

# Interviewing With the Producer: Shan on the Making of GuanZi

Interviewed, edited by A.C.

## KONG AUDIO



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DONGSHENG SHAN, the creator of the much lauded Chinese Series, tells us about ChineseGuanZi, his latest work.

**Q:** *ChineseGuanZi is the ninth installment to your well-received Chinese Series. What do you think of GuanZi as an instrument? What makes it different?*

**A**(Dongsheng Shan): As a reed instrument, GuanZi has a very long history, and is deeply rooted in the Chinese rural culture. GuanZi can be as vibrant as Suona, yet it can also be as immersing as Xiao. GuanZi is

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not as popular today as it once was though. With the introduction of **ChineseGuanZi**, hopefully more people will find its charm.

**Q:** *Can you tell us what have you learned during the production of ChineseGuanzi?*

**A:** Due to the complex multitude of the intricate performance techniques, the usual expressions, e.g., Aftertouch and Modwheel controls, are no longer satisfactory for the making of such an expressive instrument. In the end I decided to go with the combination of keyswitching and the newly introduced Pitch Envelopes, by allowing Release Gate to play a crucial role this time. This makes it much easier for the composers and

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musicians to access and familiarize with ChineeGuanzi. I also added a graphic keyboard, in hope that users can visually grasp the controls more efficiently.

The whole production process has been inspiring, and all the experimenting we did on it has been very interesting as well.

*Q: What exactly were you aiming at with this production? Were the goals reached?*

A: One remarkable characteristic of GuanZi is its abundant articulations. GuanZi is very organic and ever-changing. This characteristic makes it a challenge to be turned into a playable VST instrument. Fortunately, by making the most of the implementation of Pitch Envelope, the final release of ChineeGuanZi is arguably the most playable plugin we have made so far.

*Q: Do you have any suggestions to the people who are new to this unique instrument?*

A: Yes I have some suggestions. When you first launch GuanZi, pay special attention to the Pitch Env Page and the the blue keys on the keyboard. When you press different keys, different pitch envs will be activated. Play with it a bit, and play with different patches. That's the key to mastering ChineeGuanZi.



- ▶ The 9th Installment of the Accalimed **Chinee Series**
- ▶ 260 MB Elaborately Crafted Sample Sets
- ▶ Trademark In-depth Programming
- ▶ Innovative blending of Pitch Envelopes with Keyswitching