

The Transmission of Yue Opera in Nanjing: Educational Practices and Cultural Sustainability

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Abstract

This study examines the transmission mechanisms and cultural sustainability of Yue Opera in the urban setting of Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, as it faces challenges in a rapidly globalizing and digitizing world. This study applies an ethnomusicological approach and fieldwork in Nanjing. The author employed several research techniques, including curricular analysis, high-fidelity audio-visual documentation of performance repertoire, and semi-structured interviews with nine purposefully chosen participants. The sustainability of Yue opera in Nanjing is attributed to a balanced synergistic system of three interlocked components: the Jiangsu Provincial Drama School's targeted vocational training, the Nanjing Yue Opera Troupe's market-driven creative activity in Poetic Yue Opera, and the Nanjing Yue Opera Museum's community engagement. Of particular note is the successful regional Zhu School's closing of the generational gap through aesthetic updating and incorporation of the macro-digital. Modern multimedia, including the content of interactive museum displays and QR codes used to document performance archives, have shifted the art practice of Yue opera from a casually informal oral transmission to a systematized and modern institutional practice that resonates with the younger urban audience. The regional Zhu performing arts in contemporary large cities are likely to survive if the fragmented model of preservation morphs into an integrated model of cross-institutional collaboration. This study demonstrates that to sustain cultural traditions, it is vital to reanimate the sounds and emotions of the art form in contemporary living. This study offers a replicable model for the preservation of regional culture as an active, continually changing identity. To build on these findings, future research must explicitly undertake longitudinal studies to track the long-term career trajectories of drama school graduates and execute comparative cross-regional analyses to test the scalability of this tripartite ecosystem across different regional operatic traditions.

Keywords: Cultural Sustainability, Educational Practices, Intangible Cultural Heritage, Opera Education, Cultural Transmission

Introduction

The history of Chinese opera is most instructive as an example of the blending of different cultures and the evolution of an art form. As a complete art form, it combines music, literature, dance, and martial arts and offers an aesthetic experience, representing the philosophical and sociocultural aspects of the Chinese people (Junyou & Chantamala, 2024; Wang, 2023). It is among the hundreds of regional opera styles that developed across the vast territory of China, especially in the Yue region, which is known for its melodious tunes and graceful performances. The Beginnings of Yue Opera, which developed in

the early 20th century from the folk storytelling tradition of Eastern Zhejiang, underwent the most dramatic transformations when it relocated to the urban centers of Shanghai and Nanjing (Luo et al., 2025; Nie 2025). This shift established one of the most defining features of Yue Opera: the transition from all-male troupes to female-dominant ones. This shift is even more important considering that Yue Opera was the first Chinese opera genre to allow women to be in the performing troupes. Since 2006, when Yue Opera was designated a National Intangible Cultural Heritage, the methods of safeguarding and conserving this art form have transitioned from informal, family based oral methods to more formal, law-based, and institutional methods (Liu et al., 2026; Sun, 2025).

Nanjing, as one of the four ancient capitals and champions of the migration and settlement of Yue Opera, was one of the first cities to adopt a particular art form, opera, among the major cities of China. By the mid-1950s, many prominent directors relocated to the city, resulting in the establishment of professional opera enclaves. The movement of professional opera settlements popularized the Nanjing Yue Opera Troupe, making it one of the three most significant troupes in China (Chabrowski, 2019; Haili, 2015; Xu et al., 2026). When Yue Opera settled in Nanjing, it encouraged the creative fusion of local cultural elements, historical narratives, and the aesthetic preferences of the Nanjing people, while developing a distinct artistic regionalism. The Zhu School, a prime example of regionalism, demonstrates historical flexibility in the depiction of Sheng and Dan roles, thus broadening the creative horizons of Yue Opera beyond its original boundaries in the Province of Zhejiang (Liu, 2023; Zhang et al., 2024; Zhao & Sornyai, 2024).

However, contemporary art faces the challenge of maintaining a balance between innovation and the socio-economic realignment of the community. When combined, both threaten the cultural permanence of the art. The entertainment landscape has shifted, resulting in the loss of a younger audience and professional artists in the traditional performing arts sphere. (Fan 2018; Walmsley 2019). Although Nanjing provides fundamental legal and infrastructural support, the socio-cultural restrictions

on both the teaching and the reception of opera are largely unexplored. The problem of ‘change versus absence of authenticity’ is not illusory. The problem is real, and we cannot guarantee that the operations are solvable (Clarke, 2019; Fu & Choatchamrat, 2024; Zago, 2026). The new illusion is preserved.

This study examines the state of Nanjing’s Yue Opera in both educational and professional realms. It explores the realities of knowledge of opera at the level of drama vocational schools and the artistry of professional performing troupes. It addresses three dimensions of the local operatic ecosystem: innovation in performance repertoire, formal systems of talent cultivation, and the specialized outreach role of public professional art museums. It seeks to create a comprehensive image of the functioning of contemporary operatic knowledge. To guide this investigation, this study addresses the following explicit research questions:

- RQ1: How do formal vocational pedagogical frameworks at the drama vocational school level establish and secure a professional talent continuum for regional opera?
- RQ2: In what ways do professional performing troupes execute repertoire innovation to bridge generational audience gaps within a modernized urban attention economy?
- RQ3: How do specialized public art museums convert intangible operatic heritage into tangible urban community engagement and sustainable digital archives?

Situated in a fast-changing global context, this research addresses the urgent issue of preserving the traditional arts of regional opera in rapidly developing, largely homogeneous urban spaces. As performing arts have unique ways of safeguarding and maintaining different regional identities, this research demonstrates contemporary regional arts and the capacity to retain the essential artistic core in the modern urban environment (Deta, 2025; Pan, 2024; Reid et al., 2019). However, a significant research gap persists in the contemporary literature. While existing scholarship extensively documents the individual biographical histories of notable performers or offers descriptive aesthetic analyses of isolated play scripts, there remains a critical dearth of empirical research addressing the systemic,

integrated networks linking vocational schools, professional troupes, and public outreach museums within a single urban ecosystem. This study records the first successful combination of professional and educational revitalization in Nanjing, and provides the best model for other initiatives to safeguard intangible cultural heritage. It ultimately seeks to prevent Yue Opera from becoming a relic of an art form by maintaining the contemporary essence of the living art of opera.

Review of Literature

This literature review showcases the complexity of operatic transmission from a historical perspective to modern teaching approaches. This review, by analyzing academic papers, books, and reports from organizations, aims to provide a solid comprehension of the different aspects concerning the cultural sustainability of Yue Opera in a city setting.

Historical Overview and Gender Shift

The beginning of the Chinese opera genre, and subsequently the original basis of any genre of opera, is the articulation of Chinese opera as an overall stage art. Scholarship of the early 20th century stated that for an art form of opera to be developed, there must be an artistic and seamless integration of speech, movement, acting, and singing to narrate a story. This picture developed the articulate regional performances away from folk entertainment to an advanced stage system of theatre. To this end, Yue opera is an exceptionally highly developed genre (Chen, 2016; Liu et al., 2022; Penner, 2020). Originally a rural folk singing genre, the rural genre was radically transformed in urban centers such as Shanghai and Nan Lighting. Migration ruptured the genre's artistic and social identities. A major trend in the genre of late 20th century opera has been the scholarly focused gender reconstruction of the genre. Scholars have documented the shifts in the genre from a male-dominating troupe to a largely female performing tradition that revolutionized the genre in the late 1920s (Berehova & Volkov, 2020; Loo & Deng, 2025). This revolution largely transformed the overall appeal of the genre to great deal, as it flooded the classical, lyrical, soft, and sentimental, and affected the social transformation of the genre itself in the urban context of China.

Teaching Methodology and Altering Voices

In transmission, the scholarly literature shows a major and wide divide. Historically, the methods of pedagogy in Yue opera have been rudimentary. Primarily, pedagogy has been centered around the construction of a master-apprentice model, direct imitation, and rote learning of the opera. However, scholarly literature has focused on the operational and direct construction of a pedagogy system, especially drawing from the literature in the proclaimed pedagogy of modern science, to ensure that during the opera, the singers and actors maintain the overall health of the body and that clarity of instruction is attained (Luo et al., 2025; Shah, 2020; Thorpe, 2016; Wenyan, 2025). The modifications pertain to matters that allow performers to achieve a greater emotional range, more vocal expressiveness, and greater voice safety. The modifications are viewed as necessary to ensure that this genre of singing can be taught sustainably in the 21st century.

The Transmission and Transformation of Ethnomusicology

This research draws on the framework of ethnomusicology to formulate some ideas. The ongoing debates in the field suggest that music is one of the characteristics that define us as humans, and any musical practice can only thrive as long as it is in harmony with the experiences of the people in the community. Simultaneously, the theory of musical reproduction explains why some musical traditions remain popular and others do not. The theory explains that a combination of structural, socio-psychological, and linguistic elements is responsible for the popularity of one tradition compared to another (Almén, 2024; McKerrell, 2022; Smith, 2021). These theories are applied to the case of Nanjing's Yue Opera. Rapid socio-economic changes are responsible for the adjustments made to the "sound and emotion" of the genre.

Regional Identity and the Research Gap in Sustainability

Historical accounts of the professional troupes in Nanjing detail their ascendancy and descent. In contrast, a review of the current records shows an obvious academic void. Most available studies

document the histories of notable performers and the aesthetic evaluations of individual plays, in that order. There is a dearth of studies examining vocational drama schools and professional performing troupes. The ways in which professionally educationally integrated networks sustain ecosystem culturally the uninterrupted in the ecosystem sustainability of the integrated professional ecosystem educational vocational formally focus practice (Spours, 2024; Zhang & Sornyai, 2025; Zhao et al., 2025) are as follows: This research focuses on this gap, analyzes the integration of professional and teaching institutes, and posits that the survival of intangible cultural heritage relies on this form of systemic integration rather than on disjointed efforts.

Methodology

The research design of this study adopts a qualitative ethnomusicological approach (Leburić & Vladić-Mandarić, 2024; Ping et al., 2024; Rice, 2017) that has been carefully designed to document the

lived experiences, teaching and learning processes, and cultural and social specificities of Yue Opera in Nanjing. The nature of the study encourages extended engagement in the field to document the various dimensions of the community’s authentic voice and the socio-institutional aspects of the operatic ecosystem.

Participants and Research Informants

For the Opera case study, a mixture of purposive and snowball sampling techniques was employed to derive the range of informants from the opera landscape. Considering the ethical obligations and professional confidentiality of the subjects, the study used an anonymized role-based categorization, where participants were grouped and labeled by their professional standing and association within the community. The table below summarizes the demographics and professional spectrum of the informants.

Table 1 Profile and Categorization of Research Informants

Category	Number	Selection Criteria and Expertise
Key Informants	2	Professional performers holding first-class national honors and designated inheritors of the Zhu Pai lineage; minimum of 30 years of stage experience
General Informants	3	Senior administrators from state-owned troupes and private theaters, and academic directors responsible for opera curricula at vocational schools
Casual Informants	4	Regular theater-goers including university students, business professionals, and retired individuals with a documented interest in Yue Opera

Research Materials and Instruments

For the purposes of this research, multiple materials were useful for triangulating the findings across historical, educational, and artistic aspects. Empirically, the formal curricula and internal teaching documents of the Jiangsu Provincial Drama School were of great help in understanding the school’s formalized teaching methods. This study also consulted archival photographs, manuscripts, and personal items stored in the Nanjing Yue Opera Museum, which offered the opportunity to empirically trace the genealogy of the Zhu Pai school. In terms of artistic analysis, empirical testing

was conducted on the Jinling Trilogy (Wuyi Alley, Phoenix Terrace, and The Weaver) high-fidelity performance recordings to assess contemporary style mergers and innovations, as well as the use of classical poetry in operatic singing.

Fieldwork Procedures and Methods

Fieldwork was conducted in Nanjing over 12 months, from March 2025 to March 2026. This timeframe offered longitudinal observations of the performance season and the academic cycle. This research primarily used three methods of data collection, which are summarized in the table below:

Table 2 Summary of Research Procedures and Techniques

Method	Application and Procedure
Observations	Site visits were conducted at the Jiangsu Provincial Drama School and the Nanjing Yue Opera Troupe's rehearsal halls. The researcher focused on documenting the "master-disciple" interaction and the physical conditioning of students during daily training sessions
Interviews	Semi-structured interviews were executed using an interview guide centered on the "Five Natures" of opera pedagogy (Scientific, Artistic, National, Contemporary, and Operatic). Sessions were audio-recorded and transcribed for linguistic and thematic precision
Visual Documentation	Photography and video recordings were used to capture specific stylized movements and vocal expressions. These visual assets were categorized to support the textual analysis of the results

Data Analysis Techniques

The analysis utilized data from several sources using a thematic structure. The first round of coding in the interviews and field notes from all observations involved the same patterns of transmission and cultural sustainability. To structure this process, a brief qualitative coding framework was implemented, transitioning from open codes to axial themes: initial descriptors such as vocal physical health, 'script modernization,' and "digital exhibits" were grouped sequentially into specialized axial codes, which were collapsed into major themes such as Institutional Pedagogical Frameworks" and "Market-Driven Artistic Innovation.' The interview guide specifically prompted informants with target operational questions, such as: "How does the vocal curriculum balance physiological voice safety with master-apprentice imitative practices?" and "In what ways do multimedia archiving initiatives alter active audience engagement?" To guarantee the findings, the researcher applied data triangulation and cross-checked the professional performers' interview responses against the documented practices in the observed classroom activities and the data from the historical records in the archival materials. This rigorous process enabled the researcher to determine the primary transmission patterns that characterize the prevailing state of Yue Opera in the Nanjing area.

Results

The findings illustrate the current situation of Yue Opera in Nanjing, categorized into three main institutional pillars: vocational training, performances, and preservation through a museum. The information in this chapter was derived from fieldwork observations and institutional documents,

as well as a descriptive study of the repertoire from 2025 to 2026.

Vocational Talent Cultivation: The Pedagogical Foundation

This study recognizes the Jiangsu Provincial Drama School as the primary center for the systematic propagation of Yue Opera. As a national key art school, it functions within a specially designed administrative system aimed at safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage at the provincial level. The school's physical and operational environments (Figure 1) provide for the professional development of artistic vocations.

The success of the school's pedagogy is evidenced by the professional success of its graduates. Some documents from the institutional archives show that the school has sustained a talent production vortex for national and provincial opera troupes.

The Opera Performance major is a six-year program that integrates secondary education with professional training. The research findings on specialized program design are presented in Table 3. The analysis of this curriculum indicates a strategic shift from pure imitation to a balanced academic-technical model that legitimizes operatic training within the formal education system.

Classroom fieldwork observations (Figure 3) show a teaching method that prioritizes physical coordination and the "master-disciple" system of imitation. Students engage in daily training to refine their hand, eye, bodily, and step coordination to achieve mastery over the stylized aesthetics of the Yue Opera.

Figure 1 Jiangsu Provincial Drama School



Source: The Researcher, from fieldwork in November 2025

Figure 2 The Success of Alumni from Jiangsu Provincial Drama School

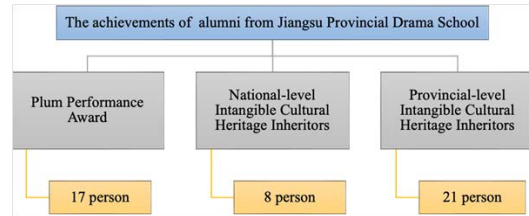


Table 3 Curriculum Structure of the Opera Performance Program

Course Category	Core Subjects	Teaching Objectives
Professional Foundation	Music Theory, Sight-singing, Opera Makeup, History of Chinese Opera	To establish the theoretical and historical grounding of operatic traditions
Core Professional Skills	Leg Techniques, Body Movement Techniques, Acrobatic Mat Skills	To develop the physical discipline and stylized movements (hangdang)
Practical Training	Professional Rehearsal, Ensemble Performance, Post Internship	To bridge classroom learning with professional stage requirements.
Professional Electives	Film and Spoken Drama, Vocal Production, Gong-and-Drum Notation	To broaden artistic versatility and scientific vocal control.

The training method analysis suggests that student recruitment occurs immediately after graduation from elementary school, enabling the commencement of training during physically pliable years. This early age intervention suggests that physical virtuosity remains a non-negotiable core of operatic identity, even in a modernized academic setting. This training continuum begins with the foundational junior years and shifts to repertoire rehearsals and character portrayal in the senior years.

An Opus of Creativity and Performance: The Nanjing Yue Opera Troupe

The Nanjing Yue Opera Troupe, established in 1956, is a leading provider of professional services

in the region. The troupe was found to achieve cultural sustainability through a diverse repertoire that balances the preservation of the historical with the addition of the contemporary. The troupe is currently characterized by a shift toward what is referred to as “Poetic Yue Opera.” This is a new approach that aspires to blend classical Chinese literature with contemporary theatrical forms. This evolution represents an analytical response to the urban attention economy, repositioning opera as a sophisticated literary and visual experience for modern audiences. A notable finding was the production of the Jinling Trilogy, a defining work for the troupe. The attributes of these productions are listed in Table 4.

Table 4 Analysis of the Jinling Trilogy Repertoire

Title	Historical	Narrative Focus	Artistic Innovation
Wuyi Alley	Wei-Jin Dynasties	Fraternal bonds of the Wang family	Integration of classical calligraphy and Wei-Jin aesthetics
Phoenix Terrace	Tang Dynasty	Life of the poet Li Bai	Reinterpreting Tang poetry through operatic vocalization
The Weaver	Qing Dynasty	The spiritual world of Cao Xueqin	Non-linear narrative interweaving reality and the Dream of the Red Chamber.

Figure 3 Students at Jiangsu Provincial Drama School



Source: The Researcher, from fieldwork in November 2025

Figure 4 Nanjing Yue Opera Museum



Source: The Researcher, from fieldwork in November 2025

The troupe’s repertoire is categorized into three distinct streams to ensure a broad audience appeal and professional continuity. This research categorized 56 active plays.

- Original Operas (Creative Innovation): Wuyi Alley, The Weaver, Lilac, Lady Mochou, Li Qingzhao, Brocade of Clouds.
- Traditional Operas (Historical Preservation): The Jade Hairpin, Dream of the Red Chamber, The Butterfly Lovers, Sister Jiang.
- Selected Scenes (Zhezi Operas): Liu Yi Delivers the Letter, The Legend of the White Snake, Blocked Horse.

Additional data collected through interviews with troupe members show that there has been a notable effort to incorporate ‘Mixed-Gender Performances’ as a means to expand the spectrum of drama in productions since 2018, even though the ‘All-Female’ tradition continues to be the primary aesthetic of the school’s pedagogy. This dual-track gender strategy reflects a functional compromise

between maintaining historical authenticity and exploring broader dramatic possibilities to attract a diverse demographic.

Museum-Based Preservation and Outreach: Nanjing Yue Opera Museum

The Nanjing Yue Opera Museum, located in the historic Laomendong area, is the third pillar that upholds Yue Opera. The museum acts as a link between the professional troupe and the audience, converting intangible cultural heritage into a tangible urban experience.

One of the museum’s responsibilities is the current management of archival materials pertaining to the Zhu School (Zhu Pai). The findings regarding the tasks the museum is engaged in and the effects of these tasks on the preservation of transmission are outlined in Table 5. The museum functions not merely as an archive but as a dynamic cultural bridge that lowers the barrier to entry for the uninitiated public.

Table 5 Operational Functions of the Nanjing Yue Opera Museum

Function	Activity Type	Audience Impact
Exhibition	Archiving of costumes, scripts, and personal items of Zhu Shuizhao	Enhances historical awareness and artistic heritage literacy
Live Performance	Immersive Zhezi opera performances in a small pavilion setting	Lowers the barrier to entry for tourists and younger urban residents
Digital Archiving	Implementation of QR codes for accessing high-fidelity audio/video	Facilitates self-directed learning and modern cultural dissemination
Educational Outreach	Weekend workshops and amateur enthusiast meetings	Sustains a community of practitioners outside professional troupes

The study captured that museum space is used for ‘Active Inheritance’ ceremonies. In February 2026, the museum conducted a formal admission ceremony for a young disciple, Yang Yongqi, the

youngest Zhu Xiaozhao lineage performer. This highlights the museum’s function as a location for traditional ritualized transmissions.

Integration of Multimedia in Cultural Transmission

The findings also illustrate another level of digitization within the troupe and museum. Three main ways to use digital technology to make Yue Opera more accessible were identified:

- **Interactive Displays:** Touch screens that enable visitors to choose and compare different singing schools in the museum.
- **Online Streaming:** The use of social media by the Nanjing Yue Opera Troupe to live stream rehearsals and behind-the-scenes activities.
- **QR Code Documentation:** The use of digital links to performances within the physical exhibits (e.g., the Jinling Trilogy) and the research team's documentation.

These digital interventions suggest an interpretative strategy in which technological simplicity is used to overcome the perceived complexity of traditional operatic codes.

In conclusion, the current condition of Yue Opera in Nanjing is a combined ecosystem. The Jiangsu Provincial Drama School offers Pillar 1, which is systematized technical training, followed by professional innovation and repertoire building by the Nanjing Yue Opera Troupe (Pillar 2). The Nanjing Yue Opera Museum oversees community interaction and historical preservation and manages the public image (Pillar 3). This three-part structure ensures that Yue Opera is preserved as an active and evolving cultural heritage in the contemporary city of Nanjing, rather than as a dead relic.

Discussion

This study shows that the cultural sustainability of Yue Opera in Nanjing has been successfully structured within a synergistic tripartite ecosystem, resulting in a positive transition from an informal oral system to a more formal institutional system. The study results regarding the formal system of vocational talent training at Jiangsu Provincial Drama School are in line with the Doctrine of Transmission, which considers the professional succession continuum essential within formal pedagogical systems. Unlike the more fragmented transmission models observed in other regional genres, such as Siping Opera, where intergenerational transmission

often remains localized or informal ([Sun, 2025](#)), the Nanjing model provides a centralized institutional pathway. This system aims to solve the phenomenon of the professional artist continuum and audience paradox in the modern urban attention economy. In addition, the described curriculum that combines science-based vocal production with imitative traditions is in line with modifying the range of emotions, voice safety, and the overall advocacy of [Luo et al. \(2025\)](#) and [Wenyan \(2025\)](#) for performers in the 21st century.

The Nanjing Yue Opera Troupe's Poetic Yue Opera shows how successfully they embraced both tradition and modernity. Artistic growth has to do with the regional school's flexibility, as the Zhu School's ability to portray both Sheng and Dan roles exemplifies, and is the basis for cultural revitalization in the practice of musical transformation. While traditional Jinghe Opera often struggles with rigid stylistic boundaries in contemporary transmission ([Fu & Choatchamrat, 2024](#)), the flexibility of the Zhu School allows Yue Opera to better assimilate local cultural elements. This troupe has the ability to mold the practice to the needs of the modern urban setting, closing the gap between generations through the reinvention of classical texts. This regional adaptability mirrors successful revitalization efforts in Huangmei Opera, which similarly re-invents tradition to maintain national intangible cultural relevance ([Jin & Xiaofang, 2025](#)). This is even more sustainable through the Nanjing Yue Opera Museum as public outreach, as it serves the purpose of making the intangible more tangible. The use of QR codes and digital tools to improve accessibility aligns with modern, self-directed learning and heritage engagement.

The most prominent critique of the study is that it focuses on only one metropolitan area in comparison to the marginal or even rural genres of opera. Although it illustrates, for the first time, the successful simultaneous integration of professional and educational revitalization in Nanjing, it does not address how digital tools will impact audience engagement depth in the long run. Predictably, audience engagement is the most affected in the present. This gap is an essential priority for future studies, as well as tracking participants' career paths via longitudinal studies and comparing educational

transmission systems across different regional opera styles.

Conclusion

In Nanjing, Yue Opera transmission is complemented by an innovative, market-driven approach from the community preservation side. My research shows that the art form's current state is dependent on the indicated triad: the structured technical foundation provided by Jiangsu Provincial Drama School, professional repertoire innovation by Poetic Yue Opera from Nanjing Yue Opera Troupe, and public outreach and archival history by Nanjing Yue Opera Museum. The primary findings reaffirm the institutional nature of talent and the cultivated regional poetic identity, especially the distinctive Zhu School (Zhu Pai), as vital for cultural perseverance and safeguarding various regional identities amidst globalization. However, certain limitations of the study must be acknowledged. The empirical dataset and fieldwork observations were strictly restricted to a single metropolitan area within Nanjing, which may not capture the transmission dynamics or socioeconomic realities of marginal or rural operatic environments. Additionally, while the research successfully documented immediate digital implementations, the twelve-month fieldwork duration poses a temporal limitation, preventing an assessment of how these digital archiving and multimedia tools will structurally impact audience depth of engagement and performer career trajectories over a long-term continuum. Nonetheless, the study's focus suggests that cultural educators and policymakers have a pathway to practice, especially concerning the intangible cultural heritage of the 21st century, which requires systemic integration and digital accessibility. Nanjing is a prime example of traditional performing arts as living, evolving cultures, and not as a static relic, by integrating the sound and emotion of the genre with modern audiovisual and digital technologies to ensure it remains a continuum of the past.

Suggestions

Given the study's results, it is advised that cultural policymakers alongside educational entities in Nanjing continue to enhance collaboration

regarding the ease of professional entry for graduates of vocational drama schools. This collaboration of professional drama schools and professional performing arts institutions, of which the latter is a component. To facilitate this process, the curriculum must continue to develop alongside the integration of new media, thereby providing young actors with new media skills to enable them to participate in the digital transmission of Yue Opera. In addition, there is a need for increased immersive educational activities within the Nanjing Yue Opera Museum to reach a wider audience of primary and secondary school pupils, cultivating interest in regional opera at the very basic level. Furthermore, municipal authorities should actively pursue international collaboration possibilities, such as establishing cross-cultural performance exchange platforms and collaborative academic symposia with overseas institutions to broaden the global visibility of Yue Opera and benchmark its tripartite preservation model against global intangible heritage safeguarding practices. Finally, there is a need for future studies to focus on the Nanjing model's scale of cultural versatility by performing the longitudinal analysis of the professional drama school graduates and cross different regional opera studies. To expand the scope of future research more fluidly, subsequent studies should specifically design tracking mechanisms for audience psychological engagement depths across digital platforms over multiple years, incorporate quantitative text-mining of historical scripts across regional boundaries, and conduct rigorous comparative institutional frameworks across a broader spectrum of both urban and rural performing art genres.

Implications

This research addresses fundamental questions that cultural policymakers, educational administrators, and heritage practitioners can examine. This study argues that isolated efforts directed at the preservation of regional operatic arts are insufficient. Preservation efforts must account for systemic, threefold integration. The research demonstrates that the cultural ecosystem is sustained through the integration of vocational education, professional creative practice and outreach through

museum pedagogy. It is understood that the provision of creative practice and professional development is the continuum that is most likely to disappear in the hyper-commercial attention economy. It is also understood that the convergence of digital media with 'Poetic Yue Opera' means that these expressive traditions can be sustained in the 'popular' sphere. It is also understood that these expressive traditions cannot be sustained within older generations and must be made relevant for younger generations through the integration of contemporary aesthetics and technological simplicity. Therefore, this research offers a framework for the preservation of intangible cultural heritage while sustaining a regional, living urban identity. The preservation of this identity is through creative pedagogy and cross-institutional collaboration.

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