

a short introduction

i was touring when mario forwarded the invitation of making a playlist. i would meet zhang cai and sun yizhou on the way and we would introduce the beijing experimental music scene in a performance in laussane. so i asked them to join making this play list and extend it from beijing to china.

it' s not a broad perspective of "chinese new music" . in 2017 i have complied there is no music from china with zhu wenbo. i still think we can' t be represent of a scene or a collective because it doesn' t exist that way. here are our very personal picks. and obviously all about our friends.

there are many other genres are not included here. noise, free rock, classic improvisation, concrete music and electroacoustic, indie pop, metal... there are many other labels are not included here, such as gogo j' s shan lab, ziyang' s tailnia, zhou pei (aka ronez)' s cheap jam (former doufu records), jun-y ciao' s where is the zeitgeist? editing office, li jianhong' s cif music... what we listed here are actually surrounded and intertwined with all of them. and not to mention the new breeds of performance artists, who often hang out and share bill with musicians.

thanx for connecting!

(yj)

playlist for percorsi musicali / zhang cai

Tong Yixin - Marching \ 11AM

from Buzzer Music (Katydid Records; 2025)

https://tongyixin.com/sound/buzzer_music/marching.mp3

tong yixin 童义欣 is an artist who based in new york. he fishing. his apartment is neat. the first time i met him was about 10 years ago when he toured with today' s pop music renovator gao jiafeng. i don' t remember their music but i remember they sweat a lot. that' s also the only time i heard him perform music. mainly he work in temporary art context. sometimes he use field recording or noise.

it' s a simple idea that he recorded the street sounds through buzzer speaker, while the room sound and resonance also appear. a little action. but that requires a quiet and sometimes retreating gestures of personal life. some people did similar thing when they were kids. i was one of them. that' s why i was touched. there are always two worlds. they were captured at same time here. maybe i can say they are collapsed into the recorder as one.

and the sound it self is great. and it' s cheap and great.

zzZzzzZm - I am stuffed with meat, and i am waiting for the next batch of meat

from I was practicing every sentence diligently to love (self-release; 2023)

[audio](#); [cover](#)

zzZzzzZm aka zhong mei 钟没 is the new artist name of zhong minjie 钟敏杰. he is one of the earliest sound artists in china. he works mainly with field recordings. he lives in guangzhou and almost never appear to public, since maybe 15 years ago. he has tons of new works and the newer ones constantly coming with his life stream.

to me his works are subtle, poetic, always with a slice of dry humor and strong concept. no these are not important. i think his works are growing in his daily life, as the trees and insects in guangzhou. they reward me abundant time if i stay with them.

Nichijo - packing/unpacking delivery

from The cheapest Japanese cuisine in the world (Zoomin' Night; 2025)

<https://zoominnight.bandcamp.com/track/packing-unpacking-delivery>

nichijo are yang kuku 羊库库 and zhao ziyi 赵子毅. yang kuku started to make noise 4 years ago when he was 41 years old. he is also my band mate in ghostmass. zhao ziyi is the

youngest pal in town. he started when he was 15. he run the you and me festival. there is a long interview of them on sub jam' s blog. i suggest read.

in this project they do bored things. i feel more people now appreciate this because their life is also bored. it' s not a kind of bored contemporary art endorsed by geroge agumben' s grandsons. it' s just so real and so direct. there is an ethic point here. it' s a typical beijing slowcore. slowcore was once named by ake when i talked about fluxus with her. she said ok then we are slowstream. then i borrowed the word slowcore when i don' t want to use non-music as a term. anyway, if there are more people use beijing slowcore i will move to another word. maybe nichijo. it means daily life.

Bie Feng - Fourteen Minutes Thirty Seconds

from 旱冬声 Sound of Arid Winter (Daybreak; 2023)

<https://daybreak.bandcamp.com/track/--22>

bie feng 别峰 lives in lanzhou where there is no art and music scene exist. he has no social media account. every week he hikes and picks stones along the yellow river.

he remind me all those early musicians. as early as when a machine or a kind of technology was still young. sounds amateur. with great passion. zoom-in to restricted details and technics. like a cat with its thread. he works in this way for almost 30 years, since his punk rock band was ended.

and somehow i feel his forms are similar as the landscape of lanzhou. he transforming it to a transcend state. i admire this partly because i' m from lanzhou, too. but i know i' m talking about today' s experimental music and it' s popular to not mention such old school value such as transcend. but that' s the fact and not possible to ignore when i listen to people like bie feng. i think we need this pole from afar.

playlist for percorsi musicali / zhang cai

nov 2025

1. zhu wenbo - screw (螺丝)

<https://zhuwenbo.bandcamp.com/album/songs-2022>

from songs 2022 (volume one), self-released cassettes 2022

[audio](#)

After several band projects disbanded or suspended over the years, songs 2022 is a collection of songs zhu wenbo (zhao cong' s husband) wrote from time I don't know, but first listened during a live concert in 2021. Primitive songs, folk songs, minimal songs, and protest songs in his own words, I say they are pandemic time's ballad, prison songs, and working classes' folks for un-grown ups. The album contains two volumes, are taped and wrapped in self-made cassettes, with no on-line listening access at all on bandcamp page.

zhu wenbo is based in Beijing. He is a self-taught musician as are most experimental musicians live in Beijing. He works across numerous musical explorations and practices, including eai, tape music, acoustic instruments and compositions. zhu wenbo composed many songs during covid time, featuring guitars(or mandolin) and vocals with lyrics, somewhat reminiscent of folk music, mostly concerning destiny of the low (in this case a "screw"), how certain things spread via the air, and more.

playlist for percorsi musicali /sun yizhou

Nov 2025

1. Zhao Cong - Blow

<https://oigovisioneslabel.bandcamp.com/track/blow>

from *blow,blow,blow,blow,blow*, released by Oigovisiones Label (OV-29), August 14, 2025

This is the work of Zhao Cong, an experimental musician from Beijing. Her creative approach to selecting and utilizing objects carries a distinct feminine sensibility. While primarily sound-based in her compositions, the visual presence of objects during live performances often becomes equally captivating. This album prominently features balloons (alongside other small objects). She deconstructs the actions of inflating and deflating balloons, explicitly referencing these processes in track titles like “Blow.” Simultaneously, she employs mixing consoles and various microphones to amplify and record sounds from different positions on the balloons, creating an auditory experience distinct from human perception.

2. Jun-Y Ciao - Canal Art Museum, Wuxi, April 2nd

<https://zoominnight.bandcamp.com/track/canal-art-museum-wuxi-april-2nd>

from *Four live recordings in 2016*, released by Zoomin' Night (ZMY 033), December 25, 2019

Jun-Y Ciao is a native Shanghai artist. He now resides in Düsseldorf, where he studied painting long ago. I believe he brought a certain German “cold” to Shanghai music scene. He primarily plays with saxophone, with a chirping insect as his teacher. This approach is steeped in the spirit of Jiangnan literati. This album features four live recordings captured at different locations using a portable tape recorder. In his artist statement, he recounts: “At the Wuxi Canal Art Museum—a vast exhibition hall—I deliberately stepped away from the performance area at the end of my set. While playing, I walked quite a distance, leaving the tape recorder behind. It picked up audience conversations and murmurs, which turned out to be quite interesting when I listened back later.”

3. Yan Jun / Zhu Wenbo - twice

<https://erstwhilerecords.bandcamp.com/track/twice>

from *twice*, released by Erstwhile Records (erstwhile 091), released June 27, 2021

The experimental music scene in Beijing changed significantly before and after COVID-19. During the pandemic, online collaboration became a brief yet popular phase. This is the context in which the material for this work was created. "Twice" refers to the album's structure: two simultaneous performances of Yan Jun's composition "linear duo." Compressed and amplified sounds enrich the album, blurring the structural clarity for listeners. You can hear humans and machines trembling through time, emerging and evolving. I consider this an important work.

4. Li Weisi - drone work 3 for sub jam - pt. 1

<https://subjamlabel.bandcamp.com/track/drone-work-3-for-sub-jam-pt-1>
from drone work 3 for sub jam (sub jam 018), released January 12, 2025

Li Weisi is involved with experimental music scenes in Beijing. He is half of Soviet Pop, member of two independent rock bands and a unit of noise-doom-drone band Ghostmass. drone work 3 for sub jam is Li Weisi's first physical solo album. A drone experiment resulted in micro drone in his own words. Which is elaborated in his ten-thousand-word essay written for the Sub Jam interview:

"Experiment means, under specified conditions, exert influence upon the experimental subject, observe and record its changes, without interfering with its process or outcome by the operator's will. Perhaps my science background has shaped my habitual methodology. Since we're dealing with the concept of an 'experiment', I shall apply the physics concept of an experiment to see what results emerge. Theoretically, true, pure, one-hundred-per-cent improvisation does not exist, but I believe we can all strive towards this state to achieve an approximate experience.

This piece primarily explores the inherent sound of blank tape itself. After processing it through speed manipulation to produce extremely high and low frequencies, I sought to discover how it would sound. With such a vast disparity in frequency between the two sounds, would they still interfere? And if so, what form would that interference take? Might such a simple, monotonous combination become a rather comforting sustained tone? Over the years, I've created several works centered on blank tape and drone, some purely amplifying levels and layering multiple tracks, others repeatedly altering speed. This time, however, two frequencies are played simultaneously. The inherent sound of 'blank tape' possesses a certain stubbornness: you might perceive it as present, yet achieving audible clarity requires some effort; you might deem it absent, yet a moment's attention reveals its presence. I find this existence rather well-balanced: cleaner than ambient air noise with

fewer impurities, yet richer and softer than circuitry noise. I prefer working with such sounds. Having obtained simultaneously playable high and low frequencies, well, the experimental materials were ready. Next, it was time to get cracking. After EQ, proportioning, fine-tuning the rotational speed, and even a bit of the author's personal touch (the design of the piece's undulations), this work yielded two parts, which can essentially be understood as two experimental processes. Others use quantum colliders spinning at ten thousand revolutions to find particles; I use two rounds of material processing to find frequency effects and comfortable sustained tones. It's all the same — revolutionary work knows no hierarchy, after all. These two parts do have distinct focuses. Pt1 emphasizes high frequencies with a touch of low end, presented in a less jarring manner; Pt2 features significantly more low frequencies and is decidedly more stimulating. I'm rather pleased with the outcome. It has all the right elements, delivering a thoroughly engaging listening experience while remaining a micro drone. Incidentally, I'm not sure if I invented this micro drone concept, but one year I had an epiphany and decided to explore an extreme direction for drones: micro-scale. Turned out rather well."

2. yan jun - a1, Maybe In The Winter (choir)

<https://subjamlabel.bandcamp.com/track/yan-jun-a1-maybe-in-the-winter-choir>

from silence is shit, released by sub jam x torsion field 2023

silence is shit is a one-on-one concert initiated by torsion field (experimental art projects founded by artist Zheng Wei in 2020), when it was rather difficult for people to meet up. Nine artists who provided their telephone numbers awaited to answer calls between ten and eleven o'clock each evening during the event from 4 to 10 July in 2021. Listeners can listen to the concert by phoning.

Maybe in The Winter is a pop hit from the 80s. A song people use to sing along across squares and streets in Beijing in 1989, because it's lovely. More of Hey Jude than Do You Hear The People Sing. The lyrics roughly convey that "Quietly I am leaving you now; do

not weep for me. After I depart, please take good care of yourself. You ask when I shall return—I suppose maybe in the winter.”

In this song sung by yan jun, what you hear is a-dozens-of-yan-jun-choir created by overdubbing dozens of vocal tracks, in which each yan jun was singing for each audience from the concert.

Born in Lanzhou China, yan jun wrote rock music critique when he moved to Beijing, but as a poet, he started to make music during the SARS period. He is one of the few people in China who enjoys hanging out with young and the fool. yan jun makes CDs in UFO format. He even has his own blog and podcasts. He is crazy, sometimes people have to listen to him talking to go to sleep.

3. sun yizhou - 06' 09"

<https://aloerecords.bandcamp.com/track/0609>

from typewriter in the rain, released by aloe records (alone-009), 2024

typewriter in the rain is a mixture of mixing board noise floor and the Boss PS-2 pitch shifter/delay. No other sources, no human intervention in between. The effector is now for sale on a second hand platform.

This is the first track of the album. It was recorded in a raining day in June 2024, not long after I got my first type machine. The dust in the machine must have done something to sun yizhou's mixing board like how rain give precise instructions to a printer drum. If a no-input mixing board musician owns 50% of the control of his instruments while playing in general, with this specific album, sun yizhou did nothing else but to turn on the switch.

As a post-2000 improvised music musician born in 2000, sun yizhou skipped right over adolescence. When he play, he hold on to the present. And can be very patient. Quotation from sub jam' s release: He is one of the volunteered unpopular musicians who focus on a world with less (or, no) humanity influences, with full of human sensitivity and curiosity.

4. ake - finger as metronome, says no

<https://subjamlabel.bandcamp.com/track/finger-as-metronome-says-no>

from ake 阿科, released by sub jam (sub jam 020), 2025

Album "ake" is a compilation album of ake, and her first full-length solo album. Many have tried before, some still haven't give up, but you can not make her to make music for your label. These recordings, as stubborn as stone and as light as a lighter, must be done on site, are all live recordings. By these solid field recordings, the word field refers to the field she's in. She has the ability to librated it, or destroy it completely. The division between field recordings, live recordings, and many doesn't work at all with her. The art she demands, "my artworks" she would say, coming from the most fundamental needs of life, and the rights to exist, has kept challenging people.

In this very unique recording, , she is playing alone at a friends' s home in Guangzhou, a friend's residence in Guangzhou, a place also known as the "Afternoon Dance Hall" .The texture revealed by the recording technology (or rather, the lack thereof) exudes a peculiar charm and raw authenticity. Towards the end, one can hear the hostess calling her name, more than twice, while she saying 'no'.

ake is from China's only tropical region. She's been in Beijing for a long time. Most of the southerners I know don't like the environment and food in the north, especially in Beijing. I think ake has a love-hate relationship with Beijing.