a response to the contextual driver; the immature but promising market of Chinese classical music provides much potential for ambitious emerging Chinese musicians.

The scale of this entrepreneurial mindset expands from self-management to a larger organizational scale that allows individual musicians to launch institutional support structures for a community of like-minded musicians with a desire to perform. Unlike Western musicians in settings characterized by developed music industries with established systems and rules for nonprofit arts and cultural organizations, running a Chinese local nonprofit enterprise can seldom provide a stable, well-paid job for individual musicians. Nonetheless, it is a symbol of growing professionalism for local musicians as a collective group and can produce public/private resources to support their performing activities. As Bridgstock (2013) observed, running such an organization is a process of engaging business partners, understanding market demand, and managing local artist networks. In addition, considering that government policy plays a significant role in shaping the landscape of the cultural market and that considerable resources are held by the government, the musicians recognize the importance of being knowledgeable and responsive to relevant government policy.

The Chinese model of arts career entrepreneurship

As the most important service providers of the thriving musical instrument and training business, local emerging musicians in economically developed regions have voluntarily started establishing an intimate relationship with their local music market to mediate the fragmented classical music market through their everyday practices of teaching music, sustaining a performing career, creating enterprises, and advocating for policy support for local musicians. Allen Scott (2006, 4) comments on creative entrepreneurs, saying that "the entrepreneur is not just a lonely individual pursuing a personal vision, but also a social agent situated within a wider system of production that can be represented as an actual and latent grid of interactions and opportunities in organizational and geographical space." The new generation of musicians have noticed the contemporary development of Western classical music in the world and the burgeoning Chinese Western classical market, with its music scene supported by small collectives in wealthy regions at its core (Bennett and Peterson 2004).

Unlike the classical music field in Western countries, which tends to have a mature infrastructure, structured professions, and established intermediaries that support the careers of artists, Western classical music in Chinese second-tier cities does not have professional intermediaries like agents and presenters who bridge talents and producers, or consumers and product. With educational credentials and professional abilities, local musicians take their private teaching and concert series as a long-term project of framing the choices and taste of classical music audiences (Maguire and Matthews 2012). Cultural intermediaries are not solely differentiated by occupational groups or legitimate services provided, but also by their expertise in taste and value in a cultural field, as well as their locations in commodity chains (Maguire and Matthews 2012). By maintaining a close relationship with local music students and audience members, local musicians are inherent cultural intermediaries who seem to be reading the Chinese classical music market accurately. These local musicians have seized the opportunity brought by cultural globalization and the rising Chinese middle class to build and institutionalize their practitioner networks to give operational definition to the local culture of classical music consumption and professionalization.

While we have only explored a small sample of emerging classical musicians in one second-tier Chinese city, this study strongly suggests that artist careers seem to exhibit similar patterns, not only across many Western countries but also between Western and Chinese practices. Musicians pursue portfolio careers requiring them to take the initiative to self-structure in an entrepreneurial manner. However, the local context means that the opportunities and strategies may differ from country to country. Further research into the career entrepreneurial practices of Chinese artists in other creative industries is likely to reveal a more intricate picture of the cross-national similarities and differences, as well as how local circumstances influence the development and sustainability of the cultural and creative industries as a global phenomenon.

Notes

1. Second-tier cities refer to most provincial capital cities like Fuzhou, Shijiazhuang, Kunming, etc., several economically advanced prefectural-level cities like Wuxi, Wenzhou, etc., and port cities predominantly in East and South China like Nantong, Huizhou, etc.

2. Self-efficacy is "task-specific self-confidence" in one's ability to attain a certain level of achievement. Attributes of self-efficacy include long-term effort, persistence in difficulties, and the ability to transform negative critiques into useful, positive advice (Shane et al., 2003, 267)
3. There is no reliable source for the exact number of professional orchestras. Tang (2013) refers to sixteen professional Western classical music orchestras with performing seasons in China and most of them are government-run.

References

American Symphony Orchestra League. 1993. "Americanizing the American Orchestra: Report of the National Task Force for the American Orchestra, an Initiative for Change." American Symphony Orchestra League, Washington, DC.

Ball, Linda, Emma Pollard, and Nick Stanley. 2010. *Creative Graduates Creative Futures*. Brighton, UK: CGCF Partnership and Institute for Employment Studies.

Becker, H. S. 1976. "Art Worlds and Social Types." *American Behavioral Scientist* 19 (6):703–718. doi:10.1177/000276427601900603

Becker, H. S. 1982. *Art Worlds*. Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.

Beckman, G. D. 2007. "'Adventuring' Arts Entrepreneurship Curricula in Higher Education: An Examination of Present Efforts, Obstacles, and Best Practices." *The Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society* 37 (2):87–112. doi:10.3200/JAML.37.2.87-112

Bennett, A., and R. A. Peterson, eds. 2004. *Music Scenes: Local, Translocal and Virtual*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.

Bennett, D. 2008. *Understanding the Classical Music Profession: The Past, The Present and Strategies For The Future*. Farham, UK: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.

Bridgstock, R. 2009. "The Graduate Attributes We've Overlooked: Enhancing Graduate Employability Through Career Management Skills." *Higher Education Research & Development* 28 (1):31–44. doi:10.1080/07294360802444347

Bridgstock, R. 2013. "Not a Dirty Word: Arts Entrepreneurship and Higher Education." *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education* 12 (2–3):122–137. doi:10.1177/1474022212465725

Bridgstock, R. 2017. "The University and the Knowledge Network: A New Educational Model for Twenty-first Century Learning and Employability." In *Graduate Employability in Context*, 339–58. London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Burland, K. 2005. "Becoming a Musician: A Longitudinal Study Investigating the Career Transitions of Undergraduate Music Students." PhD diss., University of Sheffield.

Chang, W. J., and M. Wyszomirski. 2015. "What is Arts Entrepreneurship? Tracking the Development of its Definition in Scholarly Journals." *Artivate: A Journal of Entrepreneurship in the Arts* 4 (2):11–31.

Corbin, J., and A. Strauss. 2008. *Basics of Qualitative Research*. New York, NY: Sage.

Cunningham, S., P. Higgs, S. Freebody, and P. Anderson. 2010. *What's Your Other Job? A Census Analysis of Arts Employment in Australia*. Melbourne, Australia: Australia Council for the Arts.

Dance/NYC. 2007. *Census of New York City Dancemakers, May 2007*. New York, NY: Dance/NYC.

DiMaggio, P. 1982. "Cultural Entrepreneurship in Nineteenth-Century Boston: The Creation of an Organizational Base for High Culture in America." *Media, Culture & Society* 4 (1):33–50. doi:10.1177/016344378200400104

Dobrow, S. R. 2006. "Having a Calling: A Longitudinal Study of Young Musicians." PhD diss., ProQuest Information & Learning.

Faulkner, R. R. 1973. "Career Concerns and Mobility Motivations of Orchestra Musicians." *The Sociological Quarterly* 14 (3):334–349. doi:10.1111/j.1533-8525.1973.tb00864.x

Garnett, J. 2014. "Musician and Teacher: Employability and Identity." *Music Education Research* 16 (2):127–143. doi:10.1080/14613808.2013.847073

Goulding, C. 1998. "Grounded Theory: The Missing Methodology on the Interpretivist Agenda." *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal* 1 (1):50–57. doi:10.1108/13522759810197587

Guo, C., and Z. Zhang. 2013. "Mapping the Representational Dimensions of Non-Profit Organizations in China." *Public Administration* 91 (2):325–346. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9299.2011.01994.x

Henry, C. 2007. *Entrepreneurship in the Creative Industries: An International Perspective*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing

Jeffri, J., and D. Throsby. 2006. "Life After Dance: Career Transition of Professional Dancers." *International Journal of Arts Management* 8 (3):54–63.

Jeffri, J., and National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). 2003. "Changing the Beat: A Study of the Worklife of Jazz Musicians: Volume I: Executive Summary." Research Division Report #43, National Endowment for the Arts, Washington, DC.

Kahn, J., and D. J. Wakin. 2007. "Western Classical Music, Made and Loved in China." *The New York Times*, April 21. Accessed September 29, 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/02/world/asia/02iht-china.html

Lendel, I., S. Bliss, C. Clouse, M. Piazza, Z. Austrian, K. W. Hexter, R. Constantino, M. Hrubey. 2011. "Remix Cleveland: The Cleveland Music Sector and Its Economic Impact-Full Report." Levin, Cleveland, OH.

Lingo, E. L., and S. J. Tepper. 2013. "Looking Back, Looking Forward: Arts-Based Careers and Creative Work." *Work and Occupations* 40 (4):337–363. doi:10.1177/0730888413505229

Markusen, A. R. 2006. "Crossover: How Artists Build Careers Across Commercial, Nonprofit and Community Work." University of Minnesota, Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, Project on Regional and Industrial Economics, The Arts Economy Initiative. Accessed September 24, 2018. https://www.giarts.org/sites/default/files/Crossover_How-Artists-Build-Careers-Across-Commercial-Nonprofit-Community-Work.pdf

Markusen, A. 2013. "Artists Work Everywhere." *Work and Occupations* 40 (4):481–495. doi:10.1177/0730888413504418

Martin, B. 2007. "How Visual Artists Enter the Contemporary Art Market in France: A Dynamic Approach Based on a Network of Tests." *International Journal of Arts Management* 9 (3):16–33.

Maguire, J. S., and J. Matthews. 2012. "Are We All Cultural Intermediaries Now? An Introduction to Cultural Intermediaries in Context." *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 15 (5):551–562.

Melvin, S., and Cai, J. 2004. *Rhapsody in Red: How Western Classical Music Became Chinese*. New York, NY: Algora Publishing.

Melvin, S. 2012. "Grand Ambitions for Tianjin's Grand Theater." *The New York Times*. Accessed September 29, 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/01/arts/01iht-tianjin01.html

Munnelly, P. K. 2017. "Understanding Career and Degree Expectations of Undergraduate Music Majors." PhD diss., The Ohio State University: Department of Arts Administration Education and Policy.

Murray, C., and M. Gollmitzer. 2012. "Escaping the Precarity Trap: A Call for Creative Labour Policy." *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 18 (4):419–438. doi:10.1080/10286632.2011.591490

Music Industry Promotion Committee. 2016. "2016 Report of Chinese Music Industry." Accessed September 29, 2018. Music Industry Promotion Committee: http://www.cnmipc.org.cn/show/?id=258&siteid=1.

National Endowment for the Arts. 2015. "A Decade of Arts Engagement: Findings from the Survey of Public Participation in the Arts, 2002–2012." Accessed September 29, 2018. NEA: https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/2012-sppa-jan2015-rev.pdf.

National Bureau of Statistics of China. 2016. *China Statistical Yearbook 2016*. Beijing, China: China Statistics Press.

National Bureau of Statistics of China. 2003. *Education Statistics Yearbook of China 2003*. Beijing, China: China Statistics Press.

National Bureau of Statistics of China. 1993. *Education Statistics Yearbook of China 1993*. Beijing, China: China Statistics Press.

Padgett, D. K. 2016. *Qualitative Methods in Social Work Research 36*. New York, NY: Sage Publications.

The Economist. 2016. "Red Dawn for Classical Music: China's Newest Export Hit is Classical Music." *The Economist*. Accessed September 29, 2018. https://www.economist.com/news/books-and-arts/21710242-though-not-yet-western-levels-quality-chinese-ensembles-are-improving

Scott, A. J. 2006. "Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Industrial Development: Geography and the Creative Field Revisited." *Small Business Economics* 26 (1):1–24. doi:10.1007/s11187-004-6493-9

Strategic National Arts Alumni Project. 2012. "A Diverse Palette: What Arts Graduates Say About their Education and Careers—Annual Report 2012." Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research. Accessed September 29, 2018. http://www.snaap.indiana.edu/pdf/2012/2012_Annual_Report.pdf

Strategic National Arts Alumni Project. 2013. "An Uneven Canvas: Inequalities in Artistic Training and Careers." Bloomington, IN: Center for Postsecondary Research. Accessed September 29, 2018. http://snaap.indiana.edu/pdf/2013/SNAAP% 20Annual%20Report%202013.pdf

Shane, S., E. A. Locke, and C. J. Collins. 2003. "Entrepreneurial Motivation." *Human Resource Management Review* 13 (2):257–279. doi:10.1016/S1053-4822(03)00017-2

Tang, R. F. 2013. "Subscription Season is the First Step of the Professionalization of Western Classical Music Orchestras." Accessed September 29, 2018. Damai.cn: http://news.damai.cn/classical/c/20130617/6911.shtml

Throsby, D. (1994). "A Work-Preference Model of Artist Behaviour." In *Cultural Economics and Cultural Policies*, edited by A. Peacock and I. Rizzo, 69–80. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer.

Toepler, S., and M. Wyszomirski. 2012. "Arts and Culture." In *The State of Nonprofit America*, edited by L. M. Salamon, 2nd ed., 229–265. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.

Umney, C., and L. Kretsos. 2014. "Creative Labour and Collective Interaction: The Working Lives of Young Jazz Musicians in London." *Work, Employment and Society* 28 (4):571–588. doi:10.1177/0950017013491452

Wyszomirski, M. J. 2002. "Support for the Arts: A Four-Part Model." *The Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society* 32 (3):222–240. doi:10.1080/10632920209596976

Wyszomirski, M. and W. J. Chang. 2017. "Professional Self-Structuration in the Arts: Sustaining Creative Careers in the 21st Century." *Sustainability* 9 (6):1–20. doi:10.3390/su9061035