### Jazz Orchestra Portraits of Thailand: Exploring Hybridizations of Thai Music Traditions with Jazz

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"People are different, the cosmopolitan knows, and there is much to learn from our differences. Because there are so many human possibilities worth exploring, we neither expect nor desire that every person or every society should converge on a single mode of life. Whatever our obligations are to others (or theirs to us) they often have the right to go their own way. As we will see, there are times when these two ideals—universal concern and respect for legitimate difference—clash."

Kwame Anthony Appiah

### **ABSTRACT**

### Jazz Orchestra Portraits of Thailand: Exploring hybridizations of Thai music traditions with jazz By TANARAT CHAICHANA

The objective of this dissertation is to document and critically reflect upon the creation of a collection of original works for contemporary jazz orchestra inspired by traditional Thai music, following extensive research on Thai music from the perspective of a jazz composer. This research, including the musical works, comprises a case study of the musical hybridization of Thai music and jazz that can be utilized in both Thai music studies and jazz research settings. Despite the increasing interest in Thai-Western musical integration among Thai classical composers and ethnomusicologists, no extensive studies have yet explored the integration of Thai music with jazz in the context of the contemporary jazz orchestra. Furthermore, while some musical traditions, such as those of South Asia and of the Arab world, have long been combined with jazz, there have been few such explorations of fusing jazz with Thai music traditions.

Unlike previous Thai musical hybridity projects or cross-cultural Thai musical composition studies, this research project considers four regional Thai music practices instead of assuming the existence of a single "traditional music of Thailand." I approach such musical practices from a jazz composition perspective in this study. In my research methods I identified and described their key elements, including fundamental structures, performance methods, and idiomatic instruments. I then transcribed performances by prominent Thai musicians working in these traditions into Western notation. After that, I experimentally integrated such musical elements into jazz compositions and created prototypes before composing works for full jazz orchestra. Inspired by the practice of cultural cosmopolitanism in Thailand and the openness to foreign cultures witnessed in Thai musical traditions, I also incorporated other musical techniques beyond jazz, including elements of rock, hip hop, R&B, and electronica, into my contemporary jazz orchestra writing process to produce a unique creative output for the study.

The creative outcome of this research, Jazz Orchestra Portraits of Thailand, consists of seven original jazz orchestra compositions totaling 67 minutes. The compositions demonstrate musical hybridity in the ways the characteristics of Thai music combine with contemporary jazz musical elements to produce new styles. In my critical analysis of these works, I begin with general observations on compositional approach and an extensive theoretical analysis from the perspective of jazz composition. I go on to comprehensively examine the Thai elements that are infused, transformed, or otherwise present in the pieces, and then analyze the compositional techniques employed in my musical hybridizations, discussing some of the inspirations behind them.

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I am also thankful for Dr. Wilson for guiding me and spending time on my research component. His mentorship encouraged me to step beyond my comfort zone as a jazz performer and embark on a journey as an academic researcher. His advice has also been tremendously helpful in my doctoral studies and has assisted me to discover my role as a jazz composer. In the preparation of this dissertation, his editorial assistance is also immensely appreciated. It was an honor to be a doctoral student of both Dr. Lisik and Dr. Wilson in Wellington, New Zealand.

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significant step forward in my academic career, and it motivated my ambition to one day become a professional jazz instructor.

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### **NOTES ON TRANSLITERATION**

I employ the Royal General Methodology of Transcription (RTGS) established by the Royal Institute of Thailand to transliterate most Thai words in this dissertation. Some words, such as ngiew (เรี้ยว) or luk lenam (ลูกเหลื่อม), are difficult to appropriately Romanize. In these cases, I provide readers with the original Thai script so that the readers can further explore their definitions. I use common transliterations of music terms that do not depart from the RTGS system, such as jin (จีน) instead of chin, or jawang (จังหวะ) instead of chawang. This results in inconsistent Romanization throughout this dissertation, but using common transliterations of music terms assists both readers already familiar with those transliterations, and those wishing to learn more about Thai music concepts from existing research.

Below are the standard Romanization practices of the RTGS system:

#### **CONSONANTS**

Thai	Romanized character		Example
Consonant			
	initial	final	
n	k	k	กา = $ka$ , นก = $nok$
ข ๚ ค ฅ ฆ	kh	k	ม้อง = khong
٩	ng	ng	งาม = ngam, เวียง = wiang
<b>១</b> ឧ។ ฌ	ch	t	ถิ่ง = ching
ช ทร ศ ษ ส	S	t	สำเนียง = samniang
ល្អ	у		ยาว = yao
ฎฑด	d	t	ดนตรี= dontri
រួ 🛭	t	t	ตะลุง = talung
ฐฑฒถทธ	th	t	เถา= thao

ณน	n	n	นาฎศิลป์ = <i>natasin</i> , สากล = <i>sakon</i>
n	b	р	บังไฟ = bangfai, ฉาบ = chap
J	p	p	ปี่พาทย์ = <i>piphat</i>
ผพภ	ph	p	พิณ = phin
el W	f	p	ฟองน้ำ = fong namm
ม	m	m	หมอลำ = mawlum
3	r	n	ระนาด = ranad
ล พ้	1	n	ลาว = lao
3	W		$\mathcal{A} = wong$
หฮ	h		โหมโรง = homrong
2	0		องค์= ong

### **VOWELS**

Thai Vowel	Romanized character	Example	
ี อะ อา	a	หน้าพาทย์ = <i>naphat</i>	
ବି ପି	i	$\vec{\mathbb{1}} = pi$	
์ อื อิ	ue	คลื่น = khluen	
ନ୍ ନୁ	u	ครู = khru	
ie: ie	е	เย็น = yen	
แอะ แอ	ae	แสน = saen	
โอะ โอ	0	ใล้ = lo	
เอาะ ออ	aw	To = saw	
เออะ เออ	oe	ดำเนิน = damnoen	
เอียะ เอีย	ia	เสียง = siang	
เอื้อะ เอื้อ	uea	เดือน = <i>duean</i>	
อัวะ อัว 	ua	ตัว = tua	
ไอ ใอ อัย	ai	ใน = <i>nai</i>	

### Chapter 1

### **INTRODUCTION**

The advice that I would like to give to someone who aspires to be a cross-cultural jazz composer is that he or she should be concerned in both [types of] music, and he or she should study both of them deeply, and the more deeply he or she knows, the better he or she does. I like the colorfulness and the complexity of jazz, and that something I want to happen with flamenco. Maybe, I have captured only two chords in flamenco, but I think we might have to get a task to go a little beyond and get a little far — as much as we can, and know well which traditional music you want to work on and then take it to the complexity and the beauty of jazz both together. I mean you must know both of them deeply.<sup>1</sup>

Perico Sambeat

#### 1.1 THE PURPOSE OF STUDY

What musical experiences do jazz composers encounter when learning to compose music influenced by Thai musical traditions? What practical methodologies can jazz composers apply to compose music in a process of Thai-jazz musical hybridization? How do jazz composers balance elements of jazz and traditional Thai music and find a compositional voice when working on musical hybridity? What obstacles might a jazz composer confront when incorporating elements of traditional Thai music into contemporary jazz orchestra writing? These questions form the core of this research project, and I attempt to answer them in this

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Perico Sambeat, Personal interview, 28 July 2020.

thesis and in my portfolio of compositions for jazz orchestra, both of which have been informed by intensive research into examples and studies of cross-cultural music composition.

Importantly, my answers to these research questions are based on my artistic experiences as a Thai-jazz musician from a modern, middle-class Thai society where the clash between Western ideologies and Thai beliefs is on dramatic display. In addition, my mixed family heritages meant that I was nurtured in an atmosphere featuring elements of both Thai-Chinese and Southern Thai Buddhist cultures, a multicultural background that has had a direct impact on my personal identity.

My jazz experience began at sixteen, the same age I discovered the music of Duke Ellington's jazz orchestra, which became one of my major inspirations to become a jazz orchestra composer. Unlike other jazz composers who may have been classically trained as children, I began my Western music education as a bass player by learning to transcribe and play along to recordings of alternative rock, indie pop, and African-American music, including R&B, soul, and hip-hop. I believe this has had a significant effect on my musical development and a direct impact on my compositional process, as evidenced by the original compositions I have produced for this research. As a result, all of these personal influences are reflected in my artistic viewpoints and help establish my positioning as an artist, which has a consequence on this investigation.

In this introductory chapter, I first provide a brief overview of various historical precedents for this project, including examples of cross-cultural musical hybridization from early jazz to the present day, and a brief discussion of the general lack of cross-cultural works for jazz orchestra involving Thai music. I then discuss the methodology of this project and the outline of this thesis, before brief discussions of my use of the terms "cross-cultural" and "musical hybridization," as well as my own positionality towards Thai musical traditions as a Thai person trained primarily in jazz composition and performance.

## 1.2 HISTORICAL PRECEDENTS FOR CROSS-CULTURAL JAZZ COMPOSITIONS

Though jazz is and has always been African American music, the process of composing jazz has involved and been influenced by diverse musical elements beyond the musical practices of African Americans. These distinct musical influences include, for example, the French

quadrille, as evidenced, for example, in Sidney Bechet's "Panther Dance" (1949), of which the composer remarked, "in fact, it is an old French quadrille, originally known as Praline and said to have been inspired by 'La Marseillaise [sic]." March forms are used in the ragtime compositions of Scott Joplin, such as his famous "Maple Leaf Rag" (1899), and the three-stroke rhythmic patterns (tresillas) in Jelly Roll Morton's "New Orleans Blues" show the clear influence of Caribbean music. In addition, musical elements from the Caribbean also played a prominent role in the musical hybrids of the swing and bebop styles. Various Caribbean elements appear in several well-known early swing compositions, including "The Peanut Vendor" (1931) and "Caravan" (1936), which were famously performed by Duke Ellington's orchestra, and "Chili-Con Conga" (1939), performed by Cab Calloway's orchestra.

Some of the best illustrations of musical hybridization in bebop can be found in the music of Dizzy Gillespie in the 1940s and 1950s, who was introduced to Afro-Cuban music by Mario Bauzá. After starting his own band in 1947, Dizzy met Chano Pozo, a Cuban singer, dancer, and percussionist who helped Dizzy to invent "Cubop," a clear example of musical hybridity. Afro-Cuban tumbao bass lines and the conga, an Afro-Cuban instrument of African origin, were used alongside bebop improvisation and with other complex rhythms in a fast swing context. Better-known examples of this hybridization process in Gillespie's music include "A Night in Tunisia" (1942) and "Manteca" (1947). Cubop became widespread during the late 1940s and significantly influenced jazz composers and orchestra leaders, including George Russell and Stan Kenton.<sup>4</sup>

Flamenco is another musical style, in this case from Spain, that has been combined with jazz styles in several well-known cases. Cross-cultural works combining flamenco and jazz include Lionel Hampton's "Jazz Flamenco" (1956), John Coltrane's "Olé" (1961), some elements of Charles Mingus's album *Tijuana Moods* (recorded 1957, released 1962) and the jazz orchestra work *Sketches of Spain*, a 1960 collaboration between Miles Davis and Gil Evans.

Stylistic crossovers in compositional processes among jazz composers continued and further expanded in musical style in the 1960s and 1970s. Don Ellis was active in this vein, with

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Rashida K. Braggs, *Jazz Diasporas: Race, Music, and Migration in Post-World War II Paris*, (Berkley: University of California Press, 2016), 44.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> "New Orleans Blues" was first record as a piano solo in 1923 and published in 1925. See the IMSLP Petrucci Music Library at https://imslp.org/New\_Orleans\_Blues\_(Morton,\_Jelly\_Roll).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> For more details see Paul Austerlitz and Jere Laukkanen, *Machito and his Afro-Cubans: Selected Transcriptions* (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2016).

examples including his orchestra's "Indian Lady" (1967) and "Turkish Bath" (1967, composed by Ron Myers), both of which feature an Indian sitar with a jazz orchestra. Ellis's group also performed "Bulgarian Bulge" (1969), which drew on Bulgarian folk rhythms. Other jazz composers like Toshiko Akiyoshi and Salah Ragab also brought musical elements from their home countries, Japan and Egypt, respectively, into jazz compositions. These include Akiyoshi's Kogun (1974), in which she employed Japanese traditional percussion instruments and the Japanese traditional singing style called nohgaku. Egyptian Jazz, by Salah Ragab and the Cairo Jazz band (recorded in 1968 and reissued 2017 by Art Yard Records), is an example of Egyptian music performed by a large jazz ensemble, and of Middle Eastern influence on jazz orchestra music.

The embrace of diverse musical practices in jazz composition has continued to the present, as seen in the more recent performance of "Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis" (2013) featuring the Sachal Ensemble, a traditional music ensemble from Pakistan. In this performance, audiences witness the intermingling of blues from the saxophones and brass sections of the jazz orchestra, the musical language of bebop, including improvisation, and a strong swing feel with the sound of traditional Pakistani instruments such as the *bansuri*, *tabla*, and *sitar*, instruments which also have connections with other South Asian traditions such as Hindustani classical music and Carnatic music. Another recent example of a cross-cultural music project is the collaboration between German Frankfurt Radio Big Band (hr-Bigband) and the renowned Lebanese *oud* player Rabih Abou-Khalil, playing works arranged and directed by Jim McNeely, a prominent American composer of jazz orchestra music.

The flexibility of jazz and the openness of jazz musicians to seemingly endless musical influences from around the world can be witnessed in the multicultural practices of jazz throughout its history. Duke Ellington also comments on the concept of its musical diversity:

Jazz is a tree, and it has many branches that reach out many directions, of course, it goes into the far east and picks up its exotic blossom, and at the end of each branch is a twig. It goes east, west, north, south, and everywhere it goes it pick up some certain influence. [...] As it goes down into the deep roots into the earth then you find out these blueblooded black roots are deep in the soil of black Africa which is of course the foundation of everything that is with the beat. The beat that of course today is the most listened to in the world.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> "Duke Ellington - What Jazz Is," YouTube, uploaded by Jazz Video Guy.

<sup>&</sup>lt;www.voutube.com/watch?v=brAZ9InWDiI&t=33s>, (7 September 2020).

Other jazz musicians, on the other hand, may strive to absorb other musical traditions in order to gain new perspectives or innovations that can be integrated into their creative practices, as John Coltrane described:

I like Ravi Shankar very much. When I hear his music, I want to copy it—not note for note of course, but in his spirit. What bring me closest to Ravi is the modal aspect of his art. Currently, at the particular stage I find myself in, I seem to be going through a modal phase ... There's a lot of modal music that is played every day throughout the world. It's particularly evident in Africa, but if you look at Spain or Scotland, India or China, you'll discover this again in each case.<sup>6</sup>

Despite the numerous examples of cross-cultural jazz projects mentioned above, there still remains a dearth of such hybrids of jazz and traditional Thai music, particularly with regard to contemporary jazz orchestra compositions that have yet to be explored in jazz research. In fact, even with the presence of jazz since the 1930s in Bangkok, jazz was initially only performed by a small number of people in Thailand, and the music was appreciated mostly by those in the elite or middle classes who had earned diplomas in Western countries.<sup>7</sup> After decades of jazz activity in Thailand, the College of Music at Mahidol University eventually established the first Thai jazz studies program in 1998. This was the first music institution in Thailand where music students could enroll in jazz courses and earn a Bachelor of Arts (BA).8 Yet, extensive research that is focused on cross-cultural jazz orchestra compositions is still rare in Thai jazz education. For these reasons, this research offers an opportunity to experiment, develop, and produce creative works that significantly contribute to the field of cross-cultural music composition. Therefore, the explicit purpose of this study is fourfold: 1) to create a new work that is the result of the musical hybridization of jazz and Thai music traditions; 2) to apply knowledge of traditional Thai music to jazz compositions; 3) to demonstrate through comprehensive musical analysis how the characteristics of Thai music are reproduced and adapted in jazz orchestra pieces; and 4) to offer a jazz composer's experiential account of working in musical hybridity.

### **1.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

My research methodology for this project has been drawn from multiple sources. Just as I did earlier in my life when first acquiring a jazz vocabulary as a bass player and composer, I set about learning Thai music by transcribing recordings of compositions to develop a better understanding of how such music works from a jazz composer's perspective. This process is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Quoted in Lewis Porter, John Coltrane His Life and Music (Ann Arbor: University Michigan Press, 1999), 211.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Jittapim Yamprai, "The Establishment of Western Music in Thailand," PhD Diss., University of Northern Colorado (2011), 70.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> College of Music, Mahidol University, "History," <a href="https://www.music.mahidol.ac.th/history/">https://www.music.mahidol.ac.th/history/>.

similar to the notion of "imitation to assimilation to innovation" proposed by Walter Bishop Jr., an American jazz pianist, who elaborates the concept as follows:

It all goes from imitation to assimilation to innovation. You move from the imitation stage to the assimilation stage when you take little bits of things from different people and weld them into an identifiable style-creating your own style.9

Next, I assess these transcriptions from the perspectives of Thai musicians in order to gain a practical understanding of how Thai music is genuinely performed. I then restate these new findings in jazz terminology, which I believe the majority of my readers, who are jazz practitioners, will be able to understand. As with recordings of a jazz standard, Thai recordings exist in several renditions, each performed differently depending on how the performers were taught by their masters, or if they are music teachers themselves, their own interpretation. The Thai recordings I selected for my study had a profound influence on this research. To provide a practical approach for this study, I chose Thai music recordings that were performed by well-respect Thai musicians or recorded by Thai music ensembles established by Thai universities with Thai music studies programs.

The second element of my methodology is a study of the existing literature on Thai music. A number of publications by both Western and Thai scholars who are experts in the field, such as Montri Tramote, David Morton, Terry E. Miller, Panya Roongruang, Anant Narkkong, Deborah Wong, Kumkom Pornprasit, and John Garzoli, to name a few, also played a crucial role in helping me to acquire extensive knowledge of Thai music. I reference these experts' arguments and discussions in several chapters of this research. The scope of such discussions is also extended to the historical and social aspects of Thai musical practice, to present a clearer picture of Thai performers' musical purpose and identity. In addition, I returned to Thailand in 2019 to conduct archival research in multiple libraries in Thailand. On this trip, I uncovered several Western-notated scores (transcriptions) of significant Thai works, which I also studied and employed in my compositional process.

To gain a perspective on genuine Thai music-making practice and issues surrounding the cultural appropriation of Thai music traditions, I also interviewed Somuek Saengarun, a prominent Thai classical musician who has worked in several cross-cultural music projects both in Thailand and overseas. This interview also revealed much about the attitudes of Thai classical

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Quoted in Paul Berliner, Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation, 120.

musicians toward musical hybridization or cross-cultural music works, the stylistic difference between Thai classical music and other regional traditional Thai music, and some successful Western musical approaches to Thai classical music. This interview also revealed much about the attitudes of Thai classical musicians toward musical hybridization or cross-cultural music works, the stylistic difference between Thai classical music and other regional traditional Thai music, and some successful Western musical approaches to Thai classical music.

In my approach to studies of jazz composition, I explored previous cross-cultural jazz orchestra projects through score study and listening, with special attention to aspects of cross-cultural music making. This process yielded a clearer picture of the compositional processes employed in integrating culturally distinct musical elements. I also further investigated the perspectives of the composers of these projects in articles and related dissertations.

Scholarly work on the notion of the globalization of jazz and the adaptation of jazz to local music cultures also provided significant contributions to this research. Scholars in this field such as Stuart Nicholson, E. Taylor Atkins, and Bruce Johnson led me to discover more crosscultural jazz composers, to review the historical background of jazz-influenced music outside the United States, and to examine artistic attitudes toward the products and processes of crossovers between jazz and the local music cultures of Scandinavia, Japan, and Australia.

In parallel to my investigations of Thai music, I interviewed a prominent cross-cultural jazz composer, Perico Sambeat, a professor at Berklee College of Music in Valencia who has recorded several successful jazz orchestra albums that contained elements of flamenco and jazz. In this interview, Perico explicitly demonstrated several compositional processes through which he incorporates flamenco musical elements into his jazz orchestra works. He also offered his artistic perspective on the argument between traditionalism and modernism in the criticism and perception of cross-cultural music.<sup>10</sup>

For the compositional analysis and discussion of my original compositions, which is the cornerstone of this research, I chose to adopt the practical methods of musical analysis of Rayburn Wright's *Inside the Score* (1982), Richard Lawn's *Jazz Score and Analysis* (2018), and Bill Dobbins's *Composing and Arranging for the Contemporary Big Band* (2014), all of which are widely used in jazz composition studies. Such discussions will begin with general observations on my

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Two of my research interviews were approved by the Human Ethics Committee at Victoria University of Wellington. The Ethics Approval No. 27969 was issued on November 1, 2019.

compositional approaches, including artistic inspiration, melody, harmony, and rhythm, and will examine specific composition techniques, as well as providing a detailed account of the elements of Thai music that are infused, transformed, or otherwise present in the pieces.

#### **1.4 CREATIVE PROCESS**

My creative approach to this project, which I regard as an innovative stage, is also based on my own belief in philosophical pragmatism, which I have consistently applied in my teaching and performing. For a pragmatist, outcomes are examined through practical concerns and theoretical findings must be validated by their practical consequences. A pragmatist is also interested in putting concepts, theories, and techniques to the test to discover how well they perform in practice. As William James, a significant contributor to the development of pragmatism, says, "True ideas are those that we can assimilate, validate, corroborate, and verify. False ideas are those that we cannot."

As a result, my musical work, *Jazz Orchestra Portraits of Thailand*, is the product of the practical results that have been implemented into the four distinct processes, including:

- 1) selecting a Thai composition that contains musical features that are presumed to function in a jazz context;
- 2) transcribing such Thai recordings in order to gain a better understanding in terms of practical consideration, and then analyzing the transcripts from a jazz perspective;
- composing a preliminary or prototype work for a small ensemble using features of Thai music revealed through transcriptions and combined with jazz musical elements;
- 4) producing musical works for a jazz orchestra by expanding on these Thai music elements and assimilating new Thai music ideas that can be practically incorporated into the jazz composition process.

Furthermore, my intention in composing the music for this research project is clear: I would like to produce music that not only provides audiences with an experience of Thai sonorities, but also goes beyond traditional features of the jazz orchestra repertoire by offering

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Donald A. Hodges, A Concise Survey of Music Philosophy (New York: Routledge, 2017), 188.

contemporary jazz harmonies and incorporating other musical elements, such as alternative rock, R&B, and hip-hop, to reflect my artistic perspective and personal influences.

#### **1.5 THESIS STRUCTURE**

Unlike previous Thai musical hybridity projects or cross-cultural Thai musical composition studies<sup>12</sup>, the scope of this research project considers four regional Thai music practices (I consider Thai classical music to be one of these regional practices) instead of assuming the existence of a single "traditional music of Thailand." The reason behind this is that I would like to pay equal attention to an array of Thai music traditions, recreating the sound of these four regional Thai music practices as befits my thesis title, "Jazz Orchestra Portraits of Thailand." In addition, my study adopts a jazz composition perspective rather than serving as an ethnomusicological investigation. However, as suggested by Perico Sambeat in his interview with me, "The advice that I would like to give to someone who aspires to be a cross-cultural jazz composer is that he or she should be concerned in both [types of] music, and he or she should study both of them deeply, and the more deeply he or she knows, the better he or she does." Therefore, my attention in this study may go beyond the purely compositional viewpoints to investigate those aspects of wider culture and society that might help jazz composers to understand how these musicians genuinely practice their music.

This thesis is divided into seven chapters, with this introduction serving as Chapter 1. In Chapter 2, a literature review, I begin by examining a case study of previous cross-cultural music projects and artistic experiments to demonstrate how jazz can be combined with other musical elements: flamenco; Scandinavian music (Nordic tones); the traditional music of Bulgaria, Indian, Japan, and Indonesia; and Australian folk music. This is followed by a discussion of literature on cross-cultural composition studies in Thailand, with several examples of Thai composers' attitudes on cross-cultural music projects. I conclude this chapter by discussing a selection of publications by Thai ethnomusicologists and Western scholars,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> These previous works, such as the doctoral music composition of Jiradej Setabundhu, "Aspects of Thai Music and Compositional Techniques in Selected Works," (2001) Anothai Nitibhon's a PhD dissertation "Phra Lo: Music Drama for two dances, voices and chamber orchestra," (2008) Narong Prangcharoen's doctoral music composition, "Sattha for String, Piano and Percussion," (2010) and Karn Suriyasasin's doctoral music composition, "Prasan Duriya Samnaing for Wind Symphony" (2017).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Perico Sambeat, Personal interview, 28 July 2020.

namely David Morton, Terry E. Miller, Panya Roongruang, and John Garzoli, whose work has played a significant role in my research.

Chapter 3 begins with a discussion of the cultural cosmopolitanism practiced in the ancient Siamese Kingdom, which has resulted in the openness to foreign cultures witnessed in Thai music traditions. I also briefly discuss the formation of the modern Thai nation with reference to the work of Sujit Wongthes, David K. Wyatt, Chris Baker, and Pasuk Phongpaichit. Later, I embark upon a discussion of Thai classical music (dontri thai doem) with reference to the pitch production of Thai instruments and the characteristic melodic lines (which I refer to as "Thai melodic patterns") implemented in lyrical compositions, as well as texture, rhythm, meter, compositional techniques, and musical form. I situate these musical characteristics as vital to this project, as they lend themselves well to processes of hybridization of Thai classical music with jazz orchestra music. I then discuss two "prototype compositions" of mine, where I experiment with applying principles of Thai classical music to jazz material in preparation for composing my own larger-scale works. The first composition applies the augmentation and diminution techniques employed in thao compositions to John Coltrane's composition "Giant Steps." The second composition, "Nanapa," uses several Thai classical music composition techniques such as thang kro (tremolo), luk thao (sustained pitches), and luk lo luk kut (call and response).

Chapter 4 examines the traditional music of northeast Thailand (dontri isan nuea), beginning with a general description of the musical practice in this region, drawing on the work of Charoen Chaichonphairote. I then discuss the idiomatic instruments of dontri isan, such as khaen, phin, pong lang, and klong hang. I then consider the concept of lai (similar to the notion of a mode) as implemented in isan music, analyze the improvisation of khaen (bamboo mouth organ) performance performed by Sombat Simlah, and illustrate pragmatic approaches to combining the melodic lines of traditional music of northeast Thailand, including "Lai Lom Phat Phrao," "Lai Nok Sai Bin Kham Thung (ดายนกใชบินช้ามพุ่ง)," and "Lai Teay Khong," with contemporary jazz harmony.

In Chapter 5, which discusses the traditional music of southern Thailand, I trace the Thai Buddhist performance methods of *nora* music, in particular the *khuen hua pi* technique, and present my transcription of "Patcha," a traditional *nora* piece transcribed from performances by Umnad Nuniad, a prominent *nora* musician. I also provide a brief overview of Thai Muslim

rong ngeng performances, including their musical instruments, textures, rhythms and compositional repertories, before presenting two prototype compositions, which employ Western instruments to imitate the performance methods of musical instruments of southern Thailand.

Chapter 6 assesses the performance methods, such as *khap saw*, used in the traditional music of northern Thailand as detailed in research by Kumkom Pornprasit, and demonstrates the stylistic particularities of the *salo pin* ensemble. For a selection of musical instruments, I then provide a brief description of their performance practices, illustrated by transcriptions of performances of the *pi jum* (free-reed pipe), *salo* (three-stringed spike fiddle), and *sueng* (plucked, fretted lute). I also include my transcriptions of "Saw Dad Nan" and "Saw Pan Fai," two well-known compositions in repertoires of northern Thai traditional music. As in previous chapters, I offer one example of how the musical elements of northern Thailand can be incorporated with musical elements of jazz, in this case, in the context of a small jazz ensemble.

Chapter 7 provides a musical analysis of my creative works for this project, which consists of seven contemporary jazz orchestra pieces that illustrate the use of characteristics of Thai music traditions from three different regions, as well as from Thai classical music. Four of these seven compositions are influenced by Thai classical music: "Buang-Suang" ("Deity Worship"), a ritual and worship music paying respect to the music gods, the great teachers, and the three gems of Buddhism; "Phuen Ban" ("Village Song"), a conventional big band composition inspired by the character of Thai melodies; "Samniang Jin" ("Porcelain"), a contemporary jazz piece adopting a transcultural Thai-Chinese music process, and influenced by "Choet Jin (เชิด จีน)," a Thai classical music piece with a Chinese accent; and "Patchim" ("Epilogue"), farewell music inspired by two Thai classical works, "Tao Kin Pak Buk," and "Pra Artit Ching Duang." The other three compositions are inspired by the three regions of traditional music of this study. These include "Mekong" ("River of Souls"), a musical interpretation of northeast Thailand, consisting of several remarkable traditional melodies and significantly influenced by the idiomatic instruments of khaen and phin; "Singora" ("Dance of Kinnari"), a contemporary jazz orchestra piece, influenced by pi nora performances and illustrating the multicultural practice of south Thailand, where the musical cultures of Thai Buddhists (nora) and Muslims (rong ngeng) are exchanged; and "Wiang Haeng" ("The Northern Rhapsody"), a contemporary

jazz composition inspired by the performance practice of traditional northern Thai music and depicting the mountain ranges and valleys of the region.<sup>14</sup>

In Chapter 8, I conclude with a final critical analysis and account of my musical experiences while working on these musical hybridization projects. I reflect on the compositional experiences when distinct musical elements collided, describe the obstacles that I encountered, suggest which methods may be effective in further compositional processes, and finally offer several insights that may be of benefit to future jazz composers working on cross-cultural projects.

#### 1.6 KEY TERMS

In this written exegesis I employ the two English terms "cross-cultural" and "musical hybridization" (or "hybridity"). Though the term "cross-cultural" is primarily associated with psychology and social science, it has also been employed in musicology, in particular when referring to the crossover between Western and non-Western music. Jin-Ah Kim remarks on the term "cross-cultural" in her essay, "Cross-cultural Music Making: Concepts, Conditions, and Perspectives":<sup>15</sup>

Originally, it was used in empirical studies in order to compare different cultures based on statistics. Over the course of time, however, in particular since the 1980s, the term has been increasingly used in the sense of interaction and integration between culture.<sup>16</sup>

I find the term "cross-cultural" useful to some extent, though I understand that "cultures" are more flexible, elastic, and porous than the concept implies, especially in particular forms of jazz, which is indeed a multicultural music genre. However, after spending four years living in New Orleans, where many people agree that the origin of jazz is certainly associated with multiculturalism, I have found that it is critical to clearly identify jazz as an African American musical tradition.<sup>17</sup> For example, Nicholas Payton, a New Orleans native trumpeter underlined

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> See Appendix D for the seven scores of my original jazz orchestra compositions.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Jin-Ah Kim, "Cross-Cultural Music Making: Concepts, Conditions and Perspectives," *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 48, no.1 (2017), 20.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> See more Wynton Marsalis's interview, "for Wynton Marsalis, forgetting the roots of jazz is forgetting the history of race in America,"

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://wyntonmarsalis.org/news/entry/forgetting-the-roots-of-jazz-is-forgetting-the-history-of-race-in-america">https://wyntonmarsalis.org/news/entry/forgetting-the-roots-of-jazz-is-forgetting-the-history-of-race-in-america</a> (12 January 2018) and Eric Porter writing in the first chapter, Incorporation and Distinction in Jazz

the importance of African American aspects in jazz, claiming that "The most important part to me is the black part. And that's not to say who can and cannot play this music. But without addressing the community part and who created the music — that's wrong."<sup>18</sup>

Jazz researcher Lewis Porter also advises jazz scholars that, when conducting research on jazz, it is critical to view this music from a black perspective as much as possible.<sup>19</sup> My stance is that jazz is clearly African American music, and therefore, when I try to illustrate the process of making music that combines jazz (African American music traditions) with other musical elements, I still consider that the term "cross-cultural" may be useful for readers to understand how two distinct musical elements are integrated or to which degree those two musical elements are combined.

The origin of the word "hybridity" is the Latin *hybrida*, which identifies the offspring of a domestic sow and a wild boar. According to Jean-Paul Baldacchino, although this word was applied to celebrate the mixture of cultures and languages, the word hybridity also renders it problematic, in particular in the context of nineteenth-century racial discourse. However, in the age of globalization, as Baldacchino explains, this word commonly refers to "cultural differences," "cultural fusion," or "celebrat[ing] diversity." Although the word hybridity is not a perfect description of my work, and despite the potential negative connotations, it appears to better reflect the nature of my creative works than related words such as "cross-", "inter-", "trans-" or "fusion", because my works are indeed the product of the combination of more than two distinct musical cultures to establish a new musical language that sounds distinct from its constituent parts. Moreover, I consider this word to offer a "third space" for this project, a new dimension where my jazz composition knowledge encounters Thai music tradition practices in order to create new musical works that are autonomous in terms of both authenticity and authorship. Recognizing that both are imperfect concepts, I generally use

History and Jazz Historiography Jazz/Not Jazz: The Music and Its Boundaries, (University of California Press, 2012), 15-18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> The Mercury News, "Nicholas Payton speaks: about jazz and #BAM"

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://www.mercurynews.com/2013/10/03/nicholas-payton-speaks-about-jazz-and-bam/">https://www.mercurynews.com/2013/10/03/nicholas-payton-speaks-about-jazz-and-bam/</a> (12 August 2016).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup>Lewis Porter, "Some problems in Jazz Research," Black Music Journal 8, no.2 (1998), 199.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Marwan M. Kraidy, *Hybridity, or the Cultural Logic of Globalization*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005), 1-4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Jean Paul Baldacchino and Renato Carosone, "Neapolitan Music: Challenging Paradigms of Hybridity in the Mediterranean," *Mediterranean Studies* 26, no. 1 (2018), 54-79.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> See, Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*. (London: Routledge, 1994).

"cross-cultural" when referring to jazz compositions that provide a sense of interaction or integration of distinct cultures, and "musical hybridization" or "hybridity" to my original works.

Another potentially confusing term is "traditional music of Thailand" or "traditional Thai music," which some jazz musicians may consider to be "Thai classical music" (dontri thai doem), primarily practiced in the center of Thailand. For those interested in jazz approaching my work, I hope to expand their understanding of Thai traditional music, to better understand the main traditional practices in Thailand, in their typical categorization into four regions (dontri si pak outfine), described previously. In fact, even though English-language studies of Thai classical music research are numerous, studies of regional traditional Thai music, in particular the study of the traditional music of southern Thailand, where nora and rong ngeng are practiced, are lacking. Consequently, by contributing this research, I hope that the "other traditional Thai music," which is practiced outside the area of the center of Thailand will draw more attention from music researchers in the future.<sup>23</sup>

#### 1.7 PERSONAL STATEMENT

Because my works are directly associated with Thai musical practices, I would like to provide a personal statement regarding *Kwarm pen Thai* (Thainess). Indeed, the perception of Thainess and Thai identity are ambiguous depending on the experiences and value system of individual artists. However, John Garzoli emphasizes the importance of such a concept which he explained that "Thai musicians regard this concept (Thainess) as being central to the creation and evaluation of their work" and "Thai musicians generally had clear views about what is 'real Thai' and what was not." Therefore, it is also important to me to present my personal attitude toward the interpretation of my works, and state my position on Thai music traditions.

As a Thai student who grew up in a modern society in Bangkok, I learned the concept of Thai identity through the standard Thai school curriculum, which is to some degree associated with nationalism.<sup>25</sup> However, since I have spent more time studying outside these standard

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Aside from these four groups of musical traditions, there are several ethnic minority music practices in Thailand, such as Karen, Hmong, Akha, and Lawa musical cultures, which also require further research.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> John Garzoli, "Intonational, Idiomatic, and Historical Factors That Shape Contemporary Thai Fusion Music," PhD diss., Monash University (2014), 30-31.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup>See, David Wyatt's chapter "The Rise of Elite Nationalism", in 210-222. David K. Wyatt, *Thailand: A Short History*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

curriculum contexts, and evaluated Thai cultures from my empirical observations, my perspective on *Kwarm pen Thai* (Thainess) has started to embrace the concept of multiculturalism. What makes Thai cultures fascinating to me is that they are results of the practice of cultural diversity which can be witnessed both in the past and in present-day Thailand. As I have embraced this diversity more deeply, multiculturalism is also reflected in my works, in which I try to demonstrate the influences on my creativity of traditions beyond Thai music and jazz, such as Latin American music, alternative rock, and hip-hop.

Moreover, I would like to highlight that the creative works of this project should not be interpreted as a work of nationalism, as in examples where a Thai person tries to promote Thai culture. I have decided to conduct this research because, regardless of my nationality, I have been inspired by other types of traditional music, in particular, in the southeast Asian region. Additionally, I assume that attempting to determine the border of such traditional music practices by using a modern concept of national borders would be a major mistake, as I shall highlight how cultural diversity influenced Thai music tradition's musical practices in Chapter 3. To me, it seemed logical, in composing hybrid jazz I consider to be global, to start with Thai musical traditions, since I am able to draw on Thai musical knowledge written in Thai or shared verbally in Thai. I am also able to find suitable Thai musicians' recordings that can serve as compelling resources for future jazz compositions (by me and other jazz composers), even as I have spent most of my time conducting this research in Wellington, New Zealand. In addition, I believe that we do not need to be native-born to legitimately learn traditional music. Every kind of musical knowledge, indeed, requires significant time and effort to master. Yet, in my opinion, the most important thing we need to do is clearly comprehend such musical knowledge and approach it ethically with consideration of our positionalities.

That being said, I would like to clarify my position as "an outsider" to Thai music traditions. Even though I am Thai and grew up in Thailand, I neither had opportunities to attend any ritual ceremonies (*wai khru*)<sup>26</sup> nor have a family heritage in Thai music. In addition, the almost nine years I have spent outside Thailand (five in the USA and nearly four in New Zealand) have changed how I think about Thai cultures. Even if I consider myself an "outsider" to Thai music traditions, this does not necessarily imply that I am somehow beyond the social-cultural boundaries of Thai practices, as I was nurtured in a middle-class Thai household with Thai

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> A *wai khru* is a ceremony of paying homage and respect to music teacher. The ceremonies intend to honor teachers while is allow pupils to ask for their teacher's blessing. See Chapter 3, in the sacred ceremonies section.

customs. I also acknowledge that what I see as intellectual Thai knowledge has emerged from the practice of multiculturalism in Thailand. As a result, I would like to stress that this study should not be misinterpreted as having been produced by someone working entirely outside of their own culture, which might have connotations of cultural exploitation and colonialism. I would like also to underline that while I employ Western music notation to describe Thai musical practices from a jazz standpoint, I have no intention of overlooking or denigrating Thai musical knowledge. My purpose is clear: I employ this method to transfer Thai music practices into a musical language accessible to jazz practitioners. As a consequence, this is the work of a modern Thai striving to develop his personal identity by reconciling his ancestor's legacy with his own beliefs. In addition, my personal approach to these musical hybridizations is that of a contemporary artist working in Thai music traditions and their innovative potential rather than an artist seeking to adopt a purist or traditional perspective. Furthermore, my creative work should be understood as generated from the perspective of a jazz composer seeking new ways to create music for a jazz orchestra and exploring Thai musical elements to incorporate into his jazz compositions.

Finally, I would like to mention that the overriding concern when making music for this project is "to be respectful"; as I discovered, the concept of obedience and discipline is considered a core value of Thai music traditions. In addition, I would like to pay my respects to Thai music teachers who create and develop the knowledge of these styles of music, and to inform those who continue to uphold Thai music traditions that my creative works constitute a contemporary music project produced by a jazz musician genuinely fascinated by Thai music traditions. The aim of this work is to introduce the aspects of Thai music into another branch in the tree of jazz, as Duke Ellington put it, adding Thai music traditions, through my knowledge of jazz composition and my individual artistic expression, to the many languages that characterize jazz today. Even after completing this project, I still believe that there is much that I can learn from Thai musical traditions, and much that can be applied to my jazz composition process.

### Chapter 2

# Cross-cultural Perspectives in Jazz: A Review of Related Literature

I think there is a different flavor of jazz in different countries... It is very interesting, because there is difference, the differences are nice, because there are different flavors for the audience.<sup>27</sup>

Henri Texier

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is an overview of cross-cultural jazz composition, and is divided into four sections. In the first section, a review of cross-cultural jazz orchestra literature, I explore several books, essays and dissertations that examine the amalgamation of jazz and other musical elements, namely, flamenco, Scandinavian music (the so-called "Nordic tone"), the traditional music of Bulgaria, and musical traditions of India and Australia. Next, I approach case studies of cross-cultural jazz orchestra projects in Asia, discussing and analyzing two prominent projects—the works of the Japanese musicians and composer Toshiko Akiyoshi and the Indonesian group Krakatau. In the third section, which covers literature on cross-cultural composition studies in Thailand, I discuss research that focusses on cross-cultural processes in Thailand from the appearance of Catholic missionaries during the Ayutthaya period (1350 to 1767) until the Thai

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Stuart Nicholson, Jazz and Culture in a Global Age, 101.

Cultural Revolution during the Phibulsongkhram regime. I also provide a brief observation of previous works of prominent Thai classical composers and well-known recent Thai fusion bands that have had an impact on the Thai cross-cultural music scenes. In the final section—which relates to the literature on Thai music studies—I demonstrate how the significant ethnomusicological research in traditional music in Thailand can be beneficial to jazz composers.

### 2.2 A REVIEW OF CROSS-CULTURAL JAZZ ORCHESTRA LITERATURE

The musical practices of Andalusians, principally flamenco, have long attracted the attention of jazz performers, composers, and researchers. For example, in Peter Manuel's 2016 essay "Flamenco Jazz: An Analytical Study," the author provides a comprehensive insight into how the two distinct musical styles have been combined. In this study, Manuel evaluates the artistic attitudes and works from the early stages of Paco de Lucía's musical hybrids in the 1970s, and provides observations on several of Chick Corea's compositions and the artistic movement of flamenco jazz in the 1990s. In discussions of this movement, he concentrates on pianist and composer Chano Domínguez, and describes him as responsible for "the true flowering of Flamenco jazz" in his successful adaptation of the bulerías, a flamenco rhythm, into the blues, as well as in his use of jazz harmonies to accompany malagueña, a traditional singing style. Manuel then extensively demonstrates the compatible and incompatible concepts between jazz and flamenco, comparing the musical forms and harmonic construction of the styles with one another. In addition, Manuel provides a comprehensive analysis of a solo by pianist Alex Conde, a prominent flamenco jazz artist. This improvisation illustrates the use of idiosyncratic jazz and flamenco elements as well as the application of the bulería rhythm over the chordal resources of the Phrygian mode.

Stephanie Stein Crease explores the significance of using a Spanish-influenced style in a jazz orchestra album in her discussion of Miles Davis and Gil Evans's *Sketches of Spain* (1960). <sup>29</sup> Crease discusses the album's musical adaptation of *Saeta* (the religious music of Andalusians) and its musical interpretation of *Soleá* (a traditional flamenco form). These two musical elements significantly influenced the creation of two compositions from *Sketches of Spain*,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Peter Manuel, "Flamenco Jazz: An Analytical Study," *Journal of Jazz Studies* 1, no.2 (2016), 29-35.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Stephanie Stein Crease, Gil Evans: Out of the Cool: His Life and Music (Chicago Review Press, 2003)

namely, "Saeta," and "Soleá." Crease then highlights a statement by Miles Davis regarding his initial experience working with Spanish influences, which required musical expressions similar to singing as well as performance techniques quite disparate from those typical of jazz. In Davis's words:

Now that was the hardest thing for me to do on *Sketches of Spain*. To play the parts on the trumpet where someone was supposed to be singing, especially when it was ad-libbed, like most of the time... After we finished working on *Sketches of Spain*, I didn't have nothing inside of me. I was drained of all emotion and I didn't want to hear that music after I got through playing all that hard shit.<sup>30</sup>

Sergio Pamies Rodriguez's dissertation on flamenco jazz provides further insight on this particular cross-cultural music. He explores the historical integration of these two musical styles—despite the lack of agreement between critics and journalists in classifying this particular genre from an anthropological perspective.<sup>31</sup> In Rodriguez's words, "while critics and journalists have articulated some of their critiques according to the expectations of the [genre] label instead of the quality of the music, the musicians do not seem to give any importance to the label itself." Rodriguez's research also shares Chick Corea's commentary on descriptions of this crossover music:

The flamenco goes this way, and the jazz goes this way, but then, later they meet. Now in the world they meet. When me and Paco meet, we play music—I don't know what you call it. People call it flamenco jazz... but it's definitely some of my favorite ways to make music.<sup>33</sup>

In his musical analytic approach, Rodriguez illustrates successful cases in which the two musical elements have been synthesized. For example, he discusses the adaptation of bebop language in the improvisations of Jorge Pardo—a Spanish flute and saxophone player—and the utilization of flamenco guitar approaches, such as *alzapúa* and *picados* which Chick Corea incorporated for his solo on "Touchstone" (1982) from his album of the same name. Rodriguez also examines the work of Pedro Iturralde, a well-known Spanish saxophonist. He explains Iturrald's creative process as similar to Walter Bishop Jr.'s concept, comparable to my research methodology as described earlier. To describe Iturralde's compositional process, Rodriguez states:

Iturralde certainly took elements from Davis and Coltrane's famous recordings and demonstrated that another kind of jazz was possible and showed what would make this new music different. He used the flamenco rhythmic elements of its styles (palos), the flamenco melodic gestures, and the flamenco

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Quoted in ibid., 210.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Sergio Pamies Rodriguez, "The Controversial Identity of Flamenco Jazz: A New Historical and Analytical Approach," DMA diss., University of North Texas (2016).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Ibid., 104.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Quoted in ibid., 115.

harmonic possibilities. He combined of all of them in a sophisticated and integrated hybridization with jazz performance practices at the highest level... Iturralde attempted to accomplish all of the above, introducing more elements from flamenco than any of his predecessors.<sup>34</sup>

Importantly, Rodriguez highlights several jazz orchestra projects that contain flamenco elements. These compositions and albums include *Jazzpaña* (1993) by Vince Mendoza and Arif Mardin (from the WDR Big Band in Cologne), *Victoria Suite* (2010) by Chano Domínguez and Wynton Marsalis with the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, *Flamenco Big Band* by Perico Sambeat (2009), and *Bulería, Soleá y Rumba* (2004) by Maria Schneider. He argues that the aesthetics of flamenco jazz should not be overlooked in jazz education and that this cross-cultural music genre has the potential to inspire other international jazz musicians to broaden jazz's cultural diversity.<sup>35</sup>

The prominent jazz author and critic Stuart Nicholson has made a significant contribution to research on cultural diversity in jazz, from historical analyses to discussions of present-day musical practices. One of his underlying concepts is that jazz spread by a process of cultural diffusion in what he calls "the Globalization of Jazz." His books and essays—including *Is Jazz Dead? Or Has It Moved to a New Address?* (2005), *Jazz and Culture in a Global Age* (2005), and "Jazz in the Global Village" (Jazz Musicological Symposium, University of Music and Dramatic Arts, Graz, Austria, 2009)—are exemplary studies of jazz in cross-cultural forms, and of jazz intersecting with local identities around the world. For example, in his book chapter "Fusion and Crossovers" in *The Cambridge Companion to Jazz*, Nicholson discusses cross-cultural compositions that contain the elements of Swedish traditional music that have been integrated with musical vocabulary of jazz. Nicholson's prominent examples of crossover compositions consist of the application of bebop influences and swing rhythm to Swedish-style melodies in the 1950s works of Swedish saxophonist Lars Gullin: "Sov Du Lilla Vide Ung" (1952), "Fedja" (1956), and "Ma" (1956). Additionally, he notes the recordings of Jan Johansson (a pianist),

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Ibid., 50.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 105.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> In addition to Nicholson's work, recent jazz studies literature related to the concept of the globalization of jazz includes Jazz Planet (2003) edited by E. Taylor Atkins, Jazz Diaspora: Music and Globalization (2019) by Bruce Johnson, Jazz Cosmopolitanism in Accra: Five Musical Years in Ghana (2012) by Steven Feld, Jazz Worlds/World Jazz (2016) edited by Philp Bohlman and Goffredo Plastino, and Yoshiomi Saito's book The Global Politics of Jazz in the Twentieth Century: Cultural Diplomacy and "American Music." (2019)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Stuart Nicholson, "Fusion and Crossover," *The Cambridge Companion to Jazz*, ed. Mervyn Cooke and David Horn, (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 217-252.

which contain a mix of standard jazz repertoires with Swedish folk songs such as, "De Salde Sina Hemman," which generated great interest among international jazz audiences.

Nicholson also explicitly describes the artistic rendition of Scandinavian musicians' identities in jazz, which he refers to as "the Nordic Tone." One of the prominent jazz performers to play a crucial role in this artistic movement was Jan Garbarek, a Norwegian jazz saxophonist. Inspired by folk music of Scandinavia and by his own personal interpretations of the dramatic changes in season and natural landscape in Scandinavia, Garbarek evoked the sound of tranquility—which contained strong Nordic musical roots—in his improvisations. According to Nicholson, the music in Garbarek's *Dis* (1977) also witnessed the use of a wind harp to describe the sound of the Scandinavian landscape, which Garbarek then intermingled with his jazz music vocabulary. Garbarek also provided an interesting statement on blending his musical heritage and jazz influences:

You can apply any personal input coming from whatever part of the world, and it's possible to find a way that will work in the jazz idiom. We have players from any part of the world now doing their own, shall we say, native version. They find their own direction, influenced by their own culture, but [are] still using the very strong basic elements of jazz.<sup>38</sup>

Don Ellis's work provides numerous examples of influence from a wide range of composers and traditions. Many of his jazz orchestra compositions were significantly infused with musical elements from diverse places, including musical traditions from India, Bulgaria, and Turkey. In her 2007 essay "Diversifying the Groove: Bulgarian Folk Meets the Jazz idiom," Claire Levy explains the strong relationship between Ellis and Milcho Leviev, a Bulgarian jazz pianist who assisted Ellis in refining and transposing elements from Bulgarian rural music traditions into jazz orchestra music. In her essay, Levy also describes the process of making "Bulgarian Bulge," a jazz orchestra composition in 33/16 inspired by "Sadovsko Horo," a Bulgarian dance. Aside from incorporating additive meters of Bulgarian music into jazz orchestra music, Don Ellis also—according to Sean Felson's doctoral dissertation on Ellis's rhythmic approach—extensively researched Hindustani music to find alternative approaches to rhythmic concepts in jazz. For example, Ellis explains "I learned from *Haribar Rao* how to superimpose complicated rhythmic patterns on one another, ways of counting to be able to keep my place

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup>Quoted in ibid., 242–243.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Sean Felson, "The Exotic Rhythm of Don Ellis," PhD Diss., Johns Hopkins University (2002).

in a given cycle no matter how long or involved, and how to arrive at new rhythmic ideas and the proper ways of working these out and practicing them."<sup>40</sup>

It was not until Ellis's project the Hindustani Jazz Sextet (1965), and his jazz orchestra album *Electric Bath* (1967), that the use of Indian musical elements—such as *tala, raga, matra, boles,* and *tihai*—and Indian instruments—such as *sitar, tabla, tamboura*, and *dholak*—were successfully integrated into his compositions, according to Gary Fienberg's dissertation on Ellis.<sup>41</sup> Fienberg also mentions the use of two *ragas* in Ellis's piece "Synthesis" and states how Ellis's conceptual approach—in which the composer sought to compose music that was purely Indian—ironically falls entirely into the bounds of Western musical concepts (or at most, a combination of elements of both).<sup>42</sup>

The jazz orchestra album by Australian composer and saxophonist Jeremy Rose, *Iron in the Blood: Music Inspired by Robert Hughes' the Fatal Shore* (2014), demonstrates crossover between musical genres including, jazz, Australian convict music, Greek folk music, and south Indian classical music (Carnatic). Additionally, in his doctoral thesis on the Sydney Jazz Scene, Rose provides a comprehensive investigation into what he considers the authenticity of the "Australian sound" through an intensive discussion of several Australian and American jazz writers and critics, among them the prominent Australian jazz scholars Bruce Johnson and John Whiteoak.<sup>43</sup> In addition, Rose interviews multiple prominent Australian jazz performers and university lecturers such as saxophonist Sandy Evans, trumpet player Phillip Slater, and drummer Simon Barker, focusing on their assessments of the aesthetics of Australian jazz performance and improvisation as well as on their musical experiences within the Sydney jazz scene.

In his thesis, Rose also discusses the jazz orchestra composition he wrote for his album *The Fatal Shore*. The composition narrates the story of Australian convicts—starting from imprisonment in labor camps to freedom—by using a musical interpretation of Australian's convict songs combined with jazz harmonies, blues-oriented pitch bending, and modal jazz. Rose also integrates additional musical elements that he refers to as "non-Western material,"

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Gary Andrew Fienberg, "It doesn't have to be Sanctified to Swing: A Biography of Don Ellis," PhD Diss., University of Pittsburgh (2004).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Ibid., 145–146.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Jeremy Rose, "Deeper Shade of Blue: A Case Study of Five Compositions Informed by Ethno-musicological Investigation of the Sydney Jazz Scene," PhD diss., University of Sydney (2015), 15-16.

such as the *Mirkov čoček*, a Greek folk melody, and Indian *melas* (traditional scales). Other compositional techniques mentioned in Rose's compositional analysis chapter include the use of the harpsichord to depict the movement of convicts from Georgian England to Australian labor camps, the use of aleatoric methods, in which he gives the players a pitch collection or a tone row and lets them choose a sound from their own decisions, and the utilization of "number diamonds," a technique developed by Greg Sheehan, an Australian composer. To apply Sheehan's compositional technique, Rose created a number sequence in which the last number of a series is moved up one step, and backward in the series, to build new variations. In addition, Rose also states in his research that the compositions in this album were partly influenced by Wynton Marsalis's oratorio for jazz orchestra and vocalists *Blood on the Fields* (1997), which Rose suggests may have also been motivated by Robert Hughes' book, *The Fatal Shore*.

# 2.3 A CASE STUDY OF CROSS-CULTURAL JAZZ PROJECTS IN ASIA

"Tm trying to draw from my heritage and enrich the jazz tradition without changing it. I'm putting into jazz, not just taking out" said Japanese American jazz pianist and composer Toshiko Akiyoshi. In his essay on Akiyoshi, Kevin Fellezs provides her biography and explicitly illustrates her artistic opinions on her cross-cultural compositions. Beginning with a discussion of Akiyoshi's original compositions, "Long Yellow Road" (1961), "Kogun" (1974), "Village" (1976), and "Deracinated Flower" (1977), Fellezs illustrates the initial processes evident in Akiyoshi's works, in which she blends Japanese aesthetics with musical elements of jazz, such as Brazilian samba rhythms, swing, and Afro-Cuban rhythms.

Fellezs's essay then demonstrates Akiyoshi's use of traditional Japanese instruments in her music between 1970 and 1980, including the *tsuzumi* (hand drum), *shakuhachi* (a bamboo recorder), *hyōshigi* (wood clap), and *koto* (a zither-type instrument). The author also provides insight into Akiyoshi's personal perspectives on using traditional instruments in jazz orchestra music, with the composer explaining: "If you are infusing something into the music, a different element, it should become richer—that's the important part. If you infuse an element and it

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> See ibid., 99, for a detailed description of number diamonds.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 72-73.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Kevin Fellezs, "Deracinated Flower: Toshiko Akiyoshi's "Trace in Jazz History," *Jazz Perspectives* 4 no.1 (2010), 35.

just remains something else, that's not what I'm trying to do."<sup>47</sup> As a consequence, Akiyoshi began to use a flute to interpret the sound of the *shakuhachi* rather than employing the actual traditional instrument in her compositional processes; this musical adaptation was successfully performed in several instances by Lew Tabackin—the co-leader of a big band with Akiyoshi.

Akiyoshi's interpretation of other Japanese musical elements such as *gagaku* (imperial court music) and *noh* (a Japanese theatre tradition) can also be observed in "Kogun" and "Children of the Universe" (1992)—as noted in both Fellezs's writing and Anthony Brown's interview of Akiyoshi as part of the Smithsonian Jazz Oral History Program in 2008. In this interview, Akiyoshi also shares how she began to utilize trumpets to interpret the sound of *gagaku* performances—a process that required a distinct bending technique. Regarding the trumpet players' first attempts to interpret the sound of *gagaku*, Akiyoshi noted, "[The] first time we rehearsed, the trumpet players were saying, 'we can't bend the notes.' I said, 'oh yes you can, because I've seen Japanese trumpet players do it, so if [the] Japanese can do it, you can do it'."

David W. Stowe offers additional perspectives on Akiyoshi's large-scale compositions. Two of her multi-movement suites, *Minamata* (1976) and *Kourakan Suite* (1992), witness the combination of *utai* (a specific *noh* musical technique) with the bebop language and collective improvisation. In this composition, Akiyoshi employed several musical elements that come from "non-Japanese traditions." These musical elements include the adaptation of an Arabic melody during the introduction in 6/4 meter and the use of Tibetan instruments—specifically, the *gsil snyan* (a pair of large cymbals) and the *dung chen* (long metal trumpets)—which have been integrated with a shuffle feel and harmonies in a style reminiscent of Duke Ellington's music. Akiyoshi also commented on the practice of pluralism within this composition, explaining, "we found out that migrations to Japan had come not only from Korea and China but also from far away, from the Near East, the silk roads... and this showed we have so many different people... not really Japanese, not really American, and not really Near Eastern." 50

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Anthony Brown, "Toshiko Akiyoshi NEA Jazz Master 2007", the Smithsonian Jazz Oral History Program, <a href="https://amhistory.si.edu/jazz/Akiyoshi-Toshiko/Toshiko\_Akiyoshi\_Transcript.pdf">https://amhistory.si.edu/jazz/Akiyoshi-Toshiko/Toshiko/Toshiko/Akiyoshi-Transcript.pdf</a> (29 June 2008).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> David W. Stowe, "Jazz that Eats Rice: Toshiko Akiyoshi's Roots Music," In the book *Afro-Asian Encounters: Culture, History, Politics*, ed. Raphael-Hernandez and Shannon Steen, (New York: NYU Press, 2006), 277-294. <sup>50</sup> Ibid., 290.

Ethnomusicologists David Harnish and Jeremy Wallach discuss what they call "gamelan-inspired jazz" in the music of Krakatau, a prominent cross-cultural jazz ensemble from West Java, Indonesia. In their article, the authors conduct comprehensive musical analyses of two of the ensemble's pieces—"Pukul Pitu" and "Egrang Funk"—and describe the artistic and musical philosophies of Dwiki Dharmawa, the band's leader, and Pra Gudidharama, one of the co-founders. In their musical analyses, the authors highlight the group's hybrid musical processes, which include the deployment of local tunings for Western instruments to imitate the idioms of traditional Sundanese instruments, the use of *bonang*, a Javanese gong chime, to perform in particular musical contexts that are not synonymous with the instrument, and the application of improvisations by traditional instruments—such as the *bonang*, *rebab*, *suling*, and *tarompet*—over Western harmonic chord progressions.

In terms of Krakatau's artistic process, the authors highlight that Krakatau's music, according to Dharmawan, is the result of "acculturation" (akulturasi) between musicians from two different backgrounds: those who studied Western music and those who studied karawitan gamelan (the science or intricacy of the gamelan). However, Dharmawan also explicitly states in Harnish and Wallach's article that Krakatau does not perform "traditional music," which may contribute to the restriction of certain performance techniques. Interestingly, Harnish and Wallach also point out how Krakatau's contemporary approach sets the group apart from other gamelan jazz ensembles:

Krakatau did fusion in reverse. While many of the American artists the Indonesian group emulates blended pop elements into their work to gain greater commercial appeal, the musicians of Krakatau have sacrificed popularity by incorporating more traditional music into their established pop-jazz sound.<sup>52</sup>

# 2.4 A SURVEY OF CROSS-CULTURAL COMPOSITION STUDIES IN THAILAND

Historical documents suggest that the initial cross-cultural blend of traditional Thai music and music from Europe most likely occurred after the appearance of Catholic missionaries in the sixteenth century during the Ayutthaya period (1350–1767). Nathinee Chucherdwatanasak

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 129.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> David Harnish and Jeremy Wallach, "Dance to Your Roots': Genre Fusion in the Music of Indonesia's Krakatau," *Asian Music* 44, no.2 (2013), 120-124.

points to the work of Jittapim Yamprai, "Music in Roman Catholic Mass of Thailand," which explains that early cross-cultural compositions in Thailand seem to have possibly contained a combination of reciting tones, similar to psalmodic plainchant, intermingled with the Thai vernacular. Pamala Moro also mentions the historical evidence of contact between European visitors—in particular, Portuguese envoys and French missionaries—and locals. The most important musical evidence Moro presents is a travel document written in 1687 by French missionary Simon de la Loubere. In this document, de la Loubere describes the structure of a Thai two-headed drum shaped like a small barrel and mentions Thai vocal music. In addition, de la Loubere's chronicle includes his attempt to transcribe what he calls a Siamese melody into Western notation. This transcription is possibly the first manuscript of Thai music notated by a Western explorer, and a portion of this melody ended up as one of several sources of the Thai royal anthem, which was composed in the late nineteenth century.

Jittapim Yamprai demonstrates the initial influences of cross-cultural hybrids between jazz and traditional Thai music—a widespread phenomenon due to the influence of Pradit Sukhum (1904–1967), a multi-instrumentalist who was credited with forming the first Thai-jazz ensemble during the 1930s.<sup>57</sup> Yamprai's research also refers to Eua Sunthornsana, a violinist, singer, and composer who was one of Pradit Sukhum's pupils and a founder of the Suntaraporn Band, which would become one of the primary groups in the Thai urban music scene in the 1940s and 1950s, and would later disseminate a new type of cross-cultural collaboration in the form of a new musical genre known as *Phleng Luk Krung* (a type of Thai popular music that promoted the urban lifestyle).<sup>58</sup> In addition, Sunthornsana also played a crucial role in establishing one of the prominent Thai cross-cultural ensembles with M.L. Krab Koonchorn and Pum Bapuyavat called the Snagkhet Samphan ensemble, whose utilization of the Thai *Mahori* ensemble (string ensemble) and traditional Thai repertoires was integrated into

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> Nathinee Chucherdwatanasak, "Narong Prangcharoen and Thai cross-cultural fusion in contemporary composition," Master's thesis, University of Missouri- Kansas City (2014), 57.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Pamela Moro Myers, "Thai music and Musicians in contemporary Bangkok," PhD diss., University of California, 1993.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> Also, see more, "Thai music in the Ayutthaya period from foreigner's records," <u>Sinlapa Watthanatham</u> magazine, < <a href="https://www.silpa-mag.com/history/article-46096">https://www.silpa-mag.com/history/article-46096</a> (3 June 2021).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> Moro, "Thai music and Musicians in contemporary Bangkok," 39-40.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Yamprai, "The Establishment of Western Music in Thailand," 70. Also see, Poonpit Amatayakul, "History and works of Pradit Sukhum Vol.82," *Thai Music in the Past Sirindhorn Music* 

Library, <a href="https://sirindhornmusiclibrary.li.mahidol.ac.th/thai">https://sirindhornmusiclibrary.li.mahidol.ac.th/thai</a> contemporary mu/plengthaisakol-82/> (n.d.).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> Terry E. Miller has also described *Phleng Luk Krung* as a 'city-people' song, a type of song that uses both classical Thai and newly-composed melodies accompanied by Western instruments. See Terry E. Miller and Sean Williams, *The Garland Handbook of Southeast Asian Music* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 180–181.

a big band setting.<sup>59</sup> According to Kannaphon Yothinchatchawan, the Snagkhet Samphan ensemble used four different kinds of cross-cultural compositions: 1) vocal music with Thai classical music melody and lyrics, 2) instrumental music with Thai melody, 3) vocal music with Thai classical melody but new lyrics, and 4) new compositions inspired by Thai melodies.<sup>60</sup>

Deborah Wong also points out that the musical influence of cross-cultural compositions in Thai music became increasingly prominent after the Siamese Revolution of 1932. 61 She notes how the revolution initiated the Westernization of Thailand-known as the Thai Cultural Revolution—which lasted from 1938 to 1942, during the Phibulsongkhram regime. She also emphasizes that the decrees of the Cultural Revolution under Phibulsongkhram's government had a dramatic effect on the Thai music scene. Performances of traditional Thai music tended to be overlooked, and the demand for Western ensembles to accompany Western dance styles increased significantly.<sup>62</sup> As a result, cross-cultural musical compositions that adopted the characteristics of traditional Thai music and Western harmonies and rhythms—such as swing, foxtrots, and ballads-flourished and were disseminated to the Thai middle class; this music became widespread in many ballrooms in Bangkok. As mentioned earlier, one prominent musical ensemble was also Eua Sunthornsana's band, Suntaraporn—the ensemble of the Thai Public Relations Department. Terry E. Miller also discusses a related Thai performance style called ramwong mattrathan<sup>63</sup> which was a result of the Cultural Revolution. He describes ramwong mattrathan performance as "a circular social dance, using Thai-derived gestures of the hands, accompanied by Westernized Thai music."64

John Garzoli's writings have also approached cross-cultural Thai compositional perspectives.<sup>65</sup> His 2014 article on Thai fusion music highlights the Thai artistic attitudes towards the degree of cross-cultural pollination—for example, Thai vs. Western perspectives—providing an extensive discussion of the Thai tuning system and its dissimilarity to equal temperament, and

<sup>63</sup> To find an example of *Ramwong* music, please see the Suntaraporn band's album *Ramwong Matratarn*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> See, Poonpit Amatayakul, "Phleng Snagkhet Samphan Vol.152" *Thai Music in the Past Sirindhorn Music Library* <a href="https://sirindhornmusiclibrary.li.mahidol.ac.th/thai\_contemporary\_mu/plengthaisakol-152/">https://sirindhornmusiclibrary.li.mahidol.ac.th/thai\_contemporary\_mu/plengthaisakol-152/</a> (n.d.).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> As cited in Anant Narkkong, *Thai Contemporary Music Bands and Works in present Thai society* (the Office of Contemporary Art and Culture, Ministry of Culture, 2013), 32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> Deborah Wong, Sounding the center: History and Aesthetic in Thai Buddhist Performance, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001)

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 189-191.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup>. Miller and Williams. The Garland Handbook of Southeast Asian Music, 180.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>65</sup> Other works of John Garzoli on a cross-cultural Thai compositional perspective include "Melody in the Performance of Thai Classical Music on Non-Fixed-Pitch Instrument (2020)", "Improvisation, *Thang*, and Thai Musical Structure", co-wrote with Bussakorn Binson (2018), "Competing Epistemologies of Tuning, Intonation, Mawlam, and Jazz," (2018) —and "Phleng Thai Doem and the myth of 7-tet: The questionable origins of the theory of Thai tuning" (2016).

examining a case study of several contemporary cross-cultural music ensembles, which Garzioli refers to as "fusion bands." These bands include Tewan Novel Jazz, Boy Thai, Khun In Off Beat Siam, and Korphai, all of whom predominantly employ Thai instruments to play the melodic parts while using Western instruments to produce accompanying textures. For example, in the case of the Khun In Off Beat Siam ensemble, Garzoli illustrates the group's adaptation of contemporary rhythms from styles such as rock and funk, as well as their use of functional Western music harmonies with the piano, guitar, and bass. They use these harmonies to accompany the Thai melodies—such as "Homrong Jin Dok Mai," which is performed by the *ranad ek* (a Thai xylophone)—and Thai instrumental idioms, including the *ti kep*<sup>67</sup> and *rud*<sup>8</sup> techniques in *thang ranat* and contribute to the distinctly Thai sound.

Garzoli also discusses Fong Namm, one of the prominent cross-cultural ensembles in Thailand. He discusses the compositional and performance approaches of Bruce Gaston, a cofounder of the group, and an American composer who studied with a highly respected traditional Thai musician and a national artist, Bunyong Ketkhong. Unlike other fusion bands from the same period, the compositional approaches of Fong Namm tend to follow the logical processes of Thai composition and performance. The group has referred to this approach as putting "Thai musical principles over Western [ones]" and the "Thai way of doing things rather than the Western [way]." As a consequence, the core music of Fong Namm has primarily comprised elements of Thai music surrounded by Western musical elements. Garzoli analyses three of Fong Namm's compositions—"Ahnu," "Chao Phraya Concerto," and "Rabam Chao Rai"—highlighting their adaptation of Thai heterophonic music textures, Thai musical forms, the Thai classical music extended form called *thao*, and their imitation of Thai instrumental idioms by Western instruments—indicating the band's ability to integrate their sound with the complexity of contemporary Western compositional approaches.

Similar to the experimental compositional approaches employed by Bruce Gaston are the works of Thai composer, Jiradej Setabundhu. In his PhD dissertation, Setabundhu discusses his cross-cultural integration of contemporary Western classical compositional approaches into

<sup>66</sup> Garzoli, Intonational, Idiomatic, and Historical Factors That Shape Contemporary Thai Fusion Music, 167-171.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> An instrumental technique that uses a set of eighth notes to construct melodic lines depending on the original composition's target pitches.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> A single melodic pitch tremolo.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> Also Romanized as Boonyong Ketkhong.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> Ibid., 249.

Thai compositions.<sup>71</sup> He provides a comprehensive commentary on four of his original compositions: "Thousand Lights," "Façade," "In Smoky Speculation," and "Eine schöne Zeit war es." Starting with "Thousand Lights," Setabundhu describes a compositional process that he refers to as an adaptation of "Thai surface texture," in which he constructs a Thai luk khong (principal melody), combining it with the Western compositional techniques of theme and variation. Thereafter, Setabundhu explains how in "Façade," and "In Smoky Speculation," he uses a musical form based on thao, 72 in pieces written for Western instruments. Perhaps more interesting is how, in "Eine schöne Zeit war es," he transforms the Thai sound in a nonrepresentational way. In this composition, Setabundhu structures the music on the concept of centonization—a hierarchical pitch system that he recognizes as a structural core of Thai music. He applies this system to a set of musical pitches that he personally interpreted from each word in a letter written by the painter Wassily Kandinsky to Arnold Schoenberg in 1993. Setabundhu took these pitches and constructed his composition through centonization, rather than through a framework such as Schoenberg's serialism. About the compositional structure of "Eine schöne Zeit war es" Setabundhu remarked: "the piece does not sound similar to Thai music but is based on a very similar structural system."73

Two other key Thai composers who have successfully worked on cross-cultural compositions are Narongrit Dhamabutra and Narong Prangcharoen, both of whom are extensively discussed in Nathinee Chucherdwatanasak's writing. Chucherdwatanasak describes the works of Dhamabutra as converting Thai sonority through Western instruments—as opposed to the exploration of complex Thai musical structures and experimentalism displayed in the music of Bruce Gaston or Jiradej Setabundhu. Chucherdwatanasak explains that the compositional approaches of Dhamabutra predominantly consist of using Thai pentatonic melodies, imitating the sound of Thai instruments, and employing compositional techniques from the Neo-Romantic period—which plays a crucial role in Dhamabutra's compositional aspects. For example, in "Sinfonia Suvarnabhumi" (2005), Dhamabutra composed new thematic melodies inspired by the traditional music of Thai royal barge processions, transforming the sounds of

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> Jiradej Setabundhu, "Aspects of Thai Music and Compositional Techniques in Selected Works of Jiradej Setabundhu," PhD diss., Northwestern University (2001).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> An extended musical form in Thai classical music which consists of three movements and utilizes the augmentation and diminution compositional techniques. See Chapter 3.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.,82.

northern folk melodies and imitating the sound of the northeastern musical instrument pong lang (a log xylophone).<sup>74</sup>

Narong Prangcharoen is another of the important Thai composers mentioned in Chucherdwatanasak's study. Similar to the works of Dhamabutra, Prangcharoen's crosscultural compositional projects predominantly focus on featuring Thai musical elements in orchestral pieces; however, the works of Prangcharoen focus more on incorporating harmonic dissonance and elements of atonality. Pawatchai Suwankangka provides a comprehensive discussion of Prangcharoen's compositional process. For example, in Prangcharoen's piece Three Minds, the three movements—"Fierce," "Absent," and "Hesitant"—were inspired by Prangcharoen's Buddhism.<sup>75</sup> In these three movements, the music is significantly influenced by idiomatic Thai instrumental techniques—namely, sabat (a set of three grace notes) and kro (two-pitch tremolo)—which were played by a ranad (a wooden xylophone).

Unlike other cross-cultural Thai classical composers, Prangcharoen's compositional aspects never fully adhere to the Thai musical tradition, with the composer preferring to take Thai musical elements and adapt them to his personal creative style. For example, in Prangcharoen's interview with Bangkokbiznews.com, the composer provides an insight into his compositional perspective:

Nowadays, I don't think there is one hundred percent Thai [music], we are all affected by the concept of globalization, and we have been influenced by many different cultures around us... And, for me, the most important work on cross-cultural compositions is to find your own way to interpret Thai aspects in your music, and avoid following other composer's footpaths.<sup>76</sup>

Despite the abundance of contemporary studies on Thai cross-cultural projects, there remains a dearth of research on cross-cultural Thai jazz music, particularly from contemporary jazz perspectives. One explanation for this could be that the comprehensive jazz studies program is still relatively new, with the first jazz studies program in Thailand only being established in 1998, as mentioned earlier. However, the demand for using jazz as a musical tool and infusing it with elements of Thai music has considerably increased, and the works of Thai cross-cultural contemporary jazz artists can be regularly experienced within the Thai music scene. These

<a href="https://www.bangkokbiznews.com/news/detail/563651">https://www.bangkokbiznews.com/news/detail/563651</a> (13 January 2014)

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> Chucherdwatanasak, "Narong Prangcharoen and Thai cross-cultural fusion in contemporary composition," 57.

<sup>75</sup> Pawatchai Suwankangka, "An Analysis of Narong Prangcharoen's "Three Minds" for Solo Piano," DMA diss., West Virginia University (2016).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> World Class Smart Thai: Contemporary Classical Music Composers

recent projects of cross-cultural Thai jazz artists—e.g., the album Four Colors (2005) by Infinity, a Thai fusion jazz band; the Sunny Trio and Natt Buntita'a album Two of Kind (2016); and Pairat Lukchan's album, Evening in Ayutthaya (2018)—witness the blending of Thai melodies and idiomatic singing techniques with contemporary jazz harmonies and rhythmic concepts in small ensembles. In addition, Saksri Vongtaradon's composition "Long Nan" is inspired by the musical practices of a salo saw pin ensemble integrated with the melodic structures and harmonies utilized in contemporary jazz, and Sekpol Unsamara's ensemble, the Sound of Siam, uses classical Thai instruments—including the saw u, khlui, and Thai percussion instruments such as the klong khaek, ching, and mong—alongside Western instruments in music similar to jazz-rock fusion and smooth jazz.

# 2.5 AN OVERVIEW OF RELATED THAI MUSIC STUDIES

Similar to the writings of David Morton, Panya Roongruang also analyses fundamental Thai musical elements, including Thai tuning and modes, tempo, meter, texture, idioms, and styles that are crucial from a compositional aspect. Roongruang explicitly describes how Thai classical musicians practice their music, recounts the history of how Thai classical musicians transferred teaching methods from oral to written transmission, and illustrates the changes—and losses—in the Thai music repertoire by comparing multiple versions of Thai classical music manuscripts. Roongruang also illustrates how musicians can use Western notation to write Thai music, using examples such as meter adjustment, displaying the typical range of Thai instruments in staff notation, as well as using *luk tok* (target pitches) to indicate Thai melodic phrases. The author also highlights potential problems which may occur when using staff notation to notate Thai music. Importantly, Roongruang's research has also provided an extensive overview of the Thai manuscript collection published by the Thai Music Manuscript Committee between 1936 and 1942, which include transcriptions in Western notation, useful for composers in jazz and other Western-notated traditions in the study of Thai music.

Anant Narkkong contributes a clarification of rhythmic concepts in Thai classical music, as well as a comprehensive discussion on how Thai classical percussion instruments are

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> Panya Roongruang, "Thai Classical Music Its Movement from Oral to Written Transmission, 1930-1942: Historical Context, Method, and Legacy of the Thai music Manuscript Project," PhD diss., Kent State University (1999).

<sup>78</sup> Ibid. 229-250.

performed.<sup>79</sup> In this research, Anant describes *nathap* (a Thai rhythmic cycle) and *chan* (Thai ideal tempo) and provides an explanation of the Thai rhythmic patterns generated by *taphon* (a two-headed drum mounted horizontally) in several different styles of Thai classical music. The author then demonstrates proper methods for notating Thai rhythmic patterns in Western notation and offers the example of drum stroke patterns employed in Thai repertories, including discussions of pieces such as "Si Nuan" and "Khaek Borrathet."

Somnuek Saengarun also provides significant insight into how Thai classical musicians compose music. <sup>80</sup> In his thesis, Saengarun investigates the compositional methods of Lt. Col Sanoh Luangsuntorn, a prominent Thai classical musician. These compositional techniques, include—to name a few—the application of independent *luk khong* (fundamental melodic lines), the utilization of particular patterns of *luk tok* (target pitches) from existing compositions to create new compositions, the diminution and extension of original compositions to create new pieces, melodic variations and embellishments, the application of diminutions and extensions combined with melodic variations, the utilization of sustained Thai pitches (*luk thao*), and the adaptation of foreign music accents<sup>81</sup> (e.g., Khmer, Lao, Mon, and Chinese accents) to create new Thai melodic lines. In addition, Saengarun cites examples from Luangsuntorn's compositions that are written in the *homrong* style (overture)—for example, "Homrong Pat Maharat" and "Homrong Nawamin Maharaja"—which the author had transcribed into Western notation.

Terry Miller's contributions to Thai music studies also include analyses of transcultural musical processes and detailed descriptions of regional styles. In terms of transcultural music processes and practices of cultural diversity in Thai music, he discusses how Thai musicians have adapted and reproduced a Chinese fiddle instrument (*erxian*) and Chinese struck zither (*yangqin*) for use in Thai ensembles.<sup>82</sup> He also demonstrates the influence of Chinese theater (*Chaozhou* opera)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> Anant Narkkong, "Aspect of Improvisation in Thai Classical Drumming with special reference to the Taphon," Master's thesis, University of London, (1992).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> Somnuek Saengarun, "Transmission process in Thai Classical music composition of Lt. Col Sanoh Luangsuntorn, Naitional Artist," Master's thesis., Chulalongkorn University (2018).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> Roongruang also clarifies the adaptation of foreign music accents (*samniang*) explaining, "since the Thai people avoided isolating themselves but interacted with people from many cultures, including those of the Western world, musical acculturation has occurred through Thai history. Thai musicians borrowed musical ideas from many cultures, including their tunes, musical idioms, instrument, and vocal styles, as well as song text imitating the sounds of foreign languages, and either reacted them in a Thai version or created new exotic music based on those fresh ideas." Roongruang, "Thai Classical Music Its Movement from Oral to Written Transmission," 72.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>82</sup> Terry E. Miller, "Appropriating the Exotic: Thai Music and the Adoption of Chinese Elements," *Asian Music* 41, no.2 (2010),113-148.

on Thai theatrical performances, and describes one particular style of Thai composition—"Jin Rua"— inspired by the application of *samniang jin* (Chinese accent),<sup>83</sup> a style of Thai-centric composition where elements of Chinese music familiar to most Thai are invoked, often through stereotype. Miller also makes an argument regarding the cultural diversity of Thailand, stating "what makes Thai culture unique is not its isolation but its absorption of elements from its innumerable contacts with foreign cultures over many centuries, almost none of which were forced."<sup>84</sup>

In his 1977 doctoral dissertation, Miller provides a general description of the cultural diversity of Thailand and its geographic neighbors, of which he remarks "...within this relatively small subcontinent dwell at least 151 separate ethnic groups speaking endless dialects..." and "[t]o assume that these borders define the limits of each culture would be erroneous." He then extensively describes the musical practices of northeast Thailand from an ethnomusicologist's perspective (i.e., through historical contexts, descriptions of instruments of northeast Thailand, and details of various musical genres). His dissertation illustrates the improvisation process of the use of five basic modes called *lai* used in performance on the *kaen* (usually Romanized as *khaen*)—a bamboo mouth organ—and then describes the various styles used in a northeastern form of song called *mawlum* (sometimes Romanized as *mor lam*, and, e.g., *mawlum glawn, mawlum ruang, mawlum phi fali*) and its application in performances. Similar to Morton's study, this extensive research has been marked as one of the cornerstone studies of traditional Thai music of the northeastern region.<sup>86</sup>

Thai ethnomusicologist Kumkom Pornprasit provides significant insight into the traditional musical practices of the northern part of Thailand.<sup>87</sup> In this research, Pornprasit demonstrates commonly used performance practices (e.g., *khap san*<sup>88</sup> [1116], *salo saw pin*, and *Lanna* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>83</sup> Besides the Chinese accent, other musical influences, e.g., "lao" for Lao, "khmen" for Cambodian, "khaek" for Muslim, Malay, and Indian, "mann" for Mon, "phama" for Bruma, "janva" for Java, and "farang" for Western. Also, see Miller and William, The Garland Handbook of Southeast Asian Music, 152.

<sup>84</sup> Miller, "Appropriating the Exotic: Thai Music and the Adoption of Chinese Elements,"143.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>85</sup> Terry E. Miller, "Kaen Playing and Mawlum Singing in Northeast Thailand," PhD diss., Indiana University (1977), 1-2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>86</sup> Other essays by Miller that illustrate the musical practices of northeast Thailand—and which are crucial from a cross-cultural compositional perspective—also include the 1971 essay, "The Musical Traditions of Northeast Thailand," the 2005 journal article, "From Country Hick to Rural Hip: A New Identity through Music for Northeast Thailand," and two book chapters in *The Garland Handbook of Southeast Asian Music* (2008), on Thailand and Laos.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> Kumkom Pornprasit, The performance methods of traditional northern Thailand music, (Chulalongkorn University, 2006).

<sup>88</sup> Also Romanized as "kab saw."

drumming), describes the collections of northern Thai melodies and their compositional repertoires, and extensively illustrates the instruments used in northern Thai music. The author also describes the practices of *salo saw sueng* ensembles (from northwest Thailand) and compares the latter to *salo saw pin* ensembles (from northeast Thailand, mainly in Nan province), as both utilize *khap saw* performances or perform it as instrumental music. Other important research focusing on the practice of *salo saw sueng* ensembles includes the works of Bussakorn Sumrongthong and Pakorn Rodchangphuen.<sup>89</sup>

Similar to Pornprasit's work, the research of Prapad Krupradub has contributed an overview of the fundamental musical elements of *rong ngeng* performances in southern Thailand. <sup>90</sup> In this document, Krupradub illustrates the history of southern Thai Muslim communities and describes the process of cultural exchange through the south of the country's trade routes. He also highlights the musical instruments employed in *rong ngeng* performances and discusses the stylistic differences between *rong ngeng* performances in southeastern and southwestern Thailand by analyzing three different *rong ngeng* ensembles from Pattani, Trang, and Satun provinces, respectively. In addition, Krupradub uses Western musical notation in his musical analysis of the *rong ngeng* repertoires from these three different regions.

Kuan Tuanyok is a Thai national artist who wrote another important work on southern Thai music. <sup>91</sup> In this book, the author describes the traditional southern music that is employed to accompany *nora* performances, with examples such as "Pat Cha" and "Choet Re Si." Tuanyok also provides an overview of southern Thai instruments such as the *pi nora* (a reed instrument), *mong* (a set of two gong bells), and *thap* (a pair of hand percussion instruments), and emphasizes the important role of a *thap* player (referred to as *nai thap* in the southern Thai dialect), whose performance must interact with the movement of the *nora* dancers. Wirat Leangsomboon's related work demonstrates the melodic structures of *nora* music, using Western notation to do so. <sup>92</sup> Here, Leangsomboon begins the musical analysis by demonstrating the scales, ranges, melodic movements, and ornamentation implemented in *homrong* music performed by ten

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>89</sup> Bussakorn Sumrongthong *Thai Musical Culture: Its Beliefs and Rituals within the North Region of Thailand,* (Chulalongkorn University, 2006) and Pakorn Rodchangphuen, *Construction Methods and Sound Quality of Thai Plucked Instruments and Drums within the Northern Regions of Thailand,* (Chulalongkorn University, 2010).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>90</sup> Prapad Krupradub, "Rong Ngeng: Music and Folk Dance in the South of Thailand," Master's thesis, Mahidol University (1997).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>91</sup> Kuan Tuanyok, *The Accompanying Songs for The Traditional Performances of Southern Thailand* (Songkhla Rajabhat University, 2014).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>92</sup> Wirat Leangsomboon, "Pleang Hom Rong Nora, Traditional Music for Native Dance in Nakhon Si Thammart Province", Master's thesis, Mahidol University, (2001).

different *nora* musical ensembles in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province. In addition, Lawrence N. Ross comprehensively demonstrates the rhythmic and melodic patterns of *rong ngeng* performances in southwest Thailand.<sup>93</sup> The research of Wichai Mesri and Atipon Anukool's writing have similarly provided a summary of the musical repertoire of *rong ngeng* performances in southeastern Thailand.<sup>94</sup>

In addition to the research mentioned above are some documents that provide examples—transcribed into Western musical notation—of the traditional music practiced in north and south Thailand, as well as sample recordings of traditional Thai music that I have found beneficial for my own cross-cultural jazz composition study. These works and records can be found at the Gerald P. Dyck Ethnomusicology Archive of *Lanna* Music at Chiang Mai Rajabhat University, and at "phleng Lanna," the Northern Thai Information Center, Chiang Mai University (which has provided recordings of traditional northern Thai musical performances). 95

# 2.6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Ever since jazz rapidly swept the globe a century ago, musicians and composers have combined various musical traditions with jazz, with examples all around the world. Jazz writers and critics have approached this phenomenon in a variety of ways with some, like Stuart Nicholson, referring to the movement as the globalization of jazz and the adaptation of jazz to local musical traditions to the ends of establishing artistic identities or suiting local audience experiences. Some European jazz musicians applied their own musical traditions and manipulated folk melodies to create their cross-cultural music composition. These crossover processes include examples such as the application of *bulerias*, a flamenco rhythm, into blues by Chano Domínguez; the Swedish-folk-inspired music of Swedish jazz musicians Lars Gullin and Jan Johansson; and the integration of jazz musical elements into the convict songs of European Australians of Jeremy Rose, an Australian jazz saxophonist, all of which can offer distinctive jazz composing methods.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>93</sup> Lawrence N. Ross, "Rong Ngeng: The Transformation of Malayan Social Dance Music in Thailand Since The 1930s," PhD Diss., The City University of New York (2011).

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>94</sup> Wichai Mesri, A Case Study of Rong Ngang songs of Mr. Seng Arboo, (Songkhla Rajabhat University, 2014) and Atipon Anukool, "Rong-Ngang Song of Ussaleemala," Master's thesis, Mahidol University, Thailand, (2006).
 <sup>95</sup> To access the Gerald P. Dyck Ethnomusicology Archive of Lanna Music, visit
 <a href="https://www.music.cmru.ac.th/archive/?page\_id=750">https://www.music.cmru.ac.th/archive/?page\_id=750</a> and "Phleng Lanna", the Northern Thai Information Center, Chiang Mai University, see <a href="https://lannainfo.library.cmu.ac.th/lanna-music.php">https://lannainfo.library.cmu.ac.th/lanna-music.php</a>

The employment of traditional music instruments, combined with the instrumentation of jazz, can also be observed in the works of Don Ellis, Toshiko Akiyoshi, and Krakatau, where Hindustani, Japanese, and gamelan ensemble instruments, respectively, were used in jazz ensemble contexts. However, several artistic experiences, such as Miles Davis's comments about the difficulty of using the trumpet to mimic flamenco singing, or Toshiko's remark about her trumpet player who asserts it is impossible to replicate Japanese musical techniques on his instrument, highlight the difficulty of the process of cross-cultural music-making. Importantly, the conflict between conservative and progressive viewpoints in previous cross-cultural music projects can be seen in works of flamenco jazz and gamelan-inspired jazz. Rodriguez's research and the comment of Indonesia's Krakatau ensemble also suggest that rather than being concerned with traditional aspects, their compositional approach appears to be focused on creativity.

Similarly, influences of crossovers between jazz and Thai traditional music had been present since the arrival of the Suntaraporn Band in the Thai music scene between the 1940s and the 1950s. Later on, Eua Sunthornsana, the band leader of Suntaraporn, also played a significant role in the origin of the Snagkhet Samphan ensemble, one of the prominent cross-cultural music ensembles, in which the utilization of the Thai *Mahori* ensemble and traditional Thai repertoires mainly in Thai classical music was similarly integrated into a big band. John Garzoli presents the case of Thai fusion ensembles, which were somewhat associated with the musical elements of jazz. He discusses the example of Bruce Gaston, a cofounder of Fong Namm, and his compositional techniques, emphasized that Gastons's approach was heavily influenced by the Thai way of thinking rather than the Western manner.

Other cross-cultural works in Thai music can also be observed from a contemporary classical composer such as Jiradej Setabundhu, Narongrit Dhamabutra, and Narong Prangcharoen. The cross-cultural works of Setabundhu, and Prangcharoen tend to be infused with Thai elements in superimposed methods, whilst Dhamabutra's approaches took concept of the Neo-Romanticism infused with Thai music. Prangcharoen also himself remarked on the purity of Thai music, which he believed there is no one hundred percent Thainess anymore due to globalization's effect.

In conclusion, the selected literature, documents, and dissertations discussed from section 2.2 to section 2.4 provide vital information for a cross-cultural jazz composer. They provide the

artistic experience of previous cross-cultural jazz composers, demonstrate possible or potential compositional methods that can be applied to cross-cultural works, and discuss the obstacles that they encountered while working in cross-cultural jazz composition. To provide concrete information on how Thai musical traditions function contribute to my transcription methods, I selected several Thai ethnomusicologists whose works I outlined in section 2.5. The perspectives and findings of these researchers on Thai musical traditions substantially inform my work, and I discuss them in further detail in Chapters 3-6 of this dissertation.

# Chapter 3

# Identifying Musical Elements of *dontri thai doem* (Thai Classical Music)

I believe that learning about "respect" would be beneficial to such composers. I don't mean other things when I say respect; rather, respect yourself for how much Thai classical music you know before embarking on a cross-cultural project. So, once they've determined their level, they can select a reasonable degree of Thai classical music knowledge to incorporate into their music. This, in my opinion, has nothing to do with a high level of expertise in Thai classical music. Even if it's something basic, if you can come up with innovative ways to adapt or apply such musical elements to your music, that's great. That seems to be more appealing to me. 96

Somnuek Saengarun

# **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter focuses on musical elements of *dontri thai doem*, Thai classical music. I begin with a brief overview of the history of the various Siamese Kingdoms and their transformation into the present Thai state, in order to provide context for Thailand's musical diversity. Then, I discuss Thai classical music from the perspective of a jazz composer, in light of the goals of this project. I first discuss the Thai pitch concept and several examples of Thai melodies utilized in compositions of a lyrical type. I then explore textures, rhythms, and meters common

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>96</sup> Somnuek Saengarun personal interview 27 July 2020.

in Thai classical music in ways that are relevant to my project. At the end of this chapter, I present some of the diverse compositional strategies used by Thai composers, and consider how such aspects can be used in jazz compositions. In addition, I offer a brief overview of Thai sacred ceremonies, which play an essential role in Thai Classical music practices.

# 3.2 COSMOPOLITAN MUSICAL CULTURES IN SIAMESE KINGDOMS (CA. 1200–1767)

# SIAMESE KINGDOM

When the Khmer Empire's influence in mainland Southeast Asia began to decline in the thirteenth century, several kingdoms, some of which could be considered city-states, emerged in the north and center of present-day Thailand. These kingdoms, such as Sukhothai, Lavo, and Suphannaphum, all of which absorbed Mon-Khmer influence and began to mingle a "Tai" language to communicate. The kingdom of Ayutthaya arose in the mid-fourteenth century, centered on a city of the same name, and incorporating some of these kingdoms by military actions and royal intermarriages. Ayutthaya was often call "Siam" by outsiders, and existed between 1351 and 1769. It is considered the precursor to present-day Thailand, and its ethnic diversity reveals much about the diverse cultural practices of Thailand today, including musical ones.

Created by a merging of the Suphannaphum and Sukhothai dynasties and absorbing the previous states under Mon-Khmer influence including Lavo, <sup>99</sup> the cosmopolitan kingdom of Ayutthaya was an ethnically diverse city-state that was politically and religiously influenced by the ancient Mon-Khmer kingdoms. It also adopted the language, cultures, and aesthetics of the Tai speakers who lived in the north and northeast areas within the kingdom. <sup>100</sup> The political reach of the Ayutthaya kingdom extended throughout of Southeast Asia, from the northeast in present-day Thailand (where its dominance reached Nakhon Ratchasima), to the north in Phitsanulok and Sukhothai, to the west in Dawei (พวกย) (present-day Myanmar), and to the south

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>97</sup> The Tai language, which is now known as the "Thai" language, is a member of the "Tai-Kadai" language family. It was also used alongside Khmer, Mon, and Sankrit in the past, all of which had a significant influence on the Thai language of today. Chris Baker and Pasuk Phongpaichit, *A history of Thailand* (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 2009), 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>98</sup> Pol Ittharom, "From "Siam" to "Thai", and why does "Thai" have to have, "H?," *Sinlapa watthanatham Magazine* <a href="https://www.silpa-mag.com/culture/article\_2224">https://www.silpa-mag.com/culture/article\_2224</a>, (25 May 2021).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>99</sup> Sujit Wongthes and Khanchai Boonparn "Sukhothai is not the first capital," Matichon TV

<sup>&</sup>lt;hathered leaves to the state of the state o

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>100</sup> Wyatt, Thailand: A Short History, 53-55.

in Nakhon Si Thammarat.<sup>101</sup> The Ayutthaya Kingdom also encompassed multiple ethnic groups, including Mon, Khmer, Tai, Lao, Chinese, and Malay, among others who also settled and resettled within the kingdom both voluntarily and involuntarily.

The substantial social and cultural diversity of Ayutthaya society was observed by foreigners from outside of mainland Southeast Asia—including Portuguese, Japanese, French, English, Italian, Dutch, Muslim, and Moor, especially during the reign of King Narai (1656–1688). The Chevalier de Chaumont, the French ambassador to the court of the Siamese Kingdom during this period, stated, "there is no city in the East where [are] seen more different nations than in the capital city of Siam, and where so many different tongues are spoken." Chris Baker and Pasuk Phongpaichit describe the contextual factors that contributed to the cultural diversity of the Ayutthaya Kingdom and its cosmopolitan society, writing,

[The] Portuguese first arrived as soldiers of fortune in the early sixteenth century, and their numbers swelled when the Portuguese community was expelled from Macassar in 1668. Over the years, the Portuguese intermarried with other Christians, particularly those from Japan and southern India. By the seventeenth century, the mestizo community numbered around five to six thousand, occupied in petty trading and service. A community of "Moors," meaning "Turks, Persians, Golcondans, and those of Bengal," had been present since the heyday of mercenaries in the early sixteenth century, and still supplied soldiers and guards throughout the seventeenth, while others worked as sailors, sugar palm growers, weavers, binders, and dyers. Persian trader-officials flocked to the city in the early Narai reign, and though the numbers dropped after the fall of Aqa Muhammed Astarabadi in the mid-1670s, some three to four thousand remained a decade later. <sup>103</sup>

Anthropologist Pamala Moro discusses musical aspects in historical documentation of Thai music since the sixteenth century. She explicitly summarizes the substantial historical records of contact between the people of the Siamese Kingdom and Europeans during the dominance of Ayutthaya, and points out that the first arrival of Westerners is most likely to have been the group of Portuguese envoys led by Duarte Fernandez in 1516.<sup>104</sup> After Fernandez's voyage, the number of foreigners who visited Ayutthaya gradually increased—particularly in the numbers of French missionaries who aimed to convert the kingdom into a realm of Christianity during the eighteenth century. Moro also states that two of the fifty-nine extant sources written by these European travelers in the sixteenth century provide details and references of a musical nature.<sup>105</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>101</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>102</sup> Baker and Phongpaichit, A History of Ayutthaya: Siam in the Early Modern World, 203.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 204.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>104</sup> Moro, "Thai music and Musicians in Contemporary: An ethnography,"39-40.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>105</sup> Ibid., 39.

Sixteen of the documents from the seventeenth century and two documents from the eighteenth century also illustrate musical practices of the Siamese Kingdom. The most significant musical evidence from this period is perhaps a travelogue written by the French diplomat Simon de la Loubere in 1687. In addition to the illustration of the Thai drum (shaped like a small barrel) as previously described in Chapter 2, this document highlighted the use of a duple meter in Thai vocal music, and included the author's transcription of a Siamese melody into Western notation, under the title A Siamese Song (Sai Samon). 106 This transcription is credited as the first musical document of Thai music notated by a foreigner, and a portion of the song's melody was included in the royal anthem that was created in the nineteenth century.107

### MUSICAL TRANSCULTURATION

The social, cultural, and ethnic diversity in the Siamese Kingdom created an openness to foreign influences from the Siamese perspective. As a result, diverse philosophies, religious beliefs, technologies, and cultures were widely exchanged in this region. The nondiscriminatory musical practices of Siamese music were no exception—the use of foreign instruments by musicians in the Siamese Kingdom was particularly common. As Sujit Wongthes, a Thai journalist and well-known historian explains:

The culture of using Bamboo to manufacture instruments is one of the common cultures that can be exchanged in the Southeast Asian mainland. For example, 'khaen', a traditional instrument of Laotian and northeastern Thailand was also employed for performances in Siamese Courts in the Ayutthaya period.108

Other musical instruments that were introduced by foreigners and employed in Thai classical music ensembles also included the saw duang and saw u, both two-stringed bowed fiddles that were adopted from Chinese instruments. Terry Miller suggests that these traditional fiddles seem to have a deep relationship with the Chaozhou Chinese instrument called erxian which is typically employed in Cantonese music. 109

<sup>106</sup> For further explanation of "Sai Samon" is provided by La Loubère, Simon de, 1642-1729. A new historical relation of the kingdom of Siam by Monsieur De La Loubere.

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="http://name.umdl.umich.edu/A48403.0001.001.">http://name.umdl.umich.edu/A48403.0001.001.</a>

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>108</sup> Sujit Wongthes, "Thai Music refers to the musical practice of center Thailand, other musical regions are excluded," Matichon online, <a href="https://www.matichon.co.th/columnists/news\_210907">https://www.matichon.co.th/columnists/news\_210907</a>>, (13 July 2016). <sup>109</sup> Miller, "Appropriating the Exotic: Thai Music and the Adoption of Chinese Elements", 130.

The gong is another foreign music influence that was exchanged and subsequently adapted in Thai classical music, in this case, originating in Indonesia. According to David Morton, these musical instruments and the production of such instruments also transferred to the Siamese Kingdom, via the cultural influence of the Khmer Empire. Many twelfth- and thirteenth-century illustrations of musicians and ritual ceremonies depict sets of kettle gongs that have a partly similar structure to the musical instruments of Siamese court music, which can also be seen at multiple archaeological sites in Angkor Wat and in Central Java. Thai historian Danit Yupho also states multiple percussion instruments used in Thai classical music such as the *taphon* (double-headed barrel-shaped drum) and *rammana* (frame drum) also came from India and other cultures in the Malay Peninsula, respectively.

While these traditional instruments explicitly originated abroad and remarkably influenced the traditional music practices of Siamese cultures, musicians in the Siamese Kingdom began to develop their own characteristics in order to suit the aesthetic tastes of its people, with musicians starting to create their own unique techniques—unrelated to the original cultures—to perform on these instruments. As David Morton explains:

The mainstream of Thai traditional music as it is known today is probably a composite of musical elements from several cultures. Thai music itself [consists of] influences from Chinese, Indian, and Khmer (Cambodian music). Musical elements from other neighboring cultures, Burma, and Malay, for example were possibly also absorbed into the evolving Thai traditional style. Characteristically the assimilated elements were incorporated in the existing culture of the Thai to suit their own taste, resulting in a culture distinct from those from which these elements were originally acquired. <sup>112</sup>

Philip Cornwel-Smith has also proposed a critical process in Thai cultures that results in transformation and adaptation, arguing that absorbing foreign influences is unavoidable for Thai people. He states:

Making imports Thai is actually an old tradition. While all nationalities absorb outside influences, Thai have retained their distinctiveness and independence despite living at a crossroads of cultures: Chinese, Indian, Western, Japanese, Khmer, Burmese, Malay, and indigenous tribes. The customization of imports is key to that elusive, immutable Thainess, since the essence lies not in invention, but transformation. Anything, given time enough to steep here, can end up very Thai. 113

The example of foreign musical instruments in Thai music provides an example of the broader concept of how Thainess develops out of cultural diversity, and helps explain why the people

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>110</sup> David Morton, *The Traditional Music of Thailand* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 5-7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>111</sup> Danit Yuhpho, *Thai Musical instrument and Thai Musical ensemble* (Bangkok: The Fine Arts Department, 1987), 34.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid 1

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>113</sup> Miller, "Appropriating the Exotic: Thai Music and the Adoption of Chinese Elements," 113.

of Thailand seek to adopt other musical cultures from which they create their own. Most significantly, the practice of transculturation in Thailand is a result of the great ethnic diversity and origins of the Siamese Kingdom in the past. It is also likely related to its location in the center of mainland Southeast Asia. As a result, this condition contributed significantly to previous cultural exchange activities. 114

### THE MODERN THAI NATION

After the fall of Ayutthaya in 1767, the Siamese state was reestablished and declared independent by King Taksin (1767-1782), who was then followed by King Phutthayotfa (1782– 1809). King Phutthayotfa was the founder of the Chakri Dynasty (1782-present), which marked the beginning of the new era known as the Rattanakosin period (1782–1932). During this time, the Siamese court was relocated to Bangkok, and military actions largely pushed the migration of other ethnic groups into Siamese territory. Notable displacements in this period included the resettlement of Laos, Phu thai, Tai Dam, and Puan (พวน)—to name a few—all of which took place during King Rama III's reign (1809-1824). 115 These groups of people were forced to relocate from the east bank of the Mekong River to live in the area of present-day northeast Thailand, in towns such as Kalasin, Nong Khai, Nakhon Phanom, and Sankon Nakoh. This resettlement led to significant transculturation in northeast Thailand and contributed to the construction of traditional northeast Thai music, and to the broader diversity of traditional music in Thailand.

It was also during the period of the Chakri Dynasty, during the reign of King Chulalongkorn (or King Rama V, as he was known by most Thai) (1868-1910), that the concept of "one nation" became firmly established and the ideology of nationalism began to be promoted. 116 One of the main factors in the introduction of such ideology was the immense influence of colonialism from Western countries on the Siamese court. During his reign King Chulalongkorn began to reform the procedures on how the court governed satellite states near,

<sup>114</sup> Transculturation is a concept that introduced by Fernando Ortiz. James Lull, the author of Media, Communication, culture: A Global Approach. (2000), further explains that the concept of transculturation is a process whereby cultural forms literally move through time and space, where they interact with other cultural forms and settings, influence each other, produce new forms, and change the cultural setting. <sup>115</sup> Wyatt, Thailand: A Short History, 156.

<sup>116 &</sup>quot;Those many countries which have been formed into nations and countries uphold that the history of one's

nation and country is an important matter to be known clearly and accurately through study and teaching. It is a discipline for evaluating ideas and actions as right or wrong, good or bad, as a means to inculcate love of one's nation and land," From the speech of King Chulalongkorn delivered in 1907, as quoted by Chris Baker and Pasuk Phongpaichit, A History of Ayutthaya: Siam in the Early Modern World, X.

but outside the territory of the kingdom. These states, for example, Lanna in the north and Pattani in the south, were gradually forced to merge into Siamese territory and began to lose their autonomy to govern themselves. Similar to the northeast resettlement, the ethnicities and cultural practices of the people of Lanna and Pattani were widely diverse and dissimilar to the social and cultural practices of the Siamese court. This territorial annexation of the two regions also resulted in distinctive music traditions, which were later recognized as the traditional music of northern and southern Thailand.<sup>117</sup>

Another important factor that reshaped the society, culture, and ultimately the borders of modern Thailand was the loss of territory of the Siamese Kingdom between 1785 and 1909. According to David Wyatt, seven incidents of the Siam territorial losses include:<sup>118</sup>

- 1) Cession to Britain by the Sultan of Kedah, 1785-1909.
- 2) Cambodian territory placed under French protection by Franco-Siamese Treaty, 1876.
- 3) Black Tai territory taken by France, 1888.
- 4) East Bank of Mekong ceded to France by Franco-Siamese Treaty, 1893.
- 5) West Bank of Mekong ceded to France by Franco-Siamese Treaty, 1904.
- 6) Western Cambodian provinces ceded to France by Franco-Siamese Treaty, 1907.
- 7) Malay states ceded to Britain by Anglo-Siamese Treaty, 1909.

After these losses, the border of the Siamese Kingdom took that shape of the borders of present-day Thailand. Following the Siamese revolution in 1932, the country's name was changed under the government of Prime Minister Plack Phibulsongkhram from Siam to Thailand in 1939.<sup>119</sup>

These histories of ethnic diversity in what is now Thailand have profoundly shaped the prominent traditional music practices of the nation today. These practices can be generally divided geographically into four distinct regions:

1) the musical practices of the center of Thailand or Thai classical music, which have been fundamentally influenced by Mon, Indian, Khmer, and Chinese traditions;

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>117</sup> For more see, "Siam's plan to seize Lanna," a historical seminar by Nuaon Khrouthongkhieo, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Bangkok, Thailand *Matichon TV* <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8j-aDZ7gmRw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8j-aDZ7gmRw</a> (27 July 2019).

<sup>118</sup> Wyatt, Thailand: A Short History, 193.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>119</sup> Amornrat Bunnag, Rossarin Soottipong Gray, and Peter Xeno, "Toward an Historical Demography of Thailand," *Journal of Population and Social Studies* 20, no.2 (2012), 100.

- 2) the traditional music of northeast Thailand, which predominately originated from the resettlement of Lao people;
- 3) the musical practices of southern Thailand, which distinctly consists of the culture of Malay Muslims and Mahayana Buddhist beliefs; and
- 4) the traditional music of northern Thailand, which was mainly influenced by northern Tai (Lanna), Lao, and Burmese cultures.

I will spend the remainder of this chapter discussing Thai classical music from the perspective of a jazz composer. In Chapters 4, 5, and 6, I discuss musical traditions of the other three regions.

# 3.3 THAI CLASSICAL MUSIC (DONTRI THAI DOEM)

Unlike flamenco, tango, or Bulgarian folk music, canonical musical practices in Thai classical music—emerging from central Thailand, where this music was historically practiced by the Siamese court—are quite distinct from Western music practices. In particular, and of interest for this study, Thai classical music differs from Western music in its tuning systems and musical textures. When I began my research into Thai classical music for this jazz composition project, I sought to understand how the music works based on the perspectives of Thai musicians. Later on, I transferred what I acquired from Thai classical music into Western musical terminology in order to explain these findings in a manner that jazz composers can comprehend.

## PITCH AND THAI MELODIC PATTERNS

The fundamental principles of pitch production in Thai music can be divided into two categories: 1) a system of seven distinct pitches within one octave produced by melodic percussion idiophones, namely, *ranad* <sup>120</sup> and *khong wong* <sup>121</sup>; and 2) the musical pitches that are performed beyond the seven distinct pitches, and are generated by fretless bowed string

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<sup>120</sup> Ranad is a Thai musical instrument, that has a shape similar to a xylophone in Western music. The Ranad family includes four instruments: ranad ek, ranad thum, ranad ek blek (ระนาดเอกเหล็ก) and ranad thum blek. The ranad ek (predominated instrument) and ranad ek blek (metallophone) can produce seven distinct sounds within three octaves. As for ranad thum and ranad thum lek (metallophone), it has a larger structure and is capable of producing a lower sound compared to ranad-ek (i.e. seven distinct pitches within two-octave).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>121</sup> The *Khong* is a gong-type instrument used in Thai classical ensembles, with gongs arranged in a curve or circle; the three types consist of *khong wong yai*, *khong wong lek*, and *khong mon*, and are capable of producing seven pitches (without chromatic notes) within the range of two octaves. (Note: some of these pitches can go beyond two octaves, but are incapable of being completed within three octaves).

instruments—namely the *saw duang*, *saw u*, and *saw sam sai*<sup>122</sup>—and by vocalists.<sup>123</sup> In the first European conceptualizations of the tuning system in Thai classical music, it was believed that Thai tuning was produced by an ideal interval of 171.429 (seven equidistant pitches in an octave)—an idea initially introduced by the English musicologist and mathematician Alexander J. Ellis in 1885.<sup>124</sup> However, this concept is considered to be controversial and impractical from the perspectives of multiple Thai music experts and ethnomusicologists. Among such dissenting opinions is one provided by John Garzoli, who writes that:

The contention that Thai music is based on an equidistant tuning system should be abandoned because equidistance as specified by the accepted theory of Thai tuning (7-tet) does not exist in Thai music. Although Ellis's theory of 7-tet prescribes an ideal interval of 171.429 cents, this is not found on actual instruments, and in the course of this study, no tuners endorsed nor adopted the theory in practice. The theoretical formulation incorrectly assumes an octave of 1:2, and the theory overlooks singers and string players. Unsurprisingly, given these conditions, the theory of equidistance has not been supported by empirical research, which has consistently found no evidence of it.<sup>125</sup>

Even I myself began to experience uncertainty regarding Thai classical music pitches and encountered the dilemma of the 7-tet system when attempting to transcribe multiple Thai classical compositions. However, I have begun to accept and directly perceive that "intonation diversity" is the proper concept that should be applied to the tuning system in Thai classical music. In my transcription processes, I have found that every Thai classical ensemble has its own unique tuning system and employs diverse methods to blend their instrumental pitches when performing as an ensemble. However, nowadays, as the technology of Thai instrument construction has continually improved, Thai classical ensembles can now be constructed to produce a sound that is more mathematically "in tune" with regard to the Western tuning system. <sup>126</sup> It is still important to me as a jazz composer (and others who may wish to approach Thai classical music) to understand and appreciate the concept of intonation diversity. This is important in collaboration with musicians of Thai classical music, because accounting for intonation diversity helps them preserve the sound of Thai classical music and foster their

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>122</sup> A family of string instruments in Thai classical music, also known as *khruang sai*. Both *Saw duang* and *saw u* have two strings and tune in the perfect 5<sup>th</sup> from a Western musical perspective. The *saw sam sai* has three strings and can be tuned in the perfect 4th. These three fiddle instruments are fretless and performed in an upright posture.

<sup>123</sup> When tuning melodic percussion instruments, Thai musicians add or remove heated beeswax and heat particles

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>123</sup> When tuning melodic percussion instruments, Thai musicians add or remove heated beeswax and heat particles (lead) under the wooden bars or gongs; for string instruments, players tighten or loosen their stings, in a similar manner to Western fiddles.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>124</sup> John Garzoli, "The Myth of Equidistance in Thai Tuning," *Analytical Approaches to World Music* 4, no.2 (2015): 1-2.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 23

<sup>126</sup> When attempting to build Thai instruments that use the Western tuning system (A=440), Thai musicians refer to this system as *sieng sakon* (เดียงตากต). Ranad and khlui (a vertical block flute) are two of the instruments that are typically built adopting the Western tuning system. These two instruments are widely employed in cross-cultural ensembles such as Thai fusion bands.

expressive individuality (samniang), as well as the idiosyncratic characteristic of their ensembles called thang.<sup>127</sup>

As previously stated, Thai idiophone instruments can produce seven distinct pitches, stretching out in one octave ideally. These seven different pitches appear to be dissimilar to the pitches of Western major scales, especially when comparing the intervals between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> scale degrees and between the 7<sup>th</sup> scale degree and the octave, which is a half-step interval in a diatonic major scale, but much wider in typical Thai tunings. The other scale degrees produced by Thai instruments, however, including 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6, can produce a sound relatively similar to the structure of major (or minor) pentatonic scales from a Western perspective. (Please note that Thai music compositions in the style of Mon called *thang mon* may employ the entire seven pitches when composing and performing.)<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>127</sup> Please note that the word "thang" has multiple meanings, such as thang khrueang dontri (instrumental music style), thang nai (one of Thai classical music modes), thang lao (a musical accent), and thang krhu (the overall styles of a particular teacher and school).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>128</sup> Poonpit Amatayakul, "Talk with Prasit Thaworn," the Sangkeet Sin Center Vol. 343,

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://sirindhornmusiclibrary.li.mahidol.ac.th/live-recording/musicalartcentre343/">https://sirindhornmusiclibrary.li.mahidol.ac.th/live-recording/musicalartcentre343/</a> (6 June 1986).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>129</sup> The numerical system was officially introduced by Luang Pradit Pairoh (Son Silpabanleng), with Pamela Myer-Moro providing further explicit statements from his daughter Khunying Chin Silpabanleng, who explained that "in those days (1913) music study was done by memory. Those who taught and those who studied wasted a lot of time. My father had to teach music over and over .... Then he thought of signs to help improve the memory ...." See, Pamela Myers-Moro, "Musical Notation in Thailand." *Journal of the Siam Society* 78, no.1 (1990), 101. <sup>130</sup> Ibid.,102.

understand which musical notes can be interpreted as a tonic, subdominant, and dominant when analyzing Thai music from a jazz perspective.

Based on these considerations of pitch for Thai instruments, as well as the comprehension that Thai instruments can produce pentatonic scales, I transcribed a number of Thai classical compositions, using tools of jazz analysis to identify the structures of their melodies with my compositional project in mind. Similar to transcription practices common in jazz, I started by transcribing several sections of Thai compositions that contain memorable melodic lines and less complex musical textures. These compositions, "Rabam Sukhothai," "Soi Sang Dang," "Lao Somdej," and "Saen Kham Nung," each of which contains textures featuring lyrical melodies, providing examples of a characteristic Thai sound, which I will explain later. These works are typically employed for entertainment purposes, in contrast to the irregular melody type used in Thai ceremonial music.

Additionally, because of the intonation diversity of Thai music, the process of selecting particular recordings for this type of transcription is crucial. Most of the Thai ensembles whose recordings I chose for this study have tuning systems that allow them to be transcribed using an equal-tempered keyboard. For each composition, for example "Rabam Sukhothai" (Figure 3.1)<sup>131</sup>—the musical accompaniment to a traditional Thai dance—I transcribed both the melodic lines of the A and B sections performed by *pi-nai* (quadruple-reed aerophone), which constitute pitches that can be approximated to the key of Gb major pentatonic. "Soi Sang Dang" (Figure 3.2)<sup>132</sup> is from a traditional work famously performed in traditional Thai theater based on a narrative poem called *Lilit Phra Lo*. The thirty measures of melodic motifs in the A section that I have transcribed were played by *ranad ek* (wooden xylophone). The piece's melodic patterns approximate the key of Bb major pentatonic.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>131</sup> Figure 3.1 was transcribed from Ajahn Saman and artists of The Fine Arts Department, "Rabam Sukhothai" (0.11-0.39) *Thai Fine Art artists Vol.47*, Ocean Media. To listen to this recording, see

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://open.spotify.com/track/4TRBYDB2sd9CAK0U3lWqbY?si=9978db9f5cdc49e9">https://open.spotify.com/track/4TRBYDB2sd9CAK0U3lWqbY?si=9978db9f5cdc49e9</a>.

<sup>132</sup> This figure was transcribed Ajahn Somchai Champalee's performance (0.00-0.36)

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NWZmcTRvMlk&t=4s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NWZmcTRvMlk&t=4s</a>> uploaded by Pratilop Prombut. (23 May 2013).

In contrast to the major pentatonic melodies two previous pieces, "Lao Somdej" (Figure 3.3)<sup>133</sup> features an approximation of the B minor pentatonic scale. The melodic parts of the A section in this composition were transcribed from the instrumental parts of the *sam sai* from a live performance by the group of senior Thai musician teachers of Rattanakosin. The final composition I selected is "Saen Kham Nung" (Figure 3.4),<sup>134</sup> a prominent Thai classical music piece composed by Luang Pradit Pairoh (Son Silpabanleng)—one of the most respected Thai musical masters. This music was transcribed from the sound of the *ranad ek* (xylophone-type idiophone), approximated in the key of Bb major. After completing the transcriptions and analyzing them from a jazz perspective, I was able to identify some key characteristics of these types of lyrical Thai melodies, and compose melodic lines with these characteristics in my own jazz compositions.<sup>135</sup>

Because each Thai musical ensemble has a unique approach derived from a combination of their music teacher's instructions and their own individual artistic perspectives, these four renditions of Thai music compositions are just some of many possible ways of performing Thai music. However, the Thai classical musicians whose performances are transcribed for this project are among the most respected in Thai classical music, particularly the performance of "Lao Somdej" by HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn and a group of senior Thai music teachers, such as Uthai Kaewlaiad, Surang Duriyapan, Wichian Kerdphol, Chaloem Muangphresi, and Montri Tramote, whose teaching methods I shall discuss in further detail in this chapter. Even jazz composers must acknowledge that these groups of senior Thai musicians have had the greatest impact on classical Thai music education. In addition, I consider the performance of "Saen Kham Nung" by Asdavuth Sagarik, the great-grandson of Luang Pradit Pairoh (Sorn Silpabanleng) to be the most authentic rendition, given the direct relationship between the composer and the performer.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>133</sup> Figure 3.3 was transcribed from "Lao Somdej," the performance of H.R.H Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn and the group of senior Thai musicians' teachers of Rattanakosin (2.28- 3.08).

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\_HjLXOMwCeM">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\_HjLXOMwCeM</a>> uploaded by offstreeyala (27 May 2013).

<sup>134</sup> Figure 3.4 was transcribed from Asdavuth Sagarik's performance on "Saen Kham Nung" (1.44 - 2.36).

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JIxQZQO026k">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JIxQZQO026k</a>> uploaded by Wisetdontree (4 January 2013).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>135</sup> Appendix C.1-C.4 contains the MIDI files for figures 3.1-3.4.



Figure 3.1: "Rabam Sukhothai." Transcription by the author.



Figure 3.2: "Soi Sang Dang." Transcription by the author.



Figure 3.3: "Lao Somdej." Transcription by the author.

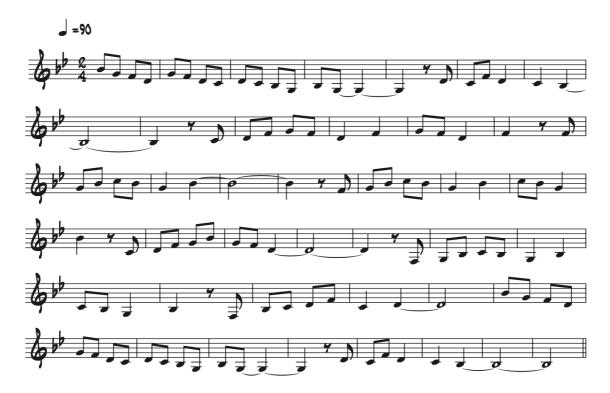


Figure 3.4: "Saen Kham Nung." Transcription by the author.

One of the features of these lyrical Thai compositions is their use of major and minor pentatonic scales in the construction of melodic motifs. Phichit Chaisaree, a prominent Thai

classical music theorist, labels this characteristic of Thai music as "penta-centric." After applying scale degrees to my melodic analysis, I was able to generate a set of the particular melodic patterns that are repeatedly employed in these melodies. These patterns include (in scale degrees, with arrows adding clarity of melodic contour, see also Figure 3.5):

- 1. 1 2 3 5 2 (twice),
- 2. 5 3 2 1 2 3 (three times),
- 3.  $23216 \downarrow 5 \downarrow$  (three times),
- 4.  $561\uparrow 2\uparrow 1\uparrow 6\downarrow$  (twice),
- 5. 2 3 2 3 5 1 2 (twice),
- 6. 1 6 5 3 (twice),
- 7. 1 b3 b7↓ 1 (twice),
- 8.  $1 \, b7 \downarrow 5 \downarrow b7 \downarrow 1 \, b3 \uparrow$  (twice), and
- 9. 3 2 3 2 1 2 (twice).

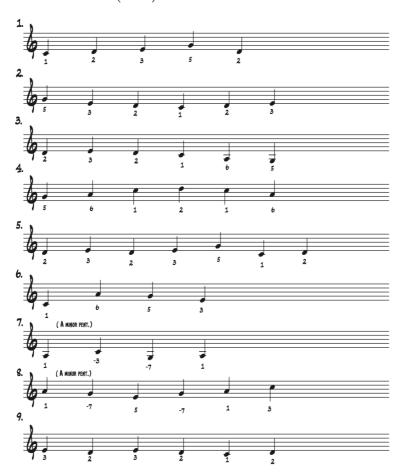


Figure 3.5: A collection of specific melodic patterns derived from the transcriptions.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>136</sup> Phichit Chaisare, A Thai musical analysis, (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 2016): 3–4.

Inspired by these melodic patterns, I was able to reconstruct these characteristics in my own compositions, to reference these types of Thai lyrical compositions. For example, in my composition "A Siamese Medley," I employed the use of several of the melodic patterns, which I had identified, including 1) 1 2 3 5, 2) 5 6 1 2 1 6, 3) 3 2 3 2 1 2, 4) 5 6 1 2 1 6, 5) 5 3 2 1 2 3, and 6) 1 6 5 3. I drew on these patterns and on syncopated rhythms, a key feature of jazz, before composing this piece partially based on rhythm changes, one of the more common expressions of AABA form in the jazz repertoire. These melodic patterns play a significant role in contributing a sound of Thai music in one of the standard forms used in jazz composition, performance, and improvisation (Figure 3.6).

Other melodic patterns in a pentatonic scale—including 1 2 3 5, 1 2 3 5 3, 1 3 2 1 6\$\dark\_1\$, and in particular, 1 2 3 5 6—can also be widely observed in the set of melodic patterns called *thang* (roughly equivalent to modes in Thai music), of which three out of seven modes have a similar construction resembling pentatonic scales. <sup>137</sup> These modes consist of 1) *thang phiang aw lang* (G A B D E), which is mainly used in theatrical music (*lakhon deuk damban*)(\$\pi\_2 \rho\_2 \rho\_1 \rho\_1 \rho\_2 \rho\_1 \rho\_2 \rho\_1 \rho\_2 \rho\_1 \rho\_2 \rho\_2 \rho\_1 \rho\_2 \rho\_2 \rho\_1 \rho\_2 \rho

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>137</sup> Miller and Williams, The Garland Handbook of Southeast Asian Music, 142.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>138</sup> These modes patterns were derived from Phichit Chaiseri, "A Thai musical analysis," Due to the intonation diversity in Thai classical music ensembles, these patterns can be transposed to other keys, such as thang *phiang aw lang* (F G A C D) or thang *phiang aw* bon (Bb C D F G). However, the patterns of these modes are still based on the 1-2-3-5-6 construction.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>139</sup> See Appendix A.1 for a full lead sheet of this composition



Figure 3.6: "A Siamese Medley."

# **TEXTURE**

Musical texture is another significant element of Thai classical music to consider in projects of hybridization, particularly because of the absence of harmonic chord progressions (in contrast to Western Music). Numerous independent musical voices often constitute textures in Thai classical music, providing an abundance of simultaneous sounds that could be heard as harmony, from a Western perspective. Yet even to trained musician ears, it still can be challenging, in the context of some of these textures, to identify main melodic parts, contrapuntal lines, or overall rhythmic structures. While listening to Thai music—in particular, ceremonial music—the unfamiliar listener could be overwhelmed by the hierarchical complexity produced by the independent musical layers of the various instruments. One of the main reasons behind this confusion for those unfamiliar with the music is that in Thai classical music every instrument has its own separate function and distinct musical role when

performing in an ensemble.<sup>140</sup> The term in Thai music *thang khrueang dontri* ("style of instrumental music") refers to the specific idiosyncratic function that each musician in an ensemble must carry out in order to interpret Thai compositions to suit the character of their instrument. In short, each musician performs the music based on the idiomatic way of playing his or her particular instrument.

Much like jazz musicians who learn the skill of improvising over chord changes, musicians in Thai classical music construct their melodic lines based on the sound produced by the *khong wong yai* (gong circles), which creates the outline of melodic movements in Thai classical music. The *khong wong yai* usually begins with the fundamental music line called *luk khong*. *Luk khong* functions as the primary nuclear melody of Thai classical compositions that musicians must accurately learn and explicitly understand in terms of its movement. There are three different categories for patterns in *luk khong* lines: 1) restricted patterns, 2) semi-restricted patterns, and 3) unrestricted patterns. These categories refer to the level of flexibility that the *khong* player is allowed to have—similar to varying levels of melodic embellishment a jazz musician might employ in performance.

Another significant musical layer is thang ranad (style for keyboard percussion instruments), which is typically divided into two categories including thang ranad ek (style for higher-pitched keyboard percussion instruments) and thang ranad thum (style for lower-pitched keyboard percussion instruments). It is the thang ranad ek that may mislead unfamiliar ears to consider it as a fundamental melody when listening to Thai music, due to its characteristic sound being clear and rhythmically concrete. One of the musical techniques used to construct thang ranad ek is called plae thannong (unlanimum) (the performance methods for modifying main melodies to suit instrumental idioms), which can be related to structural idiomatic improvisation based on the luk khong principal melody. John Garzoli and Bussakorn Binson summarize this kind of improvisation as follows:

As with jazz and other music involving improvisation, Thai improvisation is based on the principle of embellishing or transforming an underlying musical structure, in this case the *nuea phleng* [nuea means meat, phleng means song; nuea phleng is not heard in performance]. The primary function of this layer of musical structure is to act as a referent; the nuea phleng models the principles of musical organization inherent in the song which the performer then follows when creating melodic variations. In following

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>140</sup> There are three different types of instrument ensembles that mainly appear in Thai classical music. These are the *Piphat* (a melodic percussion and reed instrument ensemble), *Khruang Sai* (a string ensemble), and *Mahori*, (a diverse ensemble comprised of melodic percussion, reed, and string instruments.) For more details, see: Yuhpho, *Thai Musical instrument and Thai Musical ensemble*, 79.

the principles of melodic organization laid out in the *muea phleng*, the improviser is expected to create *thang* [their melodic line, in the idiomatic style] that faithfully reproduces the referent's melodic/rhythmic quality and maintains its structural and aesthetic cohesion. <sup>141</sup>

To perform *plae thamnong* techniques, a *ranad ek* player manages to produce the individual musical line that simultaneously approaches the exact pitch of the *luk tok* (target pitch at the end of a melodic line)<sup>142</sup>, which is outlined by the *khong wong yai* and must coincide with the given beat provided in the "damped stroke accent" called *chap*. This is demonstrated in Figure 3.7, where the pitches in the red circles identify the location of the *luk tok*, which is the note A. To utilize the *plae thamnong* technique, a *ranad ek* player must create melodic lines that land on the note A, synchronizing the line with the damped stroke called *chap* (+), examples of which are provided in three different approaches. *Plae thamnong* techniques can also be the product of pre-composed materials taught by a teacher, or of spontaneous improvisation by experienced players. According to Panya Roongruang, the aesthetic of *plae thamnong* techniques depends on how *ranad* players are able to render the sound of *luk khong*, writing that "the beauty of the *thang* of *ranad*'s variation is based on the performer [who] can bring together his/her memory of the *luk-khong*," The use of *plae thamnong* techniques also plays a crucial role in contributing to the density of musical textures and the richness of rhythmic complexity in Thai music.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>141</sup> John Garzoli and Bussakorn Binson, "Improvisation, Thang, and Thai Musical Structure," *Musicology Australia* 40, no.12 (2018), 61-62.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>142</sup> Somneuk Saengaroon and Narutt Suttachitt, "Thai Classical Music Composition Content of Lt. Col Sanoh Luangsuntorn, National Artist," *An online Journal of Education*,14 no.2, (2019), 7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>143</sup> This musical example was derived from Uthit Naksawat, *Theory and practice of Thai Classical music*, (Publishing in a memorial for Phum Bapuyawat 1970), 14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>144</sup> Roongruang, "Thai Classical Music Its Movement from Oral to Written Transmission," 265.



Figure 3.7: *Plae thamnong* techniques. "o" refers to the undamped stroke called *ching*, and "+" refers to the damped stroke called *chap*. Red circles indicate *luk tok* (in this case, the note A).

The distinct character of *thang ranad thum* can be interpreted as joyful and effervescent in a Thai musical sense. Because of its syncopated rhythmic feel and its musical embellishments deriving from *luk khong*—which a *ranad thum* player is allowed to employ—this musical interpretation helps such players to create a lively intervention into the Thai ensemble's texture. From the point of view of jazz composition, the function of *thang ranad thum* could be explained as a counterpoint-maker, contributing interesting contrapuntal lines and more complexity to Thai music's textures. Another *plae thamnong* technique that is prominent in Thai classical performances is *thang pi nai*, the style of *pi nai*, a predominant reed instrument in Thai ensembles. One of the main functions of *pi nai* in Thai ensembles is to intertwine with the sound of each of the other individual instruments. To do so, a *pi nai* player produces sustained pitches to close the empty space between various distinctive lines. In addition, the other two roles that seem to be important for a *pi nai* player, are 1) contributing to the musical expression, (e.g., joyful, sad, angry)<sup>145</sup> and 2) create a musical interpretation of a so-called "foreign accent"

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>145</sup> To express such musical emotions, the player may produce multiple staccato tones (tremolo), or play a fast passage in the short-range close to a target pitch, similar to a turn or mordent in Western music. Somnuek Saengarun personal interview 27 July 2020.

known as *samninag phasa*.<sup>146</sup> The performance of both *thang ranad thum* and *thang pi nai* in Thai classical music textures are displayed in Figure 3.8 (note that the *luk tok* which is A must coincide in all of the parts). <sup>147</sup>



Figure 3.8: Plae thamnong techniques of thang ranad ek, ranad thum, and pi nai.

Similar to other ethnomusicological studies of non-Western music, whether the texture of Thai classical music is polyphonic or heterophonic is still debated among scholars. For example, Panya Roongraung has stated that "Thai music is linear and non-harmonic. Its texture is described as idiomatic heterophony in which each instrument plays its own specific idiom based on the same principal melody." David Morton argues otherwise, writing:

Not the relationship of one melody to an underlying progression of solid complexes of sound, as in Western harmonic music, but the relationship of one melody to specific variants of itself—one idea viewed simultaneously from several different viewpoints, multiplicity within unity—characterizes Thai ensemble music. The technique of combining simultaneously one main melody and its variants is often incorrectly described as heterophony; polyphonic stratification seems a more precise description, since each of the "layers" is not a close approximation of the main melody but has distinct characteristics and a style of its own. 149

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>146</sup> As previously discussed, Thai music originates from the transculturation of multiple musical cultures. Consequently, *samninag phasa* refers to different musical "accents" produced and interpreted by Thai musicians; *samninag jin* describes the musical accent from Chinese; *samninag Lao* describes the musical accent from Lao; and *samninag mon* refers to the musical accent of the Mon people.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>147</sup> This illustration was taken from the "Khaek Borathet Thao"s music manuscript. Roongruang, "Thai Classical Music Its Movement from Oral to Written Transmission," 485.

<sup>148</sup>Ibid., 69.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>149</sup> Morton, The Traditional music of Thailand, 21.

Perhaps the most suitable answer to the question of whether Thai classical music's textures are heterophonic or polyphonic may be dependent on what types of compositions are being performed and by what types of ensembles. Terry Miller states:

*Piphat* music of theater and ceremony tends to be motivic and the differences in idioms among the instruments rather great; but *piphat* music in *sepha* style tends to be more lyrical, with slighter differences among the instruments. The former is comparable to polyphonic stratification, and the latter is comparable to heterophony. Beyond that, Thai music exhibits passages that are nearly polyphonic, not the result of chance combinations but stemming from compositional processes. Broadly speaking, then, the texture of Thai classical ensemble music is heterophonic in that each musician realizes the preexisting melodic structure in the idiom peculiar to his or her instrument or voice. <sup>150</sup>

The various textures of Thai classical music are crucial parts of my compositional approach in this project of music for jazz orchestra. I often use these textures in my work in conjunction with homophonic texture, which I will discuss in my analysis of my pieces in Chapter 7.

#### RHYTHM AND METER

Rhythm and meter are also significant elements of Thai classical music. Many Thai classical composers use a time signature of 2/4 due to the fact that the accented beat found in Thai classical music is typically located on the fourth beat (i.e., 1 2 3 4, or 1 & 2 & in eighth notes), rather than on the first beat as is common in Western music. This 2/4 concept was first introduced by the Fine Arts Department committee in 1929 in an attempt to preserve Thai classical music by using Western notation to transcribe the musical parts of the Thai ensemble. Even so, this 2/4 system still has not been met by a complete consensus among Thai classical musicians, though it is widely used in Thai classical music research—in particular in cross-cultural compositional aspects—and still remains the standard method for international musicians working in Thai music studies. Moreover, for my research, this method helps avoid confusion and provides articulate clear perspectives based on jazz composition

In contrast to Western music, rhythm in Thai classical music seems to primarily function as a musical indicator rather than as a way of constructing sophisticated rhythmic variations or contributing stimulating pulses.<sup>152</sup> There are two main forms of rhythm in Thai classical music employed by ensembles, namely 1) *jangwa ching* (rhythm defined by the *ching*, finger cymbals)

<sup>151</sup> Narkkong, "Aspect of Improvisation in Thai Classical Drumming with special reference to the Taphon," 72.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>150</sup> Miller and Williams, The Garland Handbook of Southeast Asian Music, 147.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>152</sup> In addition to *ching, krab, mong, chab, taphon, thon, rammana, klong that*, and *klong khaek* are all common percussion instruments in Thai classical music.

and 2) *jangwa nathap* (patterns related to drums in the *thon* category of goblet-shaped drums). <sup>153</sup> In both forms, rhythmic patterns function as a musical gauge that must be synchronized to the melodic structures during performances, and play a crucial role when composing Thai classical music. To generate the sound of *jangwa ching*, musicians produce two distinct sounds from a *ching* instrument: the undamped stroke called *ching* and the damped stoke, termed *chap*. These two strokes are continually performed in various patterns to create cyclical rhythms and are typically heard in Thai music. Exceptions to this include instances when the *ching* player plays only the *ching* or *chap* sound, moments when tremolo techniques are used, or passages where the *ching* asymmetrically switches between those two sounds, depending on the type of composition.

Ching patterns can be divided into two categories: 1) jangwa ching saman, consisting of approximately different twelve patterns, and 2) jangwa ching phiset, which consists of at least six patterns used to accompany different characters two forms of Thai theater, khon<sup>154</sup> and lakhon chatri. Patterns from both categories are often performed in Thai classical music, but I will illustrate only three patterns from jangwa ching saman, namely, the chan dio, song chan, and sam chan patterns—all of which have influenced my work as a jazz composer. Indeed, one must be able to understand the concept of jangwa ching saman in order to generate musical ideas on how Thai melodic movements function with instruments providing rhythmic accompaniment.

The concept *chan* in the names of the three patterns of *jangna ching saman* refers to the ideal tempos that *ching* performers must indicate in an ensemble. For example, *chan dio* refers to a fast tempo, *song chan*, a medium tempo (which is widely practiced in the ancient Thai music repertoire), and *sam chan*, a slow tempo, which is used in extended musical forms in Thai music compositions known as *Thao*—which were originally created during the early Rattanakosin period and initially invented by Pra Pradit Pairoh (Mee Duriyangkul).<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>153</sup> I exclude "*jangwa saman*," which is not related to a cyclical rhythm concept, but refers to the typical ideas of human rhythmic pulse and general tempo, e.g., fast, medium, slow.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>154</sup> The masked drama is based on the Thai version of the Indian ancient epic, Ramayana.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>155</sup> One of Thailand's oldest surviving forms of dance-drama, with significant ties to *nora*, a traditional Southern Thai performance. See Chapter 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>156</sup> Montri Tramote, "The Evolution of Thai music in the Rattanakosin period," *Sirindhorn lecture series vol.* 6, Chulalongkorn University, <a href="https://www.cca.chula.ac.th/protocol/images/book/pdf/book-sirinthorn06.pdf">https://www.cca.chula.ac.th/protocol/images/book/pdf/book-sirinthorn06.pdf</a> (19 July 1990).

To indicate the pattern of *jangwa ching* in *sam chan*, *song chan*, and *chan dio*, the players indicate precisely the sound of the *ching* and *chap*, which are equal to a half note in eight measures for *sam chan* (fast, or third level), a quarter note in four measures for *song chan* (medium tempo, or second level), and to an eighth note within two measures for *chan dio* (slow tempo, or first level) when writing in Western musical notation (Figure 3.9). As Figure 3.9 illustrates, the pattern of *ching song chan* and *ching chan dio* starts on the pickup measure due to the accented beat of Thai music, as mentioned above.

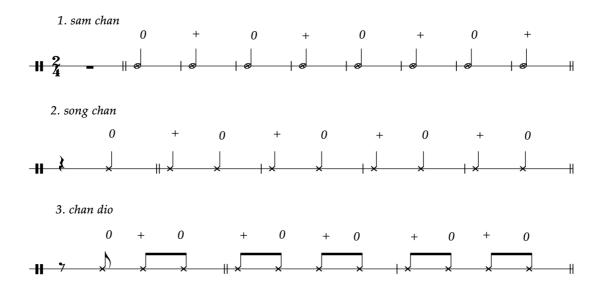


Figure 3.9: Jangwa ching patterns.

The second concept, *jangwa nathap*, is notable in Thai classical music composition due to its cyclical form. In *jangwa nathap*, the two distinctly Thai rhythmic patterns *nathap propkai* and *nathap song mai*<sup>157</sup> can provide useful means of understanding the framing of melodic phrases of Thai music, which must be synchronized and relatively restricted into each *nathap* cycle.

To produce such *nathap* patterns, musicians perform them on two-headed percussion instruments, such as double-head barrel drums *taphon* or *klong khaek*, or on the pair of single-headed drums *thon* and *rammana*. The syllables *thang*, *thing*, *ja*, and *jo* are used to describe four different types of sounds that constitute *nathap* patterns. Terry Miller has clearly demonstrated

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>157</sup> There is another *nathap* pattern used in Thai classical music which is known as *nathap phiset*, consisting of *nathap phleng*, *naphat phleng prasa*, and more. *Nathap phleng naphat* in particular is mandatory for ritual ceremonies to pay respect and worship to Lord Buddha, Hindu gods and goddesses, and the great spirit of Thai classical masters. Therefore, such a musical genre must require deep respect, and special concentration which is may not suitable for composing in a cross-cultural jazz context due to the issue of cultural appropriation, from my perspective.

how to construct the sound of Thai *nathap* from *klong khaek* (the "wife drum" refers to the lower-pitch drum, and the "husband drum" refers to the higher-pitch drum), *thon* (the wife), and *rammana* (the husband):

Thang: an undamped stroke on the center of the wife drum's head with closed right-hand fingers.

*Ting*: the same as the preceding stroke, but on the husband drum's head.

Ja: an undamped stroke on the wife drum's rim by two or three left-hand fingers.

Jo: the same as the preceding stroke, but on the husband drum's rim. 158

When bringing these four musical vocabularies together into single a rhythmic context, Thai percussionists are capable of constructing various cyclical rhythms: of *nathap propkai sam chan*, which consists of eight-bar phrases; of *song chan*, which consists of four measures; and of *propkai chan dio*, which can be performed in a two-bar rhythmic pattern (Figure 3.10).

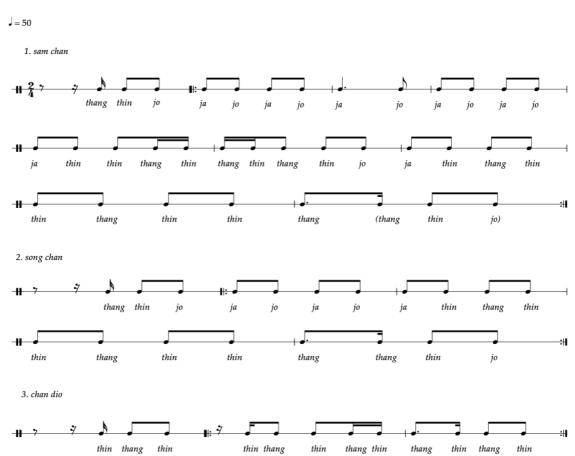


Figure 3.10: Nathap propkai.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>158</sup> Miller and Williams, The Garland Handbook of Southeast Asian Music, 143.

After completing one round of *nathap* cyclic patterns, the complete cycle is called *neung jangwa*; when these *nathap* patterns rotate in approximately eight or twelve *jangwa* (rounds), it produces the *thon*—which is a larger unit in Thai musical structure. This larger unit of structure could be compared with the concept of a "chorus" in jazz, where a cycle of a particular duration and harmonic progression repeats. When two, three, or four *thons* (choruses) are combined, they form a complete movement, called a *chan*. Analyzing a *chan* as if each *thon* were a chorus, from a jazz perspective, can provide insight into commonalities shared among jazz and Thai classical music. In addition, the rhythmic pattern of *nathap probkhai* is also known to be employed in Thai compositions that contain less syncopation of the melodic line, and more predictable rhythmic phases.<sup>159</sup>

Nathap song mai is a nathap pattern commonly used in shorter pieces which typically feature syncopated melodic lines and uneven melodic phrases. Nathap song mai is also characterized by the thang, thin, jo, and ja sounds, just like nathap probkhai when performing klong khaek. In comparison with nathap probkhai, the duration of nathap song mai is half as long, with four measures for sam chan, two measures for song chan, and a one-bar pattern in chan dio. Nathap song mai can also be widely found in the style called samminag lao (the "Lao accent" style of Thai classical music), in compositions such as "Lao Duang Duen," "Lao Siangtian," and "Lao Kham Hom." Lastly, it is also important to note that when performing these two nathap patterns, Thai percussionists also allow the addition of certain rhythmic embellishments called sai (Ane), and the addition of a small rhythmic fragment called len mai. These musical techniques can help the rhythmic features of Thai classical music to become more unexpected. Figure 3.11 demonstrates the rhythmic patterns of nathap song mai in sam chan, song chan, and chan dio.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>159</sup> Additional examples of Thai classical compositions with this pattern include "Khmen Sai Yok," "Ratri Pradab Dao," "Sarathi," "Cho Ra Khe Hang Yao," and "Iyaresi."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>160</sup> Tramote, Thai Music Studies 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Duriyangkasart Thai), 51.

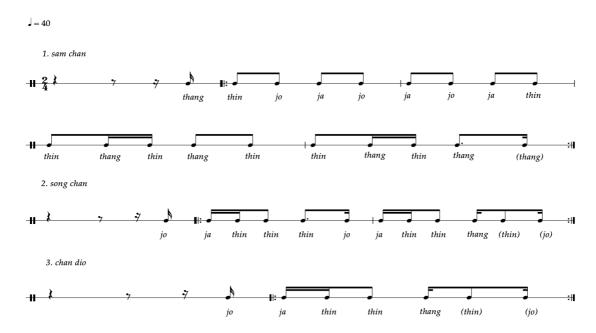


Figure 3.11: Nathap song mai.

Inspired by the individual character of Thai rhythmic patterns and endeavoring to apply their concepts to a crossover music project, I began to experimentally apply these musical elements for my own jazz composition practice. One way I did this was in composing rhythmic accompaniments in the drum set, as demonstrated in Figure 3.12. In this example, I constructed rhythmic accompaniment patterns on the snare drum and high tom in a 7/4 meter, common in contemporary jazz. This rhythmic pattern was based on the patterns of *nathap propkai sam chan* in mm.1-4, which was written in half-time on the snare drum.

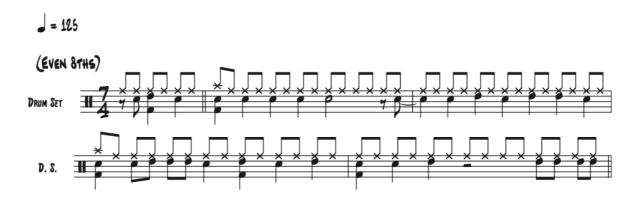


Figure 3.12: The adaption of *nathap propkai sam chan* to the drum set.

I also applied *nathap song mai chan dio* to the electric bass as well, incorporating it with hip-hop and contemporary jazz harmonies (Figure 3.13).



Figure 3.13: Electric bass part inspired by nathap song mai chan dio.

In addition, I adapted *nathap song mai song chan* for the full woodwind and brass sections of a modern jazz orchestra, to be played in homophonic rhythm during an improvised drum solo (Figure 3.14). This provides a prominent musical character of Thai classical music rhythms and emphasizes the integration of musical elements of Thai music into this particular example of jazz orchestra music.



Figure 3.14. Rhythmic adaption of *nathap song mai song chan* employed in woodwind and brass sections.

To apply these Thai cyclical patterns in a more conceptually interesting way, I also employed another musical technique of modern jazz orchestral composition: rhythmic displacement. One example of this technique is in a piano part I composed, inspired by the rhythm of *nathap propkai chan dio* (Figure 3.15). This type of piano pattern also could be accompanied by a drum solo or contributed to a concluding section of a piece to create a strong and solid ending for a jazz composition.



Figure 3.15: Rhythm of nathap propkai chan dio employed in the piano part.

#### **COMPOSITIONAL TECHNIQUES**

The original conceptualization of compositional methods in Thai classical music was embedded in the direct relationship between teachers and pupils. In a form of oral tradition, Thai composers would formally transfer the musical knowledge of traditional pieces or create new variations and personal adaptions out of traditional music and later teach them to pupils. But, from a traditional perspective, this process was intended to help Thai composers to preserve the characteristic sound of traditional music, and to maintain the traditional practices and values passed down through several generations of masters.<sup>161</sup>

Like all living traditions, Thai classical music compositional approaches have adapted as the world has modernized, and these approaches have become more comprehensive and

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>161</sup> Somnuek Saengarun personal interview 27 July 2020.

complicated. In Thai classical music composition today, compositional concepts can be typically divided into three categories: bangkhap thang (fully composed, required to be performed in the exact version of the composer), mai bangkhap thang (composed only in terms of the main structure and allowing performers to apply improvisation techniques called plae thamnong), and keung bangkahp thang-mai bangkhap thang (กิ๋งบังกับทาง-ไม่บังกับทาง) (partly performed according to the composer's exact version and partly allowing performers to improvise). 162

The well-known traditional composition method developed by Pra Pradit Pairoh (Mee Duriyangkul) entails the creation of a new composition by applying melodic and rhythmic augmentations as well as diminution techniques to an existing composition's melodic lines. These melodies and rhythms are based in *song chan* (second level), then extend to *sam chan* (third level), and again from *song chan* to reduce *chan dio* (first level), and then the three levels are combined together to produce one extended composition, called *thao*, <sup>163</sup> which consists of three movements. (It can also be referred to as a suite from the perspective of jazz composition.)

In the composition "Khaek Toi Moh" by Montri Tramote, a prominent Thai composer, and respected teacher, Montri employs the compositional technique of Pra Pradit Pairoh. He takes a melodic version of the traditional piece "Khaek Toi Moh" in *song chan* (which is widely performed in Thai dramatic dance), and then extends it to the *thao* compositional type (Figure 3.16).<sup>164</sup>

<sup>163</sup> In addition, *Thao* is also famous for lyrical music in which Thai composers display an expressive and emotional use of *bot seapa* (Thai poems) from Thai literature, and perform by alternating between instrumental and lyrical sections.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>162</sup> Personal interview with Somnuek Saengarun on July 27, 2020.

<sup>164</sup> The full score of "Khaek Toi Moh" can be found in Montri Tramote, Thai Music Manuscript Vol.1, 155-157.

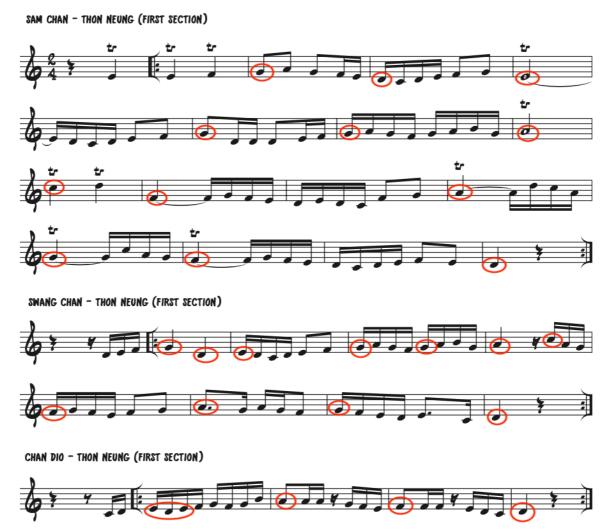


Figure 3.16: Melodic and rhythmic augmentation and diminution techniques in "Khaek Toi Moh." The red circles designate *luk tok* (target pitches) whose rhythm is derived from *song chan*.

The "target pitches" (*luk tok*, circled in red) of each melodic line of "Khaek Toi Moh" play a crucial role in these melodic augmentation and diminution techniques. The phrase structures of the composition are also significant: they double from eight measures in *song chan* to sixteen measures in *sam chan*, while target pitches are equally divided across four measures in *chao dio*. These target notes may be necessary elements for accommodating Thai classical music composers' formulation of new compositions. Composers of Thai classical music also employ the sounds of approach notes according to their aesthetic choices, with Montri mentioning that

For the core concept of the augmentation and diminution in Thai compositions, indeed the most important part is to construct the pitches that [are] mandatorily based on the sound of "luk tok" in the original compositions, but for the melodic movements that [are] construct[ed] in the middle of each

section and function as approach notes, to compose such melodic movements belong[s] to the composer's decision, and it can express how genuine [of a] composer they are. Because they must use their musicianship and artistic inspirations to construct musical melodic lines, most of the good composers construct the sound that glides smoothly and gently [to] connect each story together, similar to the construction of Thai poems. <sup>165</sup>

Besides the augmentation and diminution compositional techniques applied in thao composition, Thai composers also construct new extended musical compositions by combining old musical pieces (e.g., in a suite). Examples of this practice include 1) phleng ruang, an instrumental suite consisting of several traditional Thai compositions with a common theme, 2) phleng homrong, an instrumental suite mainly employed to open the performance—similar to an overture in Western music—and often performed in religious ceremonies and theatrical performances, and 3) phleng tap (เพลงตับ), an lyrical suite which is divided into two categories—tab ruang, which concentrates on the meaning of lyrics that can be combined together in the related context, and tap phleng, which focuses on the similar sound of certain melodic lines rather than composition lyrics. In contrast to phleng thao, phleng ruang, and phleng homrong, phleng tap applies no augmentation and diminution of the melodic parts of certain traditional pieces, but may be constructed by selecting repertoires in various tempos. For example, phleng ruang ching phra chan klang wan (เพลงเรื่องจิ๋งพระจันกลางวัน) is composed of the combination of traditional pieces in different tempos, and consists of selected pieces in song chan (second level) and chan dio (first level). 166

Another compositional technique widely utilized in Thai classical music, and related to jazz composition, is melodic variation. According to Uthit Naksawat, this melodic variation approach, known as *thang plien* (พางเปลี่ยน), is often used in works to develop new musical concepts and evoke sensations of surprise in listeners. To implement this technique, Thai composers still strictly follow the rule of retaining the original pitches located in strong beats from the original melody (*luk khong*), and recreate the melodic lines (e.g., Figure 3.17). 168

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>165</sup> Montri Tramote et al., Thai Music Manuscript Vol.1, (Bangkok: The Fine Arts Department, 1996), 193-194.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>166</sup> Kee Chantasorn, "The Analytical Study of Plaeng Rueang Ching Phra Chan Klang Wan A Case Study of Khong Wong Yai," Research and Development Journal Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University" 9, no. 2 (2017), 158-164.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>167</sup> Naksawat, *Thai music theory and how to practice*, 23.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>168</sup> This example was acquired from Uthit Naksawat, Thai music theory and how to practice, 23-24.



Figure 3.17: Thang plien (melodic variations).

In addition to these three compositional techniques, Thai composers frequently create additional sections to their modified compositions. One of these techniques is to create a unique cadence for concluding sections called *luk mot*. A *luk mot* is a recognizable melodic line that operates similarly to concluding riffs in a blues. By including a *luk mot* to conclude a jazz composition, it can help Thai audiences to identify when a piece is ending in a particularly Thai way. The utilization of *luk mot* in Thai compositions is employed in two different ways: 1) constructing a *luk mot* that has melodic lines, or 2) implementing a *luk mot* that contains no melodic lines (approach lines) that correlate to the composition. Most important from a traditional perspective is that the ending pitch of *luk mot* patterns must finish in *luk long yod*, which is relatively equal to the pitch D in Western music.<sup>169</sup> It is also noticeable that the implementation of *luk mot* sound must be related to the *samniang* (musical accents) of selected compositions (e.g., *luk mot samniang, Kheak, Lao, Mon, Burma,* and so on). An example of a *luk mot* appears in Figure 3.18.<sup>170</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>169</sup> Siriluk Changlongtham, "The principal of using Luk mot". The Fine Arts Department, The Ministry of culture <a href="http://fed.bpi.ac.th/2013/images/ebook/music/sirilak/index.html#p=1">http://fed.bpi.ac.th/2013/images/ebook/music/sirilak/index.html#p=1</a> >(n.d.).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>170</sup> This example was also taken from the Thai Music *Manuscript* Vol 1 written by Montri Tramote, p.157.



Figure 3.18: Luk mot of "Khaek Toi Moh."

In another Thai compositional technique similar to *luk mot*, Thai composers may create additional sections called *luk yon* (antieu), usually in the context of *nathap song mai* or *luk tao* when constructing *nathap propkai*. *Luk yon* works similarly to a musical bridge or a pedal point in jazz composition. The application of *luk yon* and *luk tao* must be sustained by one recurring target pitch, and can be located at the beginning of a song or the beginning of separate sections, as demonstrated in Figure 3.19.<sup>171</sup>



Figure 3.19: Luk yon, with target pitches circled in red.

Wa dok, (inner) as explained by my interviewee Somnuek Saengarun, is another compositional style that is widely used to construct additional sections, particularly in a type of Thai classical music known as *phleng la* (a farewell song). This compositional approach is to formulate a short instrumental solo between sections of vocal performance (wa dok). These solos are usually played by the *pi nai*, to give a musical interpretation of grief and to express nostalgic emotions as the solo interacts with the vocals. An example of a composition that includes wa dok is "Tao

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>171</sup> This musical example was obtained from Somnuek Saengarun, "Transmission process in Thai Classical music composition of Lt. Col Sanoh Luangsuntorn, Naitional Artist," Master's thesis., Chulalongkorn University (2018), 92-93.

Kin Phak Bung," a piece usually played as the final part of a Thai musical performance (Figure 3.20). 172



Figure 3.20: Wa Dok section of "Tao Kin Phak Bung."

Interestingly, Thai composers also use instrumental techniques and melodic embellishments that are similar to those common in Western music. These approaches help express the character of an ensemble, and include 1) tremolo (thang kro), 2) a broken fragment of a melody (luk lo), 3) call and response (luk kut)<sup>173</sup>, 4) the melodic displacement of rhythm (luk leuam) (ดูกเหลื่อม), and 5) a combination of various instrumental techniques mainly used in solo composition (thang khap luk khap dok) (ทางคาบดูกคาบดอก). For example, Thai composers widely employ the tremolo technique (thang kro) to create positive musical sensations (e.g., pleasantness and sweetness), in particular during the introduction to a piece (Figure 3.21).



Figure 3.21: A typical introduction of "Khmen Sai Yok" using *thang kro*. Transcription by the author.

Breaking up a fragment of a melody and providing the resultant distinct components for performance by different instruments (luk lo) (and also be observed in Thai compositional methods. Thai instruments such as the ranad ek and saw duang can function as lead instruments

<sup>173</sup> Thai composers regularly combine *luk lo* and *luk kut* together. The term "*luk lo luk kut*" refers to a mixture of these two compositional techniques.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>172</sup> This example was obtained from *Thai Music Manuscript* Vol.3 by Lekiat Mahawinitmontri and Lasit Issarangkun Na Ayutthaya, pages 135-136.

that perform the first phrase of the melody part and are then followed by the second instrument, which consists of the *ranad thum* and *saw u*, which perform the remaining melody section to create the sense of musical interaction (Figure 3.22).



Figure 3.22. An example of *luk lo* played by *ranad ek* and *khong wong yai* Transcription by the author.<sup>174</sup>

Luk kut is another common compositional technique in Thai classical music. Similar to luk lo, luk kut functions by dividing instruments into two categories, in which a lead instrument performs a first melodic line, and the second instrument delivers the following melodic phrase. In contrast to luk lo, the melodic patterns of luk kut perform the opposite melodic direction to the first melodic lines, but are still based on the same rhythmic idea of the first pattern. In addition, luk kut can be understood as a call and response, like in early jazz, where two musical phrases are performed in the relevant context but are not necessarily exact in musical pitch (Figure 3.23).



Figure 3.23: Example of *luk kut*. Transcription by the author.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>174</sup> Figure 3.23 and 3.33 were transcribed from "Sup Sangkhit" by The College of Dramatic Arts, Bangkok Thailand, <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KQbYyUCGoXo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KQbYyUCGoXo</a> (8 September 2021).

Another technique, *luk leuam* (animal), helps Thai composers generate interesting and complex musical ideas that can be implemented in accordance with Thai musical textures. As mentioned earlier, Thai classical music prioritizes featuring each instrument's individual character. The purpose of the *luk leuam* technique is to highlight the character of a secondary instrument referred to as *ranad thum*, which has a playful role in Thai classical music and performs the primary melodic patterns of composition one beat ahead while being followed by the usual lead instrument, a *ranad ek* (Figure 3.24).<sup>175</sup>



Figure 3.24: Luk leuam technique in "Kluen Kratob Fung."

One last compositional method of Thai classical music relevant to jazz composition is referred to as thang khap luk khap dok (พางคามลูกคามดอก). This technique helps composers balance the compositional materials in Thai music. To apply thang khap luk khap dok, which is widely utilized in solo composition (phleng dio), Thai composers shift between instrumental ornaments—for example, between single melodic pitch tremolo (rna), and thang kep (an instrumental technique using a set of eight notes, mainly in an octave similar to plae thannong techniques). This method can create irregular musical textures that musically produce more complicated rhythmic ideas and sophisticated melodic patterns. Thang khap luk khap dok also helps musicians of Thai classical music to pay tribute to the mastery of the teachers who have taught them how to practically utilize and musically organize such materials in the composition. Besides thang khap luk khap dok, other techniques that appear in Thai compositional methods include the use of a set of three grace notes (sabat, sadot) for melodic embellishment sections, or the implementation of continuous sixteenth notes in idiomatic improvisation to create an intensity in texture known as khayi (vii).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>175</sup> The transcription of "Kluen Kratob Fung" was obtained from Uthit Naksawat's book, Theory and Practice of Thai Classical Music, page 34.

#### **3.3 PRELIMINARY COMPOSITIONS**

Based on what I have learned about these compositional methods in Thai music, I have applied elements of them to processes of jazz composition. One example of this is my arrangement of "Giant Steps" by John Coltrane, which uses the augmentation and diminution techniques employed in *thao* compositions (Figure 3.25). As can be seen, in the B section, I expand "Giant Steps" from its original 4/4 to a 5/4 time signature, which is inspired by *thao* compositional approaches. Subsequently, I reduce the time signature of this section from 5/4 to 4/4, then to 3/4, in the way Thai composers generate *thao* compositions, which begin with *sam chan*, *song chan*, and *chan dio*. To provide add more complexity, in the C section, I additionally displace these three different time signatures to give the illusion of irregular meters.<sup>176</sup>



Figure 3.25: Arrangement of "Giant Steps" inspired by thao compositional technique.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>176</sup> See Appendix A.2 for a full score.

A second example is my original composition "Nanapa," where I apply several Thai classical compositional techniques to create a contemporary jazz composition (Figure 3.26). The introduction of this composition (A section), begins with thang kro (tremolo), widely found in the introduction sections of Thai classical music pieces. This is followed by the C section, whose use of luk yon (sustained pitches) contributes the sound of pedal points to the music before moving to the thematic melody section in the D section. In the E section, I divide the melody parts for use in a call and response context and provided this particular melodic line in two separate sections that can be interpreted as being in luk lo (5/4 section) and luk kut (6/4 section). Lastly, I employ melodic variation (thang plien) in the F section, and include the ending cadence pattern luk mot, to support the composition and give it the character of Thai music. For this luk mot, I partially incorporate the cadence pattern for the luk mot used in Khaek Toi Moh.

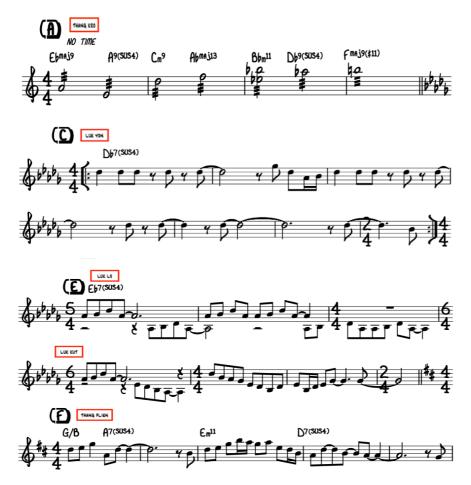


Figure 3.26a: Thai compositional techniques employed in "Nanapa." Composed by the author.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>177</sup> Appendix A.3 contains the complete score of "Nanapa.



Figure 3.26b: Thai compositional techniques employed in "Nanapa," continued.

#### **3.4 SACRED CEREMONIES**

As I have shown, applying the perspectives of Western musical analysis can assist in understanding elements of Thai classical music that may be relevant to hybrid-style approaches to jazz composition. Understanding the sacred and spiritual doctrine of Thai people's belief is also an important element of understanding Thai classical music. Before performing Thai music, Thai musicians usually hold their hands together tightly with the sticks of their instruments and then bring them above their heads, which their minds follow by contemplating their deities, teachers, and parents to appreciate the spiritual moments and musical knowledge that they have received, and also to pay respect to the instrumental spirits that they believe are symbolically embodied by Thai musical instruments.

The hierarchy of Thai music compositions used in sacred ceremonies can also be observed in three different types of pieces, namely, 1) phleng khru (respected pieces) 2) phleng saksit (sacred pieces which must be respected), and 3) phleng suung (smarga) (restricted pieces which must be highly respected).<sup>178</sup> All such music types may also be located in the *phleng naphat* category, which explicitly contains inconstant melodic lines, free rhythmic approaches, and asymmetrical measures, <sup>179</sup> and which generate opposite perceptions to the lyrical music types demonstrated earlier. To learn such music, Thai musicians must strictly acquire knowledge from their teachers, who will carefully provide the musical knowledge of phleng naphat according to a student's level of musicianship. Typical names of compositions in phleng naphat include "Saathukarn"—a musical piece of worship of the three gems of Buddhism; "Tra Homrong," "Tra Choen,"(ตระเชิญ) "Tra Sannitbat"—musical pieces used for the deities' invitation; "Rua Sam La"—a particular composition that invokes the act of the deities' salutation and demonstration of their powers; "Choet"(เชิด)—a musical composition of the processional

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>178</sup> Wong, Sounding the Center: History and Aesthetics in Thai Buddhist Performance, 104.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>179</sup> Ibid., 105.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>180</sup> Naksawat, Thai music theory and how to practice, 122.

journey to human realms; "Klom"—a musical piece for the arrival of the deities and all the divine music master sprits; "Kraao Nai" (กราวใน)—a piece anticipating the invitation of the highest god and the most Sacred demon deity; and "La"(ลา) —a composition played to indicate that all deities and spirits are assembled.<sup>181</sup>

In Wong's book, Sounding the Center: History and Aesthetics in Thai Buddhist Performance, Montri Tramote explicitly categorizes the hierarchy of learning this musical tradition in five levels. Students progress through each level of the hierarchy as they develop their performance practices for sacred ceremonies (khrop kru). Tramote describes the five levels as follows. The first level is an initiation in which a student takes flowers, incense, a candle, and a designated amount of money to the teacher, who will later grasp the student's hands and start to play the first piece of traditional Thai music called "Saathukarn" on a khong wong yai in the first ceremony. The second level proceeds only after the student has completely learned the evening overture (the standard ritual music repertoire). In the second ceremony, the teacher again grasps the student's hands and plays the beginning of the ritual piece "Tra Homrong." For the third level, the student begins to learn the daytime overture from the intermediate naphat repertoire, and at this level's ceremony, the teacher will grasp the student's hands and play a special piece, called "Tra Baungkarn" (ตระบองกัน). 182 In the fourth level, the student must begin to study the complicated and high-level ritual pieces in the *phleng naphat* category. And, in the sacred ceremony at this level, the teacher will grasp the student's hands and play "Basstaskuunii" (บาทสกุณี). For the highest level, the fifth level, the student begins to study the highest piece in the *naphat* category known as "Ong Phra Phiraap." Before studying this piece, the student must be over thirty years old and have been ordained as a Buddhist monk (for male students). 183 These five levels of sacred ceremonies play an important part in every Thai classical musician's education and are of high concern to the traditional music practices in Thai classical music, of which any cross-cultural composers working on Thai classical music projects should be appropriately considerate and aware.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>181</sup> See more details in Tramote. Thai music studies 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 81-88, and Wong, Sounding the Center: History and Aesthetics in Thai Buddhist Performance, 119-123.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>182</sup> Narongchai Pidokrajt, "Music of the Na-phaat repertoire - the connection of emotion and imagination," *Journal of Fine and Applied Arts Khon Kaen University* 6 Vol. 2 (2014), 101.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>183</sup> Wong, Sounding the center: History and Aesthetics in Thai Buddhist Performance, 120-127.

#### 3.5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Thailand's musical diversity is a product of the country's extensive history of social, cultural, and ethnic diversity. This notion has also resulted in Thai musicians being more open to foreign cultures, as evidenced by their use of foreign instruments and adoption of what they call foreign musical accents. For Thai classical music, each ensemble has its own unique way of tuning their instruments, which is referred to as "intonation diversity," an important considering when undertaking a project of musical hybridization of Thai music with music for jazz orchestra.

Despite that diversity, many Thai instruments produce pitches in, or close to, Western tuning, which can be transcribed in Western staff notation as approximations. Thai classical music, unlike Western music, contains no harmonic progression; instead, it is composed of multiple distinct lines in the style of thang khrueang dontri. Thai musical textures can relate to idiomatic heterophony or polyphonic stratification depending on the style of composition. Two concepts of Thai rhythm that are important are jangwa ching, and jangwa nathap, which function as a musical gauge for Thai classical musical performances. These two notions are also strongly connected to chan, which refers to the ideal tempos and is divided into three levels: sam chan, song chan, and chan dio. Rhythmic patterns of nathap propkai and nathap song mai also appear to be used as accompaniments for drum, bass, and piano parts.

When writing *thao* compositions, composers of Thai classical music use the concept of *chan*, in which old traditional music pieces were diminished and expanded to produce a new work. In addition, this technique can be combined with other jazz compositional approaches to generate an innovative method for jazz arranging, as demonstrated in my arrangement of "Giant Steps." Other compositional approaches used in Thai classical music are comparable to those used in jazz, also include combining songs with similar melodic characters to create a suite (*phleng ruang*), or building extended sections, such as an introduction (*luk yon*) or an outro (*luk mot*). In addition, *thang kro*, *luk leuam*, *luk lo*, and *luk kut* all appear to be beneficial and provide distinct techniques effective in both arranging and composing for a small jazz ensemble, as evidenced in my preliminary work, "Nanapa."

### Chapter 4

# Investigating the Musical Aspects of dontri isan nuea (Traditional Music of Northeast Thailand)

What makes Thai culture unique is not its isolation but its absorption of elements from its innumerable contacts with foreign cultures over many centuries, almost none of which were forced.<sup>184</sup>

Terry E. Miller

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

To provide background on *dontri isan nuea* (often shortened to *isan nuea*), this chapter begins with a brief overview of the musical cultures that constitute the traditional music of northeast Thailand. I then examine the performance methods and musical instruments of *isan nuea*.

I also include transcriptions of a number of *isan nuea* performances, each of which has provided insight into my compositional work. Following that, I investigate the use of *lai* (modes in *isan nuea*), discuss these modes' distinctive meanings, and demonstrate some of the musical overlaps between a particular *lai*, *lai* se, and common elements of jazz performance. In addition, I include my full transcription of "Lai Teay Khong" performed by Sombat Simlah, the *khaen* master

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>184</sup> Miller, "Appropriating the Exotic: Thai Music and the Adoption of Chinese Elements," 143.

from Mahasarakham Province, to provide an in-depth example of an *isan nuea* performance. Through my preliminary works, I offer several compositional approaches for incorporating *isan nuea* melodies, such as "Lai Ka Ten Kon" and "Lai Nok Sai Bin Kham Thung," into jazz compositions. To close the chapter, I briefly discuss a traditional *isan nuea* singing style called *mawlum*, drawing on work by both Terry E. Miller and Chaweewan Dumnern.

## THE TRADITIONAL MUSIC OF NORTHEAST THAILAND (DONTRI ISAN NUEA)

According to Charoen Chaichonphairote,<sup>185</sup> three prominent and distinct musical cultures that have been in practice in the northeast Thailand include: 1) the musical culture of the upper area of the region (*isan neua*), which consists of fourteen provinces, mainly influenced by Thai-Lao ethnic groups; 2) the musical practices of the lower area known as *isan tai* (Tarula) (which refers to the south), consisting of three provinces, primarily influenced by Khmer music; and 3) the musical culture of the Thai-Khorat people located in Nakhon Ratchasima Province—which has partly influenced the music culture of central Thailand. I focus here on the music of the Thai-Lao upper area (*isan nuea*), and on the ways I have adapted this music in my hybridization processes as a composer.

This particular style of music depicts the way of life of Thai-Lao communities who live in the wide plain area where the Mekong River is a symbol of the people's lives and is crucial to their survival—particularly for the region's agriculture, as the weather can be harsh and marked by extreme drought, especially during the summer, from late January to the middle of May. Consequently, the sound of music from *isan nuea* serves as the musical expression of its people, who sing and play instruments to heal their suffering in such hostile weather conditions—communicating with local spirits<sup>186</sup> for encouragement when they are sick (*lum phi faa*), entertaining themselves after finishing work in a paddy field, or providing music for their religious processions (*hae*)(usi), such as *hae bangfai* (usitis), or *hae phawet* (usitis).

186 Even though the musical practices of northeast Thailand seem to be less ceremonial when compared to Thai classical music, the practice of *wai khru* (paying respect to the teachers) and other ceremonial music used to praise local spirits—in particular for Phaya Tan (พญาแถน)—still can be observed in the region and its style.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>185</sup> Charoen Chaichonphairote is a prominent Thai ethnomusicologist specializing in the traditional music of northeast Thailand and has been teaching at Mahasarakham University—where the musical culture of northeastern Thailand is largely practiced. For more details on the historical musical knowledge of northeastern Thai music, please see Charoen Chaichonphairote's book, *The Traditional music of northeast Thailand*, (Bangkok: Srinakharinwirot University press, 1983).

#### **4.2 PITCH AND INSTRUMENTS**

The traditional music of northeastern Thailand uses a set of seven diatonic pitches similar to those in Thai classical music, and its melodic structures are also predominantly based on a penta-centric concept. The original tuning systems of isan nuea music were developed from diverse methods in disparate provinces—a subject that needs more evidence-based research to prove various hypotheses on the original tuning practices in remote areas.<sup>187</sup> However, nowadays, some instruments from this musical region have been widely produced by adapting the Western tuning system (A=440) as their standard, a process which is referred to as sieng sakon. These instruments can be performed with Western instruments, and their performances lend themselves to transcription in Western notation more efficiently than those of Thai classical music. One of the limitations that seems to occur with isan nuea musical instruments, from my perspective as a jazz composer, is that one instrument is only capable of playing in one key (e.g., khaen in Am, or wot in Dm), which may cause difficulty for isan nuea performers when employing key modulation. (Isan nuea musicians prefer to refer to the key of their musical instruments in the minor). To begin the discussion, I describe the use of isan nuea instruments and how they can function in a jazz composer's setting.

#### **KHAEN**

A khaen is a bamboo mouth-organ used in northeast Thailand and Laos. 188 When performing, the player covers the small holes that have been drilled in each small pipe, located on the left and right sides. The range of the instrument is the two-octave diatonic scale for a khaen paet (with sixteen pipes in total on the two sides), which is commonly employed in isan nuea music. Other instruments in the khaen family consist of 1) khaen hok, the smallest organ (six pipes in total, e.g., the khaen hok in G is capable of producing G, A, C, D, E, and G1, 2) khaen jed (fourteen pipes in total—e.g., a khaen jed in Am—consisting of A, B, C, D, E, F, G, A\u2223, B\u2223,  $C\uparrow$ ,  $D,\uparrow E,\uparrow$ , and  $F\uparrow$ , i.e., less than two octaves), and 3) khaen kao, the biggest organ (with eighteen pipes in total, a khaen kao in Am is capable of producing A, B, C, D, E, G, A\(\cap{\chi}\), B\(\chi\),

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>187</sup> For more details on *isan* tuning system, see chapter Miller's chapter, The Kaen Reed-Organ, its Description and History, "Kaen Playing and Mawlum Singing in Northeast Thailand," (1977).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>188</sup> Other bamboo mouth-organ-based instruments with different structures and names are also played in Vietnam and by ethnic minorities in South China. See, Sujit Wongthes, "Thai Music refers to the musical practice of center Thailand, other musical regions are excluded." Matichon online

<sup>&</sup>lt; https://www.matichon.co.th/columnists/news 210907>, (13 July 2016).

 $C\uparrow$ ,  $D,\uparrow$   $E,\uparrow$ ,  $F\uparrow$ ,  $G\uparrow$ ,  $A\uparrow\uparrow$ ,  $G\uparrow\uparrow$ , and  $C\uparrow\uparrow$ ). Please note that multiple pipes on the same *khaen* may produce the same pitch.<sup>189</sup>

The *khaen paet* (sixteen-pipe model) is the instrument that most frequently appears in *isan nuea* performances. It is also capable of performing as a solo instrument or accompanying a singer, also known as *molam*. Unlike the fingering of Western music mouth-organs, which are sequentially arranged from lower pitches to higher pitches, the fingerings used to play a *khaen paet* can be disorienting, but are effective for the pentatonic concepts and traditional melodies of *isan nuea* (Figure 4.1).<sup>190</sup>



Figure 4.1: *Khaen paet's* fingering. The right hand's fingers move among the adjacent right-hand pipes (1–8), while the fingers of the left hand do the same for the left had pipes (9–16).

Another striking characteristic produced by the *khaen* is a drone. Similar to Hindustani classical and Carnatic music in India, the use of sustained pitches—known as *sieng sep* ((\$\tilde{k}\tilde{l}\

The primary role of the *khaen* in *isan nuea* can also be observed as that of a lead instrument, with the instrument providing a tuning pitch for ensembles, and musical adjustments of dynamics, articulations, and tempos when performing in a group. One of the most important musical elements in *isan nuea* music is called *lai*. This term denotes the modes and melodic lines

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>189</sup> Sumrongthong et al., "Thai Music Culture: North Isan Region" (National Research Funding), (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University, 2017), 254-257.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>190</sup> Christopher Adler, "Khaen the bamboo free-reed mouth organ of Laos and Northeast Thailand: Notes for Composers," <a href="http://christopheradler.com/khaen-for-composers.pdf">http://christopheradler.com/khaen-for-composers.pdf</a> (17 June 2020).

<sup>191</sup> Kitsoot is black, sticky beeswax. See, Miller, "Kaen Playing and Mawlum Singing in Northeast Thailand," 48.

of traditional compositions, and was also originally generated from *khaen* performance, with *isan nuea* musicians identifying the concept as *lai mae bot* (fundamental modes). <sup>192</sup> Experienced or respected *khaen* players in communities are also appreciated as *maw khaen*, which is a title given to an honorable, skilled *khaen* master who plays a crucial role in the oral tradition of this musical style.

#### **PHIN**

The *phin* is a small fretted lute consisting of two, three, or four strings that can be performed as a solo instrument, or to accompany singers or other instruments in a musical ensemble context (often alongside the *khaen*). The tuning system of the *phin* is also fascinating, as it can be based on different provinces' perspectives (and thus is quite diverse), and must be adjusted to the sound of a drone (similar to a *khaen*) in each composition. For example, Chulalongkorn University academics discovered the notion of the *lai noi* tuning system, which was founded in Nong Kai Province and is tuned to D-A-G<sup>193</sup>—in contrast to Terry Miller's study on *lai noi*, from a different region where the instrument is tuned to A-D-A.<sup>194</sup>

Based on my work with *phin* performers in 2016–2017 with the Faculty of Music, Silpakorn University, and similar to Apiruk Phoosanga's research<sup>195</sup>, several standard tuning techniques are now commonly used in *phin* performances, in contrast to regional tuning methods. These systems are divided into three categories for a three-string *phin*: 1) E-A-E (the most widely-used); 2) E-A-A; and 3) E-B-E. There are four tuning categories for a two-string *phin*: 1) E-A; 2) E-B; 3) E-D; and 4) E-E. Finally, four varieties of a four-string *phin*: 1) E-A-E-A; 2) E-A-E-B; 3) A-E-A-E; and 4) E-E-A-A. (Please note that the first letter refers to the first string—the lowest pitch—while the second refers to the second string, and so on). When playing the *phin*, *isan nuea* musicians also use a plectrum, or pick, that was originally made of buffalo or cow horns. Nowadays, the pick often comprises of any plastic products that are easily found in communities. *Phin* players even sometimes use modern guitar picks to pluck the instrument's strings.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>192</sup> Sitthisak Champadaeng et al., "Isan Khaen Player: Technique, Method, and Success in Playing," *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Mahasarakham University* 38, no.1, 64.

<sup>193</sup> Sumrongthong et al., "Thai Music Culture: North Isan Region, 260.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>194</sup> Miller and Williams, The Garland Handbook of Southeast Asian Music, 172.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>195</sup> Apiruk Phoosanga, "Lai Pin Isan: Compositional Technique and Performance Styles of Thongsai Tuptanon and Boomma Kaowong," Master's thesis, Mahasarakham University, (2019), 9.

To practically understand how the *phin* can function, I transcribed two solo pieces, "Lai Ka Ten Kon (ตายกาเด็นก็อน)" ("crows dancing over the rocks") by Thongsai Thabthanon—a *phin* master from Ubon Ratchathnai Province, (Figure 4.2) and "Lai Kaeo Na Ma (ตายแก้วหน้าม้า)," ("a house's face") live-recorded by Boomma Kaowong (Figure 4.3), one of the most-respected traditional *phin* masters in *isan nuea* music from Kalasin Province. Thongsai Thabthanon's stylistic performance is regarded as one of the forerunners of modern *phin* performance, using an electric *phin* (a *phin* with a pickup) in *isan nuea* ensembles. He is also known for being one of the prominent *isan nuea* musicians to record *phleng luk thung* (Thai folk songs) with a *phin*. His performances can also be heard in a number of *isan nuea* films, which I listened to several times before deciding to transcribe his performance. Boomma Kaowong, a visually impaired *phin* master, is acclaimed by *isan* musicians as the maestro of three-string *phin* and one of the most rhythmically skilled *phin* performers in *isan* performance. Additionally, he produced numerous modern *isan nuea* melodies still widely used in the *phin* repertoire.



Figure 4.2: "Lai Ka Ten Kon." Transcription by the author.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>196</sup> Figure 4.2 was transcribed from Thongsai Thabthanon's performance of "Lai Ka Ten Kon" (0.00-0.29) < <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DIi4Me1pG0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DIi4Me1pG0</a>> uploaded by Thongbass Thapthanon, (6 November 2021).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>197</sup> Boomma Kaowong's performance of "Lai Kaeo Na Ma" in Figure 4.3 was transcribed from <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ZFZRmIkEuI">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ZFZRmIkEuI</a> (1.27- 1.52) uploaded by Mark Apirak (14 August 2019).



Figure 4.3: "Lai Kaeo Na Ma." Transcription by the author.

As the transcriptions in Figures 4.2 and 4.3 demonstrate, phin performances are primarily based on the construction of pentatonic scales, which in these cases are D and G minor pentatonic scales. From a vertical compositional perspective, these two transcriptions also illustrate that the construction of *phin* performance can be built on both a single pitch and two pitches, which primarily build up from minor 3rd, P4, P5, minor 7th, and an octave; alternatively, the players play a set of three pitches, which usually build up from M2 and P4, and are equivalent to a suspended chord in jazz harmony. In my transcriptions of "Lai Kaeo Na Ma" I have included articulation marks to show various characteristics of phin performance. For example, a phin player may accent the upbeat in order to provide strength in a syncopated rhythm when the phin is being used to accompany traditional isan nuea dances. Interestingly, these rhythmic accents appear to be comparable to a swing feel, which is commonly stressed on upbeats while playing in eighth-note settings. Similar to khaen performance, both compositions use drones (sieng sep)—on the note D in the melodic patterns of "Lai Ka Ten Kon" and the note G in the "Lai Kaeo Na Ma" melody. Both are also based on the penta-centric concept. In addition, sixteenth notes are used in these two compositions to offer the performances a rhythmic intensity. 198

#### **PONG LANG**

Pong lang is a melodic percussion instrument (a wooden xylophone) employed in different types of ensembles in *isan nuea* music. It was originally designed in Kalasin province to be used as a signal indicator for annual events in communities, and to expel crows out of paddy fields. The

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>198</sup> Appendix C.5-C.6 contains the MIDI files for figures 4.2 and 4.3.

pong lang originally consisted of six distinct wooden bars that produced five different sounds that related to a major pentatonic scale (e.g., G A C D E).<sup>199</sup> Pleuang Chairasmee (1932 - 2007),<sup>200</sup> a national artist and a Kalasin native, expanded the range of the *pong lang* by adding extra wooden bars to the instrument, allowing it to produce six unique pitches, which became a common tuning system for the instrument.<sup>201</sup> In addition, the tuning system of *pong lang* was modified to include the seven distinct pitches of the Western diatonic scale, allowing the instrument to participate in Western music ensembles. (Figure 4.4 illustrates three distinct *pong lang* tuning systems, consisting of traditional tuning, standard tuning, and seven-pitch diatonic tuning.)

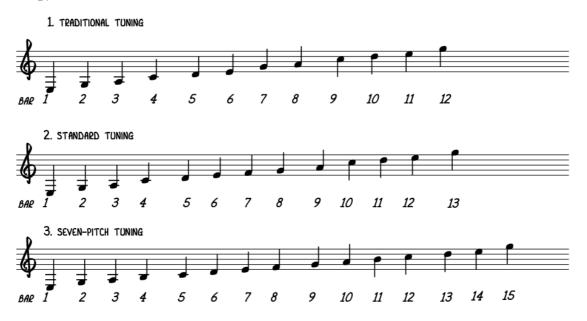


Figure 4.4: Pong lang tuning systems.

Unlike Western xylophones, whose bars lay flat, the wooden bars of pong lang are tied together and hung on two vertical poles of differing heights, resulting in a profile similar to a right triangle. The pong lang can be played by either one or two players. When it is played by two players, the one person plays melodic patterns, and the other plays a set of drones. It is also used as a solo instrument or to accompany traditional dances, including seng phu thai (tribal dance) and dances called seng swing (fishing net), seng tum na (farming), and seng yae kai mod dang (เป็นแหน้าให้มด) (hunting red ant eggs). Nowadays, pong lang instruments appear frequently in the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>199</sup> Pipop PinKaew, *Pong Lang Performances, a written document used for an isan music teaching,* (Udon Thani Rajabhat University, 2016), 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>200</sup> For more details of Pleuang Chairasmee, please visit

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="http://www.culture.go.th/cul">http://www.culture.go.th/cul</a> fund/download/open/kruplueang/kruplueang1.pdf >.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>201</sup> PinKaew, Pong Lang Performances, a written document used for an isan music teaching, 2-3.

Thai media, as well as in ensembles of cross-cultural music of a Thai pop-rock type, in regional music scenes, called *lum sing*.<sup>202</sup>

For an example of *pong lang*, I transcribed a performance of "Lai Ka Ten Kon," which is also part of the typical repertoire for *pong lang* solo performance (Figure 4.5). The recording I used is by Lamut Sapphat, a renowned *isan nuea* musician from Kalasin Province.<sup>203</sup> His reputation extended to other provinces, in particular Khon Kaen, where he taught *isan nuea* music performance at Khon Kaen University, one of the country's most recognized music programs, which has made substantial contributions to *isan nuea* music research. I chose Lamut Sapphat's performance of "Lai Ka Ten Kon" because of the relevance of several of the techniques utilized in this performance to the jazz composition and improvisation methods described below.

In this performance, drones on the pitch A are heard throughout, and the entire melody is based on an A minor pentatonic scale. Similar to the performance on *phin*, upbeat accents are also heard throughout the performance. The *pong lang* player also provides accented staccato articulation on multiple downbeats to create a strong rhythmic sense, as in other types of dance composition of *isan nuea*. Interestingly, musical techniques that are similar to those of jazz composition and improvisation include: the use of a question and answer for constructing thematic melody parts (mm.3-8), melodic sequence (primarily built up from G-A-C-D in mm.14-22 and A-G-E-D in mm.23-27), and repetition (D-E-G) in mm.28-36 (indicated by the red arrows in Figure 4.5).<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>202</sup> See, Priwan Nanongkham's chapter, Influence of Modernization on Traditional music, "Modern Isan Music as Image: A Positive Identity for the People of Northeast Thailand," PhD Diss., Kent State University (2011), 341-344.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>203</sup> *Pong lang* performance of "Lai Ka Ten Kon," in Figure 4.5 was transcribed from Lamut Sapphat's performances. <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gre1UMVCKLk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gre1UMVCKLk</a>> (0.07-0.41) uploaded by Knarwijk Thotabutr (7 September 2020).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>204</sup> The transcription's MIDI file can be found in Appendix C.7.

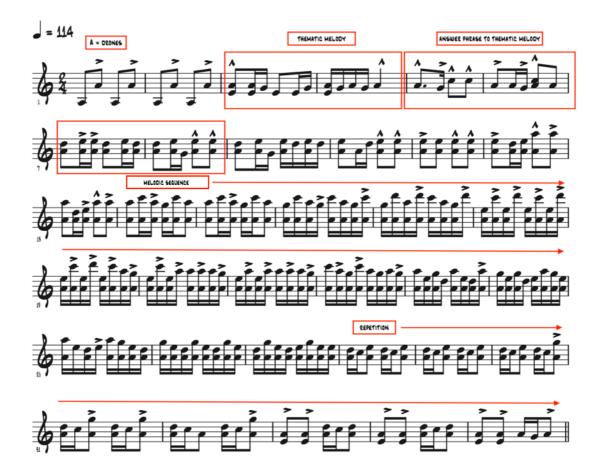


Figure 4.5: *Pong lang* performance of "Lai Ka Ten Kon." Transcription by the author.

#### KLONG HANG (LONG TAIL DRUMS) AND OTHER PERCUSSION

The rhythm in *isan nuea* music is one of the notable musical characteristics. Because *isan nuea* instruments typically serve to accompany traditional dances, as a consequence, the rhythmic patterns in this particular music seem to be more aroused, excited, and more stimulated, in comparison with other regional musical practices in Thailand. The Thai word *klong* refers to membranophone instruments that uses to generate rhythm (*jawang*). And, for the *isan nuea* percussion category, it is *klong hang* or *klong yao isan* (a long tail drum), and *ramana isan* or *klong teung* (a medium-sized bass drum) that frequently appear in *isan neua* music.

Klong hang produces three fundamental sounds: 1) Jo (the player uses the tip of their hand to make a treble sound); 2) Tung (the player applies the whole right hand to make a bass sound) and teung (same as the construction of tung sound but the player switches to a left hand); and 3) theng (the player either their left or right hand to make a bass sound out of the middle of the

drum). Theng is the only sound the *klong hang* is cable of making in *ramana isan* or *klong teung*, where it is performed together with *kholaw* (a Thai bamboo clave, using to emphasis the down beat).

Various types of cymbals are used in *isan nuea*. The *ching* produces two sounds by damped and undamped stroke (the same as the one used in a Thai classical music ensemble). *Chap lek* is a pair of small cymbals, producing two distinct sounds (i.e., *chae* [wi] and *wap* [vu]), which are produced by the player slightly rubbing the cymbal surfaces against each other; when sliding the cymbals in the opposite direction to the player's position, the sound of *chae* is produced, and when sliding the cymbals back toward the player's position, the sound of *wap* is made. *Chap yai* is similar to *chap lek*, but twice the size, and capable of making two sounds, called *chap* (damped stoke), and *chae* (undamped stoke).

#### **4.3 MUSICAL ELEMENTS**

#### LAI

Similar to thang in Thai classical music, the word lai is used in several ways in reference to significant elements of isan nuea. It is being used in the names of traditional music pieces in isan nuea, especially ones that refer to nature and landscape, such as "Lai Ka Ten Kon," (crows dance over rocks) and "Lai Maeng Phu Tom Dok" (bugs swarm flowers). It can also be the name of the sound of traditional isan nuea modes, such as lai yai, (equal to A minor pentatonic scale) or lai noi (equal to D minor pentatonic scale). In addition, lai is used in the names of repetitive melodic lines, used in processions, such as lai seng bang fat<sup>205</sup> or lai klawng yao (long drum trail processions). Lastly, it is also used in the names of regional music accents, which include the names of geographical areas, such as "Lai Phu Thai Sakon Nakhon," (the music of a phu thai tribe in Sakon Nakhon province) or "Lai Phu Thai Kalasin" (the music of a phu thai tribe in Kalasin province).

I begin my discussion of *lai* in its meaning as the sound of modes, as this is the most important element of the concept to my process of hybridizing *isan nuea* with jazz composition. Then, I

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>205</sup> The *bang fai* ceremony is also known as the rocket festival. It is one of the largest traditional events in northeast Thailand and Laos. It usually occurs from April to June. The purpose of this event is to beg for rain and the abundance of water before the farming season.

proceed to musical analysis of *lai* as traditional music compositions and describe how I adapt them to jazz compositions.

For the *lai* system of modes, *isan nuea* musicians produce sets of six distinct sounds, using these sounds in their improvisation for solo performance, or to accompany traditional *isan nuea* singing, known as *mawlum*. Nowadays, the six modes typically heard in *isan nuea* performances are divided into two groups 1. *lai thang yao* (equal to the structure of minor pentatonic scales), and 2. *lai thang san* (major pentatonic scales) (Figure 4.6).

#### lai thang yao

1. lai yai, consisting of A, C, D, E, G (A minor pent.)

2. lai noi, or lai long noi, consisting of D, F, G, A, C (D minor pent.)

3. lai se, consisting of E, G, A, B, D (E minor pent.)

lai thang san

4. lai sutsanaen, consisting of C, D, E, G, A (C major pent.)

5. lai pong sai, consisting of F, G, A, C, D (F major pent.)

6. lai soi, consisting of G, A, B, D, E (G major pent.)

Figure 4.6: Lai thang yao and lai thang san.

As *isan nuea* is based on the inspiration of the environment, entertaining communities, and providing musical expression of people's lives, the utilization of *lai* can help *isan* musicians express their musical feelings, such as pleasure (major tones) or sorrow (minor tones), and can

help them to avoid using unpleasant pitches, which they refer as *sieng som*<sup>206</sup> (sour sound) while performing as solo instruments, or to accompany singers. The application of modes in *isan nuea* also plays a crucial role in the practice of an improvisation in *thamnong yoi* (an improvisational section) that *isan nuea* musicians apply to express their artistic stories through their instrument.

As an example of how *isan nuea* musicians apply modes to the construction of melody and improvisational elements, I transcribed a live recording of a performance in *lai se*<sup>207</sup> (E minor pentatonic scale) by the *maw khaen* Buahong Phajung, a *khaen* performer native to Udon Thani Province. According to the Khon Kaen University's Isan Artists' Archive, Buahong began to learn to play *khaen* from his father. He was also recognized in both Thailand and Laos and involved in the establishment of several philanthropic *isan nuea* music education organizations in provinces along the Thai-Lao border, including Nong Khai Province.<sup>208</sup> I decided to transcribe his *lai se* performance, revealing the utilization of motivic development crucial to this *khaen* performance (Figure 4.7).<sup>209</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>206</sup> John Garzoli, "Mawlam and jazz in intercultural musical synthesis," Rian Thai: International Journal of Thai Studies 11, no.1(2018), 14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>207</sup> Lai se is one of the traditional modes in *isan neua* that is not frequently heard. It sounds can provide a mood of sorrow and sadness. For more information on *lai se*, please see, *Weerayut Seekhunlio*, "Phu-Thai musical in Savannakhet Province and the Republic of Laos," Thailand Science Research and Innovation, (Mahasarakham University (2016), 21.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>208</sup> The Cultural Center *Isan* Artists' Archive, "Buahong Phajung's personal interview", Khon Kaen University Arts and Culture Center <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YdFPU9]mafs">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YdFPU9]mafs</a> (26 April 2018).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>209</sup> This figure was transcribed from Buahong Phajung's performance of Lai se, (0.08 -0.53)

<sup>&</sup>lt;https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQsIODlore4> uploaded by Wat Pa Ban Koh, (13 December 2011).



Figure 4.7: Buahong Phajung's performance of lai se. Transcription by the author.

One of the interesting aspects of this performance is how the *maw khaen* Buahong uses only one particular mode, *lai se*, to express the musical story and improvise on his instrument. The construction of this performance is primarily based on the E minor pentatonic scale, in which the intervallic patterns predominantly build up from E, such as, E-G, E-A, and E-B, and play an important role in generating melodic lines from a horizontal viewpoint.

To intertwine musical ideas together, Buahong also uses several sixteenth-note motifs, such as A-G-E, which can be observed in mm.9-11 and m. 23. In addition, he plays staccato quarter notes on beat one (in 2/4), which avoid the repetition of eighth notes frequently heard in the performance. Rhythmic accents on the first and second upbeats can also be examined in a variety of places. Importantly, the transcription of Buahong's performance also reveals that chords generated by an E minor pentatonic scale, such as  $G^{maj}$ ,  $G^{6/9}$ ,  $E^{min7}$ , and  $D^{sus4}$ , are used in various places throughout the performance, providing homophonic texture to isan nuea music, as opposed to Thai classical musical texture, as described in Chapter 3. Other musical techniques such as motivic displacement and repetitions can be also examined in the transcription.<sup>210</sup>

The most important concept from this transcription related to jazz composition is the way isan nuea musicians create and develop concise musical ideas that later connect to a big picture, a broader, cohesive story. Charoen Chaichonphairote also states that to produce an effective lai, isan musicians produce a short motive, or construct multiple intervallic patterns based on the individual notes from a particular lai (e.g., in lai yai [A minor pentatonic]).

The player may start to construct the E note as the target pitch, and then move to A, followed by C, then to other pitches. Eventually, the player tries to circulate all pitches within the lai yai. Expert musicians can efficiently connect all the musical pitches and tell a story without providing interrupting moods that also known Thai words as "phuk klon (ผูกกดอน) [intertwined poem].211

In developing practical methods for my musical hybridization project, I have adapted the application of lai yai (A minor pentatonic) to an open section of a bass solo I played, where I attempted to imitate the character sound of isan nuea music by 1) constructing the story from concise and repetitive motifs in a similar manner to the previous transcription, 2) applying drones related to khaen and phin performances, 3) employing related musical accents, on the downbeats of beat one, and the upbeats of beats two and four, and 4) adapting similar melodic patterns to those that I have transcribed (Figure 4.8).<sup>212</sup> By including a bass solo section like this in jazz compositions, it can accommodate the sound character of isan nuea music, but produced by the timbre of Western instruments. This concept has many precedents in jazz,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>210</sup> Appendix C.8 contains the transcription MIDI of Buahong Phajung's performance.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>211</sup> The Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand (FCCT), "Sounds of *Isan - Molam Music*,"

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=60]DOeIwUnw">(3 July 2019).</a>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>212</sup> To listen my bass improvisation of *lai yai*, see < <a href="https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/tanarat-chaichana-">https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/tanarat-chaichana-</a> bass-solo?si=f09983fb96b2458282cb7f5e28ca0842>

such as the use of Arabic scales in Yusef Lateel's compositions, and the use of Indian *raga* and *tala* in John Mclaughlin's improvisation. <sup>213</sup>



Figure 4.8: Bass improvisation of *lai yai* by the author.

Another meaning of *lai* significant to a cross-cultural music composition study is its use in the name of traditional compositions. "Lai Teay Khong," "Lai Lom Phat Phrao" (wind blows coconut trees), "Lai Maeng Phu Tom Dok" (bugs swarm flowers), "Lai Nok Sai Nin Kham Thung" (birds flying over fields), are all names of compositions that contain fundamental melodic lines that a player must perform based on the original melodic structure, or making slight adjustments (melodic embellishments).<sup>214</sup>

*Isan nuea* traditional melodies are relatively short in comparison to those of Thai classical music. The sound of these melodies is typically singable and memorable, as their origins may be associated with vocal music. When analyzing the standard performance of *isan nuea* music in

<sup>214</sup> Please note that the musical learning process of *isan nuea* is based on oral tradition, therefore, the melodic lines of *isan nuea* compositions may be diverse, due to influence by individual music teachers.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>213</sup> For more information on my hybridization improvisation project, see "Applying Idiomatic Isan Nuea Improvisation to Jazz: Adapting a Khaen Performance of "Lai Taey Khong" by Sombat Simla for Solo Double Bass" *The 2021 AJIRN conference* <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqEEEki879Y&t=378s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqEEEki879Y&t=378s</a> uploaded by Tanarat Chaichana (6 June 2021).

which such melody parts are typically located in the second section of a standard *isan nuea* performance, called *thamnong lak*, after the introduction section called *thamnong kern* (ทำนองเกริ่น) and followed by the improvisation section (based on the original composition themes), called *thamnong yoi* or *don* (ดัน). To better understand the standard structure of *isan nuea* performance, I decided to transcribe one of the most well-known *lai* (compositions) in *isan nuea* music repertoires, called "Lai Teay Khong," performed by Sombat Simlah, the *khaen* master from Mahasarakham Province.<sup>215</sup> Sombat Simlah's rendition of "Lai Teay Kong" was chosen for transcription because I was impressed by his ability to generate improvisation that is both melodically and rhythmically challenging. He is also an expert at developing complex intervallic patterns and thus able to convey a compelling musical story through his *khaen* performances. The transcription of his "Lai Teay Kong" is considered in detail below

## A *KHAEN* SOLO TRANSCRIPTION OF "LAI TEAY KHONG" PERFORMED BY SOMBAT SIMLAH

Sombat Simlah begins his performance with 13 measures of quickly-moving rhythms, which I have labelled as section "A" (with Figure 4.8).<sup>216</sup> It consists of his spontaneous improvisation in sets of sixteenth notes based on a Bb minor pentatonic scale, primarily built up from F notes, eventually landing on the sound of a Bb minor chord as a musical conclusion to this introduction section (*thamnong kern*).



Figure 4.9: The A section of "Lai Teay Khong." Transcription by the author.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>215</sup> Sombat Simlah - "Lai Teay Khong," Folk Music of E-San Khaen Solo, Vol. 5, Ocean Media (2005).

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://open.spotify.com/track/6BCPBVMJyMZd4Qn5WyNVvG?si=0f5282436ee343a8">https://open.spotify.com/track/6BCPBVMJyMZd4Qn5WyNVvG?si=0f5282436ee343a8</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>216</sup> Please note that some of the drone pitches have been removed because the purpose of this analysis is to highlight how *Sombat Simlah* developed the fundamental melodic patterns from his improvisation rather than to focus on harmonic rhythm components.

Next, the original melody of "Lai Teay Klong" begins in a section I have labelled as "B" (Figure 4.9). Sombat performs the melody section twice. The construction of Lai Teay Klong is also based on the structure of Bb minor pentatonic scale which is divided into two sections consisting of melody A (m.14) and melody B (m.30), together in a section called *thamnong lak*. This section includes drones on Bb and F, as well as staccato and accented ornaments. Interestingly, throughout this section, Sombat's eighth-note rhythmic pattern is quite similar to a swing rhythm.



Figure 4.10: The B section of "Lai Teay Khong." Transcription by the author.

In the C section, known as *thamnong yoi*, Sombat begins to generate the improvisation that is related to the theme of "Lai Teay Klong" (Figure 4.10). He uses a question-and-answer improvisational technique, which is divided into three sets, consisting of first (mm.46-49), second (mm.55-58), and third themes (mm.60-63). These improvised themes are all based on the construction of Bb minor pentatonic scale built up from F, Ab and Bb from the horizontal aspect. In contrast to the improvisation methods in this section, the improvisational method in the D section adapts the melody parts of "Lai Teay Klong" (m.64). Here, Sombat attempts to deliver back the characteristic sound of the composition's memorable melody. He also uses rhythmic variations so that the melodic lines can be performed differently than in their original

statement. Sombat includes many musical accents in his improvisation based on the melodic theme, as a result, the tempo slows down in contrast to the C section.



Figure 4.11: The C and D sections of "Lai Teay Khong." Transcription by the author.

Moving to the E section, Sombat avoids a repetition of the fundamental melody and begins to develop improvisations by using intervallic patterns. These intervallic patterns of this section, primarily F-Ab, and F-Bb are constructed on a Bb minor pentatonic scale (mm.93-99), but with less rhythmic intensity compared to the C section (Figure 4.11). After this improvisation, and similar to the "head out" typical of performances of jazz standards, Sombat performs the main melody again at the conclusion of the performance. This begins in the G section (m.130) and continues to the H section (m.146), though the H section omits some parts of the melody A section of "Lai Teay Klong" to decrease the sense of repetition. It is notable that before this head out section, Sombat also implies the sound of the melody of "Lai Teay Klong" by using the embellishment of improvisational technique, established in the F section (mm.116-122) to produce the fluid transformation from *thamnong yoi* (improvisation section) back to *thamnong lak* (melody section). This performance provides a useful example of a typical form in *isan nuea* 

performance. To summarize, *isan nuea* musicians usually begin a solo introduction, then move to the melody part, and follow this by an improvisation section, before returning to the melody out section. (See Appendix A.4 for the full transcription of "Lai Teay Klong" performed by Sombat Simlah.)<sup>217</sup>



Figure 4.12: The E, F, G and H sections of "Lai Teay Khong." Transcription by the author.

<sup>217</sup> The transcription MIDI of Sombat Simlah's performance is also included in Appendix C.9.

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In combining the musical elements of jazz and *isan nuea* to produce a musical hybridity, I have developed distinct compositional and arrangement methods that can be divided into three categories. First, I have begun to experiment to harmonize the melody parts of *isan nuea* (retain the rhythm and the pitches of traditional melodies), by using jazz contemporary harmonies (e.g., using quartal harmony and chord extensions). Second, I have changed the melodic patterns of the traditional composition (e.g., modifying its rhythmic structure, and time signature, then applying the jazz harmonies). Third, I have either retained or adjusted melodic parts of traditional composition, expanding the form of jazz composition out of the standard context, and applied the idiomatic improvisation of *isan nuea* to create a musical hybridity expression And, because of the structural flexibility of pentatonic scales, typical of *isan nuea* melodies, consequently, I was able to re-harmonize *isan nuea* traditional melodies smoothly and practically by using modern jazz harmonies. These three initial compositional methods significantly provided me with a better understanding of blending *isan nuea* and jazz harmonies, which I also apply to my compositions for jazz orchestra.

#### **4.4 PRELIMINARY COMPOSITIONS**

My first adaptation of *isan nuea* music is a musical hybrid arrangement of "Lai Lom Phat Phrao" (Figure 4.13). I transcribed the melody parts of this piece from a video demonstration, provided by the Roi Et College of Dramatic Arts, Roi Et, Thailand.<sup>218</sup> The melodic movement of this composition is based on an A minor pentatonic scale, which is melodically organized by the use of repetition of the first two pitches in each short phrase, which occurs in mm.1-9 and mm.19-29. This creates the memorable sound of this composition. In this arrangement, I created a harmony that primarily focuses on the use of extended chords. These chords, such as D<sup>9sus</sup>, F<sup>maj9</sup>, C<sup>6/9</sup>, G<sup>-11</sup>, and A<sup>-11</sup> are employed to contribute modern jazz harmonies based on the melody of "Lai Lom Phat Phrao." In addition, the harmonic rhythmic of this musical hybrid arrangement also utilized the use of modal interchange, with V-7 referred to as G-11 being used in a multiple of locations. I then decided to complete the arrangement of this song by adding the rhythmic feel of fast swing, which contributes musical hybridity that combines a sense of Thai melody with a jazz rhythmic feel.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>218</sup> Yothin Phonket, "Lai Lom Phat Phrao," The Roi Et College of Dramatic Arts.

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://www.voutube.com/watch?v=f4cUgPe04fw">https://www.voutube.com/watch?v=f4cUgPe04fw</a> (21 May 2017).

## Lai Lom Phat Phrao (FAST) (wind blows coconut trees) RHODES TRADITIONAL NORTHEAST THAILAND MUSIC ARRANGED BY TANARAT CHAICHANA D9(SUS4) FMAj9 $Gm^{11}$ Am11 £7(SUS4) G13(SUS4) $D^{\omega_0}$ A7(SUS4) F% 19 25 £7(\$0\$4) Gm11 £7(SUS4) 31 A7(SUS4) D7(SUS4) **C**% $Gm^{11}$ Em11 $D_{m^{11}}$

Figure 4.13: Arrangement of "Lai Lom Phat Phrao."

In contrast to my approach to musical hybridization in "Lai Lom Phat Phrao," which its rhythmic patterns remained unchanged, I adjusted the melody parts of "Lai Nok Sai Bin Kham

Thung"<sup>219</sup> to generate a more syncopated rhythmic feel (Figure 4.14) typical in jazz. Because of the repetition of beats one and three that frequently occur in *isan nuea* music, which can produce a sense of predictability, I decided to add anticipations so that the rhythms can appear on the upbeats of the second and fourth beats, providing a sense of syncopated rhythm, which is one of the robust musical elements and prominent characteristics of jazz.

Inspired by "Magnolia Triangle," by Ellis Marsalis Jr, and "Blue Rondo à la Turk" by Dave Brubeck, I arranged the original melody of "Lai Nok Sai Bin Kham Thung" which consists of a repetitive two-bar phrase, similar to the structure of the melody parts of "Magnolia Triangle" in a time signature of 5/4. This change significantly contributes to the rhythmic complexity of the arrangement, in contrast to the simplicity typically generated by the melodic movement of traditional music. To provide the musical elements of jazz for audiences, I decided to construct this musical hybridization to be improvised in the style of a blues. I use a jazz-blues standard form and its chord progressions, and later switch between dominant based-harmonies in 5/4 rhythm influenced by "Blue Ronde a la Turk" (which also contains the integration of additive meters, traditional melodies, and blues improvisation). The modulation technique from the key A to Bb pentatonic scales can be observed on the Bb<sup>7sus4</sup>/F chord to decrease the repetitions which may be produced by the two-measure phrase of the melody.<sup>220</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>219</sup> This composition's melody parts were transcribed from a *pong lang* performance uploaded by the Ong Kha Pao Yop. <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cq-burw7pNA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cq-burw7pNA</a> (28 April 2011).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>220</sup> Appendix A.5 contains the full lead sheet of "Lai Nok Sai Bin Kham Thung"

## 

Lai Nok Sai Bin Kham Thung

Figure 4.14 "Lai Nok Sai Bin Kham Thung" arrangement, by the author.

For the third composition in this initial compositional process, I sought to hybridize *isan nuea* music and jazz by 1) expanding its compositional form by creating additional sections for both the melodic parts and the improvisation parts, consisting of the sections of fast swing, Latin rhythms, free improvisation, and the rhythm of hip-hop, and 2) employing the idiomatic improvisation of *isan neua* using Western instruments, including upright bass and alto saxophone, to solo on *lai yai* and *lai sutsanaen* (คายสุดสะแนน), as illustrated in my arrangement "Lai Teay Klong" (Figure 4.15).

The A section of the open bass solo part requires the player to mimic the idiomatic sound of *isan nuea* improvisation in order to create the aesthetic of *isan nuea* based on its musical mode, *lai yai*. This is followed by the similarity of the open saxophone solo section, which is in a fast swing rhythm in the E Dorian mode (minor sound), producing the characteristic sound of modal jazz for listeners. The melody of "Lai Teay Klong," one of the famous pieces in *isan neua* music, is performed twice in the D section without harmony and in the E section with the

accompanying instruments. Its harmony in the E section is based on the chord progressions from "Countdown" by John Coltrane. My intent was to create a piece that contains one of the most memorable Thai melodic sounds and intermingle it with one of the well-known complex harmonies of jazz.

When the solo player reaches the climax of the improvisation, performed in alternation between fast swing and Latin rhythm in the G and the F section, the arrangement transfers back to the sense of *isan nuea* character in which all melodic instrument players adapt the use of *lai sutsanaen* sounds to perform in free improvisation context. The head out section of this arrangement, which is the I section, also provides the opportunity for the memorable melody of "Lai Teay Khong" to be heard again with the Countdown chord progression. Here, instead of fast swing, the rhythmic patterns performed emphasize the backbeat, with a laid-back feel, in a hip-hop style. Because of the diversity of rhythmic patterns and the remarkable character sound of this most famous composition in *isan nuea* music, I believe that this arrangement may significantly contribute to the practice of hybridizing disparate musical elements, as it implements both jazz and *isan nuea* elements that can be recognized by audiences of both Thai music and jazz.<sup>221</sup>

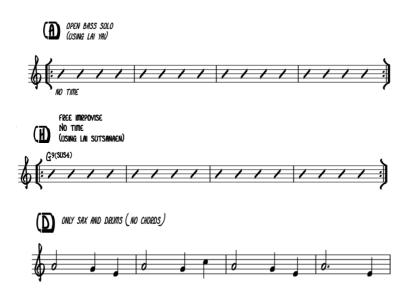


Figure 4.15a: "Lai Teay Khong" arrangement.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>221</sup> Appendix A.6 contains the complete arrangement of "Lai Teay Khong."



Figure 4.15b: "Lai Teay Khong" arrangement, continued.

#### **4.5 MAWLUM**

Mawlum, a traditional singing style, is another essential musical element of *isan nuea* music that I would like to illustrate. As mentioned earlier, the word *maw* in *isan* means 'expert' (n.), and *lum* means 'sing' (v.)<sup>222</sup>; consequently, the combination of *mawlum* points to an 'expert singer', or rather, the singing style in *isan nuea* music.<sup>223</sup> The two main reasons why the *mawlum* style can significantly inspire aspects of jazz composition are the nostalgic sound of *mawlum* vocalists and their singing techniques, such as the application of blending pitches, fast and slow tremolo, pitch vibrations, and the beauty of the metaphors used and the concinnity of stanzas, which are implemented in the movement of the lyrics.

The construction of *mawlum* lyrics derives from ancient pieces of literature, poems, and textbooks—in particular, *nithan chadok* (the Jataka Tales)<sup>224</sup>; alternatively, lyrics can be artistically

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>222</sup> Chaweewan Dumnern and Tongkam Taikla, "the Sangkeet Sin Center Vol 615, *mawlum-mawkhaen*", <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-dFemBfGmU&feature=youtu.be">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-dFemBfGmU&feature=youtu.be</a> (2 October 2020).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>223</sup> Terry E. Miller has further explained that *mawlum* refers to *Maw* (which means a "skilled person" as in *manyah* doctor), *doo* (*doo*: to see fortune teller), or *maw-kuam* (*kuam*: lawyer). Singing has also been called *lum kaen* in reference to the organ which accompanies the singing. In central Thailand, especially during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, *lum isan* was known as *aeow lao*. Terry E. Miller and Charoen Chaichonphairote, "The Musical Traditions of Northeast Thailand," *Journal of the Siam Society* (1979).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>224</sup> The Jataka Tales is a story of the previous life of Buddha, originally written in India. For an English translation, please see The Jataka; or, Stories of the Buddha's Former Births, Edward Cowell, ed., Vol 4, trans. William Denham Rouse, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1901).

written by mawlum performers who necessarily utilize poetic metaphors to construct their rhymes and lyrical melodies, which must fit together with the sound of the accompanying instrument (khaen). In general, the messages of mawlum lyrics may refer to the teachings of Buddha (to encourage and provide morality to people's lives), unexpected grief and tragic stories (to warn and urge the listeners), or playful attitudes (for entertainment about the romances, courtships, or personal life experiences of mawlum performers). The lyrical improvisation technique known as don klon (hunanu) also can be deployed while performing; as a consequence, skillful mawlum are capable of performing complicated narratives containing excellent rhymes, synchronizing the musical tones with the melodic lines and harmonies created by the khaen. To formulate practical examples of mawlum lyrics that can be applied in a mawlum performance to jazz composers, I would like to demonstrate two examples of such lyrics and their approximate pronunciation, as well as the translation of their meaning into English, which I obtained from Terry Miller's study.<sup>225</sup>

#### Sound in English:

took tee nah nawng net nuang lai
ben bang took sawat baman mee mua
kum huk ton tu tang tua la tao
mae hawt heang hai mai mawt dam

Meaning in English:

Everyone's tears are flowing

For it is a time of great sorrow.

Love floods the mother's heart;

She feels so sad that she would like to die.

The categories of *mawlum* are also diverse, as the style evolved through oral tradition in different provinces of northeast Thailand. To accurately demonstrate this diversity, I have selected the illustrations contributed by Chaweewan Dumnern, who is an expert in *mawlum* performance and one of the most respected *mawlum* singers in northeast Thailand. According to Dumnern's practical explanation in her seminar at the Sangkeet Sin Center<sup>226</sup>, *mawlum* is separated into four

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>225</sup> Miller, "Kaen Playing and Mawlum Singing in Northeast Thailand," 39-40.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>226</sup> Chaweewan Dumnern and Tongkam Taikla, "the Sangkeet Sin Center Vol 615, mawlum- mawkhaen."

categories, consisting of: 1) mawlum klon (หมอลำกลอน), 2) mawlum ruang, 3) mawlum phithikam (หมอลำพิธีกรรม) or maw lum phi fa, and 4) mawlum bettalet (หมอลำเบ็ดเตล็ด). Later on, she demonstrates the use of lai (modes) performed by the khaen, whose melodic lines and accompaniments must correspond and interact with each other and the vocal parts. For instance, when performing mawlum klon, the use of modes to accompany the vocal is divided into three types—namely, the use of lai thang san, the C, F, G major pentatonic scales for a short performance (lum thang san) which contains faster tempos, and lai thang yai (A, D, E) for a longer performance with a slow tempo, in which the vocalist sings longer poems. Meanwhile, for lum teay performances, which are classified into four types that are mainly used for entertainment (i.e., teay tammada, teay burma, teay khong, and teay hua node tan [เดียหัวในนตาล]), the accompanying player (khaen) will perform melodic patterns that are musically related to the vocalist's parts.

The employment of Buddha's teachings, the Jataka Tales, and other folklore, is also observed in the performance of mawlum ruang, which requires additional mawlum players to perform different characters, in a similar way to a theatrical performance setting. The application of lai to accompany this performance may be varied and depends on the story that was chosen. The name of mawlum ruang is also referred to as mawlum moo, when performed by a group of people. As for the *mawlum phithikam*, it can be referred by to other names, e.g., *mawlum slong* (inspection), or mawlum phi fa; this performance is practiced alongside traditional beliefs whose purpose is to cure illness. Here, the khaen player accompanies the vocal section by performing lai yai, and the mawlum invites the local spirits to possess their bodies by using poetic lyrics. The mawlum player may also dance around the patients to investigate and later reveal to the patient's family the sickness of the patient and how to cure it. The final category of mawlum performance, explained by Chaweewan in her seminar, concerns the practice of mawlum bettalet, which is related to distinctive regional singing methods. For instance, two distinct styles of vocal melodic lines consisting of the singing techniques of phu tai phukao (which is located in the Phu Phan mountain range) and phu tai yai isan (located near the Mekong River)—can be performed by using different regional accents, and the expressions assumed when singing may refer to the character of the region's people.

#### 4.6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Isan nuea music is the musical culture of north-east Thailand's upper region, which comprises fourteen provinces with Thai-Lao communities. One of the most prominent instruments in

this region is the *khaen* that can be used as a solo or accompaniment instrument. When performing *khaen*, *isan nuea* musicians make the sound of drones, which is one of the region's most distinctive musical elements. *Isan nuea* musicians also employ the concept of *lai* to create music or produce a spontaneous improvisation. Aside from this meaning of *lai*, which refers to the sound of traditional modes, this word can also relate to the name of traditional music, as well the name of a regional music accent.

Unlike Thai classical music, several *isan nuea* instruments appear to have adopted the use of Western instruments tuning known as *sieng sakon*, which can be more effective when transcribed using a keyboard. The transcription of Sombat Simlah's *khaen* performance led us to the results that *isan nuea* music is typically constructed using intervallic techniques within the key. In addition, the use of question-and-answer methods similar to those used in jazz improvisation, as well as chords produced by combining drone sounds and pentatonic scales, which are equivalent to a suspended chord in jazz harmony, give *isan nuea* music a homophonic texture that sets it apart from Thai classical music.

Thamnong kern, thamnong lak, and thamnong yoi are three distinct sections used in isan nuea performances, as Sombat Simlah's transcription demonstrated. Buahong Phajung Lamut Sapphat and Boomma Kaowong's performances reveal that while performing isan nuea musicians frequently emphasize the rhythmic accents on the upbeat, comparable to a swing feel. Three traditional melodies, "Lai Lom Phat Phrao," "Lai Nok Sai Bin Kham Thung," and "Lai Teay Khong," whose melodic construction is based on pentatonic scales which are also capable of combing with contemporary jazz harmony, particularly the latter composition, which can be integrated with Coltrane's chord progression, "Countdown." As a result, my arrangement of "Lai Teay Khong" is able to express both memorable isan nuea melodies as well as distinct jazz chord progressions. Other rhythms used in jazz compositions, such as hip hop, Latin, and 5/4 odd times, also effectively interweave with isan nuea traditional melodies. Isan nuea modes, such as lai yai, and lai sutsanaen can be employed in jazz compositional process to accentuate the character of isan nuea music during the improvisational section as the preliminary works reveal.

### Chapter 5

# Examining the Musical Features of *dontri paktai* (Traditional Music of Southern Thailand)

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter 5 highlights the musical practices of southern Thailand, which include nora music (Thai Buddhist music), and rong ngeng (Thai Muslim music). I begin with a brief overview of hypotheses of nora music's origins, followed by a critical analysis of nora musical instruments, and how they function in nora ensembles. I then present some examples of nora repertoire, including the pieces "Patcha" and "Chak Bai," and describe how I incorporated nora musical elements into a prototype composition. My discussion of rong ngeng performance also begins with a brief history of the genre, followed by a stylistic comparison between southeast and southwest rong ngeng performances. The musical instruments used in these two versions of rong ngeng, as well as their musical textures, are next examined. I then present two musical compositions used in southeast rong ngeng performances, followed by a discussion of compositional techniques I applied in my preliminary work that integrate rong ngeng music components with jazz composition.

#### THE TRADITIONAL MUSIC OF SOUTHERN THAILAND (DONTRI PAKTAI)

Located on the Malay Peninsula, southern Thailand functions as a bridge between the Andaman Sea (bordering the Indian Ocean) and the Gulf of Thailand (which connects to the South China Sea). This location has played a role in the richness of the musical cultures of the people of southern Thailand, which stem from the multicultural practices influenced by the activities of maritime trade and religious exchange in the area. In this region, two distinct types of traditional music have been practiced for many generations, both integrated with the religions of its people: the musical culture of Thai Mahayana Buddhists, and the musical culture of Thai Muslims.<sup>227</sup> Among the numerous musical styles of these two communities, I examine only two traditional music customs for the purposes of this study: *nora*, a musical accompaniment of the theatrical performances by Thai Mahayana Buddhists; and *rong ngeng*, the music culture that accompanies traditional Thai-Mulism dances.

#### **5.2 NORA**

There are two main hypotheses about the origins of the traditional practice of *nora* or *manora* (in the dialect of central Thailand). One hypothesis is promoted by prince Damrong Rajanubhab, a pioneering Thai historian who believed that this traditional practice may have been influenced by a similar theatrical performance style founded during the Ayutthaya period known as *lakhon chatri*. This hypothesis is based on ancient scripts referring to homages to *nora* teachers (*bot wai khrni*), groups of *nora* troupes who came to Ayutthaya to learn this performance style and brought it back to southern Thailand.<sup>228</sup> The other hypothesis is that this traditional culture was originally developed in southern Thailand (presumably in Phattahalung Province) and significantly evolved in this particular area—and it only later influenced theatrical performance practices in central Thailand.<sup>229</sup>

Much like with other histories of traditional cultures based on oral tradition, to find the actual answer to this question may depend on personal beliefs and local customs. As such, it may still

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>227</sup> Other than these two musical traditions, music practices in this region include *Talung* (shadow play music), *Kalor* (funeral music), *Li mont*, and *Toa Khurm* (ritual music), and *Silat* (martial arts music) See more, Sumrongthong, *Southern Music: Artists, Knowledge Transfer Rituals and beliefs*, (CU Press), 2011.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>228</sup> Katawut Promli, "Pi nora Performance Technique of *Khru* Umnad Nuniad," Master's thesis, Chulalongkorn University (2009), 36-37.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>229</sup> Chuitka Kosonhemmanee, "The Development of Nora of Khun Oupbhathamnarakorn Family (Pum Dheva)," Master's thesis, Chulalongkorn University (2010), 11-18.

be difficult to obtain the exact answer as to the origins of *nora* performance. However, in a practical sense—and from the perspective of empirical observation—the performance of *nora* indeed has a deep connection with the spirit of southern Thailand, through its dialects, beliefs, and customs, which can be especially observed in Phattahalung, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Songkhla, and Trang Provinces. In these areas, the musical performances authentically project the character of the traditional culture of southerners, which is quite distinct from other traditional practices in Thailand. The purpose of *nora* practices is also divided into two categories which are employed in both formal ceremonies and for entertainment. The formal category is recognized as *nora rong khrul*<sup>230</sup>, and is purposely practiced for communicating ancestries, healing illness, and worshipping local spirits.

#### PI NORA

Understanding the musical practices employed to accompany *nora* performances begins with the fundamental concepts of the instruments and techniques used in *nora* musical ensembles. The pi nora is a reed instrument similar in appearance to the pi nai used in Thai classical music ensembles, but is slightly smaller. The tuning system of the pi nora produces seven diatonic pitches per octaves over a range of approximately 2 octaves. These pitches are B, C, D, E, F,  $G, A, B \uparrow, C \uparrow, D, \uparrow E, \uparrow, F \uparrow, G \uparrow, A \uparrow, B \uparrow \uparrow C \uparrow \uparrow, D \uparrow \uparrow$  in the standard model (42 cm). Similar to isan nuea instruments, some pi nora adapt the Western tuning system, which allows a pi nora player (also known as nai pi nora in southern dialect) to perform with Western musical instruments, especially with accompanying instruments such as keyboards, which are recently employed in nora performances. In contrast to the homophonic texture of isan nuea produced by the khaen and phin, or the idiomatic heterophony and polyphonic stratification produced by Thai classical music ensembles, the musical texture of nora music seems to be largely monophonic in texture, with the pi nora acting as the only instrument to produce significant melodic lines of the nora musical ensemble.<sup>231</sup> For this reason, understanding how the pi nora functions in nora performances is crucial for jazz composers who are interested in this particular style of music.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>230</sup> There are two types of *nora rong khru*: 1.) *nora rong khru yai* (spending 3 days and 2 nights), and *nora rong khru yai lek* (taking 1 day and 1 night), which are generally held from March to September, with the ceremony starting between Wednesday and Friday. For more, see the Provincial Cultural office of Songkhla, Ministry of Culture, Thailand. <a href="https://www.m-culture.go.th/songkhla/ewt\_news.php?nid=445&filename=index">https://www.m-culture.go.th/songkhla/ewt\_news.php?nid=445&filename=index</a> (7 May 2017). <sup>231</sup> I exclude the musical pitches that are produced by the *mong* (a set of two gong bells) which function as a rhythmic indicator (from a southern Thai musician's perspective), more than contributing the necessary melodic movement to *nora* ensembles. More details on the *mong* are later described in this chapter.

#### KHEUN HUA PI TECHNIQUE

To further illustrate the *khuen hua pi* technique, I have transcribed a performance of the *nora* music ensemble from Songkhla Rajabhat University in Songkhla Province, southern Thailand (Figure 5.1)<sup>232</sup>, considered one of the outstanding *nora* music ensembles in the southern region. In mm.1-2, the *nai pi nora* performs a rapid repetition of the pitch D, before using the pattern of sixteenth and thirty-second notes—primarily consisting of the notes D and F—in mm.4-5 to introduce a new set of repeated pitches an ascension to the new target pitch—the note A in m.12. Later on, in m.13, the application of trills from A to B can also be examined as a new set of two repetitive pitches, which then approach the note G in m.14. Afterwards, from mm.19-28, the melodic repetitive patterns undulate, primarily including the pitches of G, D, A, B—with the B note observable as the highest note in these patterns which eventually transfers to the higher note, F#, in m.30.

The melodic lines of this example of *khuen hua pi* technique also gradually ascend, to repeatedly reference the pitch B (m.32), and later reach the high D (m. 35)— the highest pitch capable of being produced by the standard model of the *pi nora*. After reaching this highest pitch, the *pi nora* plays descending melodic patterns to the new lower target pitches, including the note of F# in mm.38-41, the note of D in m.42, the pitch of A in m.45, the pitch of E in m.48, before

hua pi technique also may be slightly varied based on the regional influences and distinct teaching methods.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>232</sup> Figure 5.1 was transcribed from the performance of the *nora* music ensemble from Songkhla Rajabhat University (0.00-1.03) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PO6\_pkO3wZk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PO6\_pkO3wZk</a> uploaded by Kon Dontri, (27 June 2019). Please note that I excluded the application of tremolo and ornament signs to demonstrate the pitch levels and rhythmic notation to resemble the original performance as much as possible. The utilization of *khuen* 

lastly returning to the pitch of D—the original pitch of this entire melodic pattern—and ultimately transitioning to the next composition of the *nora* performance in mm.50-53.<sup>233</sup>

It is important to note that the *khuen hua pi* technique can also be referred to as *phleng hua pi* (a short introduction song for *pi nora*). This instrumental technique operates as the introductory music of a *nora* performance to draw the audience's attention, and it is placed within a longer overture section known as *thon homrong*. The utilization of drum rolls, the repetitive *ching* patterns, and the two distinct, constant sounds produced by two gong bells are also employed to rhythmically accompany this short introductory section created by *pi nora* techniques.

<sup>233</sup> Appendix C.10 contains a transcription MIDI.



Figure 5.1: Khuen hua pi technique. Transcription by the author.

#### **THAP**

Thap is an important pair of percussion instruments employed in *nora* musical ensembles. It consists of two separate drums that are given different tunings—one for a higher tone known as *nuay chap* or *luk chap* in central Thai dialect, and one for a lower tone called *nuay thoeng* (1978) or *luk thoeng*. One of the main reasons why *thap* is so important to *nora* ensembles is because its

functions must precisely synchronize with the dance postures and movements of *nora* dancers. To provide the best illustration of the importance of using *thap* in *nora* performances, Kuan Tuanyok, a national artist and one of the most respected traditional south Thai musicians, has emphasized the importance of the application of *thap* in *nora* and *nang talung* (a southern style of shadow-puppet theater), stating that, "the first instrument employed in *nora* performance was *thap*, and at that time, there was not a melodic instrument, such as *pi nora*. Therefore, *thap* was [the] only instrument used to accompany singing, acting, or playing for *both nora* and *nang talung*."<sup>234</sup>

There are a variety of techniques in playing the *thap*. The *nai thap* (a *thap* player) uses the hands to hit the drumheads in various locations, producing four distinct sounds from the instrument:

1) *chap* or *pap*, a treble tone produced by striking the right hand to the center *nuay chap* (a highertone drum) while using the left hand to mute the sound at the hollow part of the tail of the same drum; 2) *tik*, a treble tone (lower than *chap*) produced by a similar process to *chap*, except the player employs the right-hand hit at the edge of the drumhead instead of the center; 3) *thoeng* (trik), which is a bass tone produced by a *thap* player using both the left and right hand to hit the center of both drums; and lastly 4) *tid*, a bass tone created by a similar method to *thoeng*, but here, the *nai thap* concentrates on producing more bass tones with the right hand compared to the *thoeng* sound.<sup>235</sup>

#### KLONG, MONG, AND CHING

Other musical instruments of *nora* musical ensembles that I have found to have potential use in musical hybridization projects include: 1) *klong* (known as *klong charti* in the central Thai accent), 2) *mong* (referred to as *khong khu* in the central Thai dialect), and 3) *ching*. The *klong* is a drum similar to the *klong thad* (large bass drums) used in Thai classical music ensembles. However, the size of the *klong* used in the *nora* ensemble is much smaller than the *klong thad* and is performed with only one drum—in contrast to *klong thad*, which consists of two types of drum known as *klong thad tua phu* (a male drum) and *klong thad tua mia* (a female drum). The sound of the *klong* is produced by using a pair of drum sticks; this produces low bass tones and

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>234</sup> Kuan Tuanyok, *The Accompanying Songs for The Traditional Performances of Southern Thailand*, (Songkhla: The Office of Arts and Cultural studies, Songkhla Rajabhat University 2014), 1-3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>235</sup> Kanokwan Khwanyuen, "Tap Playing Style of Nai Tap Sommai Laongsom in Nora Performance," *Journal of Community Development Research Neresuan University* 9, no.2, (2015), 194-201.

contributes a strong downbeat to emphasize a more rhythmic dynamic in the movements of a *nora* dancer. Common drum techniques in *klong* rhythmic patterns include drum rolls and playing around the edge of the drum with sticks to produce a more wooden sound.

The purpose of the *mong* (a set of two gong bells) in *nora* ensembles can be divided into two categories: 1) using the mong to operate as a rhythmic indicator or timekeeper, and 2) producing the tuning pitches for *nora* dancers when they are required to sing lyrics (which primarily consist of Buddha's teachings, paying homage to teachers, descriptions of their postures, or improvised rhymes to entertain the audience).<sup>236</sup> The mong sound consists of two separate sounds in descending perfect fifths; for example, a mong in D produces a D for the higher pitch, and a G for the lower pitch. The mong player (nai mong) provides alternating sounds of D, G, D, G to indicate continuous time for nora ensembles. Alternatively, the instrument can be performed only as D or G, or it can be rearranged to a different pattern of the two notes (e.g., D, D, D, G) based on the type of composition accompanying the *nora* dancers while performing. In addition, the ching—which consists of undamped and damped sounds, similar to Thai classical music—is also be played by mong players by using their one hand to hold a gong mallet and their other to play a ching instrument attached to a box that contains a set of two gong bells. Please also note that the tuning of the mong is also variable and based on the individual characters of nora ensembles. In my observations, the tunings in D and Eb occur widely when transcribing nora music, and the tuning in E can be often observed in a different kind of traditional performance known as *nang talung* (a shadow puppet play).

An example of typical rhythmic patterns implemented in *nora* performances is illustrated in Figure 5.2, my transcription of a *nora* dance called *rum nora sip-song bot* (twelve dance postures) performed by Tammanit Nikomrat, a *nora* expert from Songkhla Province who currently teaches *nora* performance at Thaksin University in Songkhla Province. Tammanit is well-known to both local and international audiences and is also renowned as an inventive *nora* performer who has incorporated this style of southern Thai performance with other traditional performances that may be seen in other parts of southern Thailand.<sup>237</sup> I selected four rhythmic elements of the performance for musical analysis. The first (mm.1-5 in Figure 5.2) is the

<sup>237</sup> Thammanit Nikhonrat, "Contemporary Nora Dance Performance, Master Series, the 6th Thailand - China Relations Concert held in China" *Asian Journal of Arts and Culture* 15/1 (2014), 25–52.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>236</sup> For *nora* singing, see "The Folk Performing Arts in ASEAN, by Tammanit Nikomrat," *The Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre* <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KoUjwkLM2zM&t=912s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KoUjwkLM2zM&t=912s</a> (14 October 2021).

performance of a short solo of a *pi nora player* (*khnen hua pi* technique), a monophonic texture without rhythmic accompaniment in this particular performance; followed by the signal of the *thap* player in m.6, who plays two quarter note beats to indicate the entire ensemble to start to perform in m.7. The second example is a rhythmic synchronization between the patterns of *thap* and *klong* that contributes a solid rhythmic sense to the *nora* dancer, which can be seen in multiple instances. Based on my observations of these *thap* patterns, I discovered that the respective *chap* and *thoeng* sounds play a critical role in accompanying the *nora* dancer, and the application of the *thoeng* sound in the second downbeat (as illustrated by the letter "T") provides strong rhythmic accents for the performance.

The third example displays the consistent rhythmic patterns of a set of two gongs sounded in Eb and Ab, with the *ching* patterns emphasizing every downbeat also functioning as a time indicator. In the fourth example it is noticeable that the *klong* patterns start to change at m.12 yet still rhythmically coincide with the *thap* pattern, which seems to be more unpredictable. Although *thap* players and *klong* players usually generate their rhythmic patterns independently, the synchronization of their rhythms can still be observed in their performances as emphasizing the downbeats for *nora* dancers. *Nora* musicians also rely on the sound of the *mong* as a timekeeper, which can be heard throughout *nora* performances.



Figure 5.2: Four rhythmic patterns employed in *nora* performances. Transcription by the author.

#### NORA REPERTOIRES AND PERFORMANCE METHODS

As mentioned earlier, *nora* performances in the south of Thailand may be partly influenced by the cultural practices of the country's center. Indeed, the use of *nora* repertoires to accompany *nora* dances may be seen in repertoires of Thai classical music as well. In a study by Katawut

Promil on the *pi nora* performing techniques of Umnad Nuniad<sup>238</sup>, a *pi nora* master and respected teacher from Phatthalung Province, Katawut discusses Umnad's repertoire in his nora performances. Some of the compositions he plays are also used in Thai classical music performances, including "Patcha" (overture song), "Phama (Burma) Rum Khwan," "Phama Thaeng Kob (พม่าแทงกบ)," "Chak Bai" (also known as Jin Lo Reua [จีนโล้เรือ]), and "Khang Khao Kin Kluay (ค้างคาวกินกล้วย)."239 While nora musicians may employ traditional compositions that originate from other regions, the method and performance of such compositions are distinct to *nora* practice.<sup>240</sup> Please note that the *nora* repertories used in *nora* performances these days also include several phleng luk thung241 (Thai country-folk songs) compositions—a category which is, arguably, able to provide greater entertainment and excitement to local audiences. Such compositions may be performed as instrumental music to accompany nora dancers and sometimes even singing by nora performers.

The order of nora performances also varies depending on the practices of different regions and provinces. As an example for this study, I would like to briefly describe the nora performance methods used for entertainment (in contrast to nora rong khru, which is a ritual ceremony) as practiced by the troupe of a nora master, Tammanit Nikomrat, of Songkhla Province. Traditional nora performances (nora boran), as explained by Tammanit, can be separated into eight types. These include:

- 1) nora musicians performing a short ceremonial piece of music to summon local spirits for protection and ask for permission to construct nora theaters;
- 2) nora musicians performing overture compositions (homrong) to announce to audiences that nora dancers are ready for performing;
- 3) nora musicians performing ritual compositions accompanying nora stage performers to pay homage to their teachers and local sprits;

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>238</sup> Umnad Nuniad is a well-known nai pi nora. He currently teaches at Phatthalung College of Dramatic Arts in Phatthalung, Thailand. See more, <a href="http://cdapt.bpi.ac.th/sub5.htm">http://cdapt.bpi.ac.th/sub5.htm</a>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>239</sup> Promli, "Pi nora Performance Techniques of Khru Umniad Nuniad,"119.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>240</sup> Appendix B also provides Somnuek's remarks on the differences in performance methods between pi nora

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>241</sup> Terry E. Miller explicitly defines *phleng luk thung* as a musical act of hybridization blending regional instruments and stylistic traits into modern urban sounds. Phleng luk thung music videos also invoke images of objects of rural life: fishing nets, agricultural tools, and costumes. The modern city gives rise to modern music. See, The impact modernization on Traditional music, the book chapter by Miller and Williams, The Garland Handbook of Southeast Asian Music, 65-80.

- 4) the first performances of a group of apprentices of *nora* dance (comprising two to four people), including *nora* dancers singing behind the curtain to provide excitement to audiences and performing the first dance postures on the stage, *nora* dancers' performance of sitting postures and their related singing performances, and lastly, *nora* performers' second dance postures;
- 5) the performance of *phran*, a comedic character who provides a sense of amusement to the audience;
  - 6) the performance of the *nora* master of the troupe;
  - 7) the second of performance phran to introduce a selected short play; and
- 8) the performance of apprentices, *nora* dancers, and the *nora* master in a play (theatrical performance).<sup>242</sup>

To apply the musical knowledge of *nora* performance practically in my hybridization project, I have selected three notable compositions that exhibit influential characteristics of this traditional music style. The first transcription is "Chak Bai" (Figure 5.3)<sup>243</sup>, a slow *nora* dance accompaniment song recorded by Sirichai Vejkul, a *nora* musician from Nakhon Si Thammarat province. The second is identifiable in its short melodic patterns used for introducing the transformation of dance postures to *nora* dancers, called a "Sot Soi (and antiput)" pattern, which transcribed from Tammanit Nikomrat's ensemble (Figure 5.4)<sup>244</sup>. The third is "Patcha," which is used in the overture section (*homrong*) (Figure 5.5)<sup>245</sup> transcribed from Umnad Nuniad's performance. (Please note that these transcriptions omit ornamentation due to my primary focus on the melodic lines of *nora* music.)<sup>246</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>242</sup> Kosonhemmanee, "The Development of Nora of Khun Oupbhathamnarakorn Family (Pum Dheva)," 178-195.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>243</sup> This figure was transcribed from Sirichai Vejkul's performance of "Chak Bai"

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oyaLkbFq1pQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oyaLkbFq1pQ</a>> uploaded by Kon Dontri (4 June 2020).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>244</sup> Figure 5.4 was also transcribed from *rum nora sip-song bot*, a performance of *nora* Tammanit Nikomrat (1.01-1.09) < <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iAiV14VyzZE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iAiV14VyzZE</a>> uploaded by Tammanit Nikomrat, (10 October 2016).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>245</sup> Figure 5.5 was transcribed from the performance of Umnad Nuniad

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bp]NfvZbq0I">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bp]NfvZbq0I</a>>uploaded Kok Kai Sound Studio (2 December 2018).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>246</sup> Appendix C.11-C.12 contains MIDI files for Figures 5.3-5.5 transcriptions.



Figure 5.3: "Chak bai." Transcription by the author.



Figure 5.4: "Sot Soi" pattern. Transcription by the author.



Figure 5.5: "Patcha." Transcription by the author.

The melodic construction of "Chak bai" is made up of 28 measures in a 2/4 time signature that are repeated twice. The melodic structure of this piece is also built on a C major pentatonic scale, similar to melodic constructions of Thai classical and *isan nuea* music, with the G note

operating as a marker for the beginning and conclusion of musical phrases. Unlike *khaen* performances of *isan nuea* music, which are constructed by using several interval patterns, the melodic patterns in "Chak Bai," a southern Thai composition, appear to be based on stepwise motions with the wide skip interval evident only in m.6.

Similar to the melody of "Chak bai," the melodic construction of "Patcha," as performed in Umnad Nuniad's version, is also based on the C major pentatonic scale, with the note G used at the beginning and end of its several musical phrases, and D at the end. Applying the same method of jazz analysis of Chapter 3, the fundamental patterns of this composition are also based on G-A-C-D-E (5-6-1-2-3) and E-G-A-C (3-5-6-1), both of which can be found in several locations throughout the performance. Furthermore, the melody of "Patcha" is also made up of a combination of several short motifs in quarter-note rhythms, and the repetition, such as C-C, D-D-, E-E, and G-G can be utilized to intertwine its musical phrases together.

#### 5.3 A PROTOTYPE COMPOSITION

By working with these three musical elements in jazz composition, I was able to compose the contemporary jazz piece "Manora," which musically expresses the sound of *nora* performance (Figure 5.6). In the A section, I decided to manifest the specific character of the melody of "Patcha." I did so by implementing some of the melodic motions from mm.1-16 of my transcription of Umnad Nuniad to construct the bass part—performed by a keyboard in this section. For the double bass part in the A section, I also composed a retrograde version of these melodic lines. Together with the bass lines generated by the keyboard part, they produce contrary motion, which contributes an interesting musical idea to the composition. For the B section, I continued to examine the application of *kheun hua pi* techniques by utilizing the sound of a soprano saxophone to reference the sound of the *pi nora*. The traditional technique on *pi nora* was initially composed based on the pitch D—a similar sound to those of *kheun hua pi* techniques, with the ascension to the higher pitches of the notes G and A. In addition, the double bass part of the B section also essentially imitates the perpetual sound of D alternating with G, similar to the patterns created by *mong* players in *nora* ensembles.

Moving on to the compositional methods in the C section: here, I selected the memorable melodic lines of "Patcha" and began to transform their original pitches, and rearrange the rhythmic structures from the transcription (starting from m.35), to accommodate the main

melody section of "Manora." To avoid the duplication of the melodic movement of the simple melody, I also decided to employ the key modulation of the second repeat of the melody part. Another noticeable musical element that I included in this composition is the "Sot Soi" pattern, in the E section. Because the characteristic sound of the "Soi Sot" pattern is simple, memorable, and frequently heard when *nora* performers change their postures, implementing this memorable melodic line can clearly signal the unique sound of *nora* performances to the audience. In the F section, I decided to include the melodic patterns for "Chak Bai," which I transcribed from Sirichai Vejkul's performance and then transposed up a minor third. However, in this section—which contains no rhythmic adjustments—my aim was to provide the sound of *nora* music with as minimal change as possible in order to balance compositional practices between traditional and modern aspects and render an accurate characterization of *nora* music to the audience. Indeed, working on blending these selected musical elements of *nora* music into a small jazz ensemble can provide me with practical methods, as well as generating more innovative compositional ideas that can be later utilized for musical hybridization in jazz orchestra writing.<sup>247</sup>

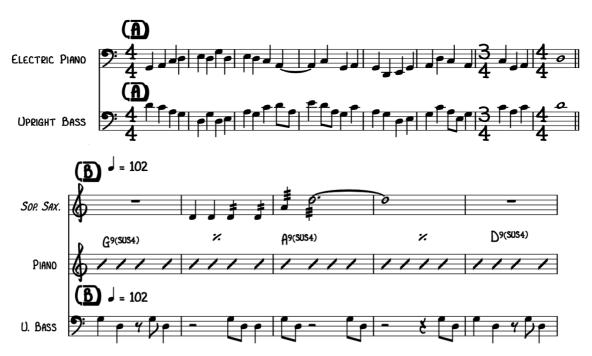


Figure 5.6a: "Manora." Composed by the author.

 $<sup>^{\</sup>rm 247}$  The full lead sheet of "Manora" is displayed in Appendix A.7.



Figure 5.6b: "Manora." Composed by the author. (continued)

#### **5.4 RONG NGENG**

Rong ngeng is one of several musical practices of Thai Muslims in southern Thailand. The origins of this style of music are both vibrant and fascinating, as Thai Muslim music can be interpreted as an exemplary case of the musical transculturation of Western, Arabic, and multiple local cultures in the Malay peninsula.<sup>248</sup> As Prapad Krupradub states in his study "Rong Ngeng: Music and Folk Dance in the South of Thailand," the origin of rong ngeng—which refers to a dancing style that may have been influenced by overseas traders, in particular the Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, and Arabs—can be also traced to the area around Java, before later moving to the Malay peninsula.<sup>249</sup> As Lawrence N. Ross notes, "Rong ngeng is an old term that goes back to fourteenth-century Java, and has commonly stood, since that time, for some type of music ensemble featuring a female singer-dancer—if not a term for the dancer, herself—throughout

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>248</sup> The modern national border between Thailand and Malaysia was formed as a result of the Anglo-Siamese Treaty in 1909, as previously stated in Chapter 3 (the modern Thai nation section). Wyatt, *Thailand: A Short History*, 192-193.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>249</sup> Prapad krupradub, "Rong Ngeng: Music and Folk Dance in the South of Thailand," Master's thesis, Mahidol University (1997), 57.

the Malay-speaking world."<sup>250</sup> However, it seems that most historical documents may emphasize the development of *rong ngeng* performances during the Portuguese colonial period<sup>251</sup> and somewhat neglect the crucial discussion of *rong ngeng* music associated with theatrical performance during the twentieth century. David Goldsworthy states that

These authors' extrapolations of *rong ngeng* to explain history all miss a crucial point: that regardless of connections to early colonial contact *rong ngeng* is a more recent phenomenon whose roots lie primarily in transformations to early twentieth-century popular Malayan dance hall and theater music, rather than an archaic form perpetuated from earlier centuries. Not to discount connections with the older roots, but recent history is more germane to what make *rong ngeng* distinctive.<sup>252</sup>

Tan Sooi Beng, when discussing the origins of *rong ngeng* during the post-Portuguese period, has referred to the ethnic diversity of *rong ngeng* troupes in Melaka, later emphasizing its peaks, which were comparable to the performance of Malay theaters:

It is believed that the *ronggeng* developed during the post-Portuguese period in Melaka, and *ronggeng* troupes comprising performers of different ethnic origins still provide music and entertainment during Malay and *Baba*...And, folk *ronggeng* songs evolved into modern popular genres and were introduced to all parts of Malaya through *bangsawan*, the first urban commercial Malay theater. It evolved in the late nineteenth century and reached its peak prior to and during the Second World War—in the 1920s, 1930s, and early 1940s. <sup>253</sup>

As previously indicated by these four researchers, whether *rong ngeng* performances originated in Java or the Malay Peninsula is still a source of debate. However, it is significant that this performance is one of the musical traditions of Southeast Asian Muslim communities, which still can be witnessed in the coastal cities across Java and the Malay Peninsula, as well as several provinces in southern Thailand, of particular relevance to the aims of my composition project.<sup>254</sup>

The traditional practices of *rong ngeng* for both dancing and accompaniment in Thailand can be divided into two geographical categories, namely, 1) the style of *rong ngeng* located in the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>250</sup> Lawrence N. Ross, "Rong Ngeng The Transformation of Malayan Social Dance Music in Thailand Since The 1930s," PhD Diss., The City of University of New York (2011), 1-2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>251</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>252</sup> Ibid., 25-26.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>253</sup> Tan Sooi Beng, "From Folk to National Popular Music: Recreating Ronggeng in Malaysia," *Journal of Musicological Research* 24, no.3-4 (2005), 288.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>254</sup> I would like to clarify that *rong ngeng* is a common tradition among Muslim communities in the Malay peninsula and some parts of Indonesia, and it is also known as Malaysian folk music. And, similar to the northeast Thai music that can be also observed as the traditional music of Laos. Nevertheless, because my research focuses on musical aspects of jazz compositions rather than sociocultural discussion. For this chapter, I will only consider the example of *rong ngeng*, which has been practiced among Thai-Muslim communities.

southeast part of Thailand (the gulf of Thailand), which includes Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat Provinces, and 2) those *rong ngeng* performances by the Thai-Muslim communities along the Andaman coastline (southwest Thailand) (e.g., Satun, Phang-nga [พังงา], Krabi, and Trang provinces, as well as Lanta and Li-pe islands).<sup>255</sup> The distinctive performances of these two different styles of *rong ngeng* can be observed in the selected instruments of the musical ensembles, the postures of the dancers, and the original purpose of the performances.

The origins of *rong ngeng* practice in the southeast part of Thailand, according to Prapad Krupradub, traces back to the musical entertainment of governors or sultans in this particular area (and, more specifically, to Phya Phiphit Senamad [พระยาพิพิธเตนามาตย์ฯ], a sultan of Yaring [ยะ หริง], which is present-day Pattani Province). Later, this style spread to the communities through traditional Muslim theatrical performances known as *mak yong* (มะใช่ง) (which are related to *nora* performances). As a consequence, the practice of *rong ngeng* in this region significantly concerns the meticulous posture of *rong ngeng* dancers (comprising both males and females), and the instruments used in this musical ensemble include Western instruments such as the violin, mandolin, and accordion; both of these factors are evident in the practice of musical translation, as mentioned earlier.

The practice of *rong ngeng* in the southwest of Thailand can also be separated into two subcategories, consisting of *rong ngeng chao le* (*rong ngeng* of the *chao le* people [arrain] and *rong ngeng tanyong* [munter], concentrated in the Krabi Province and surrounding areas). Unlike the performances of *rong ngeng* in the southeastern area, *rong ngeng chao le* and *rong ngeng tanyong* were originally practiced among the fishing communities and in villages along the coast of the Andaman Sea. Therefore, most of the performances in this style include lyrics that express the fisherman's lifestyle, sea lullabies, and ordinary stories of village-style courtships; these lyrics are occasionally generated by improvisational processes of vocalists (*klon sol*). In addition, the musical instruments employed in the *rong ngeng* performances of southwest Thailand seem to be fewer in number—consisting only of the violin, two different sizes of a frame drum called *rebana*<sup>257</sup> (or *rammana*, in the central-Thai dialect), and one gong—compared to the *rong ngeng* musical ensembles of the southeastern part of the country.

255 Mesri, A Case Study of Rong Ngang songs of Mr. Seng Arboo, 16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>256</sup> Krupradub, "Rong Ngeng: Music and Folk Dance in the South of Thailand," 61.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>257</sup> Please also note that there are several different *rebana* models employed in various traditional music styles in south Thailand. The *rebana* type referred to in *rong ngeng* performances in both the southeast and west is a single drum head that sizes around 25 to 60 centimeters, and traditionally made of goat and cow skins. See more in:

Another striking difference in the performance methods between these two regional rong ngeng styles (southeastern and southwestern) concerns the practice of wai khru ceremonies (paying homage to teachers). Nevertheless, such ceremonies can only be investigated in rong ngeng chao le and rong ngeng tanyong performances where the musicians perform a "Lagu Dua"(anagana) (for rong ngeng tanyoung) and "Lagu Du Wa (anagana)" (for rong ngeng chao le) to pay the local spirits for protection.<sup>258</sup> (Please also note that different dance postures, costumes, and slightly different dialects are observable in the respective performances of rong ngeng chao le and rong ngeng tanyong.)

#### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS AND TEXTURE

The *rong ngeng* musical ensembles in the southeast, as previously indicated, include several Western instruments, such as mandolin and accordion, that can be used to create harmony. As a result, the musical texture of *rong ngeng* in the region is identifiable in its homophony—which is similar to *isan nuea* music but differs from Thai classical music and *nora* performances, as well as the *rong ngeng* performances of the southwest region (*tanyong* and *chao le*), which only use one violin. The primary function of the violin in *rong ngeng* musical ensembles (for both regions) is similar to its purpose in other traditional music styles of Europe, the Americas and elsewhere, serving to execute main melodic lines. Another technique of Thai *rong ngeng* violinists which is similarly identifiable in Western classical music, as well as in a number of traditional and classical music styles, is the use of the double stop. The use of the accordion and mandolin applies to only to southeast *rong ngeng* ensembles, and is intended to support violinists primarily by constructing unisons or octave unisons in the melodic lines of *rong ngeng* compositions. Other fundamental accompaniment techniques—such as playing intervals or triads—are also frequently observable in the performances of the accordion and mandolin.

The percussion instruments used in *rong ngeng* performances in southern Thailand can also be divided into two categories, by region. In general, southwestern *rong ngeng* performances use fewer percussion instruments than southeastern *rong ngeng* performances. In both regions, *rong ngeng* performances usually feature two sizes of the *rebana (rammana)*, a larger drum for the

<sup>258</sup> Chayada Rattanaphan, "A Comparative Analysis of the Performance of the East and the West Rong-Ngeng," *Journal of Nakhonratchasima College*, 11, no.1 (2017), 75.

Lawrence N. Ross, "Across Borders and Genres in Malaysia and Thailand: The Changgong Rhythm of the Andaman Sea Coast," *Asian music* 48, no.1 (2016), 58-84.

fundamental rhythmic patterns and a smaller drum (*luk kut*) for generating variations such as improvisational fills or off-beat accents. Both regions also feature one unpitched gong (or *khong* in the central-Thai dialect) in *rong ngeng* performances, utilized to emphasize the downbeats.

In contrast to *rong ngeng* performances in the southwest, the percussion instruments in southeastern ensembles include additional percussion instruments such as maracas and the tambourine. Because of these larger instrumentations of southeastern ensembles, and my interest in musical texture, I decided that for this project, I would provide one concise illustration of a performance from the southeastern region's style. This example was taken from Atipon Anukool's research on southeastern *rong ngeng* performances.<sup>259</sup> The Ussakmeemala ensemble, one of the most well-known *rong ngeng* groups from Pattani Province in the southeast, performed this piece, a composition called "Oh Sa Loma" (Figure 5.7).<sup>260</sup> (Please note that while transcribing or studying *rong ngeng* compositions, the use of a 2/4 time signature is avoided due to the lack of perpetual beats generated by the *ching*, which are often heard in other traditional Thai music styles.)



Figure 5.7a: Selection from "Oh Sa Loma" by Atipon Anukool, an example of the musical texture of southeastern *rong ngeng*.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>259</sup> Anukool, "Rong- Ngang Song of Ussaleemala,"76.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>260</sup> Ibid.,76.



Figure 5.7b: Selection from "Oh Sa Loma" by Atipon Anukool, continued.

In this example, the principal functions of the violin and accordion—both of which perform the main melodic lines of the composition—are comparable. In addition, the accordion player carries additional responsibility for producing fundamental harmonies to *rong ngeng* musical textures (e.g., employing simple triadic voicings). The mandolin players in *rong ngeng* ensembles either play an accompaniment role by performing certain intervals (typically the interval of a third) or melodic lines in unison with the violin players, as is demonstrated in the second ending. In a standard setting, the rhythm sections of southeastern *rong ngeng* ensembles may consist of three players—with the sounds of the gong and maracas performed by the one percussionist and serving to signify the downbeat accents. The sound of the *rehana* also constructs perpetual rhythmic patterns that signify and guide the distinguished stylistic rhythmic patterns used in *rong ngeng* performance. To provide complicated rhythmic ideas—in particular, to create syncopated rhythms—*rong ngeng* ensembles also add one more percussion player on *luk kut* to create a syncopated character against *rahana* patterns, as seen in the transcription.

#### RHYTHMIC PATTERNS

In the southeastern and southwestern genres of *rong ngeng*, rhythmic patterns are performed in a number of ways. Tan Sooi Beng has explained the application of Malay words to symbolize the two dissimilar sounds that are constructed by the *rebana*, namely *tak* (treble sounds), and

dung (bass sounds).<sup>261</sup> This is similar to Lawrence N. Ross's demonstration that the word dung refers to a center stroke produced by the low sound, while tak denotes the high timbre produced by striking the player's hand against the edge of the instrument. In addition, Ross also mentions that the word duk may apply to the muted treble sound similar to tak, but here, the rebana player uses one hand to mute the drum skin.<sup>262</sup> Adapting this significant rhythmic information can provide jazz composers with a better understanding of rebana performances and also develop the practical concept of rhythmic patterns performed in both types of rong ngeng performance. However, due to regional accents and the diverse dialects that may differ between Muslims in Thailand and Malaysia, I have decided to, in my rebana transcriptions, use two percussion lines where the top line refers to the treble sound and the bottom line refers to the bass tone. The "x", meanwhile, designates the muted sounds, in order to substantially reduce any confusion around the letters used in my method.

To provide demonstrations of the rhythmic patterns of rong ngeng music practiced in Muslim communities in Thailand, I selected performances of a rong ngeng troupe from Satun Province<sup>263</sup> (tanyong in the southwestern region), whose performers are from the Faculty of Fine Arts of Songkla Rajabhat University, led by Jansamorn Pholboon.<sup>264</sup> Additionally, this performance was a subject of a qualitative study conducted using the documentary method and the field survey approach, which included interviewing, observing, and learning from a local rong ngeng troupe. The three fundamental rhythmic patterns, which were transcribed from the rebana performance, are called lagu dua (ลามูลูวอ), mak inang (มะอินัง), and sinadong (สินาโด้ง) (Figure 5.8).<sup>265</sup>



Figure 5.8a: Fundamental rhythmic patterns of *rong ngeng tanyong*. Transcription by the author.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>261</sup> Beng, "From Folk to National Popular Music: Recreating Ronggeng in Malaysia," 291-293.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>262</sup> Ross, "Across Borders and Genres in Malaysia and Thailand: The Changgong Rhythm of the Andaman Sea Coast," 63.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>263</sup> Jansamorn Pholboon, "Inheriting Rongngeng-tanyong Performance by using Traditional Posture Instructional Media," *Journal of Yala Rajabhat University* 12, no.1 (2017), 29.

To listen the performances, see 1) Lagu dua < <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oKiYv9Yp5qI">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oKiYv9Yp5qI</a>, 2) Mak Inang < <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ysiMC5rbio">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ysiMC5rbio</a>, and 3) Singdong

<sup>&</sup>lt; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lWHNJEgoCk8>, all of which uploaded by Monton Pholboon (20 July 2015).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>265</sup> See Appendix C.13-15 for MIDI files of transcriptions.



Figure 5.8b: Fundamental rhythmic patterns of rong ngeng tanyong, continued.

In Laga dua, the rong ngeng rhythm is characterized by two measures of a repeating rhythmic pattern. This rhythmic pattern is also made up of three groups of treble tones and two groups of bass sounds, with the accentuated beat appearing on the second and fourth beats, which is interestingly comparable to beats typically accented in many styles of jazz. Throughout the performance, it is also performed in triplet pulse. The rhythmic patterns of the rebana employed in "Mak Inang" and "Sinadong" also include syncopated sixteenth-note rhythms. Muted techniques are evident in both of these rhythmic patterns. Interestingly, the accentuation of Mak Inang is comparable to Laga dua, with the second and fourth beats again corresponding to emphases on beats 2 and 4 in many 4/4 jazz styles. "Sinadong" rhythmic patterns also feature syncopated beats produced by a set of two notes in treble tones and a group of three notes in bass tones, with the accented beats placed on the initial downbeat. This rhythmic pattern can of course be applied to drum set or congas parts, as I later explain in the discussion of my jazz orchestra compositional process (Chapter 7).

For examples of rhythmic patterns of *rong ngeng* performances in southeastern Thailand, I selected for transcription *rebana* patterns which have been analyzed by Apicha Kantacha in an academic forum on "Ronggeng community people in Songkhla" hosted by Prince of Songkhla University in Songkhla Province. In this seminar, Apicha, a renowned *rong ngeng* musician in Songkhla Province and the leader of the Ussakmeemala ensemble, provides significant details about how *rong ngeng* music is practiced in the southeastern region, providing examples of performances from which I selected three different rhythmic patterns: 1) *Asli*, 2) *Inang*, and 3) *Ioget*. These are the standard rhythmic patterns that *rong ngeng* performers from this particular

region must learn and frequently apply to accompany *rong ngeng* dancers.<sup>266</sup> The example of these three *rebana* patterns are displayed in Figure 5.9.<sup>267</sup>

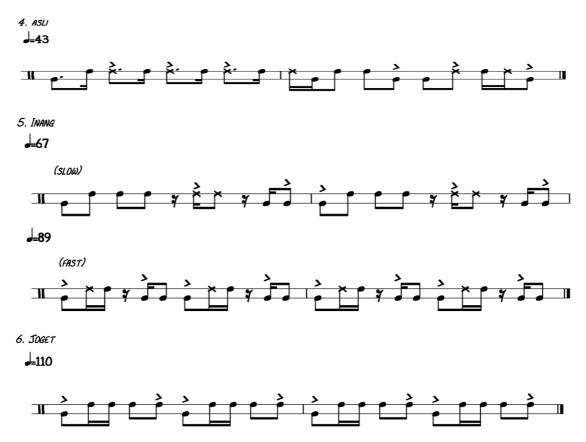


Figure 5.9: Rhythmic pattern in southeastern *rong ngeng* performances.

Transcription by the author.

The fundamental rhythm of the *Asli* pattern as played by Apicha's ensemble has a slow tempo (indicated as 43 BPM), perhaps similar to the tempos of jazz standards when played as ballads. The first measure of the *Asli* pattern also provide a rhythmic sense similar to the feeling of swing in jazz, consisting of dotted eighth notes followed by sixteenth notes. To provide more syncopated rhythmic ideas, the *rebana* player also performs the second sixteenth-note up-beats in the bass tone in the second group of patterns. Apicha also mentions that the performance of the *Asli* style is one of the oldest traditional rhythms and is rare in current *rong ngeng* performances.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>266</sup> These three standard rhythmic patterns, consisting of *Asli, Inang*, and *Joget* can also be observed in the practices of Muslim communities in Malaysia; however, from my empirical observations, the distinctions between these two regional styles can be explicitly recognized. See more in: Tan Sooi Beng, "From Folk to National Popular Music: Recreating Ronggeng in Malaysia."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>267</sup> Appendix C.16-18 contain MIDI files of transcriptions.

The second standard rhythm applied in southeastern *rong ngeng* performances and represented in the above notation is the *inang* (Pii) pattern, which is slightly faster the *Asli* example, and can be employed in lullaby songs. It seems that the slow *inang* is less syncopated in its rhythm than the *Asli* pattern. The fast *inang* includes syncopated rhythms on the upbeats of the second and fourth beats. The rhythmic pattern of the fast *inang* is also similar to the rhythmic pattern that accompanies "*Sinadong*" in southwestern *rong ngeng* performances, but with different beats emphasized.

The final rhythmic pattern that I transcribed is *joget*, which is one of the most famous stylistic rhythmic patterns in *rong ngeng* performances in the southeastern region, and perhaps in other areas as well. Apicha explains that the origin of this particular rhythm could be associated with the traditional dances of the Portuguese. Nowadays, the *joget* rhythm is famously employed in Muslim wedding ceremonies. In addition, the noticeable musical elements in this particular rhythm include a set of sixteenth-notes connected to two eighth-notes—which are accented in the first down-beats and the second up-beats without any rests.

#### RONG NGENG COMPOSITIONS

The musical compositions of *rong ngeng* performances in Thai-Muslim communities have also been significantly influenced by Malay folk and film music. Seng Arboo, one of the prominent *rong ngeng* musicians from Pattani province, mentions that some of the musical compositions that he uses to accompany southeastern *rong ngeng* performances are drawn from Malay folk music he listened to in his childhood, which he later interpreted and adopted to suit his performances.<sup>268</sup> The compositional repertoire of *rong ngeng* music played in the southwestern region can also be divided into two categories: 1) compositions significantly influenced by Malay folk music during the Second World War, and 2) compositions that contain Thai lyrics resulting from the separation of Malay and Thai cultures in the post-war era.<sup>269</sup>

Although *rong ngeng* compositions are relatively new when compared to Thai classical and *isan nuea* music, its performance practices have been strongly maintained through oral transmission between the different generations of Thai Muslim communities in southern Thailand. In particular, *rong ngeng* performances in southeastern Thailand went through a process of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>268</sup> Mesri, "A Case Study of Rong Ngang songs of Mr. Seng Arboo,"37.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>269</sup> Ross, "Rong Ngeng The Transformation of Malayan Social Dance Music in Thailand Since The 1930s,"234.

standardization of dance postures by cultural institutions and local artists. This preserved both the original dance postures associated with accompanying compositions, and the rhythmic patterns traceable back to the original practices of the sultanate period.

Traditionally, there are at least eight compositions that are famously employed in the *rong ngeng* performances of the southeastern region. These traditional compositions are: "Lagu Dua" (which has a distinct melody contains the "Lagu Dua" rhythm of the southwestern region), "Lenang (เลนัง)," "Pu Jo Pi Sang (ปูรีก็ปรัง)," "Mo Inang Chawa," "Jitra Sayang," "Mo Inang Lama," "A Nao De Dee (อาเมาะดิดี)," and "Bu Nga Rum Pai (ปุหมารำไป)." I selected two compositions from this traditional repertoire to draw on in this project: "Lenang" (Figure 5.10)<sup>271</sup> and "Lagu Dua" (Figure 5.11). <sup>272</sup> The recordings of these songs that I transcribed were by Khadae Wadeng (ขาเครี แวเด็ง), a nationally renowned artist who is one of the most respected *rong ngeng* musicians in Thailand. Khadae was also a pioneer of *rong ngeng* performance in the southeastern region. He recorded these two compositions with his well-known ensemble, the Dendung Ussalee ensemble (คณะเด็นดังอัสดี)<sup>273</sup> formed in 1971 in Pattani Province.<sup>274</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>270</sup> Supa Watchasukhum, Rong Ngeng, A Southern Thai Folk Dance, (Yala: Yala Rajabhat University, 1988), 32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>271</sup> Figure 5.10 was transcribed from Khadae Wadeng's performance of "Lenang," Rong Ngeng Ocean Media (0.00-1.46) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=We9mOV-ca8U">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=We9mOV-ca8U</a> uploaded by Bangsun Sri (30 November 2012).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>272</sup> This figure was Khadae Wadeng's performance of "Lagu Dua," which was transcribed from (1.47- 2.32) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5H7KLqOhmnA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5H7KLqOhmnA</a>> uploaded by Siam Melodies (1 February 2021).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>273</sup> For further information on the Dendung Ussalee ensemble, see Wichai Mesri, "A Case Study of Rong Ngang songs of Mr. Seng Arboo,"25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>274</sup> See Appendix C.19-20 for MIDI files of transcriptions.



Figure 5.10: "Lenang." Transcription by the author.

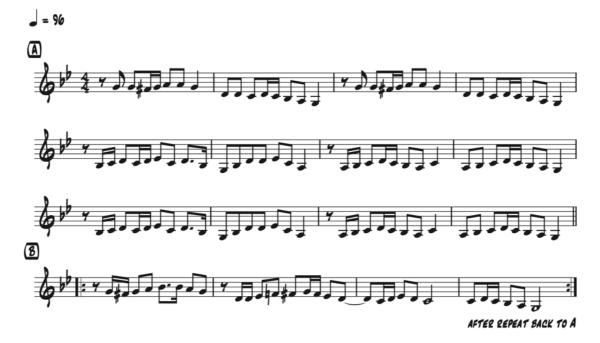


Figure 5.11: "Lagu Dua." Transcription by the author.

Unlike other traditional music in Thailand, the melodies of musical compositions for *rong ngeng* performances contain half-step intervals and harmonic minor scale structures that are the result of the pitch constructions of Western musical instruments. The melodic lines of "Lenang" are created from a G major scale with the half-step between the notes of F# and G, in contrast to the penta-centric concept of other traditional Thai music. The melodies of this composition

are also based on symmetrical phrases consisting of eight measures of repetition that repeat twice. The tempo of "Lenang" also alternates between a slow and a fast section: after the second repetition, the tempo increases to double-time.

The melodic lines of "Lagu Dua" outline the sound of the G harmonic scale and include the pitches of Bb, Eb, and F#—pitches that clearly distinguish the harmonic minor scale sound from the penta-centric doctrine of Thai classical music, *isan nuea* music, and even *nora* music. In this recording, Khadae also performs two distinctive sections (melodies A and B), which are examples of standard compositional forms and applied in the performances *rong ngeng* southeast. Performances of *rong ngeng* in this region usually start in a slow tempo and change to a fast tempo to provide more excitement, and to avoid monotony for the dancers. Instrumental arrangements also shift in such performances—for example, instruments take turns playing the melody part of the composition. Interestingly, improvisational methods are rarely identified in *rong ngeng* performances from this region.

#### 5.5 A PROTOTYPE COMPOSITION

To begin thinking through musical hybridization of *rong ngeng* performances and jazz composition for this project, I composed "Mutee Yara," with the lead sheet included below (Figure 5.12).

In this composition designated for a jazz quartet, I utilized the original melody of the Lagu Dua composition from southeast Thailand transcribed earlier as the melody part of the B section. However, I decided to modulate the original scale of the Lagu Dua melody—G harmonic minor—to several different scales, including C, D, and Gb harmonic minor (in red rectangles in Figure 5.12). The prominent musical elements of southwestern *rong ngeng*—namely, the individual rhythmic patterns *mak inang* and *sinadong*—were also adjusted for use as rhythmic accompaniment devices in the rhythm section in the solo parts, as illustrated in the D section. To provide a rhythmic character related to the social dances of the *rong ngeng* performance, I also made use of the rhythmic patterns of *bolero* which are performed by the drum, bass, and piano players in the E section. In addition, the melody of this part was a reharmonization of the original melody of the Lenang composition that is frequently performed in southeast Thailand as a piece of slow dance music. As a result, this melody is

capable of transmitting a surprising sensitivity to the audience who may expect Lagu Dua's melody to be repeated as a melody out. <sup>275</sup>



Figure 5.12: "Mutee-Yara." Composed by the author. The red boxes indicate the various harmonic minor modes; their corresponding harmonies are typical of contemporary jazz.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>275</sup> Appendix A.8 includes the entire lead sheet for this composition.

#### **5.6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

Nora music is a musical culture practiced by Mahayana Buddhists in southern Thailand, and it is intimately associated with nora performances, a type of Thai southern theater. Pi nora, thap, klong, mong, and ching are some of the instruments utilized in nora music, with nai pi (a reed player) playing a significant role in creating the fundamental melodic lines used in nora music. One of the prominent instrumental techniques of pi nora that is capable of being imitated by a soprano saxophone is khuen hua pi, which is a single pitch reiteration that begins with lower pitches and progresses to higher notes before returning to lower pitches. Another important musical characteristic of this traditional music can be linked to the two mong sounds, such as D and G, which can be constantly heard alternating throughout nora performances and replicated in bass lines, as shown in my prototype composition. The use of nora repertoires has also been linked to Thai classical music musical performance repertoires. Unlike the melodies of isan nuea music performances, which are predominantly constructed by using intervallic patterns, the melodic patterns of southern Thai compositions tend to be based on stepwise motions, as illustrated in the transcriptions of "Patcha," and "Chak Bai."

Another traditional Thai southern music performance is a rong ngeng performance, which is a musical practice of southern Thai Muslims. Unlike other Thai musical traditions, rong ngeng performance incorporate the use of western instruments such as the violin and accordion. Two distinct regional styles, rong ngeng (tanyoug) in the southwest and rong ngeng in the southeast, are distinguished by the instrument, repertoires, and performance methods. The rhythmic pattern of rong ngeng's music, which construed by rebana is one of the most intriguing features that can be utilized in jazz composition. These rhythmic patterns can be effectively executed by drums, bongo, and conga in jazz ensembles, or employed as rhythmic accompaniments for drum solo as demonstrated in my prototype composition. The southwestern region's rong ngeng music compositional repertoire can also be classified into two categories: 1) compositions influenced by Malay folk music; 2) compositions with Thai lyrics and adaptations of Thai cultures as a result of the separation of Malay and Thai cultures in the postwar era. In addition, Malay folk and film music have had a significant influence on rong ngeng repertoires in the southeast. Importantly, the melodic lines of rong ngeng compositions contain half-step intervals and highlight the sound of a harmonic minor scale, which is dissimilar to the concept of "pentacentric" in dontri thai doem (Thai classical music) and isan nuea music.

To summarize, the compositional methods of this chapter provide an example of imitating the performance methods of southern music instruments such as the *pi nora*, *mong*, and *rebana*, which can be used by instruments in a jazz ensemble as previously described. In addition to the previous compositional techniques, such as the utilization of Thai classical music compositional methods, or the employment of *isan nuea* melodies and its musical modes known as *lai yai* and *lai sutsanaen* combined with jazz improvisations and harmonies, as illustrated in Chapters 3 and 4, this compositional technique also allowed me to have more approaches to explore in my jazz hybridization orchestra project.

## Chapter 6

# Exploring the Musical Components of dontri paknuea (Traditional Music of Northern Thailand)

#### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter offers an overview of the traditional music of northern Thailand. I discuss practices from two regions of northern Thailand: the *khap saw* singing tradition of the northwest region, a region is predominantly influenced by practices of Chiang Mai province; and the *salo* and *pin* ensemble traditions of the northeast region, which are prominent in Nan province. I start by examining the northern Thai musical instruments used in both regions, and present several transcriptions to explore how these instruments can work in a jazz context. Next, I focus on the performance methods of the northern music tradition in my two examples. I analyze a *khap saw* performance from Chiang Mai province as well as two traditional songs performed by *salo saw pin* ensembles from Nan province. Like previous chapters, this chapter concludes with two musical examples of prototype compositions I have composed as examples of hybridized musicality between jazz and *dontri paknuea*.

# THE TRADITIONAL MUSIC OF NORTHERN THAILAND (DONTRI PAKNUEA)

The traditional music of northern Thailand, known as "Lanna Music," 276 is the musical practice of northern Thais who reside in the region's mountain ranges and valleys, bordering Laos to the east and Myanmar to the west. Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Lampang, Lamphun, Mae Hong Son, Phayo, Phrea, Nan, and some regions of Uttaradit Province are among the nine provinces where traditional northern Thai music is still performed in modern-day Thailand.<sup>277</sup> The prominent musical performances of this particular genre of traditional music can be divided into four different types<sup>278</sup>: 1) the practices of female and male singers (khap saw) accompanied by a musical ensemble of free-reed bamboo pipes (wong pi jum); 2) instrumental and accompanying music performed by northern string instruments in ensembles called salo, saw, and sueng in Chiang Mai (called salo, saw, and pin in Nan); 3) performances of klong sabat chai and klong luang drum ensembles for sacred and religious ceremonies, klong mong soeng drum ensembles for accompanying traditional northern dances (fon), and klong puje drum ensembles, which accompany the northern martial arts (fon dap); and lastly 4) the performances of pi phat Lanna musical ensembles (also known as pad, pad-gong, pad nae) which are slightly similar to pi phat ensembles of Thai classical music, but which employ different instruments, including drums called klong teng thing (กลองเต่งถึ้ง) and klong pong (กลองป่งโป้ง), as well as double-reed instruments known as nae luang (แนกดวง) and nae noi (แนน้อย). In addition, the traditional pi phat Lanna repertoire consists of both Thai classical compositions and compositions of northern Thailand.<sup>279</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>276</sup> The word "Lanna" is also associated with other subjects—including the name of the ancient kingdom of the northern people, the primary influential language of northerners, and the historical period of the northern part of Thailand. Wyatt, *Thailand: A Short History*, 33.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>277</sup> It is also important to recognize that these nine provinces were once part of the Lanna Kingdom, which was greatly influenced by the Lan Xang kingdom (Laos), in particular during the reign of King Setthathirah (1534-1571), and were then ruled by Burmese during Toungoo and Konbaung dynasties from the 16th to the 18th centuries, before being officially annexed to Siam territory during the reign of King Chulalongkorn (1868-1910). "Siam's plan to seize Lanna" Nuaon Khrouthongkhieo, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, *Matichon TV* <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8j-aDZ7gmRw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8j-aDZ7gmRw</a> (27 July 2019).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>278</sup> Lanna music is also referred to as *Khon Mueang* music in urban areas. In addition, there are multiple musical performances that belong to the hill tribes of northern Thailand. See, "The ethnic group research", Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre's website < <a href="https://www.sac.or.th/">https://www.sac.or.th/</a>> and Benjamin Stuart Fairfield, "The Participatory We-Self: Ethnicity and Music in Northern Thailand," PhD diss., University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (2017).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>279</sup> Wuthipat Ketpattanaphon, "Knowledge of Wong Petchphayom, a *Lanna piphat* ensemble," (Chiang Mai: Cultural Arts Center of Maejo University 2011), 16-18.

Among the several traditional music practices of these nine provinces, distinctive regional performances are also evident in terms of the utilization of different instruments, types of musical ensembles, and singing dialects. To enable easier understanding of this concept of regional distinction, Thai ethnomusicologists such as Pornprasit (2006) and Sumrongthong (2006) divide the musical practices of this region into two dominant groups: the traditional practices primarily influenced by Chiang Mai province (Northwest), and the musical cultures mainly inspired by Nan province (Northeast).<sup>280</sup> Two practices, one from each province, lend themselves to the hybridization process of this project: 1) the traditional singing practice known as *khap saw* (from Chiang Mai Province), and 2) the instrumental compositions of *salo* and *pin* ensembles from Nan Province.

#### **6.2 MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS**

Before providing a comprehensive discussion on the musical structures of northern Thai music that I have drawn on in this project, it is important to start by discussing the traditional instruments of this region relevant to this study, which can provide fundamental concepts of how northern Thai musicians perform music. These instruments include: 1) *pi jum* (bamboo pipe), 2) *salo* (two-stringed bowed fiddle), and 3) *sueng* or *pin* (plucked lute).

#### PI JUM

The word "pi jum" refers to the group of end-blown free reed bamboo pipe instruments (jum means "congregation" in Lanna dialect), consisting of five different sizes in pi jum ensembles. Each instrument has either six or seven finger holes. The individual instruments include pi koy (the main instrument, medium-sized), pi klang (for bass tones, medium-large), pi mae (for bass tones, the largest), pi lek (for treble tones, small), and pi tat (for treble tones, the smallest). Each instrument in this group of bamboo pipes is capable of producing seven relatively diatonic pitches similar to other bamboo instrument types used in Thai classical music or isan nuea music. The tuning system of the pi jum family appear to utilize the Western tuning system (sieng sakon) of the present-day,<sup>281</sup> and it can be also divided into five categories based on the size of instruments, namely: 1) the pi koy system (in C), which starts from C(4)-D-E-F-G-A-B-C↑

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>280</sup> Pornprasit, The performances method of the traditional north Thailand music, 68.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>281</sup> This video was uploaded by Huan Green Music and demonstrated instruments from the *pi jum* family that used the Western tuning system <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NqYsvZmdHQk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NqYsvZmdHQk</a> (24 June 2021).

(within one octave); 2) the *pi klang* system (in C), which starts from G(3)-A-B-C-D-E-F-G $\uparrow$ ; 3) the *pi lek* system (in C), which is produced from G(4)-A-B-C-D-E-F-G $\uparrow$ ; 4) the *pi mae* in C, which is constructed from D(3)-E-F-G-A-B-C (only six holes, and hence rarely used); and 5) the *pi tat* system (in C), starting from C(5)-D-E-F-G-A-B-C $\uparrow$ .

When creating sound on *pi jum* instruments, *pi jum* players (*chang pi* in *Lanna* dialect) keep the entirety of the top of the *pi jum*, in which the instrument's reed is implanted, in their mouths and use the four fingers of their right hand to cover four different holes, while applying the other three fingers of their left hand to cover three additional holes (i.e., 7 holes in total, except for the *pi mae*, which has six holes). In addition, when performing as a musical ensemble, to accompany vocalists (*khap saw*), this group of instruments is also capable of forming into three standard ensemble categories: 1) wong pi jum sam (three instruments), consisting of pi koy, pi klang, and pi lek; 2) wong pi jum si (four instruments), consisting of pi koy, pi klang, pi lek, and pi mae; and 3) wong pi jum ha (five instruments), including pi koy, pi klang, pi lek, pi mae, and pi tat. While performing together, pi jum ensembles are capable of producing a heterophonic texture based on idiomatic interpretations of the of the principal melodies, which is part of the unique and characteristic sound of northern Thai traditional music, which I explain later in this chapter.

#### **SALO**

The salo is a two-stringed fiddle that has historically been used by northern Thai musicians to generate the distinct characteristics and timbre of this style of music. The physical shape of the salo seems to be smaller than other fiddle instruments in the Thai classical ensemble, namely, the saw u, saw sam sai, and saw duang, and is consequently able to construct a brighter shining tone. There are three different salo sizes—large, medium, and small—and two different models<sup>282</sup> that are distinctively employed in Chiang Mai and Nan Provinces, the regular salo (kom) and the salo kop. The difference in structure between these two models concern the size of the salo kop (use in Nan Province) (which is slightly bigger), and the barring of the "kop" on the instrument's neck (similar to guitar frets). In contrast, the salo kom (employed in Chiang Mai Province) is a fretless instrument. The tuning concepts and systems of these two salo

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>282</sup> I exclude another *salo* model—which has a similar playing technique to a regular *salo* but employs a different bow placement—that is only utilized in Uttaradit Province.

models can be diverse, as with the tuning system of *phin*. However, there are currently three methods that are commonly used, including 1) the *luk sam* technique, which is frequently employed for a small type of *salo kom* and in which the higher string is tuned in the sound of G, and the lower string to the note of C note (perfect 5th). This is the opposite tuning to 2) the *luk si* technique in which the higher string is tuned to C and the lower string to G (perfect 4th) (this is the preferred tuning for the medium-sized *salo kom* and *salo kop* type). Lastly, 3) in a combination of *luk sam* and *luk si* tuning techniques for a large *salo kom*, the strings are tuned in C(low)–G(mid)–C(high). This large *salo kom*—or *salo sam sai* (three strings)—exists, but is rarely used in traditional northern Thai musical ensembles these days. The style's melodic embellishments that are comparable to those used in jazz compositions include sliding pitches (*rud sai* in Thai), trills (*phrom niu*) (พระเจ้า), and mordents (*sabat niu*). These elements are prominently employed in *salo* performances, with Terry Miller writing that, "Northern Thai music is distinguished by the use of certain instruments unique to the region, the extensive and distinctive ornamentation of melody, and the heterophonic texture of ensemble music." <sup>284</sup>

#### **SUENG**

The *sueng* is another plucked lute instrument that is frequently employed in northern Thai traditional ensembles. On this instrument, the group of four stings—which are constructed in double courses, similar to the *oud*—is installed over the neck of the instrument. Nowadays, three different sizes and models of the *sueng* are widely performed, namely, *sueng luang* or *sueng yai* (the largest model, only used in some areas), the medium-sized *sueng klang*, and the small *sueng lek*. These usually have a similar number of frets (nine in total), and are capable of producing different timbres, from the lower tones of the larger model to the brighter tones of the smaller model. Besides the differences in timbre, differences in the tuning of these models can also be observed; for example, the *luk si* technique (similar to the *salo* tuning system) is applied to the *sueng yai* and *sueng lek* (where the lower string is tuned in G, and the higher string in C), as well as the *sueng klang* and *sueng luang*. The name *sueng* can also refer to a related lute instrument called *pin*, which is played in Nan Province and is slightly larger, consisting of eleven to thirteen frets.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>283</sup> Pornprasit, The performance methods of traditional northern Thailand music, 86-85.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>284</sup> Miller and Williams, *The Garland Handbook of Southeast Asian Music*, 167.

Heavy tremolo techniques referred to as *rua* or *mai dit khu* (Linne) are frequently used in *sueng* performances in *Lanna* music, and can be interpreted as greatly contributing to the unique character of this style of traditional performance. The *sueng*'s primary function in northern Thai musical ensembles is to emphasize the main melodic patterns that are principally performed by the *pi koy* or *salo*, as well as to accommodate the stability of timing in the *pi jum* ensemble (in Chiang Mai Province). To provide a practical example, I have transcribed the *sueng* performance of a prominent multi-instrumentalist, Panupat Apichanatong from Chiang Mai Province, in a well-known northern Thai composition called "Saw Eue" (1964)." Furthermore, Panupat is regarded as one of Thailand's most outstanding contemporary *Lanna* musicians. His expertise in the construction of traditional *Lanna* instruments, particularly the *sueng*, was especially well-known. Here, a set of eighth-note patterns with tremolo techniques frequently accent the upbeat, similar to performance on the *phin*, a small fretted lute from *isan nuea*, and other tremolo techniques are frequently employed throughout (Figure 6.1). <sup>286</sup>



Figure 6.1: "Saw Eue." Transcription by the author.

#### **6.3 PERFORMANCE METHODS**

#### **KHAP SAW**

The musical performances of traditional northern Thai music are relatively old, and date back to the period of the *Lanna* Kingdom during the thirteenth century.<sup>287</sup> Among the diverse

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>285</sup> Figure 6.1 was transcribed from Panupat Apichanatong's performance of "Saw Euu" (1.07-1.19) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6GUYYITDv-g">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6GUYYITDv-g</a> uploaded by Kruadd NKT (13 February 2016).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>286</sup> See Appendix C.21 for transcription's MIDI file.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>287</sup> Wyatt, Thailand: A Short History, 33.

musical traditions that have preserved the sound of this period, I would like to focus on the traditional practice of khap saw performances, which include singing and pi jum. The phrase khap saw in Lanna means "singing" and can be easily confused with saw—which refers to a type of fiddle instrument in the central-Thai dialect. The original practices of *khap saw* performances and their poetic lyrics are significantly associated with historical events—in particular, wars between the Lanna Kingdom and their neighbors, which were written in Phongsawadan Lanna (chronicles); the Buddhist tales (Jataka story); stories of romantic courtship between northerners; or the ordinary stories of various ethnicities and hill tribes residing in the highlands, such as Tai yai (ไทใหญ่), Karen (กระเหรี่ยง), and Hmong (มัง).

In the musical research of Bussakorn Sumrongthong, she explicitly categorizes khap saw performances into two different groups: 1) saw ruang (singing performances describing a long story) and 2) saw kio sao (ซอเกี้ยวสาว) (spontaneous vocal performances by female and male singers that reveal romantic relationships).<sup>288</sup> When generating the poetic lyrics—through either precomposed or improvised material—of khap saw performances, chang saw (vocalists) must strictly follow by a pattern of stanzas consisting of four lines with a length of six to twelve syllables. In addition, the melodic lines (thamnong) produced by singers must be musically synchronized with the melodic movements constructed by the pi jum ensembles, which practically function as the musical accompaniment to khap saw performances.

Only a few types of melodic patterns (thamnong) are considered traditional Lanna compositions, and used as the principal melodies for accompanying khap saw performances, are still used today. These are: 1) the melodic patterns performed in the northwestern region, such as "Thamnong Tang Chiang Mai" (overture)(ตั้งเชียงใหม่), "Japu," "Lamai," "Eue, (อือ)" "Phama (พม่า)," and "Ngiew (เงียว)"; 2) the regional melodic patterns prominently employed in the northeastern region, such as "Laplae (ลับแล)" and "Panfai" (used in northeast regions); and 3) "Long Nan (ต่องน่าน)," which is played in both the northeastern and northwestern regions.<sup>289</sup> To provide a practical example of the traditional melodic patterns (thamnong) in khap saw performances, I have transcribed the comprehensive treatment of the melodic patterns in "Thamnong Ngiew" as performed by Inchan Muncharoen, a player of the pi key (an instrument

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>288</sup> Bussakorn Sumrongthong, Thai Musical Culture: Its Belief and Ritual within the North Region of Thailand, (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University, 2006), 21-22.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>289</sup> Please note that the various names of these selected melodic patterns (thamnong) depend the different local dialects and accents. For more detail relating to this subject, please see Pornprasit, The performances method of the traditional north Thailand music, 71-72.

in the *pi jum* family) who ranks among the most well-respected performers of *Lanna* music. He is also a member of the *Lanna khap saw* Artists' Association, which is endowed by the Thai Ministry of Culture (Figure 6.2).<sup>290</sup>

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Figure 6.2: "Thamnong ngiew." Transcription by the author. Notable repeated pitches are circled in red.

By transcribing Inchan Muncharoen's rendition of "Thamnong ngiew," I perceived that this particular traditional melodic pattern was in a scale resembling A natural minor. The utilization of repetitive notes—in particular, A-A, and D-D (in the red circles)—can also be frequently observed in this transcription. Repetitive interval patterns are also frequently constructed in downward minor-third intervals (e.g., G-E, C-A), upward minor-third intervals (e.g., A-C, E-

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>290</sup> Figure 6.2 was transcribed from Inchan Muncharoen's performance of "Thamnong Ngiew," (13.12-14.30) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WLgPdN939gs">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WLgPdN939gs</a> uploaded by the *Lanna Khap Saw* Artists' Association (30 September 2021). The full transcription of "Thamnong Ngiew" can be also found in Appendix A.9, and Appendix D.22 contains the MIDI audio from Figure 6.2.

G), and upward major-second intervals (e.g., A-B, G-A, D-E). These patterns help to create the intervallic characteristics of this composition's melodic movements. It is also noticeable that the melodic contour of "Thamnong ngiew" tends to be in skip-wise motion when compared to the lyrical type of Thai classical music that tends to be in stepwise motion. Surprisingly, the note B—which is not considered part of the structure of the A minor pentatonic scale—also frequently appears, providing a contrast to the sound of penta-centric ideas common in Thai classical music and traditional northeastern *isan nuea* music.

Another striking musical element discovered in the transcription process concerns the application of perpetual eighth-note rhythms, which is evident throughout the transcription. This rhythmic performance method is considered to be one of the key features of performance on the *pi koy* and other instruments from the *pi jum* family. Because *pi koy* players perform this instrument by holding the top of the instrument in their mouths constantly and relying on circular breathing, they are capable of performing perpetual rhythmic patterns without taking a breath or needing to stop for breathing. In addition, the use of the melodic embellishments widely demonstrated in this transcription play a crucial role in creating the individual character of *pi koy* performances—especially in the blending of pitches in both downward and upward motions and the application of trill techniques called *phrom niu* (พรมนิ้ว). Inchan Muncharoen has applied these elements in multiple areas of his performance to produce the characteristic sound of *pi jum*.

Unlike southeastern rong ngeng and isan nuea, where homophonic textures are used, the musical texture of khap saw performances appears to be heterophony, with a variety of instrument configurations performing variations of fundamental melodic lines. Of the numerous pi jum ensembles, three main types are frequently employed in khap saw of the northwestern region. The first type of accompanying ensemble is known as wong pi jum sam (three instruments) and consists of a pi koy, pi krang, pi lek, sueng, and a male and female vocalist. The second type, which is used in a modern setting, is wong pi jum si (four instruments), and includes a pi koy, pi krang, pi lek, pi mae or sueng, as well as a male and female vocalist. The third model of ensemble is the wong pi jum ha (five instruments), and consists of a pi koy, pi krang, pi lek, pi mae, pi tat, and a male and female vocalist. In contrast, in the northeastern area, only one setup is widely observed for accompanying khap saw performances—wong salo saw pin, which consists of one salo kop (fret

fiddle), one or two *pin* (lute), and a male and female vocalist.<sup>291</sup> To demonstrate a practical example of the heterophonic texture of *khap saw* performances, I have included an illustration from Keng Watcharin's instructional video of *khap saw* performances meant as a resource for *khap saw* studies to provide a practical example of the musical texture of *khap saw* performances. This piece "Thamnong Japu," is performed by a *wong pi jum si* (four instruments) ensemble led by Unruean Hongtong, a senior traditional musician from Chang Mai Province (Figure 6.3). <sup>292</sup>



Figure 6.3: "Thamnong Japu" by Keng Watcharin as performed by Unruean Hongtong. Red rectangles indicate target pitches coordinated by all players, except for rectangle #1, which indicates performance in octaves by all players.

The musical analysis of Figure 6.3 examines how the performance methods of *pi jum* ensembles accompanying a *khap saw* performance are based on the musical and idiomatic interpretations

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>291</sup> Pornprasit, The performance methods of traditional northern Thailand music, 69-68.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>292</sup> This video, which is an instructional resource for a *khap saw* study, which was uploaded by Keng Watcharin, "Saw Thamnong japu" (main melody and variations) vol. 1/3,

<sup>&</sup>lt;https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= No5ZJfSMvw>from 6.57to 7.16, (27 May 2017).

of the perpetual rhythm of the principal melodies, played by *pi koy*. These melodies must be related to the instruments' ranges and typically approach the final pitches of the musical phrases as displayed in m. 7, 11, 16, 20, 24, and 28 (red rectangles) in order to create the heterophonic texture of traditional northern music.

This performance is an example of how the *pi jum* ensemble—which includes the *pi koy*, *pi klang*, *pi lek*, and *pi mae*—typically functions. The *pi koy* plays a short introductory solo from mm.1-4, and the other instruments simultaneously enter on the second beat of m.4. And, similar to the *plae thamnong* technique applied by Thai classical musicians, each musical phrase has a target pitch for all the players, which they must coordinate with the mandatory pitch provided by the *pi koy* player. This musical interpretation of the principal melodies is called the *or kae* (ชอกแก) technique in the northern Thai dialect.

Another interesting aspect of this transcription is the use of octave unison, which is shown in the rectangle labeled #1. This performance style, which is based on *pi koy* melodies, can be applied to other *pi* instruments, as seen in mm.12-14 and m.17. Importantly, the instrumental ranges of *wong pi jum* play an important role in constructing the musical textures of this performance, ranging from *pi koy* (main melody), *pi lek* (soprano), *pi klang* (tenor), and *pi mae* (bass). I apply these to my writing for saxophone soli.

One of the prominent rhythmic characteristics of *pi jum* performances concerns the application of musical accents in the second and the fourth beats, which are somewhat similar to the musical accents applied in *sueng* and *isan muea* performance and the rhythm of jazz. This rhythmic technique is a consequence of the circular breathing method of *pi jum* players, in particular, their consecutive breaths executed rhythmically. This technique is also known as *hom lom* (1911) in the northern dialect. Furthermore, the melodic construction of "Thamnong Japu" appears to be in disjunct motion, with large intervals extending over the third interval regularly played in a set of perpetual eighth-note rhythms, which significantly produced the fundamental characteristics of a *pi jum* performance (*khap sam*). Please note the vocal sound produced by the interaction between a male and female vocalist, and that singing from northern poetry is also performed in coordination with the instruments' sounds.

#### **SALO PIN**

Another type of musical ensemble used to accompany *khap saw* performances, and that can also be performed as an instrumental ensemble in the northeastern region (in particular in Nan Province) is the *wong salo (saw) pin* ensemble. This particular ensemble consists of two types of instruments and, sometimes, vocalists: one *salo kop*, two *pin* (lute-type instruments), and one male and one female vocalist—if performing in a singing context. One of the prominent characteristics produced by this musical ensemble is the *salo kop*'s bright and gleaming timbre, which is produced by its steel strings. Another prominent characteristic is the effect of the perpetual rhythms of the principal melodies, mainly as eighth notes. This is musically reinforced by the sound of two wooden lute instruments (*pin*), which contribute significantly to the sophisticated heterophonic texture of *salo pin* performances. Nowadays, several traditional northern compositions which have prefixed titles referring to "Saw" in the *Lanna* dialect are still frequently performed, such as 1) "Saw Long Nan," 2) "Saw Laplae (To MILLO)," 3) "Saw Panfai," 4) "Saw Dan Nan," and 5) "Saw Phra Lo Doen Dong, (To WYZGOLÓLIO)."

To better understand the structure of the melodic structures of *salo pin* compositions, I decided to transcribe two compositions—"Saw Dan Nan" and "Saw Panfai"—which I will discuss briefly and use in my compositional prototypes. These selected transcriptions ("Saw Dan Nan" and "Saw Pan Fai were performed by Wiset Kaewsriwong, a native musician from Nan Province and a member of the *Lanna khap saw* Artists' Association from Nan Province (Figures 6.4. and 6.5). <sup>294</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>293</sup> Wiset Kaewsriwong (a *salo* player), Kasemsak Deepichai, and Insuay Muntra performed "Saw Dan Nan." This figure was transcribed from (24.18-25.24) released by the *Lanna Khap Saw* Artists' Association <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4TVm64sIvS0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4TVm64sIvS0</a> (5 November 2020).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>294</sup> For transcription's MIDI, See Appendix C.23- C.24.



Figure 6.4: "Saw Dan Nan," with the six melodic patterns indicated. Transcription by the author.

"Saw Dan Nan" is performed by *salo kop*. In contrast to other Thai musical traditions that were transcribed in the research, the construction of the melodic movement of this composition is based on a scale comparable to Bb Dorian, with the majority of the accented beats approaching the pitch Bb. G natural can also be observable in multiple locations, providing the characteristic Dorian sound. Similar to the "Thamnong Japu," the majority of the melodic material in "Saw

Dan Nan" appears to be in disjunct motion, with large intervals such as perfect fourths and fifths being seen in various places.

The six striking melodic patterns that musically contribute to the characteristic sound of the *salo pin* composition have also been indicated by the different numbers, consisting of the following melodic patterns:

- 1) 2 4 1 4 67 5 4 2
- 2) 2 b7 1-2-1
- 3) 2 b7 1 5 b7 4 2 1
- 4) 6 1 2 6 1
- 5) 2 6 1 5 6 5 4 1 4
- 6) 4 6 5 6 1 2 6 1

I utilize these patterns to compose and imitate the sound of *salo pin* compositions in a similar manner to jazz musicians' application of jazz licks for improvisation, as I will discuss later. This piece also includes another striking technique—the blending of pitches and trills—which is capable of being executed with Western instruments in musical hybridity compositions seeking to interpret and musically express the unique sound of the *salo kop* performance.

The "Saw Pan Fai" composition is also one of the most famous compositional pieces in the *salo pin* repertoire, and is widely employed both as instrumental music and for accompanying vocals. In this specific version, the melodic movements of the "Saw Pan Fai," which was played by *salo kop*, are based on an A major pentatonic scale, with the majority of the target notes of each musical phrase directly approaching the root note. In addition, the fifth E, and the second note B are also employed as target notes, as noted in m.7, 12, 22, and 24. In contrast to "Saw Dan Nan," the melodic movements of "Saw Pan Fai" are prominently repetitive and based on a twenty-four-bar phrase. (The second repetition of the melody begins in m.25.)

The memorable melodic patterns of the characteristic sound of northern traditional music that feature in this particular piece include:

- 2) 1-6-2-1-6-1-5
- 3) 3 5 3 2 1 2 3 1 2
- 4) 6 2 1 6 1 5
- 5) 1 6 5 3 5
- 6) 6 5 6 1 5

I apply these patterns to construct northern Thai melodic lines in my own compositions, intermingled with jazz harmonies.



Figure 6.5: "Saw Pan Fai," with melodic patterns indicated. Transcription by the author.

#### **6.4 PRELIMINARY COMPOSITIONS**

To illustrate the prototypes of musical hybridization compositions that integrate musical elements of northern Thai music, I have divided the relevant compositional techniques into two comprehensive models. I first have attempted to construct a concise saxophone soli section by adapting the melodic movements of the *pi jum* ensemble from the previous illustration. In this soli section, the lead part—located in the soprano saxophone—was created by utilizing the previously obtained melodic movement of the *pi lek* (the smallest model). Thereafter, the second alto and the first and second tenor soli lines were adapted and

constructed based on the melodic movements of the *pi koy*, *pi klang*, and *pi mae* obtained from the same transcription. Lastly, I partly applied the four-part double-lead technique that is frequently employed in saxophone soli writings to the baritone saxophone part. In this baritone saxophone part, the instrument performs one or two octaves below the lead part provided by the soprano saxophone. As a consequence, this saxophone soli is capable of producing a version of the characteristic sound of northern Thai music by using jazz orchestra instruments and their corresponding conventional techniques (Figure 6.6).

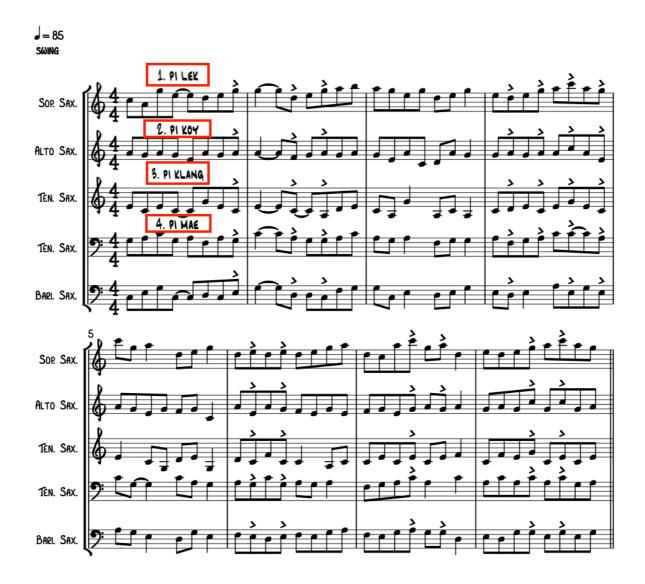


Figure 6.6: Saxophone soli inspired by pi jum.

In a second musical hybridization compositional example, I composed a contemporary jazz composition entitled "Phumin" by integrating the five melodic patterns of two traditional compositions, namely "Saw Dan Nan" and "Saw Pan Fai" (Figure 6.7). Similar to the

compositional methods of producing preliminary jazz compositions in Thai classical music, the melodic patterns obtained from my previous musical analyses have also been practically applied to the principal melodic patterns of "Phumin." These selected patterns—1) 1-6-2-1-6-1-5, 3, 2) 2-3-5-5-6-1-3-2-1, and 3) 1-6-2-1-6-1-5—from the "Saw Pan Fai" composition, were transposed to the key of Eb major and rhythmically adjusted as the main melody in the B section of this composition. These adapted melodies were performed by the double bass (in red rectangles in Figure 6.7a), in oblique motion and in syncopation with the piano's sustained sounds on Eb. I attempt, in this technique of interaction with the bass melodies, to depict the atmosphere of mountain ranges and valleys of the northern region. For the melodic patterns acquired through the transcription process of "Saw Dad Nan," I also manipulated the patterns of 1) 2-4-1-4-b7-5-4-2 and 2) 2-6-1-5-6-5-4-1-4 by transposing them to the Eb Dorian mode. I also adjusted and extended their rhythms to suit time signatures such as 6/4 and 5/4, as also illustrated in rectangles in the D section. Ultimately, I chose to construct my own melody combined with the adopted melodic patterns in a disjunct motion to create the original melodies of "Phumin," which, in my view, provides the characteristic sound of northern traditional Thai music. 295



Figure 6.7a: "Phumin." Composed by the author. Bass melodies doubling the melodies of "Saw Pan Fai" noted at B. Melodic and rhythmic adaptation to Eb Dorian and shifting time signatures noted at D.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>295</sup> The entire lead sheet for this composition is shown in Appendix A.10.

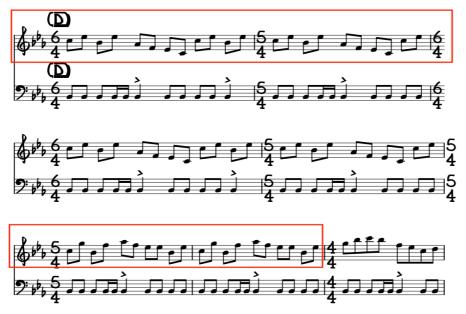


Figure 6.7b: "Phumin," continued.

#### 6.5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The musical practice of northern Thailand, commonly known as Lanna music, is separated into two categories: 1) traditional practices primarily influenced by Chiang Mai province (northwest), and 2) musical traditions primarily inspired by Nan province (northeast). The major distinction between these locations can be found in the use of different instruments, such as salo and salo kop, or in the names of musical groups, such as salo, saw, and sueng ensembles (northwest) and salo, saw, pin ensembles (northeast). Pi jum is a crucial instrument in this region's northwest musical tradition, and it may be paired with other instruments from the pi family and performed as wong pi jum for khap saw performances. Pi jum's melodic lines are based on disjunct motions that combine several interval patterns, such as ascending and descending minor third intervals, which emphasize intervallic qualities rather stepwise motion, shown in Thai classical music's lyrical composition type. Other technical methods, like bending and trills, are also used to offer this instrument a particular character. Importantly, pi jum is also constantly performed in eighth-note rhythm, which is the result of hom lom techniques. Furthermore, as demonstrated in the preliminary compositional process, the melodic lines of pi jum ensemble, which create from three to five instruments, are capable of adapting to the woodwind section of a jazz orchestra.

Unlike the northwest, the northeast's khap saw performance used a wong salo (saw) pin ensemble to accompany vocalists rather than a wong pi jum. The previous transcriptions of the wong salo,

saw, and pin ensembles also yielded remarkable melodic patterns that can be used in place of jazz licks to create the distinctive sound of salo pin compositions. When compared to other Thai instruments, the bright sound of salo kop and its fretboard can make it easier to transcribe. As opposed to isan nuea melodies, which rely on the penta-centric concept, the melodic structure of northern Thai music can be formed from natural minor or Dorian scales, with the sound of 2nd and 6th degrees, heard in its melodic movement as demonstrated in "Thamnong ngiew" and "Saw Dan Nan." This can help jazz composers, and others interested in working with Thai music traditions to realize that not all music traditions of Thailand are grounded on the penta-centric concept. Performances of rong ngeng and lanna music are among the exceptions. Interestingly, the use of sliding and trills, which are widely used in northern music performances can also be imitated by western instruments in jazz orchestra, such as flute and clarinet to emphasize the musical features of northern music performances.

In Chapters 3 to 6, I examined key musical aspects of Thai musical traditions in order to develop a better appreciation of how Thai music functions, as well as composing a preliminary or prototype piece drawing on transcriptions of Thai music and experimentally incorporating jazz musical elements as a case study for myself and other jazz composers who might be interested in this music. As stated in the research methodology section, understanding of the key musical features of these traditions emerges from the concept of learning music by ear through the transcribing process and a review of relevant works in Thai music studies. As a result, these four chapters have provided critical insights into Thai musical traditions, a crucial step before I began producing the key creative outcomes for this research. The musical aspects that I have selected interact well with the musical characteristics of contemporary jazz. They can also incorporate other Thai music features that I engaged with in my process of composing larger-scale works for jazz orchestra, which I explain in detail in the following chapter.

## Chapter 7

# Jazz Orchestra Portraits of Thailand

My ambition is to create opportunities to praise beauty using music in a Thai tradition and style. In my own musical identity, I want to create something thought-provoking and modern that is in line with the wisdom of Thai philosophy. I'm doing this for the sake of Thai society and for the benefit rest of the world.<sup>296</sup>

Bruce Gaston

#### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a commentary on my composition work, which constitutes seven contemporary jazz orchestra pieces totaling 67 minutes that have musically integrated Thai musical traditions from three different regions, as well as from Thai classical music. It is divided into four sections. The first section discusses four compositions inspired by Thai classical music. "Buang-Suang" ("Deity Worship") is a piece of ritual and worship music that pays respect to the music gods, the great teachers, and the three gems of Buddhism; "Phuen Ban" ("Village Song") is a conventional big-band composition inspired by the character of traditional Thai penta-centric melodies; "Samniang Jin" ("Porcelain") is a contemporary jazz piece that adopts a transcultural Thai-Chinese musical idiom; and "Patchim" ("Epilogue") is a farewell composition inspired by the traditional practices of Thai classical music. My commentary on

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>296</sup>Quoted in Anant Narkkong, Thai Contemporary Music Bands and Works in present Thai society, 53.

these four compositions primarily focuses on the musical elements of Thai classical music that I have infused, and transformed, into music for jazz orchestra.

The three subsequent sections each focus on one composition. These three compositions, which are influenced by regional traditional Thai music, are: "Mekong" ("River of Souls"), an interpretation of music of northeastern Thailand (*isan nuea*); "Singora" ("Dance of Kinnari"), a contemporary jazz orchestral piece that illustrates the multicultural practices of southern Thailand, where the music cultures of Thai Buddhists (*nora*) and Muslims (*rong ngeng*) have interacted with each other; and "Wiang Haeng" ("The Northern Rhapsody"), a contemporary jazz composition inspired by the performance practices of traditional northern Thai music (*khap saw* and *sueng*). Unlike the previous four compositions that were inspired by Thai classical music, I undertake a comprehensive musical analysis of these three compositions not only to demonstrate the level of musical integration of regional Thai musical elements, but also to highlight the level of complexity of the jazz compositional techniques that I utilized to create these pieces.

The musical elements of the Thai music traditions employed to create jazz orchestral works and applied in my commentary on these compositions are divided into two separate categories. The first group consists of musical elements that I learned throughout my research on Thai musical traditions, as well as the transcribing process discussed in previous chapters, and of new elements based on what I discovered during the compositional processes of the jazz orchestra project and further transcriptions of mine, which are discussed in this chapter. I then employed these musical elements to create sketch scores of my initial ideas before expanding them into full jazz orchestra compositions. The second category includes musical elements I encountered in my archival research on four books containing Thai musical manuscripts that I discovered when visiting Thailand in 2019. These books are: *Collected Works of the Thai Classical Repertoire Vol. 4, and 6* by Panya Roongruang<sup>297</sup>—which were originally published by The Thai Music Manuscript Committee from 1930 to 1932, and 1936 to 1942 respectively; and *Thai Music Manuscript Vol. 1*, and *Vol. 3*,<sup>298</sup> which were first published by the Thai Fine Arts Department. I spent a significant amount of time learning to play transcriptions obtained from the four

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>297</sup> Panya Roongruang, Collected Works of the Thai Classical Repertoire Vol.4-6, (Bangkok: Kasetsart University, 2001).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>298</sup> Montri Tramote et al., *Thai Music Manuscript Vol. 1* (Bangkok: The Fine Arts Department, 1996). Lekiat Mahawinitmontri and Lasit Issarangkun Na Ayutthaya, *Thai Music Manuscript Vol. 3*, (Bangkok: The Fine Arts Department, 1996).

books on the piano to assimilate these musical influences and try to find practical ways of integrating and blending these transcriptions into my original compositions.

Of the many possibilities for an analytical methodology in my discussion of my work, I adopted the framework of Rayburn Wright's musical analysis in *Inside the Score* (1982), Richard Lawn's *Jazz Scores and Analysis* (2018), and Bill Dobbins's *Composing and Arranging for the Contemporary Big Band* (2014)—all of which are broadly accepted within jazz composition studies. The benefit of employing these structures of musical analysis is that they assist jazz composers in revealing—and discussing—the orchestration, harmonization, vocal techniques, form, solo background parts, balance, and other important compositional techniques used in jazz orchestra compositions. To adhere to these frameworks, my commentary in this chapter will begin with general observations on the various compositional approaches—including artistic inspirations, melody, harmony, and rhythm—before providing a comprehensive analysis of specific writing techniques, and then addressing in detail the elements of Thai music that I have included, transformed, and infused into the pieces. (Appendix D contains the seven scores for my portfolio of jazz orchestra compositions.)

#### 7.1 COMPOSITIONS INSPIRED BY THAI CLASSICAL MUSIC

#### "BUANG-SUANG" ("DEITY WORSHIP")

"Buang-Suang" ("Deity Worship") is a jazz orchestra composition inspired by "Psalm," the final movement of John Coltrane's album, A Love Supreme (1965), which Coltrane described as his spiritual proclamation of faith in God.<sup>299</sup> Similarly, in the wai khru tradition, Thai classical musicians also perform a specific music repertoire (phleng naphat) to invite all deities and to pay homage to their teachers during the ceremony. Inspired by both A Love Supreme and the wai khru tradition, my intention in composing this piece was for it to serve as a musical devotion that intertwined my faith in the gods of music as well as an overture for this project. Through the sound of a jazz orchestra, I also intended for it to pay homage to all Thai musical masters.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>299</sup> Coltrane's improvisation on "Psalm" reveals that his sax solo is a wordless "recitation" of the poem he included in the liner notes to *A Love Supreme*, with one note for each syllable. Each section of several lines has an arch shape—an ascending phrase, a recitation on one tone, and a descending phrase. The recitation tones ascend as the piece builds in intensity. Coltrane's poem is punctuated with the frequently recurring words "Thank You, God." At the final word of the poem, "Amen," he clearly plays "Amen" on his sax. Coltrane adds a flourish only on that final word. See, Lewis Porter, *John Coltrane His Life and Music* (University Michigan Press, 1999), 244-249.

The melodies of this composition are divided into two sections, one carrying original melodic lines and the other containing melodic adaptations taken from the *thang khong wong yai* and *ranad ek* of two classical music compositions employed in the *wai khru* ritual, namely, "Sathukan" and "Sathukan Klong." (See Roongruang, *Collected Works of the Thai Classical Repertoire Vol.6* for notation of these compositions.) The harmony of "Buang-Suang" features suspended chords, which were played by McCoy Tyner, as can be heard in Coltrane's "Psalm." Throughout the composition, extended chords, such as 9<sup>sus</sup>, minor 11<sup>th</sup>, and major13<sup>th</sup> can be also observed.

Unlike "Psalm"—in which Coltrane's tenor saxophone improvisation assumes a primary role—the solo section of "Buang-Suang" features solos by trumpet, soprano saxophone, and bass clarinet. Several drum solos also add complex ideas from a rhythmic improvisational perspective. Two rhythmic styles, namely, swing and slow processional drumbeats, which were inspired by Elvin Jones's drumming in "Psalm," constitute the fundamental rhythmic ideas of this composition. The total duration of this composition is nine minutes and fifty-seven seconds, which is represented by the letters A-G in the graphic below.

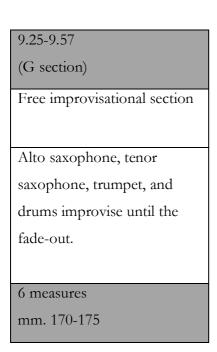
#### A - C section

0.00-1.43	1.44-2.51	2.52-5.20
(A section)	(B section)	(C section)
First melodic section	First improvisational	Second melodic section
	section	
Trumpet intensively solos	Soprano saxophone and	Tenor saxophone, vocal,
over the melodic lines.	trombone improvise in	guitar all play the second
Electric piano plays the thang	swing (with a time signature	melodies. Vocals then sing
khong wong yai of "Sathukan."	of 3/4).	special melodic lines inspired
		by Buddhist ceremonies.
		Extended techniques, such as
		air sounds, can be heard in
		the trombone section.
28 measures	24 measures	43 measures
mm. 1–28	mm. 29-52	mm. 53–95

#### D - F section

5.21-6.36	6.37-7.49	7.50-9.24
(D section)	(E section)	(F section)
Second improvisational	Third improvisational	Third melodic section
section	section	(Melody out)
Bass clarinet solo over	Tenor saxophone and bass	Vocals, electric piano, and
processional drumbeat.	clarinet solo over intensive	guitar play specific melodic
Electric piano provides the	background layers. Electric	lines inspired by the "ti kep"
accompaniment lines	piano and alto saxophone	technique of Ranad ek. Alto
adopted from the thang khong	both integrate thang khong	saxophone keeps intensively
wong yai of "Sathukan	wong yai of "Sathukan" to	soloing over the main
Klong."	produce melodic lines in	melodies and background
	the background.	voices.
24 measures	23 measures	27 measures
mm. 96-119	mm. 120-142	mm. 143-169

#### G section



#### **COMPOSITIONAL DISCUSSIONS**

My initial intention in composing the A section of "Buang-Suang" was to imitate John Coltrane's "Psalm." To do so, I composed thematic melodies that seemed to convey similar emotions to "Psalm," enhancing and elevating the mood of listeners in a spiritual sense. I constructed these melodies from various motifs in quarter-note triplets performed by two alto saxophones, soprano saxophone, and flugelhorn. I then created the improvisational section for the trumpet and drums (using mallets in a manner reminiscent of Elvin Jones's drumming), in order to contribute further emotional improvisations that interact with the melodies in a similar way to the "Psalm" recording. To express the sound of Thai ceremonial music, I adopted the thang khong wong yai of the "Sathukan" (See Roongruang, Collected Works of the Thai Classical Repertoire Vol. 6, p. 126 in mm. 1-10), which is considered the most fundamental piece in Thai music, according to Panya Roongruang's musical manuscripts. I later adjusted these melodic lines obtained from the manuscripts to unify the motifs in the melodies I composed, and also modified certain notes in order to align them with the harmonies I composed (see Figure 7.1).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>300</sup> The "Sathukan" is the first composition that Thai musicians must learn before attending a wai khru ceremony. The composer of this composition is anonymous, yet the distinct variations can be observed in different Thai music teachers. The version that I have used for my musical adaptation was transcribed by the Thai Music Manuscript Committee. For more, see: Roongruang, "Thai Classical Music Its Movement from Oral to Written Transmission," 229-253.



Figure 7.1: The A section of "Buang-Suang." Red boxes indicate the melody I composed, the harmony, the drum part using mallets, and the reference to *thang khong wong yai* of the "Sathukan."

For the second thematic melody, located in the C section, I composed a melody for a female vocalist to perform using scat singing techniques to deliver the impression of serenity. I then integrated the rhythmic patterns of Buddhist plainchant, which is similar to Coltrane's improvisation that is understood to be his prayer to God. As illustrated in Figure 7.2, I have composed the specific melodic lines for the trombone (m.73-m.78) and bass clarinet that were

then laid over the fundamental melodies sung by a vocalist. This particular melody also synchronizes with the rhythmic patterns of the Buddhist chant known as "Salutation of the Triple Gem" which is performed before the start of the *wai khru* ceremony. Additionally, in line with Coltrane's approach, the number of syllables in this particular chant (18) is equal to the number of pitches in the trombone melody, as depicted here:

Ratanattaya Vandana (Salutation to the Triple Gem)

Na Mo Tat Sa

Phra Kha Wa to

A ra Ha To-

Sa ma Sam phut tha sat<sup>301</sup> (Romanized as Sa ma sam Budd has sa)



Figure 7.2: Excerpt from "Buang-Suang" (mm. 74-79). Red boxes indicate the melody in the female vocal, and the melody based on "Salutation of the Triple Gem" in the trombone part and in part of the bass clarinet part.

In addition to my melodic adaptation of the *thang khong wong yai* from "Sathukan," I also employed the fundamental melodic lines (*thang khong wong yai*) from "Sathukan Klong"—

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>301</sup> Wong, Sounding the Center: History and Aesthetics in Thai Buddhist Performance, 46.

another sacred composition from the wai khru ceremony. My version of this thang khong wong is also based on the version in Panya's manuscripts, and is present in the electric piano part from the D to E sections. (For the original melodic lines of this thang khong wong yai, see Roongruang, Collected Works of the Thai Classical Repertoire Vol 6., p. 130-140 in mm.1-5 and mm.10-16.) Similar to how I used the thang khong wong yai of the Sathukan in the A section, these selected melodic lines omit the pitch B from the original melodies in order to be appropriately used within the harmonic design of this composition. (See also Roongruang, Collected Works of the Thai Classical Repertoire Vol.6, p. 126, mm.23-27, as well as mm.36-42.) Furthermore, these particular lines are performed along with background parts in the brass section, and also interact with the soloist, who improvises around these two particular sections. Figure 7.3 and Figure 7.4 illustrate the melodic adaptation of the thang khong wong yai in the electric piano parts of the D and E sections. The former is obtained from the thang khong wong yai of "Sathukan Klong," while the latter is thang khong wong of "Sathukan."



Figure 7.3: Excerpt from "Buang-Suang" electric piano part (mm. 108–119), highlighting the melodic adaptation of the *thang khong wong yai* of "Sathukan Klong."



Figure 7.4: Excerpt from "Buang-Suang" electric piano part (mm.131–138), highlighting the melodic adaptation of *thang khong wong yai* of "Sathukan."

I also applied the rhythmic patterns of *nathap song mai song chan* from Chapter 3 to emphasize the Thai classical rhythmic characteristics in "Buang-Suang." This is played by the bass player from mm.120-124 in the E section (Figure 7.5).



Figure 7.5: Excerpt from "Buang-Suang" bass part (mm. 120–124), illustrating the rhythmic application of *nathap song mai song chan*.

Another important Thai classical musical element employed in "Buang-Suang" is the imitation of the *ti kep* instrumental technique of the *ranad ek* (*thang ranad ek*). This particular technique, which is a sequence of eighths notes produced by *ranad ek* to interpret *luk thong*, is usually employed in *plae thamnong*, as described in Chapter 3. I created multiple eighth-note patterns for the vocal, organ, and guitar parts, all of which are performed using the *ti kep* technique, as demonstrated in Figure 7.6 (m.143-m.146). However, to provide more varied rhythmic ideas, I also adjusted this particular melodic pattern to be performed in triplets or sixteenth note patterns, in order to increase the emotional intensity. When performed, these melodic patterns interact with the improvisations of the lead alto and background vocals created from various extended chords, which also feature in this dense climax section.

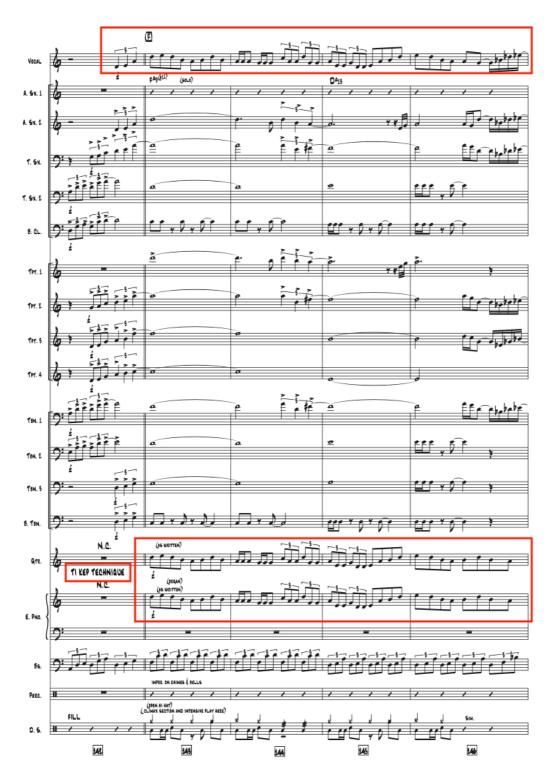


Figure 7.6: Excerpt from "Buang-Suang" (mm. 142–145). The imitation of the *ti kep* technique is in red boxes.

## "PHUEN BAN" ("VILLAGE SONG")

My intention in composing "Phuen Ban" was to create a jazz orchestra piece in Duke Ellington's big-band style, based on the penta-centric concept—one of the significant characteristics of Thai classical music. This work was inspired by one of my students in Thailand, who shared his discontent on social media during the recent political turmoil in the country, writing: "What I had been taught in a jazz history class is that this music has been strongly associated with freedom of expression, democracy, and civil rights movements, but why do Thai jazz musicians only use this music for one purpose, which is to serve rich people?" As a result, I would like to devote this jazz orchestra piece to my fellow colleagues in the lower-middle class and hope that this composition will be used as a musical tool to promote a sense of social equality in Thailand. I also believe that jazz in Thailand will someday become more associated with the social-cultural practices of all Thai people, rather than as a genre for one specific part of society.

The fundamental melodic lines of "Phuen Ban" are the product of thematic development that starts with a simple melodic pattern. As the piece progresses, this thematic melody becomes more developed, before reaching its climax in several sections of this composition. I have also adapted elements of three other Thai classical works—"Khmen Liep Nakhon (เขมจะเดียบนคร)," "Khmen Phuang (เขมจะพวง)," and "Saen Kham Nung," all composed by Luang Pradit Pairoh (Son Silpabanleng)—to my melodic lines in multiple places.

The harmonic rhythm of "Phuen Ban" has been designed to suit the characteristic sound of a traditional jazz orchestra, which features functional harmony. The key centers are A major and Eb major, which have been used to construct standard chord progressions (e.g.,  $ii^7 V^7 I^{maj7}$  or I  $IV^7 ii^7 V^7$ ). The two main solos in the improvisation section are on piano and soprano saxophone. Trumpet with plunger mute, trombone, and clarinet ad-lib solos, all referencing Ellington's jazz orchestral style, can also be heard several times throughout this work.

Unlike other compositions in this project, the rhythm of "Phuen Ban" is centered on heavyswing and ragtime grooves. In contrast to the rigidity of medium-swing tempo in 4/4, I use a

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>302</sup> "Saen Kham Nung" (A Hundred Thousand Sorrows) was also written by Luang Pradit Pairoh to express discontent with the musical reforms of the government of Prime Minister Plack Phibulsongkhram. Wong, Sounding the Center: History and Aesthetics in Thai Buddhist Performance, 190.

5/4 meter to generate odd rhythmic patterns. Instead of adopting a form typical in traditional jazz orchestra music, the musical form of "Phuen Ban" has been expanded, consisting of ten separate components (from A to I). The total duration of this composition is ten minutes and twenty-four seconds.

### A -C section

0.00-0.40	0.41-2.05	2.06-3.14
(A section)	(B Section)	(C section)
Introductory section	First melodic section	Fugato section
Drums play swing beat in 4/4	The first thematic melodies	Woodwind and brass
along with specific bass lines	are performed by the vocals,	sections form a fugato
from the bass clarinet.	flute, clarinets, trombones,	section. Later on, a tenor
	and plunger-muted trumpet.	saxophone ab-lib solo is
		followed by the stride piano.
21 measures	45 measures	37 measures
mm.1-21	mm.22-66	mm.67-104

## D – F section

3.16-4.36	4.37-6.15	6.16-7.42
(D section)	(E section)	(F section)
First improvisational section	First background section	Second improvisational
		section
Piano plays a written solo	Vibraphone plays the	Soprano saxophone solo.
imitating thang dio, a ranad ek	melodic adaptation of	Drums play swing pattern in
technique.	"Khmer Liep Nakhon,"	5/4. Later on, the trombone
	which uses a call-and-	plays the thematic melody of
	response interaction in the	"Khmer Phuang" by using a
	background section.	plunger mute.

43 measures	50 measures	38 measures
mm.105-146	mm.147-197	mm.198-235

#### G-I section

7.43-8.51	8.52-9.44	9.45-10.24
(G section)	(H section)	(I section)
Second background section	Quasi Symphonic part	Melody out
(Trumpet soli)	(Climax)	
Trumpet plays a soli part	Woodwind and brass	The rejuvenation of the
based on the "penta-centric"	sections play the climax part	thematic melody is
concept. Following by key	along with the melodic	performed by the flute and
modulation from C major to	adaption of "Saen Kham	vibraphone in swing 5/4,
Eb major.	Nung," which is performed	interacting with the ab-lib
	by the vocals and the	solo of the trombone,
	vibraphone.	clarinet, and vocals.
37 measures	27 measures	18 measures
mm.236-272	mm.273-299	mm. 300-317

#### COMPOSITIONAL DISCUSSIONS

My purpose in composing "Phuen Ban" was to establish a Thai folk-melody of sorts based on the penta-centric concept as described by Phichit Chaisaree. The three initial thematic melodies include Melody A (mm.21-29), A2 (mm. 30–38), B (mm.39-46), and C (mm.47-59), all of which have primarily been constructed in the A major pentatonic scale (Figure 7.7). Compositional techniques such as call-and-response and melodic variation also serve to construct melody A2, which is a slight variation of melody A. In contrast to melodies A and A2, however, the melodic patterns of B and C are more complex, involving a dense rhythmic pattern and providing less pentatonic sounds in order to avoid uninteresting ideas generated from the repetition of melodies A and A2; B and C are also performed in medium swing. The concluding statement of the first melodic section, which is based on the chromaticism concepts

typical in conventional jazz orchestra writing, occurs in mm.55-59, with a particular melodic movement audible in multiple places to generate memorable impressions to the listener.



Figure 7.7: The first thematic melodies of "Phuen Ban": A (mm.21-29), A2 (mm. 30-38), B (mm.39-46), and C (mm.47-59).

To emphasize the integration of traditional Thai music elements with swing, I composed a written solo for the piano. This particular piano part imitates one of the performance styles of

ranad ek, a solo piece called thang dio ranad ek.<sup>303</sup> As described in Chapter 3, to perform thang dio ranad ek, Thai musicians deploy specific techniques, including rua (a single melodic pitch tremolo), kro (two-pitch tremolo), sabat (grace notes), and khayi (sixteenth notes of idiomatic improvisation). I applied these techniques in the piano solo mimicking thang dio ranad ek (Figure 7.8).



Figure 7.8: Piano solo from "Phuen Ban" mimicking thang dio ranad ek. (mm. 109, 110, and 128 for sabat; mm. 113-115 for rua; mm. 119 - 120 for kro; and mm. 124-127 for khayi.)

In addition, I created a trumpet soli passage—a characteristic of traditional jazz orchestra composition—to add more Thai musical influences in the context of a swing feel. The total duration of this trumpet soli section is 16 measures, and it is primarily constructed in the B-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>303</sup> "Thang dio" is used to indicate a solo piece. It can also be applied to other instruments. For example, a solo performance in khong wong is called "thang dio khong wong yai."

major pentatonic scale (A# is used as a passing tone or for harmonizing purposes), which emphasizes the soli's Thai musical character and provides tension in relation to the voicings of, in the piece's main key center of A major, the 9th (B), #11 (D#), and 13 (F#). Two trumpets with harmon mutes and two trumpets with cup mutes play this particular passage, in a timbre combination also commonly featured in Duke Ellington's compositions for jazz orchestra (Figure 7.9).



Figure 7.9: Trumpet soli from "Phuen Ban" mm.236-240.

In composing "Phuen Ban," similarly to in my compositional process for "Buang-Suang," I adopted the fundamental melody of "Khmer Liep Nakhon," which may awake a sense of recognition in a Thai audience. This particular melodic line was composed by Luang Pradit Pairoh (Son Silpabanleng) and was also adapted from another composition, namely "Khmer Khao Khio" (song chan), a Thai classical music piece in the Khmer accent written by an anonymous composer—as noted by Montri Tramote in the Thai Music Book Vol. 1.304 To transform this and other melodies to work with my composition, I employed jazz arranging techniques such as melodic augmentation and diminution as well as, in this example, key transposition from Khmer Liep Nakhon's original key of C major to A major. I included these melodic lines in the vibraphone part, which imitates the sound of the ranad ek, playing contrapuntal melodic lines in contrast to the original melody played by the woodwind and brass sections (Figure 7.10). (For the original "Khmer Liep Nakhon" melody, see Tramote, Thai Music Manuscript Vol. 1, p. 91)

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>304</sup> Tramote, Thai Music Manuscript Vol. 1, 210-212.



Figure 7.10: The melodic adaptation of "Khmer Liep Nakhon." Excerpt from "Phuen Ban" vibraphone part (mm.147-175).

I also adopt the melody of "Khmer Phuang," a Thai classical music piece in the Thai-Khmer accent composed by Luang Pradit Pairoh (Son Silpabanleng), as a solo in the transitional section in mm.221-231. The process of adapting this particular melody was similar to my adaptation of "Khmer Liep Nakhon," with augmentation, diminution, and key transposition from the original key of "Khmer Phuang" all prominent. These arranged melodic lines were assigned to the lead trombone part to be performed with a plunger mute to imitate one of the musical features of the trombone section in Ellington's jazz orchestra, which often saw the use of the plunger mute (Figure 7.11). (See Tramote, *Thai Music Manuscript Vol. 1*, p.99 for the original melody of "Khmer Phuang.")



Figure 7.11: The melodic rendition of "Khmer Phuang," in the trombone part of "Phuen Ban" (mm.221-231).

Lastly, in the climactic section of "Phuen Ban" (Figure 7.12), I have also included elements of my transcription of "Saen Kham Nung" by Luang Pradit Pairoh (Son Silpabanleng) from Chapter 3 to function as a thematic melody. I have modified and implemented this melodic line for the vocal and vibraphone parts (mm.273-276), which are performed in combination with my original melodies in the woodwind section, as well as accompanied by rhythms of the stride piano style, another typical element of Ellington's performances.



Figure 7.12. Excerpt from "Phuen Ban" (mm.273-277). Red boxes indicate the modified "Saen Kham Nung" melody in the vocal and vibraphone, as well as my original melody in the saxophones.

### "SAMNIANG JIN" ("PORCELAIN")

"Samniang Jin" is a jazz orchestra work that expresses the musical influence of Chinese music on the Thai classical music repertoire—specifically, music belonging to the *phleng samniang jin* category. As noted earlier, Terry E. Miller's evidence of the cultural influence that Chinese music had on Thai classical music, including the adoption of Chinese instruments and melodies in the sometimes stereotypical "Chinese accent." The melodies of "Samniang Jin" are based on several pentatonic scales and resemble various Chinese melodies, which developed from my childhood memories of growing up in a Thai southern-Chinese household. These pentatonic scales include Gb, F, Eb, and Ab pentatonic. I use them in this piece to create more

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>305</sup> Miller, "Appropriating the Exotic: Thai Music and the Adoption of Chinese Elements," 113-114.

than two independent, simultaneous melodic lines to imitate a polyphonic stratification texture—one of the characteristics of Thai classical music identified by David Morton. In addition, I also employ thang ranad thum and thang ranad ek from "Choed Jin (भित्रीय),"306 a Thai classical composition by Pra Pradit Pairoh (Mee Duriyangkul) that was inspired by the application of the Chinese accent as a secondary melody, which is played by several instruments. In the synthesizer and vibraphone parts, I also include musical techniques of Thai classical instruments performed in ranad ek (e.g., ti kep) to simulate a Thai musical character.

From a harmonic standpoint, I composed this piece applying chord progressions primarily derived from the Gb major scale, though non-diatonic chord progressions also appear several times throughout the piece. (These include non-diatonic chords such as C<sup>-7</sup>, F<sup>maj9</sup>, D<sup>13sus</sup>, B<sup>6/9</sup>.)

"Samniang Jin" has two different rhythmic styles: even eighths, and drum and bass. I use drum and bass as a contemporary rhythmic style in popular music, and as a sign of cosmopolitanism, as this electronic dance music style, along with its rhythmic elements, has been popular globally for more than two decades. Additionally, I use meters such as 7/4 and 5/4 to generate complex rhythmic ideas throughout the composition. The total duration of "Samniang Jin" is nine minutes and thirty seconds.

## A - C section

1.39- 2.07 0.00 - 0.530.54-1.38 (A section) (B Section) (C section) Melody B of second First melody section Second melody section melody section Vocal, soprano saxophone, The melodies of this section Similar to the second and vibraphone deliver the are divided into two layers. melody section, the first thematic melodies The first layer is the original fundamental melodic lines inspired by the first section thematic melody performed of this section are split into

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>306</sup> Inspired by the local Chinese performances in Siam, Pra Pradit Pairoh (Mee Duriyangkul) initially composed "Choed Jin" for the Pi Phat ensemble of His Majesty King Pinklao Chao Yu Hua, who was the viceroy of Siam during King Rama IV's reign. King Pinklao was later pleased by this composition and promoted Pra Pradit Pairoh to the higher rank of officer. Poonpit Amatayakul, "Pra Pradit Pairoh (Mee Duriyangkul) – Choed Jin Vol. 212" *Thai Music in the Past Sirindhorn Music Library* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://sirindhornmusiclibrary.li.mahidol.ac.th/music\_teacher/phrapraditpairoh-krumeekhaek/">https://sirindhornmusiclibrary.li.mahidol.ac.th/music\_teacher/phrapraditpairoh-krumeekhaek/</a>>(n.d.).

of "Choed Jin." (from thang	by the flute and flugelhorn.	two layers. The first one
ranad thum)	The second layer has been	comprises the original
	adapted from the first section	melodies performed by the
	of "Choed Jin." (from thang	flute and flugelhorn.
	ranad thum)	Soprano saxophone and
		vibraphone perform the
		melodic adaption.
17 measures	14 measures	16 measures
mm.1-17	mm.18-31	mm.32- 47

# $\underline{D-F\ section}$

2.08- 2.46	2.47-3.59	4.00-4.45
(D section)	(E section)	(F section)
Third melody section	Fourth melody section	Transitional section
(Chorus)		
Woodwind and flugelhorn	To provide a release section,	Electric piano ostinato is
sections play third thematic	a less intense melody is	created, interacting with
melodies to imitate the Thai-	generated. The vibraphone	brief melodic lines from the
Chinese melodic character.	part has also been taken from	vocals and flute to create a
	the first section of "Choed	smooth transition to the
	Jin." in thang ranad ek	solo section.
16 measures	41 measures	29 measures
mm.48-63	mm.64-104	mm.105-133

# <u>G – I section</u>

4.46-5.45	5.46-6.22	6.23-7.09
(G section)	(H section)	(I section)
First improvisational section	Background section	Second part of first
		improvisational section

Trumpet plays the first solo.	Syncopated bass lines and	Trumpet continues to solo,
Background voices are	complicated guitar patterns	supported by intensive
provided by alto saxophones	are employed to accompany	background voices.
and trumpets with a cup-	the trumpet's solo.	Vibraphone keeps imitating
mute.		the <i>thang ranad ek</i> of "Choed
Vibraphone imitates thang		Jin." (second section)
ranad ek of "Choed Jin."		
(second section)		
24 measures	12 measures	26 measures
mm.134-157	mm.158-169	mm.170-195

# J- L section

7.09-7.42	7.43-8.39	8.40-9.30
(J section)	(K section)	(L section)
Transitional to climax	Climax	Melody out
Brief melodic lines are	Alto saxophone solos for the	The thematic melody of the
introduced by the	climax section. Vibraphone,	fourth melodic pattern is
woodwinds, accompanied by	woodwind, and brass	recapitulated. The musical
the vibraphone part, which is	sections replicate a stratified	statement concludes with a
a melodic adaptation of the	polyphonic stratification	four-section replica of the
thang ranad ek from "Choed	texture.	thang ranad ek from "Choed
Jin." (third section)		Jin." (fourth section)
18 measures	30 measures	21 measures
mm.196-213	mm.214-243	mm. 244-264

### **COMPOSITIONAL DISCUSSIONS**

I composed "Samniang Jin" with the intention to imitate the texture of Thai classical music—namely polyphonic stratification. As Morton states, the construction of Thai music in this

texture consists of different "layers" that are not a close approximation of the main melody but have different characteristics and a style of their own.<sup>307</sup> The musical texture of "Samniang Jin" primarily consists of between two and four independent lines. I include this texture in multiple instances throughout the composition, which adds a distinct contrast to its other textures, which are often homophonic and more typical of jazz orchestra compositions (Figure 7.13).



Figure 7.13. An example of the musical texture of polyphonic stratification in "Samniang Jin" (mm.31-36).

Inspired by the utilization of *luk lo, luk kut* (i.e., call and response)—the Thai compositional technique that I have explicitly drawn from "Choed Jin"—I created a thematic melody that consists of short motifs that interact with each other but operate in opposite directions, in a similar manner to *luk lo, luk kut* techniques. This compositional technique contributes to the

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>307</sup> Morton, The Traditional music of Thailand, 21.

development of the thematic melodic lines that mimic one of the main characteristics of Thai melodies (Figure 7.14).



Figure 7.14: The utilization of "luk lo, luk kut" in "Samniang Jin" (mm.89-90).

Similar to the compositional techniques utilized in "Buang-Suang," the imitation of *ti kep*—the idiomatic performance of *ranad ek*—can be observed in several sections of "Samniang Jin," such as the introduction (Figure 7.15) and the climax (Figure 7.16). To imitate *ti kep*, I constructed eighth-note rhythmic patterns with mostly stepwise melodic contours, in a similar manner to the *ti kep* implemented in *ranad ek* performances. This melodic pattern is primarily played by the vibraphone and synthesizer, which both generate the sound of a percussion-type instrument similar to the *ranad ek*. During the climax section, other instruments such as the trumpet and trombone also perform this instrumental imitation to emphasize the character of the *ranad ek*, interacting with the intensive improvisation of the lead alto saxophone.



Figure 7.15: The imitation of *ti kep* techniques employed in "Samniang Jin." Excerpt from the synthesizer part (mm.6-9).



Figure 7.16: The use of *ti kep* techniques in the climax of "Samniang Jin" (mm.220-225).

To significantly integrate the musical elements of the Thai-Chinese accent, I employed the melodic patterns of "Choed Jin," which I obtained from Panya Roongruang's musical manuscript, Collected Works of the Thai Classical Repertoire Vol.4.<sup>308</sup> The process of integrating such melodic patterns into the composition began when I experimentally played the musical transcription of "Choed Jin" on the piano in an attempt to identify the specific melodic lines that illustrated the typical sound of Thai-Chinese melodies. I discovered several melodic lines from thang ranad ek and thang ranad thum, which I then adjusted to be performed by the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>308</sup> Roongruang, Collected Works of the Thai Classical Repertoire Vol.4., 29.

vibraphone, soprano saxophone, synthesizer, and guitar parts in various places. Additionally, as demonstrated in Roongruang's musical manuscript, the musical form of "Choed Jin" consists of four distinct sections. I later applied the prominent melodic lines collected from these four distinct sections to the important parts of "Samniang Jin" (Figure 7.17). (See Roongruang, *Collected Works of the Thai Classical Repertoire Vol. 4*, pp. 1, 40, 60, and 62 in mm. 1-6, mm.313-320, mm.473-480 and mm. 490-496 for the original melody of "Choed Jin.")



Figure 7.17: Four melodic patterns derived from "Choed Jin" in "Samniang Jin."

### "PATCHIM" ("EPILOGUE")

I composed "Patchim" ("Epilogue") with the purpose of creating a jazz orchestra piece inspired by one specific type of Thai classical music known as *phleng la* (a farewell song). As such, "Patchim" is to be performed as the final composition of this project. The fundamental melodic lines of "Patchim" were constructed by using a twelve-tone row intermingled with two Thai melodies (*thamnong lak*) from the *phleng la* pieces "Pra Artit Ching Duang" and "Tao Kin Pak Buk." <sup>309</sup> I include a spoken-word performance of an original poem, which was inspired by

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>309</sup> Both compositions are in the "farewell" category and are often employed as the final composition to end Thai musical performances. "Pra Artit Ching Duang" was originally written for Somdet Chao Phraya Sri Suriwongse by Pra Pradit Pairoh (Mee Duriyangkul), while "Tao Kin Pak Buk" is the ancient composition derived from the

the lyrical interpretation of "Pra Artit Ching Duang" by Pra Pradit Pairoh (Mee Duriyangkul), in the final section of this piece<sup>310</sup>, where the poem is read and combined with melodic lines performed by the trumpet section.

Because I built the melodic lines primarily utilizing a twelve-tone row, the harmonic rhythm of "Patchim" is predominantly based on a vertical approach. To create the harmonies, I first chose the pitches that the row generated, then added suitable harmonies to reflect a modern jazz sound quality. The harmonic progression of the improvisation sections also follows the chord progression of C-minor blues to highlight jazz idioms. Similar to the rhythmic concept of "Samniang Jin," the rhythm of "Patchim" includes a feel with primarily even eighth notes, and sounds including electronic drums. The use of hip-hop and rock drumming patterns in the final section emphasizes the influence of popular music and invokes a sense of contemporary culture.

#### A - C section

0.00- (on cue)	0.06-0.25	0.26-1.22
(A section)	(B Section)	(C section)
Free improvisational section	Introduction section	Melody A of the first
		thematic melody
Clarinet, bass clarinet, and two	The bass plays a specific	A synthesizer and two
trombones solo by using	bass line in a 5/4 fusion and	trumpets with plunger
special effects and extended	rock genre.	mutes play the original
techniques.		melody based on the
		twelve-tone concept. Guitar
		ad lib solo.
4 measures	8 measures	25 measures
mm.1-4	mm.5-12	mm.13-37

Ayutthaya period. The composer of this composition is anonymous. Tramote, *Thai Music Manuscript Vol. 1*, 227-230

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>310</sup> To see the Thai lyrical version, see: Thanatip Paopan, "Dynamic of Pra Artit Ching Duang in Thai Traditional Music Culture" *Bansomdej Music Journal* Vol. 2, 51-68, July-December, 2019.

# $\underline{D-F}$ section

1.23-1.45	1.46-2.53	2.54-4.03
(D section)	(E Section)	(F section)
Melody B of the first	The second thematic melody	Recapitulation of the first
thematic melodic section	section	thematic melody
Synthesizer keeps playing	The melodic adaptations of	Vocals and woodwind
twelve-tone melodic lines,	"Tao Kin Pak Buk" are	perform the melodic
which intermingle with the	performed by the woodwind	adaption of "Pra Artit
lead trumpet's melodic	section and vibraphone.	Ching Duang." Quartal
interpretation of "Pra Artit		harmonies are deployed.
Ching Duang."		
12 measures	36 measures	34 measures
mm.38-49	mm.50-85	mm.86-119

# <u>G – I section</u>

4.00-4.19	4.20-5.44	5.45-6.48
(G section)	(H Section)	(I section)
First improvisation section	Second improvisation section	Third improvisation section
Trombone solos in a	Guitar starts to solo along	Guitar and trumpet
combination of irregular	with two trombones. The	continue soloing over a fast
meters, such as $5/4$ , $3/4$ , and	woodwind and brass provide	swing. A pyramidal
2/4.	intensive background	background section—
	voicings.	inspired by the fundamental
		melodic lines of "Pra Artit
		Ching Duang"—is
		performed by the
		woodwind, brass section,
		and vibraphone.

6 measures	104 measures	76 measures
mm.120-126	mm.127-230	mm.231-306

### I – L seciton

6.49-7.08	7.07-8.10	8.11-8.29.
(J section)	(K Section)	(L section)
Free improvisation section	Melody out	Outro
Tenor saxophone provides a	Vocalist reads the	Woodwind and brass
free improvisation with the	monologue, which is inspired	sections play repetitive
drums. The tempo is	by the lyrics of "Pra Artit	melodic lines, while alto
dramatically decreased,	Ching Duang" in	saxophone solos until the
allowing for the transition to	combination with a bass line	fade-out.
a hip-hop beat.	and the original melody of	
	the trumpet.	
7 measures	31 measures	10 measures
mm.307-314	mm.315-345	mm.346-355

### COMPOSITIONAL DISCUSSIONS

To compose the melodic lines of "Patchim" in the D section, I constructed two main melodic patterns, which consist of the original melodic line from the twelve-tone row, and my adaptation of a melody from "Pra Artit Ching Duang." For the first melodic pattern, I created a twelve-tone row on my sketch score and then applied it to the guitar and synthesizer parts (mm.38 - 41, Figure 7.18). The melodic line of "Pra Artit Ching Duang" (See Tramote, Manuscript Vol. 1, p.183), which was originally composed by Pra Pradit Pairoh (Mee Duriyangkul).311 To apply this melodic line to my composition, I doubled the note values of the original melody, modified their pitch to avoid the collision of minor 2nd intervals that may be created by the guitar and synthesizer parts, and then applied them to the trumpet, and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>311</sup> Tramote, Thai Music Manuscript Vol. 1, 183.

trombone (mm.38-41). This produces the sound of a Thai melodic style in combination with the less predictable line generated by the twelve-tone patterns.



Figure 7.18: The D section of "Patchim" (mm.37-41). Twelve-tone row melody appears in the guitar and piano, melody based on "Pra Artit Ching Duang" in the brass.

In the next section, rather than employing two melodic lines as I did in section D, I created new thematic melodies through the combination of "Tao Kin Pak Buk," from the *Thai Music Book Vol. 3* with my original melody in mm.54-59. To create this new thematic melody, I first adjusted the note values of the "Tao Kin Pak Buk" melody using augmentation and diminution techniques similar to those used by Thai composers, and then alternated the melody with my own original melody. In addition, this particular melodic line was interchangeably performed in the soprano saxophone improvisation (Figure 7.19). (See Mahawinitmontri and Issarangkun, *Thai Music Manuscript Vol. 3*, p.130 for the original melody of "Tao Kin Pak Buk.")



Figure 7.19: The combination of the original melody and the melody from "Tao Kin Pak Buk" (mm.54-59 and mm.60-65).

Luk leuam, a Thai instrumental technique, also features in the E section. This technique is widely used in *ranad thum* and plays a crucial role in generating textures of Thai music where a variety of melodic lines layer on top of one another. I imitate this technique in the 3rd and bass trombones and in the 2nd alto; the melody is played by overlapping the lines of these three instruments (Figure 7.20), which brings a characteristically Thai sound to this section.

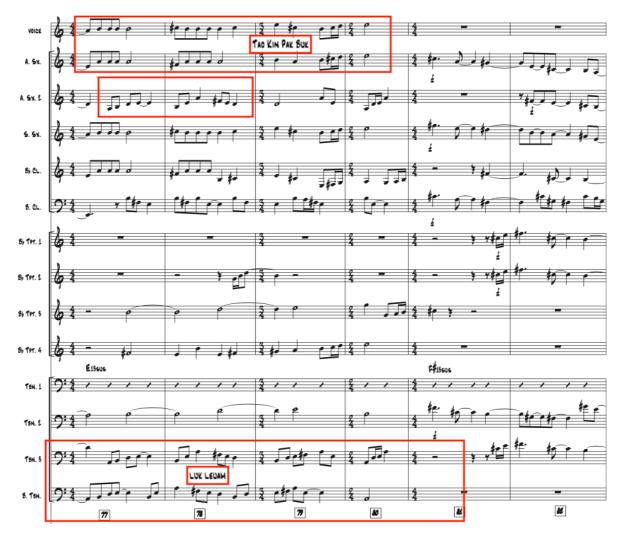


Figure 7.20: The luk leuam layering technique in the 2nd alto saxophone, 3rd trombone, and bass trombone. Excerpt from "Patchim" (mm.77-82).

Another Thai musical element presented in "Patchim" is the interpretation of the lyrics of "Pra Artit Ching Duang." According to Thanatip Paopan, the meaning of the lyrics of "Pra Artit Ching Duang" in Pra Pradit Pairoh's version can be divided into two distinct sections 312. The meaning of the first part of the text is ambiguous and can be interpreted in many ways; it may refer to the political power of Somdet Chao Phraya Sri Suriwongse, who was a Thai regent during the early reign of King Rama V, and was the most powerful authority during the transition from the reign of King Rama IV to Rama V. The second part directly expresses the

312 Paopan further explains that the lyrics of "Pra Artit Ching Duang," in Pra Pradit Pairoh (Mee Duriyangkul)'s version, was taken from Khun Chang Khun Phaen, a prominent text in Thai literature. Paopan, "Dynamic of Pra Artit Ching Duangin Thai Traditional Music Culture," 57.

tragic love story derived from *Khun Chang Khun Phaen*.<sup>313</sup> Inspired by the tragic love expressed in the lyrics of "Pra Artit Ching Duang," I composed a short poem that is performed as a spoken-word monologue during the melody-out section of "Patchim" (mm.317-345). The poem depicts *Artit* (the sun), *Duang* (the moon), and cites the names of several flowers—such as jasmine and dahlia—referenced in the original lyrics. This poem describes two subjects who are unable to be together no matter how hard they try:

The sunrise and the moonset, we used to live happily together.

But now we have to depart. Only the empty sky will remind the old to be sad.

Oh, my dearest jasmine, why do you have to remind me of the dewdrop on your leaf?

The feeling that I used to touch, the delicate fragrance that I used to smell.

It is at this time that the wind blows and flutters and brings the clouds to the sky, and my eyes could not follow.

Does no one know how deep is the ocean? Does no one know how deep is your heart?

Oh, my dearest dahlia, the flower of my love, the flower I carefully planted, but no one knows who has taken. Now my heart will be broken, and my soul will be lost.

It is at this time that we nearly see each other, but we still remain apart

Because you are the moonset at dawn and I'm the sundown at dusk. Thus, we cannot see each other in the same sky.

Tanarat C. 25/01/2021

Figure 7.21: The poem from "Patchim" (mm.317-345).

#### 7.3 COMPOSITIONS INSPIRED BY DONTRI ISAN NUEA

### "MEKONG" ("RIVER OF SOULS")

"Mekong" ("River of Souls") is a jazz orchestra composition that artistically expresses the sound of northeast Thailand (*isan nuea*) by using—among other elements—characteristics of traditional Thai melodies of the region. This composition intermingles multiple elements from

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>313</sup> Khun Chang Khun Phaen is a Thai epic poem based on a Thai folklore legend and considered one of the most influential works of Thai literature. For English translation, see *The Tale of Khun Chang Khun Phaen* translated and edited by Chris Baker and Pasuk Phongpaichi, Silkworm Books, Chiang Mai, Thailand, 2010.

the traditional music of northeast Thailand, such as the performance practices of *khaen* and *phin* music, with contemporary jazz compositional techniques. In addition, inspired by the compositional form of Thai classical music form called *phleng ruang*, (a suite of ancient tunes with a common theme) the thematic melodies of "River of Souls" reference the Thai classical music repertoire that has a "Lao accent" (samniang lao), as well as prominent northeast traditional compositions (dontri isan nuea).

The melodic lines in this composition were inspired by two compositions from northeastern traditional repertoires, "Lai Lom Phat Phrao" and "Lai Teay Khong." They were also inspired by four musical interpretations of the Lao accent category performed in Thai classical music repertoires: "Lao Somdej," "Lao Pan," "Lao Dum Noen Sai," and "Lao Duang Duen." These concepts appear in various sections of the composition and performed by the soprano saxophone, alto saxophone, trumpets, vocalist, bass, and bass trombone.

From a harmonic standpoint, I have applied techniques of contemporary jazz orchestra composition—such as quartal and spread voicings, extended harmonies, modal interchanges, and pedal points—to imitate the sound of the drone characteristically produced in *isan nuea* performances. Three rhythmic styles that often exist in jazz orchestra arrangements—even eighth-notes, swing, and Afro-Cuban rhythms—occur in the rhythm section parts. I also composed using polyrhythms, asymmetrical phrases, and rhythmic displacement in numerous places.

The total duration of "Mekong" is twelve minutes and seventeen seconds, and it is the longest composition of this study.

### A section (Introduction)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>314</sup> Even some Thai classical music with a Lao accent, such as "Lao Duang Duen," was geographically derived in present-day northern Thailand. This composition was well recognized by Thai classical musicians as *phleng seminang lao* (song in a Lao accent). Furthermore, it is notable that throughout the *Ayutthaya* and *Rattanakosin* periods, Siamese living in the central area referred to some of the Northern tribes who share cultures with the people of modern-day Laos as "Lao."

0.00-0.56	0.59-1.06	1.07-1.23
Introductory section	Drums and percussion set off	Transition to B
Compositional interpretation	Drummer starts to play even	Pianist demonstrates pedal
of khaen performance by the	8ths, and a rhythmic	tones to imitate the drones.
lead alto.	adaptation of lum phloem is	Bass player and bass
	performed by the congas.	trombonist hint at the short
		melodic lines of "Lai Teay
		Khong."
14 measures	7 measures	9 measures
mm.1-14	mm.15-21	mm.22-30

# B section (Introduction)

1.24-1.59	1.59-2.10	2.11–2.29
First extended introductory	Answer passages of "Lao	Recapitulation to first
section	Pan" melodies.	extended introduction
		section.
Trumpet section and guitar	First and second alto	Melodic lines of the
player construct memorable	saxophonists (soprano	concluding statement are
melodic lines of "Lao Pan"	saxophone), and trumpet	performed by the lead
composition.	construct the answer passage	trumpet.
18 measures	7 measures	10 measures
mm.31-48	mm.49-55	mm.56–65

2.31–2.41	2.46-3.24
Second extended	Transition to C
introductory section	

Third trumpet and soprano	Extensive interplay
saxophone perform second	between brass and
selected theme of "Lao Pan."	woodwind sections.
Guitar player also adapts	
musical elements from phin	
performances.	
12 measures	16 measures
mm.66-77	mm.78-93

# C section (Head in)

3.25–4.08	4.09-4.23	4.30-5.03
Melody A of "Lao Somdej"	Melody B of "Lao Somdej"	Variation of Melody B and
		Transition to D
Soprano, alto saxophone,	The melody B section is	Most brass and woodwind
and trumpets perform the	performed by two alto	sections are performed to
melody A from "Lao	saxophones, one tenor	provide a short climax as the
Somdej."	saxophone, and the	melody sections end.
	trombone section.	
23 measures	11 measures	21 measures
mm.94 -116	mm.117– 127	mm.128-148

# D section (transition to solo section)

5.09–5.36
Introductory solo section
Change to swing feel

Brass section provides short background.

14 measures mm.149-162

## E section (solo section)

5.37–6.35
First solo section
Trumpet solos over a functional harmony.
32 measures mm.163-194

# F section (solo section)

6.37–7.42	7.43-8.08	8.09-8.34
Second solo section	Third solo section	Transition to G
Trumpet keeps soloing with	"Lai Lom Phat Phrao" is	Swing in 4/4 and the low
contrapuntal	performed by alto	voice instruments restates
accompaniment by the low-	saxophone solos.	"Lai Teay Khong" in
voice instrument in 5/4.		contrapuntal lines.
27 measures	16 measures	7 measures
mm.195-221	mm.223-238	mm.239-245

# G section (head out)

8.35-8.51	8.53-9.14	9.15-9.46
First melody of "Lao Dum	Second melody of "Lao	Variation of Melody B and
Noen Sai"	Dum Noen Sai"	transition to H section
Vocalist, alto saxophone,	Soprano saxophone and	Woodwind and brass sections
and trombone perform my	trumpets perform the	harmonize second melody of
arrangement of the "Lao	second theme of the "Lao	"Lao Dum Noen Sai" and
Dum Noen Sai."	Dum Noen Sai."	provide a transition to the H
		section. (Afro-Cuban rhythm)
		Bass clarinet also provides
		contrapuntal lines.
10 measures	13 measures	17 measures
mm.246-255	mm.256-268	mm.269-285

# H section (head out)

9.48-10.10	10.11-10.36	10.37-11.10
First melody of "Lao	Second melody of "Lao	Recapitulation of "Lao Duang
Duang Duen"	Duang Duen"	Duen" melody
Vocalist and guitar	Trumpet sections perform	Saxophones and trombone
construct my interpretation	melody B of "Lao Duang	sections harmonize the "Lao
of "Lao Duang Duen" in	Duen," accompanied by	Duang Duen."
an Afro-Cuban rhythm.	contrapuntal bass lines.	
13 measures	13 measures	18 measures
mm.286-298	mm.299-311	mm.312-329

### 11.12-11.35

#### Climax

All sections build up to the climax's chord progressions by using triplet rhythmic figures to highlight the Afro-Cuban rhythms.
Final reiteration of "Lai Teay Khong" by bass trombone.

11 measures

mm.330-340

## I section (outro)

### 11.36-12.27

Ritardando tempo

The final melodic lines of outro section gradually constructed by lead trumpet, alto saxophone, and lead trombone.

12 measures

mm.341-352

### **COMPOSITIONAL DISCUSSIONS**

In the introduction of the work, a solo in the lead alto saxophone, I imitate the performance techniques of *khaen*, including the construction of intervallic patterns, and standard rhythmic

patterns, which are, in most cases, perpetual rhythms executed in eighth-note and sixteenth-note contexts. To reference the intervallic patterns of *khaen* performance, I constructed particular patterns that gradually build off the target notes, including the expansion from the pitch A, and the development of intervallic patterns from the pitch G—similar to the performance in the Sombat Simlah's *khaen* performance from Chapter 4. In addition, I employed eighth-note and sixteenth-note patterns in a similar manner to Sombat's performance (the C section of the transcription of the performance in Chapter 4), to construct standard rhythmic patterns for this section. Other contemporary performance techniques such as slap tongue, fluttertongue, and multiphonics are also used to reference the sounds of *khaen* performance in this section (Figure 7.22).

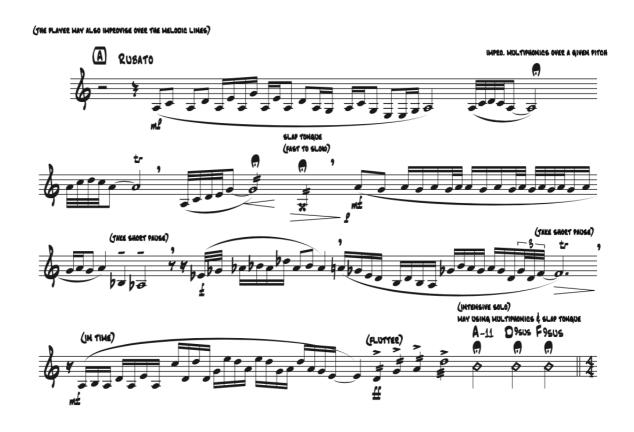


Figure 7.22: The imitation of *khaen* performance in the alto saxophone part of "Mekong" (concert key).

Later on in the introduction, I adapt the melody from northeastern traditional composition "Lai Teay Khong" for the lower-pitched instruments and guitar (mm.23-.26). This melody is played together with a drone on the pitch A (mm.22–26), later restated at the defining moments of this composition, including after the solo section and in the ending section. For the

adaptation of "Lai Teay Khong" used during the introductory sections, the sound of the drone is reproduced by the electric piano (Figure 7.23).



Figure 7.23: The adaptation of "Lai Teay Khong," with drone on A in the electric piano, from "Mekong" (mm.22-26).

For the B section, I composed melodic lines that were inspired by mm. 9-13 of the melody "Lao Pan" (Figure 7.24)<sup>315</sup>, which I recently transcribed for this composition. The melodic adaptation of "Lao Pan" is performed by the first and second trumpets in mm.31-36 (Figure 7.25), and later transposed down a perfect fourth in a sequence performed by the guitar and electric piano for the second theme. In addition, modal interchange between A Aeolian and A Phrygian modes occurs at the entrance of the Bbmaj7 chord in m. 36.



Figure 7.24: The melody of "Lao Pan." Transcription by the author.

<sup>315</sup> Figure 7.24 was transcribed from the performance of Thongdee Sucharitkul (0.03-0.16)

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d2LIw845]-U> uploaded by Wisetdontree">www.youtube.com/watch?v=d2LIw845]-U> uploaded by Wisetdontree (3 February 2011).</a>

Please note that this figure's key signature was transposed into the key signature of my original composition, "Mekong."



Figure 7.25: The opening of the B section of "Mekong" (mm.31-36).

Similar to my interpretation of *khaen* performances, I have also referenced the performance practice of *phin*, which featured extensively in my transcription process (in particular, performances by Boomma Kaowong and Thongsai Thabthanon.) To do so, I composed eighth-note melodic lines which utilize the pitches of F as drones, gradually ascending to the note of Bb—the highest pitch—before switching to neighbor pitches without taking extensive leaps (e.g., mm.74 -86). This *phin* performance method is widely to incorporated into the guitar part (Figure 7.26).



Figure 7.26: The interpretation of *phin* techniques in the guitar part of "Mekong" (mm.74-86).

In the melody section (section C) of "Mekong", I composed the melodic lines by interpreting the traditional melody of "Lao Somdej" (transcribed in Chapter 3). Melodic expansion, diminution, anticipation, and delayed attacks, as well as rhythmic displacements, play crucial roles in facilitating the extensive development of this melody. After I had adapted this melody, I applied modal interchanges and modern non-functional harmonies to enrich the tone colors of this melodic line and to emphasize the character of a modern jazz orchestra. The comparison between the original melody of "Lao Somdej" and my melodic arrangement implemented in the C section is illustrated in Figures 7.27 and 7.28.



Figure 7.27: The melody of "Lao Somdej."



Figure 7.28: The thematic melody of "Mekong" (mm.93-135) in the C section.

I also applied an ostinato to generate intricate ideas by and provide contrast to the melodic lines of "Mekong," aiming to produce an intense response in the audiences from the first climax section to the improvisational segment (Figure 7.29).



Figure 7.29: An example of an ostinato from "Mekong" (mm.118-121).

"Mekong" features solos at E and at F, over functional harmony in the keys of C natural minor and F major. The trumpet solo begins at E and continues into F, where it is accompanied by contrapuntal lines in the bass. This is followed by a solo in the lead alto, while "Lom Phat Phrao" melody is played by the lead and third trumpets, second alto, and tenor.

The first solo section featuring the lead trumpet has a 32-bar form, and is in the key of C natural minor. The harmony includes i<sup>7</sup> (m.163), v<sup>7</sup> (m.167), and bVII<sup>7</sup>(m.171), and also borrows chords from other modes to produce interesting and exciting harmonies such as vi-<sup>7</sup> (m.183, Ionian) II<sup>7</sup> (m.191, Lydian), and bV<sup>maj7</sup> (m.187, Locrian), as well as the ii-V-I progression to emphasize typical jazz harmonic constructions. In addition, I also include irregular meters such as 3/4 and 5/4 to provide measures of varying duration, and to contribute a sense that the rhythm of this section is unpredictable (Figure 7.30).

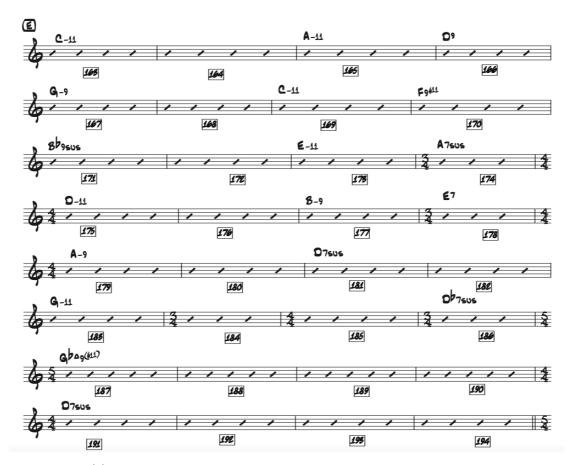


Figure 7.30: The trumpet solo section in "Mekong" (mm.163-194).

The thematic material from "Lai Lom Phat Phrao," which was obtained from my transcription (see Chapter 4), was also applied to the final solo section in the key of F major to generate the characteristic melodic sound of *isan nuea* music, intermingled with the improvisation of the lead alto saxophone and electric piano. This melody is played by the soprano saxophone, tenor saxophone, the lead and third trumpet, and guitar (mm. 225-229, as illustrated in Figure 7.31).



Figure 7.31: Thematic materials in "Mekong" (mm.225-229) derived from "Lai Lom Phat Phrao."

For the climax of the solo section, I constructed open voicings by using the quartal chord harmony technique (i.e. G-11/C) to produce a contemporary sound. The imitation of the drone sound, which is played by in electric piano (mm. 237- 240), and the thematic melody of "Lai Teay Khong" is restated and performed by the bass trombone and baritone saxophone parts (mm. 239-241) to revisit the musical character of *isan nuea* (Figure 7.32).



Figure 7.32: The climax of the solo section of "Mekong," (mm.236-241) with the melody of "Lai Teay Khong" restated in the baritone saxophone and bass trombone.

Similar to the musical adaption of "Lao Somdej," I adjusted the melodic lines of the prominent Thai classical music composition featuring the musical accent of Laos called "Lao Dum Noen Sai." These lines appear in the fundamental melodies in the first head-out section, and provide the characteristic sound of Thai classical music. The compositional techniques I used to create new melodic lines in this case include melodic expansion, contrapuntal motion, delayed attacks, and changing meters (4/4 to 3/4). In addition, to make the rhythmic patterns more attractive and interesting, I used syncopated patterns in accompanying instruments and low-voice instruments including electric piano, bass, baritone saxophone, and bass trombone.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>316</sup> The original melodic line of "Lao Dum Noen Sai" was transcribed (0.00-0.27) from CHEE's upload of the Mahori Orchestra of the Fine Arts Department <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9zSSKrh6A2Y">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9zSSKrh6A2Y</a> (16 July 2021).

The key center of "Mekong" also modulates from A natural minor to F major, and I also use modal interchange in several instances, such as II7 (Lydian) and I-7 (Aeolian). I also construct modern harmonies and strengthen the characteristic sound of pentatonic scales through including two parts written primarily in perfect fifths and quartal voicings (Figure 7.33).



Figure 7.33: Compositional techniques employed in mm. 269-274 of "Mekong."

Rather than repeating the melodic lines of "Lao Dum Noen Sai," I decided to select another piece from the traditional Thai musical repertoire that features the Lao musical accents called

"Lao Duang Duen." This piece, containing one of the most memorable melodic lines in Thai music, intermingles with the sound of the jazz orchestra in the final head-out section of "Mekong." Similar to other traditional Thai melodies applied and integrated into this composition, the thematic melody of "Lao Duang Duen" was also extended, adjusted, and blended to the harmonic structures and rhythms of jazz. Afro-Cuban rhythms were further applied to create the energetic movement that generates rhythmic diversity, in addition to employing even eighth notes and swing rhythms. Furthermore, this rhythmic pattern provides the syncopated patterns which form a distinct opposition to the character of Thai melodic rhythms.

For the voicing techniques to harmonize the Thai melody, I use conventional techniques such as four-way close voicings, non-dissonant clusters, two-part writing with smooth intervals (for example, major 3rd or major 6th), and then subsequently adjust these to contemporary techniques such as quartal and quintal voicings or extended chords. Contrapuntal lines provide complexity for the melodic lines in the baritone saxophone and bass trombone parts, as in the final head-out section. To construct syncopated rhythms against the main melodic lines, I used triplets to produce a rhythmic feel in the Afro-Cuban drum patterns as rhythmic accompaniments for the brass sections, bass, and baritone saxophone. These accompanying patterns also contribute to the rhythmic intensity which can provide a more exciting groove for the audience (Figures 7.34).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>317</sup> The original melodic line of "Lao Duang Duen" was transcribed from Suebsak and Chatichai Duriyaprathanee's performance rendition. (0.14-1.31)

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMOvBOIZCWU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMOvBOIZCWU</a>>uploaded by Kasemsuk (13 July 2018).



Figure 7.34a. A piano reduction of the head-out section of "Mekong" (mm. 285-301). Compositional techniques appear in red boxes.



Figure 7.34b. (mm.302-323) Compositional techniques appear in red boxes.

To express more of the aesthetics of Thai musical culture, I also translated the lyrics of "Lao Duang Duen" into English and made my own adaptation, which can be sung in combination with wordless vocals (scat singing) by a female vocalist in the H section of "Mekong." The English translation of "Lao Duang Duen" is as follows:

Oh my love, my precious moon

I just come to say that I love you for one last time

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>318</sup> "Lao Duang Duen" was originally composed by Prince Benbadhanabongse, who was the third-eighth King Chulalongkorn's son. The story behind this composition's lyric expresses his regret for Princess Chomchuen, whom he was unable to marry. Benjamin Pongtep Cefkin, "Lao Duang Duen" "Lost in Translation: A New Perspective on the Southeast Asian Classical Arts," *American Music Research Journal*, Vol. 27 2018, 30-31.

Then the hour grows late, I must say my eternal goodbye But you'll be forever in my mind
Oh my love...



Figure 7.35: The melodic interpretation of "Lao Duang Duen" in the vocal part of "Mekong" (mm.285-320).

For the final section "Mekong," I employed the rhythmic intensity of triplet rhythms related to Afro-Cuban rhythmic patterns to create rhythmic unification for the ensemble. I later approach the climax segment with a rapid passage of the set of sixteen notes in the lead and second trumpets (m.334). The prominent theme of "Lai Teay Khong" also appears and is restated again in the bass, vocal, bass trombone parts (mm.329 - 334) to connect and conclude the entire story of this composition. Such compositional techniques also operated in conjunction with the intensive improvisation of the soprano saxophone, and the second alto (Figure 7.36).



Figure 7.36: The final section of "Mekong" (mm.329-334).

The outro of "Mekong" in the I section begins with a ritardando. The final melodic line of this section is played by the two trumpets and the second alto, and then later supported by two trombones and the tenor saxophone. My intention in composing this part was to allow the audience unwind after listening to this extended composition. In addition, the final melodic lines of "Mekong" (min. 349-351) were composed by replicating the sound of a penta-centric

concept that is significantly influenced by *isan nuea* melodies. The final chord of "Mekong" is also generated by the combination of quartal and quintal voicings (C\$\pm\$9\$sus), which can create a bright tone and a sense of freshness (Figure 7.37).



Figure 7.37: The outro section of "Mekong" (mm.345-352).

#### 7.4 COMPOSITIONS INSPIRED BY DONTRI PAKTAI

### "SINGORA" ("DANCE OF KINNARI")

"Singora" was the name of a cosmopolitan city in southern Thailand located in the present-day province of Songkhla, where performances of *nora* and *rong ngeng* are still widespread. The musical elements of *nora* and *rong ngeng* serve as the principal ingredients of this composition. Strategies for adapting these musical elements include: the use of the "Sot Soi" melodic pattern, the application of the *kheun hua pi* technique of *pi nora*, the rhythmic adaption of *rong ngeng tanyong* performances, and the thematic melody of "Tari Kipas" as performed by Khadae Waedeng, which I also transcribed from the southeastern *rong ngeng* repertoire for this composition. Furthermore, I have included two monologues that narrate the romantic story of Pra Suthon and Manora—which is one of the famous Thai works of literature used in *nora* performances.

The thematic melody of the composition is divided into two sections, namely a musical adaptation of two melodies from the "Sot Sot" (nora) and "Tari Kipas" (Southeastern rong ngeng), and the original melodies I composed to respond to them. "Singora" is based on Eb Mixolydian, F Lydian dominant, and G Ionian modes. The modulation techniques without pivot chords in various sections of the composition create a feeling of surprise and unpredictability.

To express the rhythmic ideas of southern Thai music, I adapted traditional Afro-Cuban rhythmic patterns, which, in my view, function effectively alongside southern Thai melodic rhythms. I use swing, hip-hop drum beats, and patterns of contemporary jazz fusion to create fundamental rhythmic patterns in the rhythm section. In addition, intricate polyrhythmic ideas appear in the brass and the rhythm sections in multiple places. I have also applied the rhythmic patterns of rong ngeng tanyoung (southwest)—the sinadong patterns and the rebana patterns of the Lagu dua composition—in several places in the bass and percussion parts.

The primary improvisation sections of "Singora" are the short ad-lib solo and the main solo section. The soloists in the first "monologue" of this composition include the guitar and second tenor saxophone, while the primary improvisation section features soprano saxophone and trumpet. The second "monologue" also features a combined duo improvisation of soprano

saxophone and guitar, providing a musical interaction with the spoken word performed by the singer.

Rather than using the standard form of jazz orchestras, the musical form of "Singora" is a narrative story whose melody parts are not repeated, with each part blending into the monologue and improvisation sections. The musical form of this composition consists of eight sections (from A to H) totaling nine minutes and seven seconds, which are illustrated in the following diagram.

### A section (Introduction)

0.01-0.21	0.21-0.41
Introductory section	Transition to B
Drums play Afro-fusion	Guitar and synthesizer play
rhythms.	short melodic lines used in
Bass lines interpret sinadong	the introductory section.
(rong ngeng tanyong) patterns.	
12 measures	12 measures
mm.1-12	mm.13-24

### B Section (monologue)

0.42-1.21	1.22-1.34	1.35-1.44
First monologue	Modulation (Upper onestep)	Transition to C
Vocalist gives first	Soprano saxophone	Combination of
monologue from Suthon	demonstrates kheun hua pi	polyrhythm refers to 4 over
and Manora's story.	technique from pi nora.	

Clarinet ad-lib solo.	Brass sections apply	6 of woodwind, and 3 over
	polyrhythms, e.g., 4 over 6,	6
	and 3 over 6 (three groups	of brass sections.
	of two) for	Percussion imitates lagu
	accompaniment.	dua,"s rhythmic patterns.
		(rong ngeng tanyong)
18 measures	14 measures	4 measures
mm.25-42	mm.43-56	mm.57-60

# C section (first melody)

1.46-2.02	2.04-2.18	2.20-2.40
First melody section	Answer to first melodic line	Second thematic of first
		melody and transition to D
Trombone and soprano	Vocals and trumpet play the	Vocals and trumpet play
saxophone play the melodic	original melody to provide	second thematic melody
interpretation of "Tari	answer to the first thematic	obtained from "Sot Soi"
Kipas." (southeastern mng	melody of "Tari Kipas."	pattern used in <i>nora</i>
ngeng)		performances.
		Guitar parts simulate mong
		sounds utilized in nora
		music.
10 measures	10 measures	14 measures
mm.60-79	mm.70–79	mm.80-93

## D section (second melody)

2.46- 3.06	3.10-3.46
The second melody section	Extended transition

Trumpet, vocals, and	Recapitulation of extensive
trombone perform the	polyrhythmic ideas is
modulation of the "Sot	demonstrated by woodwind,
Soi" pattern (upper one-	brass section, synthesizer,
step and changes from	and bass. Guitar also
$E b 7^{sus4}$ to $F^6$ ).	provides solo to add intense
Baritone saxophone applies	emotion to this section.
3 over 6 polyrhythms for	
accompaniment (different	
from the previous patterns).	
11 measures	25 measures
mm.94-104	mm.105-129

## E section (third melody)

3.47-4.22	4.24-4.46
Third thematic melody	Answer to the third thematic
	melody
Trombone plays the	Vocals and trumpet restate
original melody employed	the variation thematic
as the third thematic	melody of "Tari Kipas"
melody (penta-centric	(different than the C section),
concept).	demonstrating the
Drum changes patterns to	contraction compositional
create the distinction and	approach.
provides more space.	Soprano saxophone starts
	soloing in pre-
	improvisational section.
26 measures	8 measures
mm.131-156	mm.157-167

## F Section (solo section)

4.47-5.01	5.02-5.15	5.16-6.00
Solo section	Restating of "Sot Soi" as	Climax
	background.	
Solo sections are played by	Trombone and soprano	Rhythmic intensity is
trumpet and soprano. The	saxophone play the	produced by brass and
half-time swing is employed	thematic melody of "Sot	woodwind sections.
for this solo section.	Soi" (changed key) which	Bass trombone and bass
	serves as the background	player construct intensive
	for the two soloists.	bass-line doubling.
	Woodwind illustrates the	Drum solo in the final four
	kheun hua pi technique.	measures to provide the
	Drums switch to Afro 6/4	climax before setting the
	patterns.	tempo for the G section.
9 measures	12 measures	22 measures
mm.168-176	mm.177–188	mm.189-210

# G section (head-out)

6.02-6.31	6.32-7.01	7.02-8.24
Second monologue	Transition to final	Final thematic melody and
	thematic melody	final improvisational section
Drum sets off the tempo	Trombone, tenor, and alto	The original thematic melody
(slow R&B). Vocalist delivers	saxophone gradually	has been composed for the
second monologue of	construct chords similar	trumpet, trombone, and
Suthon and Manora's story.	to pyramidical chord	baritone saxophone. The
Guitar provides ad-lib solo.	structure. Vocalist still	

Trumpet also plays the short	delivers monologue until	improvisation is provided by
theme of the original	m. 244. Guitar keeps ab-	soprano saxophone and guitar.
composition.	lib soloing.	Brass section provides a
Tonality shifts to F major		background constructed from
and modal interchanges are		extended harmonies such as
applied to chord		$F^{\text{maj}9}$ , $Ab^{\text{maj}9}$ , and $Db6/9$
progressions.		chords.
10 measures	8 measures	26 measures
mm.210-220	mm.221-228	mm.229-254

### H section (Outro)

### 8.25-9.07

#### Outro

Trumpet and trombone sections demonstrate recapitulation of various, extended polyrhythmic ideas Woodwinds perform fast passage to contribute interesting ideas. Vocals demonstrate 4 over 6 patterns. The composition ends in F<sup>6/9</sup>.

20 measures

mm.255-274

#### **COMPOSITIONAL DISCUSSIONS**

The initial idea behind composing "Singora" was to apply the rhythmic ideas of *rong ngeng* performances. To do so, I selected the rhythmic patterns of *sinadong* played by the *rebana* in *rong ngeng tanyong* performances, then reducing the tempo to half-time and applying them to the principal bass line in the A section. The comparison between the *sinadong* and the bass patterns is demonstrated in Figure 7.38.



Figure 7.38: A comparison between the *sinadong* pattern and the bass part of "Singora" in mm.5-8.

The chord progressions accompanying the first monologue in the B section can be separated in two: in the first section, which consists of sixteen measures, I applied a chord progression based on Eb Mixolydian and consisting of 1) F<sup>sus4</sup> (II7) borrowed from the parallel key of Eb Lydian, 2) Db<sup>add9</sup> (bVII7), and 3) C<sup>-11</sup>/Eb (VI-7). The voicing techniques applied in this section also include the use of fourth voicings for F<sup>sus4</sup>, Eb<sup>sus4</sup>, and Db<sup>add9</sup>, as well as four-way closed voicings in C<sup>-11</sup>/Eb. The application of 3 over 6 and 4 over 6 polyrhythms have been included to contribute interesting rhythmic ideas, which appear in the woodwind and brass sections in the chords E<sup>bsus4</sup> and C<sup>-11</sup>/Eb (Figure 7.39).

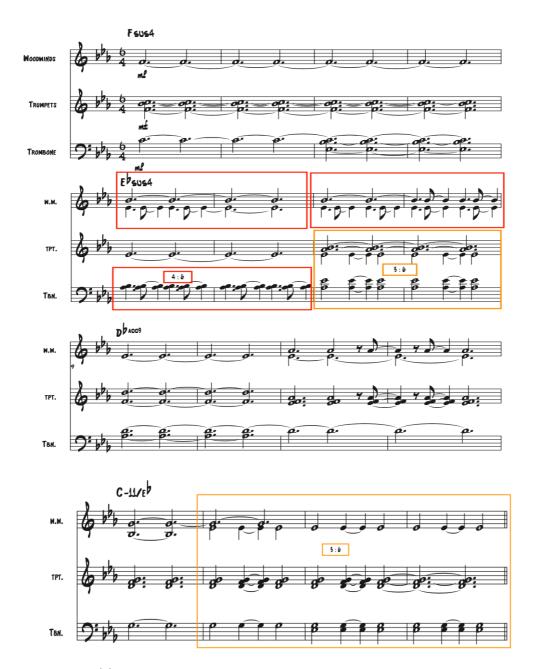


Figure 7.39: The chord progressions and polyrhythms accompanying the first monologue in "Singora" (mm.25-40).

I also applied the rhythm of the *rebana* from the *lagu dua* composition from *rong ngeng tanyong* performances. Thai rhythmic ideas in this pattern are constructed by groups of four notes and then groups of five notes; I included this pattern in the conga part in mm.36–40 and mm.54–55 (Figure 7.40).

I also included the *lagu dua* rhythmic pattern in the baritone saxophone part (mm.39-.40), which contributes additional contrasting rhythmic ideas to the polyrhythms of the soprano saxophone and the brass section (also in Figure 7.40).



Figure 7.40: The application of the *lagu dua* rhythmic pattern in the conga part, and in the baritone saxophone part, of "Singora."

The harmonic progressions applied in the second part of the B section are based on the key of F Lydian, which consists of  $G^{7sus4}$  (II7), and  $Eb^{-11}$ (bvii-7) borrowed from F Phrygian. The voicing in the fourth and closed positions (four-way close voicing) can also be identified in the woodwinds and brass sections. To integrate the musical elements of southern Thailand, I applied the *kheun hua pi* technique—one of the prominent characteristics of the *pi nora* performance—to the soprano saxophone part, which yielded an effective result when used in the prototype composition in Chapter 5. In this technique, the soprano saxophone player gradually performs the target notes—moving from quarter notes to eighth notes—and applies a tremolo technique, as illustrated in the chords of  $G^{7sus4}$ ,  $F^6$ , and  $E^{-11}$  in the woodwind section.

Another compositional technique that I employed to express the sound of traditional southern Thai music was the adaptation of a performance practice by a set of two gongs (*mong*) that is frequently heard in *nora* performances and provided the distinctive sound characteristic to this music. To apply this musical technique, I constructed two sets of sounds—containing the

pitches of D and A, and Eb and Ab respectively—to be continually performed by the bass trombone parts in a similar manner to a *mong* performance (Figure 7.41)



Figure 7.41: Compositional techniques employed in the B section of "Singora" (mm.43-54).

For this piece I also translated the story of Pra Suthon and Manora, which is one of the most prominent pieces of Thai literature performed in *nora* performances in southern Thailand. This story portrays the romantic relationship between a mythical female half-human bird and a male prince. The spoken text of this section is narrated by the female vocalist in mm.25-59 by using distortion effects to produce a more modern sound suited to the composition. My English translation of the story is quoted below:

Pra Suthon and Manora is a story of forbidden love between a human and a female mythical figure, who is halfbird and half-human and lives beyond the Himavanta forest. One day, while taking a bath in an ancient lake in the mysterious forest of the human realm, Manora is captured by Phran Boon, a ferocious hunter, who later hands her over to Pra Suthon, the heir to the Kingdom of Uttarapancala. As soon as they see each other, they fall in love because of the loving spirit that they had in their past lives. However, a jealous brahmin falsely tells the king, Artit Wong, Pra Suthon's father, that Manora would bring about a deterioration of his reign and requests the sacrifice of Manora. So reluctantly, Manora leaves Pra Suthon behind without saying goodbye and secretly flees to Mouth Kailash, where humans are unable to go.319

For the first thematic melody of "Singora," I transcribed the prominent melodic pattern of the composition "Tari Kipas" performed by Khadae Waedeng (Figure 7.42). Then, I retained the target notes of Bb and of the group of descending notes to the pitch C (in the red circles), which I later include in the melody I composed for the soprano saxophone (Figure 7.43).



Figure 7.42 The original melody of "Tari Kipas." Transcription by the author.



Figure 7.43: The adaption of the "Tari Kipas" melody in "Singora" (mm.59-64).

uploaded by The Siam Society (n.d.).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>319</sup> The story of Pra Suthon and Manora is a popular Thai performance that can be seen throughout Thailand, in particular the center. The plot of this literature has been also reproduced and appears in Thai TV programs several times. For the introduction of the story of Pra Suthon and Manora, see Henry D. Ginsburg, "The Manora Dance-Drama: An introduction < https://thesiamsociety.org/wpcontent/uploads/1972/03/ISS 060 2h Ginsburg ManoraDanceDrama.pdf>

<sup>320</sup> The original melody of "Tari Kipas" was transcribed from Khadae Waedeng's performance, which was released by the Ongkhaphayop at <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k]88gk-GNKY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k]88gk-GNKY</a> (January 23, 2011). Please note that the key signature in Figure 7.43 has been transposed from the original key signature in G major scale.

Besides adapting the remaining "Tari Kipas" melody to construct the melodic lines of "Singora," I composed an original melody that functions as an answer passage to the "Tari Kipas" melody. These melodic lines consist of the combination of an Eb minor pentatonic scale—based on the character of the Thai melody—and a C Phrygian dominant scale (m.74). This produces a sound akin to another significant influence of *rong ngeng* music—Arabic music—and appears in the third trumpet part (Figure 7.44).



Figure 7.44: The melody from "Singora" in the third trumpet part (mm.69-76).

To combine the sound of *nora* music with *rong ngeng* performances, I applied the short melodic line of the "Sot Soi" pattern (transcribed in Chapter 5), and then made adaptions to the vocal, lead alto (soprano saxophone) and trumpet parts, allowing this melody to function as the thematic melody of the D section (Figure 7.45). I also avoided an overly repetitive sound of this memorable pattern through key changes and rhythmic adjustments. For example, I shifted the melody from the Eb major scale to the C Locrian by adding the pitch Db (m.118), which is performed by the vocalist. This technique also provides the sound of the flat 2, which is another integration of the characteristic sound *rong ngeng* music to *nora* performance (Figure 7.46).



Figure 7.45: The "Sot Soi" pattern in mm.79-84 of "Singora."



Figure 7.46: The "Sot Soi" pattern composed for the vocal part of "Singora" (mm.112-118).

The first climax of the piece, in the E section, also utilizes extended harmonies to produce a contemporary jazz sound. These harmonies include the use of upper structure triad—principally, the B/A chords (m.118), from which I omit the note of E in the bottom chord to highlight the sound of \$\pm\$11 (in the key of A) produced by third of the B major triad (D\$). The progressions of B/A, E<sup>b6/9</sup>, and C<sup>6/9</sup> also provide unconventional chord movements which can decrease the sense of predictability that is often present in other transitional sections in jazz orchestra writings. Eventually, I also include the short thematic melody of "Sot Soi" in mm.119- 120 to conclude the story of this part of the composition before entering the first

climax section. This occurs with a  $C^{6/9}$  chord, to which I applied quintal voicings in the trombone section (m.121) in order to produce a brighter sound and project a modern voicing.



Figure 7.47: The first climax of "Singora" (mm.118-123).

Rather than moving to the solo section after the first climax section, I constructed a short thematic melody part to avoid the sense of predictability of conventional jazz orchestra compositions, where a solo typically follows an initial climax. I composed the first melody (17 measures) in the guitar and soprano saxophone based on the Bb major pentatonic scale, another reference to the penta-centric elements of Thai music (Figure 7.48).



Figure 7.48: The melody in the E section of "Singora." Excerpt from the guitar part in mm.130-147.

To further express the distinct sound of southern Thai music as integrated with my original melody, I composed the vibraphone part, which references the sound of the *mong* and consists of two sets of continually alternating pitches similar to the previous compositional techniques discussed earlier. The first pattern of pitches consists of the sounds of C and G which emphasize the tension of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> (harmonically speaking) over the Bb major pentatonic scale used in the main melodic line. The second pattern includes the pitches of C and F, which produce tension as the 9<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of Bb major (again, harmonically speaking). Because of the similarity between the vibraphone and *mong* as idiophones (and metallophones), the construction of these patterns also reproduces strong elements of *nora* performances (Figure 7.49).



Figure 7.49: The imitation of *mong* performance in the vibraphone part of "Singora" in mm.131-147.

For the second melody of the E section, I recapitulate the "Tari Kipas" melody in the vocal and soprano parts whose rhythmic structures contrast those that appear earlier (in the C section). I also modulate the key for the second repetition, with this melody moving to G major (m.161). In addition, the second tenor (soprano saxophone) plays an ad-lib improvisation to produce contrapuntal lines over the melody part and provide a structural transformation before entering the improvisational section (Figure 7.50).



Figure 7.50: The recapitulation of the "Tari Kipas" melody in the E section of "Singora" in the vocal part (mm.151-165).

Similar to the compositional process of the introduction section of "Mekong" which was inspired by Sombat Simlah's performance, I also employ the melodic lines of "Patcha," which were transcribed from Umnad Nuniad's performance in Chapter 5 (mm.79-88), to serve as the thematic melody at the beginning of the second climax. These melodic lines were transposed down a major sixth from the original key before being applied to the lead trumpet in mm.185-188 (Figure 7.51).

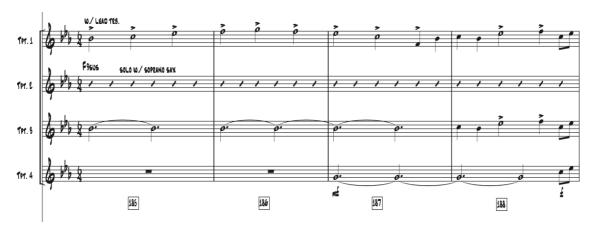


Figure 7.51: The adaption of the melodic lines of "Patcha" (mm. 185-187) obtained from Umnad Nuniad's performance.

For the second climax of the piece in mm.189-198, I use various compositional techniques to create harmonic and rhythmic density and encourage the musical expression of the two soloists (the soprano saxophone and the trumpet players). These compositional techniques include semi-tutti passages performed by the brass section to produce percussive attacks, and a rhythmic ostinato produced by the guitar, second alto, and to some extent bass parts to echo the rhythmic complexity that has been integrated into the improvisation. Additionally, the polyrhythm created by the lead trumpet part creates a contradiction to the semi-tutti passages and rhythmic patterns of the soloists.

The harmonic progressions in the climax sections are characterized by the non-harmonic functions of the extended chords G7<sup>sus4</sup>, A<sup>-11</sup>, Bb<sup>-11</sup>and Db<sup>9sus</sup>, and in particular, the harmonic motion from Bb<sup>-11</sup> to Db<sup>9sus</sup>. These progressions generate unexpected chord movements to supply excitement to the listeners. Doubled bass lines are also evident in the baritone saxophone, bass trombone, and bass parts until the end of the solo section (m.200), creating

contrapuntal motions toward the improvisation and providing a resolution to the climax section before moving to the next section (Figure 7.52).



Figure 7.52a: Compositional techniques used in the second climax section of "Singora" (mm.189-193).



Figure 7.52b: The second climax section of "Singora," continued.

The rhythmic patterns and harmonic progressions used in the G section (the second monologue) draw on the practice of contemporary jazz fusion that integrates musical elements from neo-soul, R&B, and gospel music. For example, I based the drum patterns in the piece on those frequently employed in contemporary R&B, adapting them to this composition (Figure 7.53).

Figure 7.53: Example of drums patterns in the G section of "Singora."

In this section, the second monologue (mm.215 - 244) concludes of the story of Pra Suthon and Manora. This monologue is also narrated by the female vocalist and is supported by the rhythm and harmony of contemporary jazz fusion. An English translation of the second monologue is provided below:

"I insistently forbid him to follow me because the journey to the realm of Kinnari, a world of half-bird and half-human, is extremely perilous. The route to my world is certainly not for humans, but for non-humans only," says Manora. However, despite the warning, Pra Suthon still relentlessly chases her and wishes to bring his lover back. Along the way, Pra Suthon encounters several poisonous forests and a flooded river where a colossal python lies as an obstacle. Then he must sneak into the nest of the gigantic birds in the mythical world, where he must be patient and wait until all ferocious creatures fly away so that he can slowly climb up to the top of Mouth Kailash where he will eventually be reunited with his love. The journey of Pra Suthon and Manora took seven years, seven months, and seven days, providing us with a great story of persistence and showing us the power of love to overcome difference—in this case, between human and non-human.

In terms of the harmonic design of this section, I made significant use of extended harmonies containing ma9 and m9 chords, which can be frequently heard in neo-soul and contemporary gospel music. In addition, the chord progressions used to accompany this second monologue were influenced by the chord progressions of contemporary jazz fusion. These chords—namely Ab<sup>ma9</sup> (bIII<sup>ma7</sup>), Gb<sup>6/9</sup> (bII<sup>ma7</sup>), F<sup>-9</sup> (i-<sup>7</sup>), Eb<sup>ma9</sup> (bVII<sup>ma9</sup>), and C<sup>-9</sup> (v<sup>9</sup>), all of which relate to the key of F major—can be frequently observed in the chord progressions of contemporary jazz music. The entire chord progressions constructed to accompany the second monologue (34 measures) are demonstrated in the guitar parts (Figure 7.54).

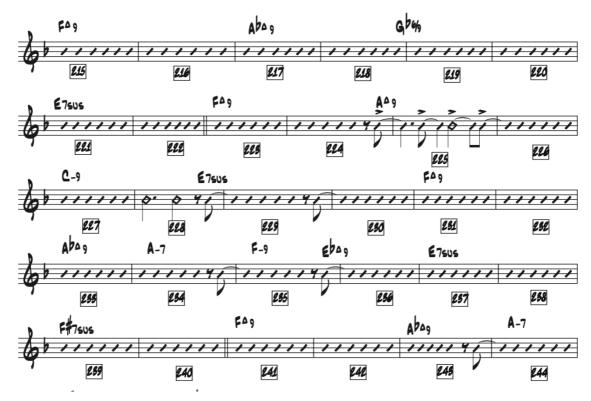


Figure 7.54: The harmonic design of the second monologue of "Singora" (mm.215-244).

Other compositional techniques applied in the G section also include the construction of a thematic melody and the deployment of an ad-lib solo, which both interact and communicate with the monologue. For the thematic melody used in this section, I sought to compose melodic lines containing a memorable melody in the lead trumpet. The intensity of this thematic melody increases in the second trumpet, soprano saxophone, baritone saxophone, and bass parts in order to stimulate the audience's emotional response. Before reaching the conclusion of the second monologue, the guitar player and the first alto (on soprano saxophone) perform an ad-lib improvisation, integrate their musical expression with the story from ancient Thai literature (Figure 7.55).



Figure 7.55: Compositional techniques applied in the G section of "Singora" (mm.241-246).

Inspired by polyrhythmic practices, the structure of the final part of "Singora" is based on four separate rhythmic patterns. These four distinct rhythms occur in different sections of the ensemble. The first occurs in the woodwind section, which performs a fast-moving passage

and provides rapid melodic movements to gain the attention of the audience. The second is in the trumpets, which deliver a syncopated percussive accompaniment and create a rhythmic intensity in the section. The third occurs in the rhythm section, which performs in eighth-note patterns to produce contrapuntal motion against the woodwind section. Last, the trombone section introduces a pattern of four pulses of equal duration within each six-beat measure to contribute a sophisticated polyrhythm when performing together with the other sections (Figure 7.56).



Figure 7.56: The final section of "Singora" (mm.260-263).

I recapitulate the thematic melody of the "Sot Soi" pattern (mm.264 -266) performed by the female vocalist to summarize the story of *nora* performances towards the end of the

composition. Another musical element acquired from *nora* music concerns the imitation of the *mong* sound, which can be heard, one last time, in the vibraphone part, on F and C (mm.264 - 266) (Figure 7.57).



Figure 7.57: A selection from the ending section of "Singora."

#### 7.5 COMPOSITIONS INSPIRED BY DONTRI PAKNUEA

#### "WIANG HAENG" ("THE NORTHERN RHAPSODY")

My intention in composing "Wiang Haeng" ("The Northern Rhapsody"), a work in the style of a jazz ballad, is to create a contemporary composition for a jazz orchestra that musically expresses the sound of northern traditional music of Thailand. This composition also attempts to aesthetically depict the mountain ranges and valleys of the northern parts of Thailand. To create such sounds and provide such depictions, I adapt northern Thai *khap saw* and *sweng* performance techniques for instruments of the jazz orchestra such as those of the woodwind section and the guitar. In addition, I reharmonized two prominent northern traditional compositions called "Long Mae Ping," "Selemao," and "Fon Ngiew (Maurilla)," 321 all of which were transcribed specifically for this composition and can be heard in multiple sections.

The fundamental melodies of this composition include an original thematic melody I composed, and musical adaptions of two northern traditional melodies, "Selemao" and "Long Mae Ping." The original melody first appears in the flute parts, and constitutes six measures of melodic patterns based on the F major pentatonic scale. This melody depicts the sound of calm and gentleness of northern Thai music. It is later developed and expanded to four different variations.

The harmonic design of "The Northern Rhapsody" is based primarily on non-functional chord-to-chord successions. My intention with this compositional approach was to reflect the sound of northern traditional melodies through complicated jazz harmonies as much as possible. In addition, the use of extended chords such as maj13, sus13, and mi11, as well as polychords, are meant to emphasize sounds of tension while creating harmonies for the prominent Thai melodies throughout the composition.

The rhythmic style of the composition mimics the performance of jazz ballads and slow backbeat drum patterns, where time signatures such as 5/4, 7/4, and 11/8 are employed to

Groups in the Mekong River Basin," Journal of Mekong Societies 9 Vol. 2 (2013), 82-83.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>321</sup> "Fon Ngiew" is a Thai classical composition that is performed in the center of Thailand to accompany traditional Thai northern dance. The original melody for this song was derived from "Selemao," a traditional northern Thai composition composed by Lamul Yamagupt, a Thai choreographer who had the opportunity to teach Siamese Court dance to Princess consort Dara Rasami's troupes in Chiang Mai during King Rama V's reign (Chulalongkorn). Jarun Kanchanapradit, "Tracking Fon-Ngeue Songs: Musical Relationships among Ethnic

contribute sophisticated rhythmic concepts to northern Thai melodies and in contrast to the 3/4 or 4/4 time signatures typical in ballads. Odd-numbered note groupings and rhythmic displacements generate contrasting ideas to the rhythmic patterns of slow swing ride-cymbal patterns, and appear in the various places of the guitar, organ, bass clarinet, and bass parts.

Unlike in the other compositions, the improvisation of "The Northern Rhapsody" is primarily performed by the drummer, which is rare in jazz ballad compositions. The flugelhorn and soprano saxophone also improvise in multiple parts of this composition. The total duration of this composition is six minutes and fifty-two seconds.

#### A section (first introduction)

0.00-0.29
First introduction (rubato)
Guitar plays the retrograde
patterns of "Long Mae
Ping."
mm.1-9
9 measures

#### B section (second introduction)

0.30-0.55	0.56-1.13
Second introduction	Transition to C
Woodwinds imitates khap	Brass section provides
saw performance (Pi jum	chordal harmonies for
ensemble) and guitar	transition.
mimics sueng performance.	

	Two clarinets and organ
	construct odd note
	groupings.
mm.10-15	mm.17-22
6 measures	6 measures

## C section (first thematic melody)

1.15-1.40	1.38-1.53	1.55-2.11
First variation thematic	Second variation of thematic	Third variation of thematic
melody	melody (key modulation)	melody (rhythmic
		adjustment)
First thematic melody	First trumpet and soprano	Two flutes and female vocal
performed by flute and	saxophone plays second	plays third thematic
clarinet.	thematic variation.	variation.
		Trombone section provides
		background harmonies.
mm.23-28	mm.29-33	mm.34-37
7 measures	5 measures	4 measures

# 2.12- 2.32 Recapitulation of first thematic melody (key changes and rhythmic adjustment) First trumpets, female vocal, first trombone plays the recapitulation of thematic melody.

Flugelhorns and trombone section construct background harmonies.

mm.38-46

9 measures

#### D section (second melody)

#### 2.33 - 3.07

Second thematic melody

Two alto saxophones play the adaption of "Fon Ngiew"s melody.

Bass clarinet and upright bass provided prominent
Contrapuntal lines to melody parts.

Tenor ab.lib solo. Electronic drum pad is employed.

mm.47-56

10 measures

#### E section (third melody)

3.09 -3.34	3.36-4.03
First variation of third melody in metric modulation	Second variation of third melody (key modulation)
Female vocal sings first variation of third melody	Vocal. plays second variation of third melody.

based on the combination of	soprano saxophone.
original melody and adaption	provided contrapuntal
of "Selemao."	motion.
mm.57-64	mm.65-72
8 measures	8 measures

## F section (first solo section)

4.05-4.44	4.46-4.54
First solo section	Second solo section
	(percussive accompaniments)
	,
Recapitulation of third	Drums solo over percussive
thematic melody played by	accompaniments from brass
lead trumpet, alto	and woodwind sections. Bass
saxophone, soprano	and baritone saxophone
saxophone, and lead	provided contrapuntal
trombone.	basslines. Organ and guitar
Semi-tutti passage primarily	construct odd note
provided by brass section.	groupings.
Drum and Flugelhorn solo	
over the melody parts and	
tutti sections.	
mm.73-80	mm.80-84
8 measures	4 measures

# G section (second solo section)

4.46-5.33
Second solo section
(irregular meters)

Drums and soprano saxophone solo over the irregular meter. The woodwind and brass section provided tutti passages to provide a strong dynamic for reaching the climax.

mm.84-97

14 measures

#### H section (third solo section)

#### 5.35-5.59

Third short solo section in 11/8 (blues)

Soprano saxophone player and pianist provided improvisational performance.

Bass and baritone saxophone construct ostinato.

mm.98-102

5 measures

#### I section (outro)

6.00- 6.54

Outro (Cadenza)

Soprano saxophone keeps improvising over the five four chords. The composition ends in Amaj13#11.

6 measures

#### **COMPOSITIONAL DISCUSSIONS**

The first melody section of "Northern Rhapsody" was constructed by using a retrograde technique to the original melody of "Long Mae Ping," which is one of the prominent compositions of the northern Thai repertoire that I heard frequently as a child (mm.1-3, as shown in Figures 7.58 and 7.59). To compose the melodic lines for this section, the pitch C\$ at the beginning and pitch E at the end in rectangle no. 2 were retrograded to the melodic pattern in m.2 of the introductory section as shown in Figure 7.59. The order of the pitch set from A at the beginning and the pitch of E at the end (of mm. 1-3, Figure 7.58) were also put in a backward position to m.3 in the introductory section (Figure 7.59). Moreover, I harmonized the remaining melody of "Long Mae Ping" in order to create higher extensions, such as an \$11th in m.5 and a 13th in m.6 performed by the guitar player.



Figure 7.58: The melody of "Long Mae Ping." Transcription by the author.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>322</sup> Long Mae Ping's original melody was transcribed from the performance of *salo saw sueng* ensemble performed by Hassanai Panna, Chaiwat Sammano, and Thanachai Sukatta.

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="http://lannainfo.library.cmu.ac.th/onlinemusic\_show.php?musicid=306">http://lannainfo.library.cmu.ac.th/onlinemusic\_show.php?musicid=306</a>> uploaded by the Northern Thai Information Center, Chiang Mai University.



Figure 7.59: The introductory section of "Northern Rhapsody" Excerpt from the guitar part in mm.1-8.

For the B section, I imitated the *khap saw* style as it is played by *pi jum* ensembles described in Chapter 6. To imitate this sound, I employed two flutes and two clarinets which similarly functioned as *wong pi jum si* (four instruments). The construction of *pi jum* melodic lines is also based on intervallic features in disjunct motion which typically extend over ascending and descending second intervals as also revealed in the transcription in Chapter 6. By adopting such characteristics, I constructed several motives from several intervals stretched beyond the second interval as played by the two flutes and two clarinets in skip-wise motion.

Another technique I applied in the section is use of perpetual rhythms to imitate the rhythmic characteristics of *khap saw* performances. As explained in Chapter 6, the rhythmic movements of *khap saw* performances are performed as perpetual rhythms without stopping, a *pi jum* performance method called *hom lom* (involving circular breathing). To imitate this technique, I constructed the multiple motive lines which are intertwined with each other and performed in the woodwind sections (mm.11 – mm.16) by using the eighth sixteenth, and eighth note triplet without any interruptions of the continuous sound of the section (Figure 7.60).



Figure 7.60: The adapting of *khap saw* performance in the woodwind section in "The Northern Rhapsody" (mm.11-16).

In another adaptation of the idiomatic sounds of instruments of the northern Thai music ensemble, I composed a guitar part that imitated the performance of the *sueng* (a plucked lute instrument) another typical sound of northern Thai music. I applied typical *sueng* eighth-note patterns and its tremolo technique to the guitar parts from mm.10-14 in the B section (Figure 7.61).



Figure 7.61: The imitation of *sueng* performance in the guitar part of "The Northern Rhapsody" (mm.10-14).

I later composed the thematic melody for the vocal part of "The Northern Rhapsody," which is based on the F major pentatonic scale. My intent was to capture the sound of northern Thai music, which tends to be more calm and gentle when compared with the music of other regions of Thailand. To express such musical emotion, I attempted to avoid the extended leaps in the melody and instead used stepwise movements, as opposed to the previous section to produce a fluid melodic line (Figure 7.62).



Figure 7.62: The first melody in "The Northern Rhapsody" (mm.22-28).

I develop this thematic melody to generate three distinct melodic variations. In the second melodic variation, I partly transposed the fundamental melodic line up a perfect 5<sup>th</sup> and replaced both Eb and Ab to avoid the repetition of pentatonic sounds. In addition, I slightly adjusted the rhythm of the main melody by using rhythmic anticipations (Figure 7.63).



Figure 7.63: The second variation of the melody in "The Northern Rhapsody" (mm.29-34).

The construction of melodic lines in the third variation is a combination of the previous thematic melody with the new melodies (in the red rectangles in Figure 7.64) that I specifically composed for this section. The use of modulations up a minor 2<sup>nd</sup> from C to Db and up a major 2<sup>nd</sup> from Db to Eb in the lead alto in m.37 also provided the harmonic movements before entering the fourth thematic variation. Additionally, I added contrapuntal lines in the bass clarinet in measures 34-36 (Figure 7.64).



Figure 7.64: The third variation of the melody of "The Northern Rhapsody," (mm.33-37) with new melodic material in red boxes.

For the fourth thematic variation (the recapitulation section), the original melody modulates from F major pentatonic to Db major. This melodic pattern is performed by various instruments: lead trumpet, lead trombone, and first tenor (soprano saxophone). This provides a strong conclusion to all the melody parts of the C section. Furthermore, I composed background parts in the brass section by using close voicings, as well as musical ornamentation such as trills in the woodwind section to mimic the idiomatic performances of *pi jum* instruments and contribute more dynamic and musical intensity to this recapitulation section (Figure 7.65).



Figure 7.65: The recapitulation section of the C section of "The Northern Rhapsody" (mm.38-43).

The harmonic progressions in the C section are non-functional (Figure 7.66). My intention here is to produce intriguing harmonies and an emotional atmosphere for audiences as can be experienced, in particular, in listening to jazz ballads. To generate these musical effects, I constructed harmonies based on the accented notes of the melodic lines of C section to produce the sound of tensions produced by the 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 13<sup>th</sup> of particular chords. For example, the accented notes of measure 23 are on the pitch G, the \$11 of Db<sup>ma13</sup>, and the accented notes of measure 24 are on the pitch D which is the 9 of the C<sup>6/9</sup> chord. By implementing this compositional technique, I highlight the harmonic tensions of each chord and evoke the sound of contemporary jazz voicings.



Figure 7.66: The harmony of the C section of "The Northern Rhapsody" (mm.23-38).

The melodic lines of the D section were generated by two approaches. The first is the melodic adaption of the chorus section of "Fon Ngiew," Thai classical music composition that adapted one of Northern Thai music's most well-known pieces, "Selemao" (Figure 7.67). The melodic lines are played by two altos in m.48 and m.49, where I intend to conceal the melody of "Fon Ngiew" under other musical components. I also composed an original melody to interact with the adaptation of Fon Ngiew, performed by soprano saxophone and trumpet with harmon mute (mm.45- 50). I then employed changing meters from 3/4 to 5/4, to 4/4, and back to 3/4 to avoid the repetition of rhythmic ideas which often can occur in jazz ballads. I designed the ad-lib improvisation of the second tenor to provide spontaneous interaction with

 $<sup>^{323}</sup>$  "Fon Ngiew," s melody was transcribed from the performance of the Fine Arts Department, Thailand (4.15-5.10) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TA4qdz00RBc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TA4qdz00RBc</a> uploaded by Korathome (28 May 2018).

these two thematic melodies. In addition, I also employed a soft fluttertongue played by two alto saxophones to imitate the tremolo technique heard in *sweng* performance (Figure 7.68).



Figure 7.67: The melody of the chorus section of "Fon Ngiew." Transcription by the author.



Figure 7.68: The melodic lines in the D section of "The Northern Rhapsody" in mm.45-50.

Another noticeable technique applied in this section is the application of multiple types of subdivision in the organ and guitar to contribute the rhythmic density and to create rhythmic contradiction against the main melodic patterns and bass lines. As shown in figure 7.69, both the organ and guitar players produced complex rhythm patterns in triplet and sixteenth-note settings.



Figure 7.69: An example of the rhythmic density in the D section of "The Northern Rhapsody" (mm.47-51).

The thematic melody of "Selemao"<sup>324</sup> (Figure 7.70), also functions as compositional material and is prominently heard in the scat singing of the vocalist in the E section. My intention in composing this section is to arrange this northern Thai melody in changing time signatures, and to add rhythmic complexity techniques to the original melody. I applied the various meter changes between 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4, which provide a sense of unpredictability. In addition, I also applied melodic diminution and augmentation to create melodic patterns that are distinct from the original version. Similar to other sections, I also used interval transposition to generate a key modulation (Figure 7.71).



Figure 7.70: The melody of "Selemao." Transcription by the author.

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<sup>324 &</sup>quot;Selemao"'s thematic melody was transcribed from Panupat Apichanatong's performance.

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZtlRNRIFHRs">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZtlRNRIFHRs</a>, which was published by Jora Su (15 April 2015).

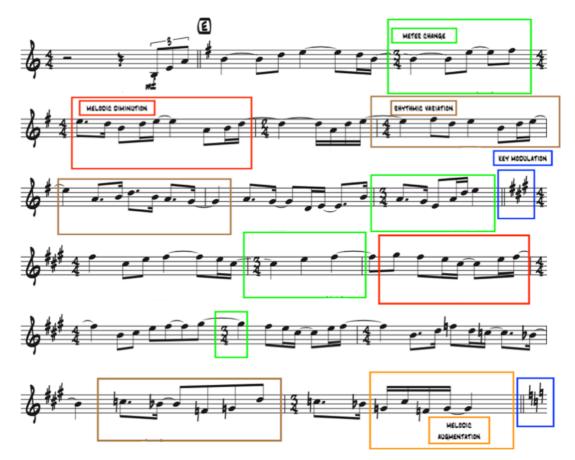


Figure 7.71: My arrangement of the melody of "Selemao" in mm.56-72. Compositional techniques are noted in the colored boxes.

As has been mentioned, this composition's harmonic approach is based on providing coloristic harmonies to emphasize the sound of the tension of the melodic lines. To generate these musical effects, I applied several extended chords such as maj7#11, maj13#11 min9, min11, and 13<sup>sus</sup> chords to appropriate melodies in various parts of the E section. This conceptual approach can generate contemporary jazz harmonies out of a northern Thai melody, and invigorate the sound of Thai music by integrating elements of modern jazz (Figure 7.72).



Figure 7.72: E section of "the Northern Rhapsody," (mm.57-72) performed by a synth pad. Pitches of the melody are those that are used to generate the harmonies, and function as tension-producing pitches in those harmonies.

The F section is the first improvisation section, which develops towards the piece's climax. In this section, I employ several compositional techniques to stimulate audiences' emotions. I composed melodic lines for the lead trumpet, second tenor (soprano saxophone), second alto, and the lead trombone, which constitute the recapitulation of the main melodic lines of "Selemao" (mm.73-76). This recapitulation is also reinforced by accompanying semi-tutti passages performed by alto, tenor saxophones, three trumpets, first and second trombones, and rhythmic section to create and contribute more dynamic to this particular section. The

improvisation of drums also appears in the F section, generating a dynamic performance that interacts with the melodic recapitulation and the tutti passage (Figure 7.73).



Figure 7.73: The first improvisation section of "The Northern Rhapsody" (mm.73-76).

The second improvisation section at G includes the improvisation of drums and lead alto (soprano saxophone). Here, I use meter changes in various places. These unpredictable meter changes can be heard as longer measures reducing their duration by one beat at a time: 7/4

(3/4+4/4), 6/4 (3/4+3/4), 5/4 (2/4 + 3/4) as explicitly demonstrated from mm. 85 to mm. 90 (Figure 7.74). I constructed distinctive bass lines and percussive accompaniments performed by various instruments to integrate with meter changes and to provide complicated rhythmic ideas in this section. Importantly, the recapitulation of the melody of "Selemao" can also be heard from the vocal and bass trombone (mm. 84-89), as I attempt to encapsulate the story of this composition before reaching its climax a few measures later.



Figure 7.74: The second improvisation section of "The Northern Rhapsody" (mm.84-89).

The final section of improvisation in "The Northern Rhapsody" is the H section. My primary intention here is to create a release and unwind the audiences' emotions after prolonged listening to complex harmonic chord progressions, and to changing, irregular meters. To provide such an even-tempered atmosphere decreased the musical intensity, I constructed a simple chord progression moving between A<sup>7sus4</sup> and G<sup>7sus4</sup> and back again, with improvisation by the pianist and lead alto (soprano saxophone) in an 11/8 blues shuffle feel. Later on, the guitar again imitates *sueng* performance, playing melodies in G major pentatonic and F major pentatonic along with a tremolo technique. The ostinato in the bass also strengthens the rhythmic stability of this section (Figure 7.75).



Figure 7.75: The final section of "The Northern Rhapsody" (mm.98-102).

#### **7.6 CONCLUSION**

In the compositional process of this chapter, emphasizing the "assimilation to innovation" concept of Walter Bishop Jr. (quoted by Berliner), I show how I employed several Thai music traditional elements, such as its fundamental melody, idiomatic instruments, musical texture, and rhythms, to use as the core musical elements of my original composition. Rather than applying such musical components directly and noticeably to my composition as I had done in earlier projects, I blended them with my own interpretation to create complex layers where Thai musical influences are intertwined with my original compositional material. This produces hybridity that integrates the musical elements of jazz and Thai music, highlighting principles of musical innovation. Examples of my compositional processes include:

- 1) transforming Thai melodies to intermingle with contemporary jazz musical elements;
- 2) incorporating Thai melodies and combining them with my own melodies to create thematic melodies;
- 3) employing melodic lines from Thai musical traditions in one layer to interact with my original melodic lines in a second layer, which simulate Thai musical textures;
- 4) adapting Thai idiomatic instruments to jazz orchestra instruments;
- 5) modifying Thai rhythmic patterns to be used in the rhythm section such as in the bass and percussion parts;
- 6) applying Thai compositional techniques to jazz orchestra composition; and
- 7) converting Thai literature into monologues to be read, to interact with jazz styles.

In addition, I also used synthesizer, pedal effects, electric bass, and drum machines to express traditional Thai musical elements through contemporary timbres, which had a significant impact on my compositional perspective and process.

In evaluating the compositional experiences of working in four different regions of Thai music traditions, I found that *isan nuea* musical elements appear to be more flexible when applying its traditional melodies. These elements operate well with contemporary jazz harmonies, as can *isan nuea* instrument techniques, which can be effectively adapted by western instruments, such as alto saxophone or electric guitar. *Rong ngeng* rhythmic patterns performed by bass, as well as the *khuen hua pi* technique of *nora* as applied to soprano saxophone, appear to incorporate well

with Afro-Cuban beats and drum patterns with backbeats. The adaptation of polyphonic stratification derived from Thai classical music textures resulted in an interesting resource for jazz composing methods. This approach introduced multiple independent lines into the jazz orchestra music texture, resulting sounds quite distinct from the styles of section writing used in conventional jazz orchestra compositions. The use of *khap saw* performance from northern Thai music performances can be used in the woodwind section, particularly for the flute and clarinet, to establish a texture almost like a fugue. In addition to the musical elements mentioned above, I found that the use of Thai literature, such as the interpretation of Thai poetry in "Patchim" ("Epilogue"), and the use of Pra Suthon and Manora's monologues in "Singora" ("Dance of Kinnari"), contribute yet another interesting method of presenting the Thai aspects into jazz orchestra performances.

When it came to obstacles I had to overcome while working on this project, I sometimes found it difficult to produce references to Thai idiomatic instruments such as the *ti kep*, which is played by *ranad ek*, in woodwinds, brass, or vocals. To avoid such issues, I had to locate appropriate instruments to play such specialized approaches, for example, a vibraphone, guitar, or synthesizer, or I had to break such techniques down into small motifs so that a woodwind instrument could execute them. Second, to avoid the pentatonic scale's repetitive sound, which is the core structure of many Thai music traditions, I used key modulation or slightly adjusted interval patterns or applied metric modulations, which may provide a productive distraction from the penta-centric concept. As a result, I discovered that such compositional strategies work effectively, particularly in the piece "Mekong," which I believe is an exemplary case of avoiding the recurrence of pentatonic scales while also increasing the complexity of Thai melodies through a variety of jazz composition approaches.

The most essential point, however, is how the balance between Thai musical traditions and jazz is achieved. While working on sketch scores, I carefully considered the degree to which Thai and jazz musical elements should each be included in the original compositions, and my final goal was to convey those musical elements equally. This process can be seen in multiple parts of the original compositions, with one example being the presence of Thai musical influences in the background as interplay with soloists in improvisation sections, where my objective is to keep the Thai musical elements intact even when a soloist is improvising. However, as mentioned previously in the introduction to this chapter, I situate these works as examples of musical hybridization, which is defined as the blending of more than two distinct

cultures to create a new one that sounds different from its parts. Therefore, rather than aiming for levels of Thainess (*Kwarm pen Thai*) or of jazz styles from conventional perspectives, I would like to encourage listeners to evaluate and consider these works in terms of musical creativities and innovations.

# Chapter 8

# Conclusion

The fundamental of music is that it has been in harmony with different societies since the beginning. But in some periods, we develop ourselves into artists' egos, and the musician becomes a separatist. We also overlook the fact that music is as diverse as ethnicity, language, people. Anthropology teaches us to embrace differences in music, just as it teaches us to appreciate musical diversity. 325

Anant Narkkong

#### 8.1 ARTISTIC EXPERIENCES

This research project came about as a result of my extensive learning of Thai traditional music, which included three distinct stages: transcribing (which I often refer to as learning by ear), reviewing previous literature, and creating my own original works, all of which came to permeate both my written thesis and my compositions. In total, I created nine prototype compositions, one double bass crossover improvisation, and seven jazz orchestra pieces totaling 67 minutes. My thesis encompasses comprehensive analysis, and four chapters of comprehensive discussions of Thai music elements including twenty-four transcriptions, all of which demonstrate my methods and experiences in attempting to comprehend Thai music traditions from my perspective and background as a jazz performer and composer. It is my

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>325</sup> Natchanan Klahan, "Anant Narkkong: Learning Ethnomusicology Through customs, Traditions, and Discussing Music from "*Prathet Kru Mee*" in Classroom" *The Potential Org*, <a href="https://thepotential.org/creative-learning/arnun-nakkong-interview/">https://thepotential.org/creative-learning/arnun-nakkong-interview/</a> (14 November 2019).

hope that this study, now complete, will be beneficial to many composers and scholars, including composers from any background who are interested in Thai music traditions.

My research questions led me to musical experiences of attempting to combine aspects of jazz and Thai music. Although these two genres are entirely distinct due to their geographical origins, several Thai musical structures are comprehensible to practitioners of jazz (related to my first research question). Some examples include:

- 1) the comparison of Thai classical music to jazz musical forms;
- 2) the idiomatic improvisation of Thai classical musician based on *luk tok* similar to jazz performers who learn to improvise by using target pitches;
- 3) the correlation between Thai classical compositional techniques and the compositional method of jazz (e.g., *luk yon* [pedal point] or *thang plien* [melodic variation]);
- 4) the concept of *thang khreuang dontri*, which refers to a style of instrumental music used in Thai classical performance to create Thai music texture—employed in jazz orchestra writing it can produce independent melodic lines;
- 5) the performance of *thang dio*, which uses instrumental techniques similar to Western music;
- 6) the performance methods of *khaen*, and *pi jum*, which are primarily based on the construction of intervallic patterns similar to an approach to jazz improvisation;
- 7) the accompaniment of *khaen* and *phin* which produce equivalents to suspended chords in jazz harmony;
- 8) the use of Dorian mode in salo-pin compositions; and
- 9) the similarities between the rhythmic accents of *isan nuea* music, *sueng*, and *khap saw* performances and the swing feel, all of which emphasize the upbeat.

These musical experiences have revealed to me that even when working with music from two or more distinct musical traditions, there are always some common aspects that may be effectively modified.

As I indicated previously that my philosophical idea is based on a pragmatic approach, I believe that transcribing Thai music elements into Western notation has also provided me with a practical approach to modifying Thai music elements for use in jazz compositions (related to

my second research question). This method provided me with insight into how musicians of Thai traditions perform their music. While transcribing, I was able to absorb the character of the various types of Thai music, allowing me to establish the concept of "the Thai sound" in my consciousness, which was similar to my initial step in learning to improvise on jazz. The successful output produced by the transcription process is explicitly illustrated in my analysis in chapters on Thai traditions, my prototype compositions, and my jazz orchestra work. Examples include:

- 1) the use of a jazz analysis approach to stimulate melodies modeled (equivalent to jazz licks) from Thai classical music and northern Thai salo (saw) pin transcriptions;
- 2) the imitation of *khaen*, *phin*, and *sueng* played by alto saxophone and guitar, which I adapted from transcriptions of *isan nuea* music;
- 3) the compositional methods that I employed in the soprano saxophone derived from the transcription of *khuen hua pi* techniques in Chapter 5;
- 4) the transcriptions of Thai classical music rhythms (*nathap*) and *rong ngeng* rhythmic patterns, which were used in the bass parts in the original works; and
- 5) numerous Thai melodies that were obtained through the transcription processes and afterward used in original pieces.

The transcribing processes, in contrast from learning from literature alone, granted me with individual compositional aspects, which I then applied to my compositional processes throughout this research.

In the artistic experience of working to balance the musical elements of Thai music and jazz in my compositional process (my third research question), I also encountered a significant challenge in maintaining both two musical aspects equally. My intent was, and is, to create musical works that could be attractive to both jazz and Thai audiences. Several questions come to mind while I worked on this project, such as: Why does this section sound "too" jazz, or why does this section appear to be "too" Thai? And are these works interesting from the viewpoint of jazz composition? Will Thai composers and traditional musicians be interested in these works? In one straightforward example, I encountered a challenge when working on the rhythm of Thai melodies. It appeared to me that I could not use too many syncopated beats since it would diminish the impression of Thai melodic character, but if I did not supply any syncopated rhythms, the melodies would lack one of the significant features of jazz. As a result,

I have had to pay close attention to the amounts of Thai and jazz musical elements that I put into this project in order to produce musical hybridizations, which are still innovative and distinct from those created by other composers who have previously worked on cross-cultural Thai music projects, some of which are mentioned in Chapter 2.

The timbres of Thai instruments, which can play an important part in providing Thai musical characteristics, are something I found lacking in this project, in a somewhat unsatisfying way. Even though I attempted to employed western instruments from similar instrument families to reference or imitate the timbre of Thai instruments, such as a soprano saxophone for the *pi nora* (reed instrument) or a vibraphone for the *ranad ek* (xylophone), I found it was difficult for western instruments to accommodate the unique timbre of Thai instruments that constitute the actual sonic experience of Thai musical traditions, and could, theoretically, be used to balance the musical timbre between jazz and Thai features. In the future, I plan to compose for Thai instruments as an important part of my jazz orchestra music.

The difference in tuning systems between Thai instruments and Western instruments presented me with my greatest challenge to the concept of "learning by ear" while working on this research (related to my fourth research question). The tuning systems of Thai and Western instruments are categorically different, and it is common to find traditional Thai instruments to be "out of tune" in terms of Western music perception. Consequently, I would advise jazz composers to take proper care when choosing recordings for transcribing. Although Thai traditional instruments may employ different tuning systems, several have been adapted to Western tuning (sieng sakon) and played in fusion bands, as mentioned by my interviewee Somuek Saengarun and discussed in John Garzoli's dissertation. These instruments, such as pi nai, ranad ek, khlui, khaen, phin, pi nora, and sueng are frequently available in Western tunings that may be ideal for jazz composers to use for transcription, and for hybridization projects.

Another obstacle I encountered during this research was the difference between Thai and Western music in their notions of rhythm. Thai musicians, unlike Western musicians, do not perform at a steady tempo, which is indicated in music scores. As a result, the tempo of Thai music might be slow or fast depending on the performer's perception, in particular regional traditional Thai music, such as *isan nuea* or *lanna* music, which do not include a *ching* player in ensembles. Regarding the time signature I used in my transcription processes, I still believe that the use of 2/4 meter, first introduced by the Thai Fine Arts Department committee in 1929,

can help us to understand Thai rhythmic phrases more easily, as well as being more useful for sight reading. I also observed that using Thai *nathap* on drums does not seem to work well in a jazz orchestra setting, so I had to employ them in the bass parts instead. And, if I try to syncopate such beat patterns, the Thai rhythmic character will be lost. As a consequence, I will require further study, and more time, to concentrate solely on the rhythms of Thai classical music, which I will attempt in a future project. Interestingly, when transcribing regional music from the Northeast (*khaen* and *phin* performances) and the North (*khap saw* performances), I observed that these two rhythmic patterns are characterized by rhythmic accents on the upbeat, a feature shared with the swing feel. Having a rhythmic similarity can be beneficial when attempting to integrate Thai melodies from these two regions with jazz musical components.

#### **8.2 DEFINING AN ARTISTIC POSITION**

One of the most important developments I have made as a result of this research is in my artistic identity and position as composer engaged in musical hybridization. My artistic aim is to offer Thai musical qualities and express the essence of Thai music through a contemporary perspective, as indicated by the music I composed for this project. Unlike my previous projects, where I was concerned about my Thainess, and in which I intended my works to sound "Thai" to Thai musicians, this research project has allowed me to break free from such limiting attitudes and cultural boundaries. I also learned that the most appealing aspect of being a composer of musical hybridization is being honest with yourself and using your originality to interpret musical traditions. As a result, these seven jazz orchestra compositions reflect my feelings on Thai qualities that are not overtly influenced by traditional or progressive viewpoints on Thai music. These compositions demonstrate how I personally perceive Thai characteristics that I chose to express in my jazz-oriented compositional process.

I have found that the jazz and Thai music traditions, among others, have traditionalists and progressivists continually debating notions of authenticity and purity. However, after spending a significant amount of time studying these two musical cultures, I discovered that what appeals to me about them is their shared practice of multiculturalism, their shared openness to foreign cultures that allowed these two styles to blend effectively with other musical influences and, in my project, with one another. These two musical cultures seem to join ethnomusicologists in

remaining skeptical about "purity," agreeing that "no traditional music is ever static, since changes must appear during the transmission."326

Though I still believe that the term "tradition" can provide "authentic" experiences to audiences and these two words also should be granted to both jazz and Thai musicians who have committed their lives to these two kinds of music in the past, I would like to convince other traditionalists that without openness and a progressive outlook, these two styles of music would become rigid and lack diversity, in contradiction to their origins. Wayne Shorter, a legendary jazz musician who has experienced the growth of jazz over the years, supports this idea:

Jazz should not have any mandates. Jazz is not supposed to be something that you are required to sound like jazz. For me, the word jazz means, I dare you. And the effort to break out of something is worth more than you getting an A in syncopation.<sup>327</sup>

Asdavuth Sagarik, a prominent Thai classical musician, offers another perspective:

The question is, why do we need to preserve Thai music? It really doesn't need to be preserved. Everything has its own time. When the term "preservation" is mentioned, it is separated into two categories: conservative and progressive. In reality, everyone possesses both conservative and progressive qualities.328

Cultures have always changed and evolved. It is natural for one culture to interact with another to create something new. The original works composed for this research have illustrated what strategies can be used to produce creative works that incorporate the musical knowledge of two musical traditions with different origins. My musicianship and jazz expertise collided with my Thai identity to generate musical works that I refer to as "hybrid products." These musical hybridizations came about through the infusion, integration, and exchange of jazz compositional techniques and Thai music elements demonstrated in the creative component of this project.

< https://www.npr.org/transcripts/170882668> 2 February 2013. 328 Narkkong, Thai Contemporary Music Bands and Works in Present Thai society, 115.

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<sup>326</sup> Bo-Wah Leung, Traditional Musics in the Modern World: Transmission, Evolution, and Challenges (Springer International Publishing, 2018), 3-4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>327</sup> Wayne Shorter, "On Jazz: How Do You Rehearse the Unknown," NPR music.

#### **8.3 FUTURE WORK AND CONCLUSION**

One objective of my research was to add a Thai branch to Duke Ellington's jazz tree. In fact, though the globalization of jazz is explicitly described in the works of Stuart Nicholson and E. Taylor Atkins, to name but two, the jazz world seems to pay little attention to Thai musical traditions, just as it marginalizes many other musical traditions around the world. I am hopeful that the creative output of my project will be used as musical evidence of the merging of jazz and the traditional music of Thailand. I also hope that my research methodology can be applied to study other musical traditions to enhance the level of diversity in jazz cultures.

My future work will continue to explore other musical traditions, cultural diversity, and music in a global context. I believe we can learn from our differences and establish new intellectual cultures by combining our different perspectives, as underlined in Kwame Anthony Appiah's discussion of cosmopolitanism. I will start composing for Thai traditional instruments, an experience that I have lacked in this project, and then employ them to perform with my jazz orchestra, a group I aim to form as a professional ensemble in Thailand. Traditional instruments from outside Thailand which I am looking forward to working on my jazz orchestra project, including *koto, saung, erhu,* and *serunai,* which I will spend more time learning using the research approaches with which I have become familiar in this study.

Beyond conventional jazz composition approaches, there are a vast number of approaches available to jazz composers that can motivate and inspire. Some composers may turn to 21st-century classical composition techniques, such as acoustic and electronic compositional techniques, while others may seek to revisit and revise the musical achievements and brilliance of prominent jazz composers of the past. I decided to turn to the sound of traditional music, which I believe is a form of musical knowledge that has been cultivated through many generations. Among the many things that I gained from learning traditional music, the most fascinating element of being a jazz composer who studies traditional music is that I am able to combine musical knowledge from the past with my own compositional ideas rooted in jazz. At the same time, I can participate in preserving traditional voices, which are likely to become lost as time passes, and present them through the musical features of a contemporary jazz orchestra, and incorporating other musical elements, including alternative rock, hip-hop, R&B, and electronica.

This research demonstrates several practical approaches to how jazz composers can draw on Thai music traditions to generate innovative methods for composing music, particularly for a jazz orchestra. Beyond musical genres, authenticities, and national identities, I reckon there is much we can learn from one another to create and develop new creative perceptions that are inspired by other humans.

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# Appendix A: Lead Sheets of Preliminary Works and Transcriptions

Appendix A comprises the full lead sheets of my preliminary compositions, which were used in chapters 3 to 6, as well as the full transcriptions of Sombat Simlah's performance of "Lai Teay Khong" and Inchan Muncharoen's performance of "Thamnong Ngiew," which were used in chapters 4 and 6 respectively.

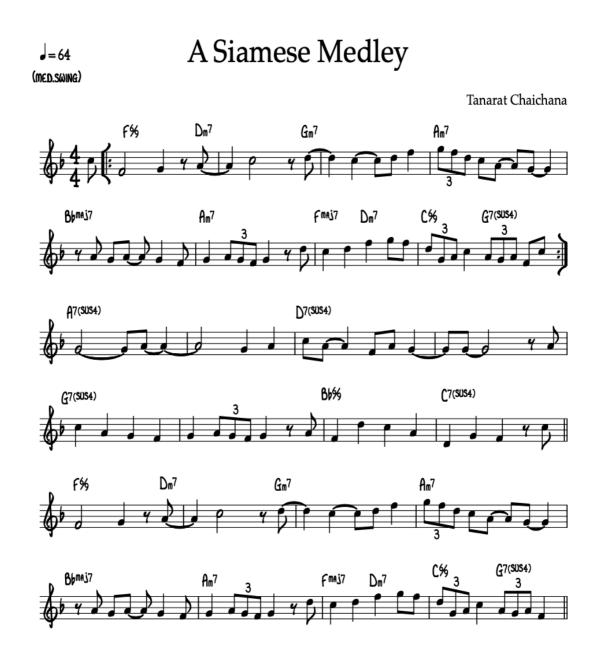


Figure A.1: "A Siamese Medley.



Figure A.2: Giant Step's arrangement.



Figure A.3a: "Nannapa."



Figure A.3b: "Nannapa" continued.

### Lai Teay Khong



Figure A.4a: Sombat Simlah's performance of "Lai Teay Khong."



Figure A.4b: Sombat Simlah's performance of "Lai Teay Khong" continued.



Figure A.4c: Sombat Simlah's performance of "Lai Teay Khong" continued.



Figure A.4d: Sombat Simlah's performance of "Lai Teay Khong" continued.

## Lai Nok Sai Bin Kham Thung (birds flying over fields) J=176 TRADITIONAL NORTHEAST THAILAND MUSIC ARRANGED BY TANARAT CHAICHANA (A) Cmaj7 A7(SUS4) **Db**% F7(SUS4) Ebma37 Eb7 (7(SUS4) ///// ///// ///// ///// /////

Figure A.5: "Lai Nok Sai Bin Kham Thung."

#### Lai Teay Khong



Figure A.6a: "Lai Teay Khong."

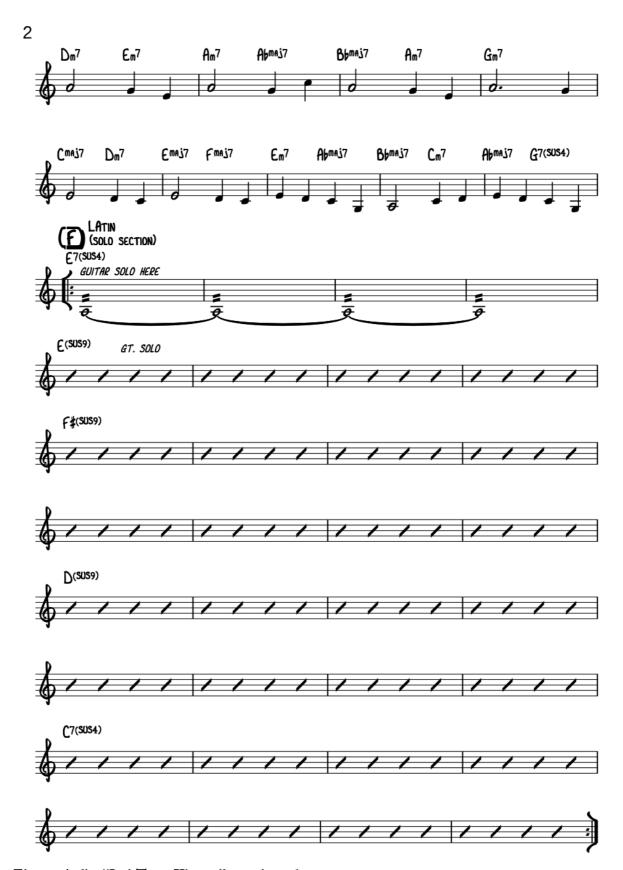


Figure A.6b: "Lai Teay Khong" continued.



Figure A.6c: "Lai Teay Khong" continued.



Figure A.6d: "Lai Teay Khong" continued.

#### Manora

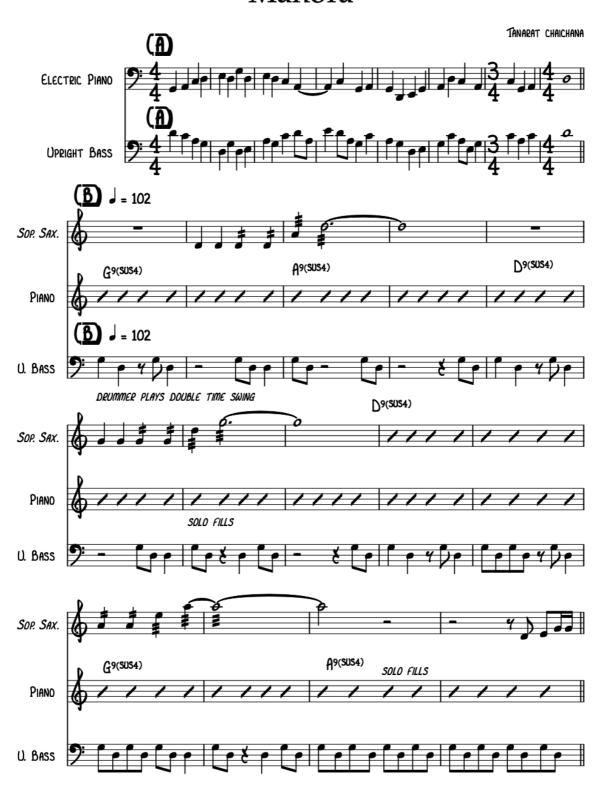


Figure A.7a: "Manora."



Figure A.7b: "Manora" continued.

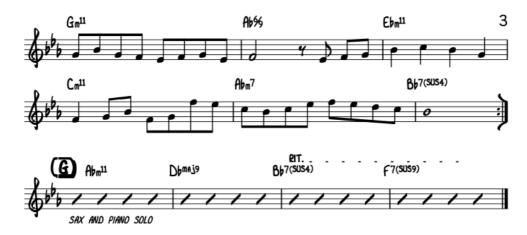


Figure A.7c: "Manora" continued.

### Mutee Yara



Figure A.8a: "Mutee Yara."



Figure A.8b: "Mutee Yara" continued.



Figure A.8c "Mutee Yara" continued.



Figure A.9a: Inchan Muncharoen's performance of "Thamnong Ngiew.



Figure A.9b: Inchan Muncharoen's performance of "Thamnong Ngiew. continued.

#### Phumin



Figure A.10a: "Phumin."



Figure A.10b: "Phumin" continued.

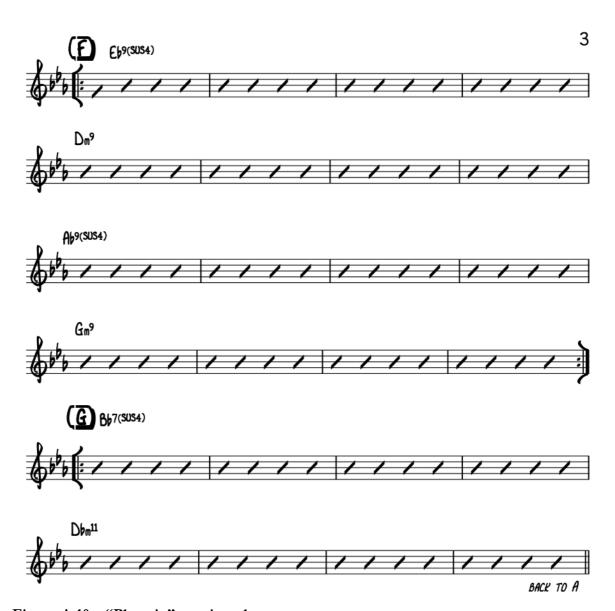


Figure A.10c: "Phumin" continued

APPENDIX B: Interviews

**APPENDIX B: INTERVIEWS** 

This appendix contains interview questions and answers between Somnuek Saengarun and

Perico Sambeat, which were conducted via Zoom July 27-28, 2020. These questions were

designed to show the compositional process and artistic experiences in the context of cross-

cultural jazz compositions. These two interviews were approved by the Human Ethics

Committee at Victoria University of Wellington. The Ethic Approval no. 27969.

Interviewee: Somnuek Saengarun

Time: 35 minutes

Tanarat Chaichana: Could you please describe how you go about learning to play traditional

Thai instruments? Also, what were your teacher's approaches for transmitting musical

knowledge to you?

Somnuek Saengarun: I was born into a musical family. As a result, learning music was a

regular activity of my childhood. My grandfather taught me how to play khong wong yai. As I

grew older, I began to learn different instruments. Every evening after dinner, I had to go to

my grandfather's house to study music. My father used to wake me up at 5 a.m. to practice

music. This has been my daily ritual since I was a child.

TC: Ok. As a result, what tactics did your grandfather employ to instruct you? Is it something

you have to recite or sing in Thai notes?

SS: So, my grandfather taught me by playing music on instruments, and I had to follow what

he did exactly. At the time, there were no Thai musical notations. Thai musical notation was

only used by Thai musicians who were studying in government-funded music institutes. In

addition, my grandfather also sang melodic lines by mimicking the sounds of instruments,

which I had to convert to instruments and play.

TC: Yes, that's why I was really impressed by Thai classical musicians. Because the sounds of

Thai classical compositions are incredibly complicated, you have to learn everything from

phrase to phrase. This process indeed requires a lot of time. So, my next question is still about

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the general concept of Thai classical music. Can you explain why the majority of Thai classical musicians can play practically every instrument in a Thai ensemble? Was this also necessary for your learning process?

**SS:** The most significant aspect, in my opinion, is that every Thai musician must first learn to play *khong wong yai* in order to master the fundamental melody known as *thamnong lak*. This thematic melody can then be applied to different instruments according to their idioms, which you can think of as *plae thamnong* approaches. As a result, once Thai musicians have mastered the fundamental melody, which is the first level of study, they want to increase their musical expertise by learning other instruments.

**TC**: Could you kindly explain how to conduct *plae thamnong* approaches (a musical technique in which a player asks that a fundamental melody be interpreted and played on their instruments)? To what extent can Thai musicians improvise when performing such techniques?

SS: To begin, you must understand that Thai classical music is separated into two categories: phleng bangkhap thang (a composition which does not enable a musician to improvise) and phleng mai bangkhap thang (a composition that allows a player to improvise). "Lao Duang Duen," "Khmer Sai Yok," and "Saen Kham Nung," for example, are musical pieces in the phleng bangkhap thang genre. The phleng mai bangkhap thang category comprises phleng Thayoi (IMANNEIDE) compositions. Interestingly, there are also Thai compositions that players must conduct both plae thamnong, and strictly play the specific melodic lines that are instructed by their teachers. To best answer your question, I believe you should learn to play Thai instruments.

**TC**: Yes, thank you! I've examined Montri Tramote's books. He also showcased a few other types of Thai compositions. What about the category of *phleng naphat*? Is it possible for Thai musicians to improvise over the thematic melody on such a piece?

**SS:** Yes, absolutely. In the *phleng naphat* genre, Thai musicians must improvise (*plae thamnong*). Experienced Thai musicians, in particular, enjoy demonstrating their musical abilities through *phleng naphat* performances. The more experience they have with Thai music, the better they are at using the *plae thamnong* technique.

**TC**: Thank you! I would like to expand on my question regarding the musical composing approaches that your teacher taught you. How did your teachers begin teaching you how to compose traditional Thai music?

SS: I think you ask the right person here, because of my research concerning Thai composition techniques. Sanoh Luangsuntorn, a pupil of Luang Pradit Pairoh (Son Silpabanleng), was my Thai music composition teacher. Again, you must keep in mind that Thai musicians dislike writing things down on paper, so the teaching methods of Thai composition were also transmitted orally from teachers to pupils. However, Sanoh Luangsuntorn, my teacher, was one of a few Thai composers who wrote about Thai compositional methods. There are a lot of different ways to compose Thai music, and I'll show you some of them. To begin with, 1) Thai composers create music based on their imaginations. This might be accomplished by Thai composers beginning to play the sounds they hear on instruments, and then asking their pupils to help them in remembering such tunes. 2) composers may take the melodies from old compositions and use them as the basis for new creations. This could be accomplished using a variety of strategies, such as augmentation and diminution techniques, melodic embellishments (thang kro, luk leuam), building extra sections (luk yon), and so on. Lastly, composers may use the thao compositional method, which is similar to the augmentation and diminution strategies I described earlier. However, Thai composers must pay close attention to the sound of luk tok (target pitches) when using this method.

**TC**: Yes, I've learned that several Thai compositional techniques are similar to those employed in western music, such as providing a solo passage for instruments (a cadenza). As you have learned western and Thai music, could you please give a brief comment on this?

**SS**: Yes, I believe it is possible. Montri Tramote and Luang Pradit Pairoh (Son Silpabanleng) were among the Thai composers who observed the growth of western music in Thailand. And, I believe they may have absorbed some western influences to some extent. "Saen Kham Nung" is one of the examples you could consider.

**TC**: Moving on to the concept of "nathap," could you further explain why nathap is so significant to Thai music composition?

**SS**: It is really crucial. That composers relate *nathap* to a musical boundary, where each That melodic phrase must conclude with *nathap*'s rhythmic rhythms. The melodic patterns of *phleng propkai compositions*, for example, must fully end with the *nathap propkai* pattern.

**TC**: One aspect of Thai classical music that fascinates me is the concept of cultural diversity. So, could you kindly elaborate on the musical approaches when performing traditional Thai works with a variety of musical accents? (e.g., samniang Lao, Khmer, Mon, Java, and jin)

SS: Before I go into detail about this concept, you should be aware of the differences between nationality and ethnicity. I believe that in the past, Thai composers enjoyed imitating the variety of melodic accents they heard all around them. We [Thai composers] then learn to make certain sounds (equivalent to modes) that we may use to imitate the musical characteristics of those particular groups [starts to sing several compositions in samniang lao, and jin]. Taking "Lao Pan" as an example, I believe the goal of this piece is to mimic the sound of khaen's drones. And, you may be mistaken if you believe the khaen is only played in the northeast of Thailand or in modern-day Laos. Several pieces of evidence suggest that khaen was also popular in Bangkok during the Rattanakosin period. Photographs of the khaen ensemble sent to Europe by King Rama V with a group of Siamese diplomatic envoys are one example. However, you may need to conduct your own investigation into why khaen's influence is decreasing. So, to get back to your question, you may have noticed that the drones sound that Thai composers aim to adapt from lao ethnicity can still be heard in Thai classic music compositions.

**TC**: Thank you very much! Still pertaining to musical accent topic, you're a reed player. Could you a briefly describe the distinction between *pi nai* (Thai classical music's reed instrument) and *pi nora* (a reed instrument used in *nora* ensembles)?

**SS:** Again, I believe this has something to do with regional dialect. As you may know, a person from the center of Thailand speaks with a distinct accent different than someone from the south. As a result, I believe this method has had a significant impact on how we perform music. The ornamentation employed during performances in these two styles of music appears to be different. The ranges used in these two pieces of music are also distinctive. In Thai musical ensembles, the function of a reed instrument is to imitate vocalists. As a consequence, I believe that having distinct dialects has influenced the playing method.

**TC**: What is the first order of advice that you would give to jazz composers who are interested in learning traditional Thai music, to gain a better understanding of this genre?

SS: In response to your question, I believe that learning about "respect" would be beneficial to such composers. I don't mean other things when I say respect; rather, respect yourself for how much Thai classical music you know before embarking on a cross-cultural project. So, once they've determined their level, they can select a reasonable degree of Thai classical music knowledge to incorporate into their music. This, in my opinion, has nothing to do with a high level of expertise in Thai classical music. Even if it's something basic, if you can come up with innovative ways to adapt or apply such musical elements to your music, that's great. That seems to be more appealing to me. The second piece of advice to consider is cultural appropriation. As I previously stated, when working on these kinds of Thai-fusion works, composers should consider their level of Thai classical music. For example, "Sathukan" is a composition whose meaning is "respect." Therefore, if someone wants to reinterpret this piece, I believe that the notion of respect should be brought over into their crossover pieces as well.

**TC:** Yes, I am aware that many Thai classical music compositions are tied to a sacred ceremony. Are there any songs that you would warn a cross-cultural composer to avoid?

**SS:** As in the prior response, you must undoubtedly comprehend a Thai composition on which you intend to work on. The more knowledge you have, the more you will understand what you should and shouldn't do. In the past, Prince Paribatra arranged a number of Thai compositions in *naphat* category for Western ensembles, and you should keep in mind how conservative Thailand was at the time. However, today... times have changed, and please do not exploit the word "traditions" to construct your own wall.

**TC**: Please accept my heartfelt gratitude, *khru Somnuek*. Thank you so much for opportunity to speak with me in this interview. I'll see you in Thailand.

**End of Interview** 

Interviewee: Perico Sambeat Interview question: 20 minutes

**Tanarat Chaichana**: How did you begin to compose music for a jazz orchestra that combined the musical elements of flamenco and jazz?

**Perico Sambeat**: Well, that came kind of naturally because I've been a jazz musician myself. I have had deep contact with flamenco music and flamenco for the last 30 years of my career. I had a chance to play with many of them and listen to a lot of this music. So, I think it's natural. It happens around the world. I would call it nationalism. Maybe, that's something that happened in classical music in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and it's also happening now.

**TC:** To add to that, is it correct you were born into a household that listened to flamenco music or grew up listening to flamenco music?

**PS**: No, I grew up listening to mostly classical and Latin music, like boleros and all kinds of Cuban music. I got into flamenco when I was already near 30 years old, and I practiced this music and studied it the way I studied jazz.

**TC**: Actually, this is quite close to me. Even though I was born in Thailand, I never had the opportunity to learn about the country's traditional music when I was a child.

**TC**: Could you please give brief examples of musical elements of flamenco that you apply to your jazz orchestra compositions (e.g., modes, melodic and rhythmic patterns, forms, traditional instruments timbre, etc.)?

**PS**: Well, an example I don't know. I think you have to know a little of the fundamentals of flamenco music to be able to create something that sounds reminiscent of that style. Flamenco works with what is called *palo*. And, *palo* is like different rhythms and styles.

TC: So, you're saying you compose your works using Flamenco rhythmic patterns?

**PS:** Yeah, like another complex one that work is the pattern of *signiriyasing* [begins snapping his fingers to show this rhythmic pattern].

**TC**: Got it. Thank you, let's move to next question. Do you agree that jazz is artistically and musically able to be absorbed or combined with other musical genres without losing its identity? If yes, what is your reason for this?

**PS**: You know African rhythm (...) and European harmony, then it got together and happened in the south of the United States at the beginning of last century. It had also grown and gotten enriched by other artists. For example, Charlie Parker played "*la cucaracha*." After that, Stan Getz did so many records with Bossa Nova. So, I think jazz is the best tool, and we can have to be open-minded.

**TC**: Ok. My next question also relates to your original music. I really like your musical compositions and have listened to your performance with the Frankfurt Radio Big Band. Also, I saw you put on this performance with Flamenco dances, which I think is very beautiful. So, in your original composition, "Tio Petila," could you please explain what your artistic inspirations were and how do you developed musical ideas to compose this music?

**PS:** The idea to compose that music. Well, I have basically the *Bulerías* pattern, because that pattern is a little different from the one I mentioned before and this would be something like [snapping fingers], and the harmonic rhythm in flamenco is a little different, but I tried to combine it in jazz and harmonic. The traditional flamenco harmony sound likes [playing piano]. So, to be more interesting I try to combine that with the Lydian flat two. Then, I created a vamp, moved to the fourth minor degree. Yeah, and that's basically how this music was created.

**TC**: Yeah, and flamenco seems to include a lot of Phrygian sounds as well. Could you comment on this?

**PS:** The Phrygian is the one used in flamenco, and it's also very popular in eastern music.

**TC:** Ok, in terms of composing cross-cultural music for a jazz orchestra, what are common issues or prominent obstacles that you have encountered? In particular, when combining Spanish with jazz music.

**PS**: Well, I think jazz and flamenco have a lot of things in common and a lot of improvisation too. Um.... I had a little problem. I decided to try not to do it in the very swing way because I think swing doesn't fit much in flamenco, so most of my record is in even eighths. That's more

like Latin jazz or something like that. But, there is some flamenco rhythm (in three-four patterns) that I think can be worked with swing, which I did on my previous project. (He started to play such rhythm on piano).

**TC**: Ok. Thank you! So, I've got three more questions for this short period. So, this one is more about artistic attitudes than compositional techniques. Starting with the most relaxing one, what is the most pleasurable feeling that you have ever experienced since you decided to be a jazz composer who combines the musical elements of your country with jazz?

**PS**: I think the audience is very open to this kind of cross-cultural thing. Yeah, and the things and they really love are definitely the dancer, which I think is a key point. Most of the audience really them. And, they are crazy when the dancer comes out.

**TC:** Oh, ok! And, this one is about traditionalism vs. modernism. For example, the musical traditions of my country seem to be conservative. And, if you want to change something, you'll need to consider a number of cultural considerations. So, have you ever encountered or received negative feedbacks from musical traditionalists in your country when working on cross-cultural music projects? If yes, what are your reactions and your artistic perspectives based on this issue?

**PS**: Well, I thought about it when I was writing it, which is on the border of respecting the tradition and getting into something beyond that. First of all, I think the best thing is to write without prejudice about all the music that comes to my mind, and if someone doesn't like it I'm sorry, but at the same moment I love jazz, and I love flamenco, and I try to somehow be respectful with both. But, that was not something that I was forced to do. It's just something that I wanted as a listener. Before my big band project, there were not many people doing big bang projects in flamenco and jazz, in my opinion. For example, the Sketches of Spain, and some other things. But none of them were very deep in flamenco. So that was my intent to go deep into the flamenco forms in jazz, which still sounds like flamenco. But, I tell you, I have no prejudices about the music that's in my head.

**TC**: Thank you! Moving on to the final question, what is your advice for jazz composers who are interested in composing cross-cultural music for a jazz orchestra? And, what should be the initial process of learning to compose such music that you would suggest to them?

**PS:** The advice that I would like to give to someone who aspires to be a cross-cultural jazz composer is that he or she should be concerned in both [types of] music, and he or she should study both of them deeply, and the more deeply he or she knows, the better he or she does. I like the colorfulness and the complexity of jazz, and that something I want to happen with flamenco. Maybe, I have captured only two chords in flamenco, but I think we might have to get a task to go a little beyond and get a little far — as much as we can, and know well which traditional music you want to work on and then take it to the complexity and the beauty of jazz both together. I mean you must know both of them deeply.

**TC**: That's the perfect answer. Thank you very much for your time, Mr. Perico Sambeat.

**End of Interview** 

## APPENDIX C: TRANSCRIPTION MIDI RECORDINGS

The MIDI recordings used in chapters 3-6 can be found in this appendix. I chose to make these recordings available to composers who want to learn more about Thai musical traditions. They can also be used by students, faculty, and members of the general public for non-profit educational purposes only, with the author's permission.

The lists of MIDI transcriptions including:

(1) "Rabam Sukhothai" (Appendix C.1)

https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/rabam-sukhothaitranscription/s-iYzXpj67Bvd?si=13c0ac47d7674f98ae6c6595b8f1fc42

(2) "Soi Sang Dang" (Appendix C.2)

https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/soi-sang-dang-transcription/s-LGW6BLl8vou?si=13c0ac47d7674f98ae6c6595b8f1fc42

(3) "Lao Somdej" (Appendix C.3)

https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/lao-somdejtranscription/s-EwGl6h3MosM?si=13c0ac47d7674f98ae6c6595b8f1fc42

(4) "Saen Kham Nung" (Appendix C.4)

https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/saen-kham-nung-transcription/s-FbhkMexZS4N?si=13c0ac47d7674f98ae6c6595b8f1fc42

(5) "Lai Ka Ten Kon" (Appendix C.5)

https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/lai-ka-ten-kon-transcription/s-pBVaci9x1sc?si=13c0ac47d7674f98ae6c6595b8f1fc42

(6) "Lai Kaeo Na Ma" (Appendix C.6)

https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/lai-kaeo-na-ma-transcription/s-VaCFURLOPJP?si=13c0ac47d7674f98ae6c6595b8f1fc42

(7) "Lai Ka Ten Kon" (pong lang performance) (Appendix C.7)

https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/lai-ka-ten-kon-transcription-1/s-TwStfBN0VfI?si=13c0ac47d7674f98ae6c6595b8f1fc42

(8) lai se (Appendix C.8)

https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/lai-setranscription/s-T7Sno0U3jjV?si=13c0ac47d7674f98ae6c6595b8f1fc42

(9) "Lai Teay Khong" (Appendix C.9)

https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/lai-teay-khong-transcription/s-Erzdx39dsXW?si=13c0ac47d7674f98ae6c6595b8f1fc42

(10) khuen hua pi (Appendix C.10)

https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/khuen-hua-pi-transcription/s-IeLXxBRnu88?si=13c0ac47d7674f98ae6c6595b8f1fc42

(11) "Chak Bai" (Appendix C.11)

https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/chak-bai-transcription/s-ZC6HqZRGAew?si=13c0ac47d7674f98ae6c6595b8f1fc42

(12) "Patcha" (Appendix C.12)

https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/patcha-transcription/s-FKozAXrgq39?si=13c0ac47d7674f98ae6c6595b8f1fc42

(13) lagu dua (rebana patterns) (Appendix C.13)

https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/lagu-dua-transcription/s-5QnrCW686QK?si=13c0ac47d7674f98ae6c6595b8f1fc42

(14) mak iang (Appendix C.14)

https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/mak-inang-transcription/s-ADfDXlTCG28?si=13c0ac47d7674f98ae6c6595b8f1fc42

(15) sinadong (Appendix C.15)

https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/singdongtranscription/s-wofuf68NQnP?si=13c0ac47d7674f98ae6c6595b8f1fc42

(16) Asli (Appendix C.16)

https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/asli?si=27434c4688b04c87b4724ae183f7e09b

(17) Inang (Appendix C.17)

https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/inang?si=2313ef8c1c664f39af491d6c7b33b55d

(18) Joget (Appendix C.18)

https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/joget?si=f1eac0c1fe914e998a20d60f4bd9c724

(19) "Lenang" (Appendix C.19)

https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/lenangtranscription/s-TKzQM379eu2?si=f695c8bdd7b24fa2a41c58adfd781741

(20) "Laga Dua" (The rong ngeng composition of the southeastern region) (Appendix C.20)

https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/lagu-dua-tanscription/s-4FsRZY8A3ef?si=13c0ac47d7674f98ae6c6595b8f1fc42

(21) "Saw Eue" (Appendix C.21) https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/saw-euutranscription/s-iPcXntYGkFM?si=f695c8bdd7b24fa2a41c58adfd781741

(22) "Thamnong Ngiew" (Appendix C.22)

https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/thamnong-ngiew-transcription/s-XDjnhLhVvg4?si=f695c8bdd7b24fa2a41c58adfd781741

(23) "Saw Dan Nan" (Appendix C.23)

https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/saw-dan-nan-transcription/s-9J6t7DVdrIF?si=f695c8bdd7b24fa2a41c58adfd781741

(24) "Saw Pan Fai" (Appendix C.24)

https://soundcloud.com/user-264254280/saw-pan-faitranscription/s-0NnH8J5HZlc?si=f695c8bdd7b24fa2a41c58adfd781741

#### APPENDIX D: SCORES OF JAZZ ORCHESTRA PORTRAITS OF THAILAND

Appendix D contains the seven scores for my portfolio of jazz orchestra compositions, which were developed as a creative output of this research and completed in order to fulfill the requirements of Doctor of Philosophy in Music at Victoria University of Wellington.

These seven original works, *Jazz Orchestra Portraits of Thailand*, totaling 67 minutes, are described in details in Chapter 7:

- (1) "Buang-Suang" ("Deity Worship")
  (2) "Mekong" ("River of Souls")
  (3) "Phuen Ban" ("Village Song")
  (4) "Wiang Haeng" ("The Northern Rhapsody")
- (5) "Singora" ("Dance of Kinnari")
- (6) "Samniang Jin" ("Porcelain")
- (7) "Patchim" ("Epilogue")

To listen to the recordings, please see the links below.

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1z\_S5L5LFIBFQX8szvGaBN

# BUANG-SUANG (DEITY WORSHIP)

BY TANARAT CHAICHANA

## BUANG-SUANG (DEITY WORSHIP)

#### FOR JAZZ ORCHESTRA

#### **INSTRUMENTATION**

Vocal

Alto Saxophone 1 Alto Saxophone 2 Tenor Saxophone 1/ Soprano Saxophone Tenor Saxophone 2 Bass Clarinet

4 Trumpets/ Flugelhorns

3 Trombones 1 Bass Trombone

Electric Guitar

Electric Piano/Organ

**Upright Bass** 

Percussion (Rain Stick/Wind Chime/Seed Rattle/Triangle)

Drum Set

#### TRANSPOSED SCORE

## BUANG-SUANG (DEITY WORSHIP)

J = 62

















































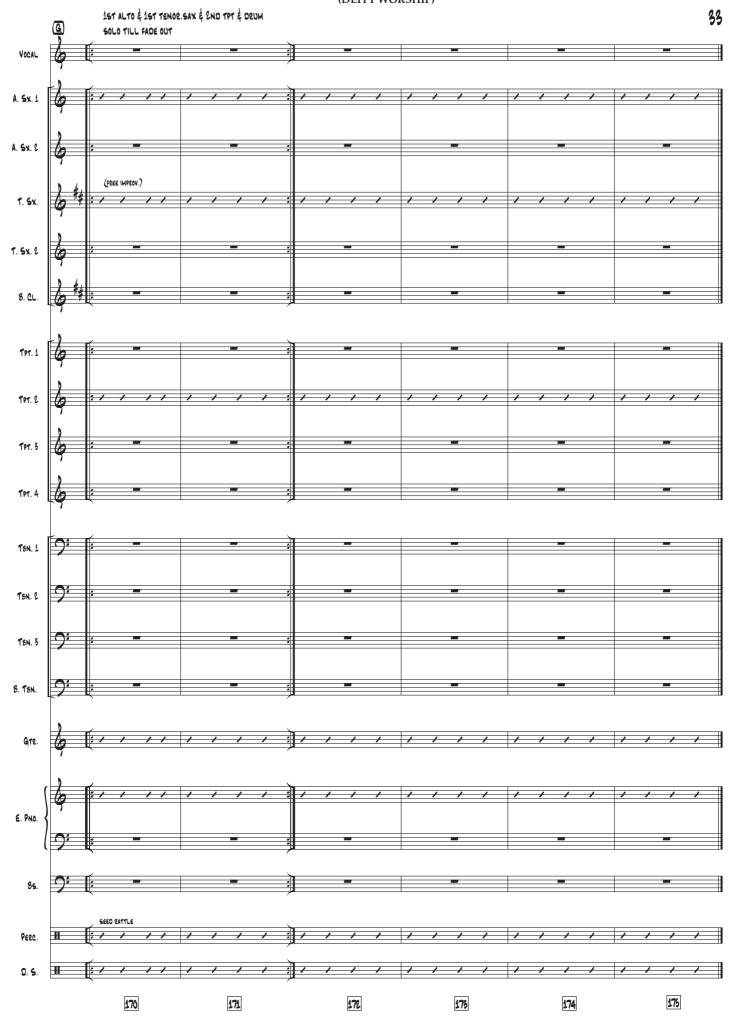












# MEKONG (RIVER OF SOULS)

BY TANARAT CHAICHANA

# MEKONG (RIVER OF SOULS)

### FOR JAZZ ORCHESTRA

#### **INSTRUMENTATION**

Vocal

Alto Saxophone 1/ Soprano Saxophone Alto Saxophone 2 / Soprano Saxophone Tenor Saxophone 1 Tenor Saxophone 2 Baritone Saxophone

4 Trumpets/ Flugelhorns

3 Trombones 1 Bass Trombone

Electric Guitar

Electric Piano/ Synthesizer

**Electric Bass** 

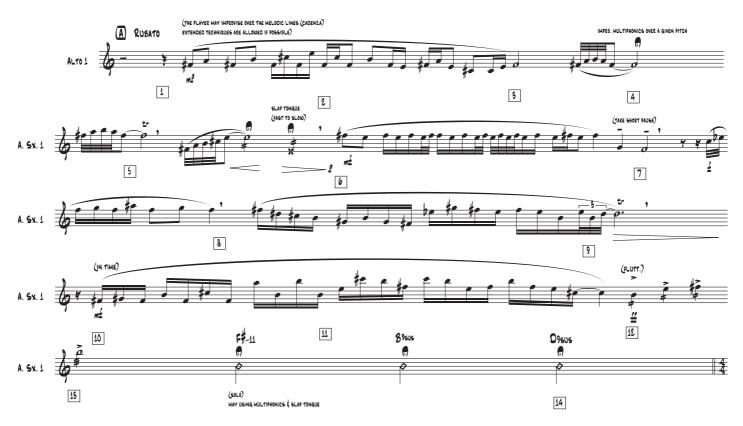
Percussion (Congas/Rain Stick/Wind Chime/Pandeiro)

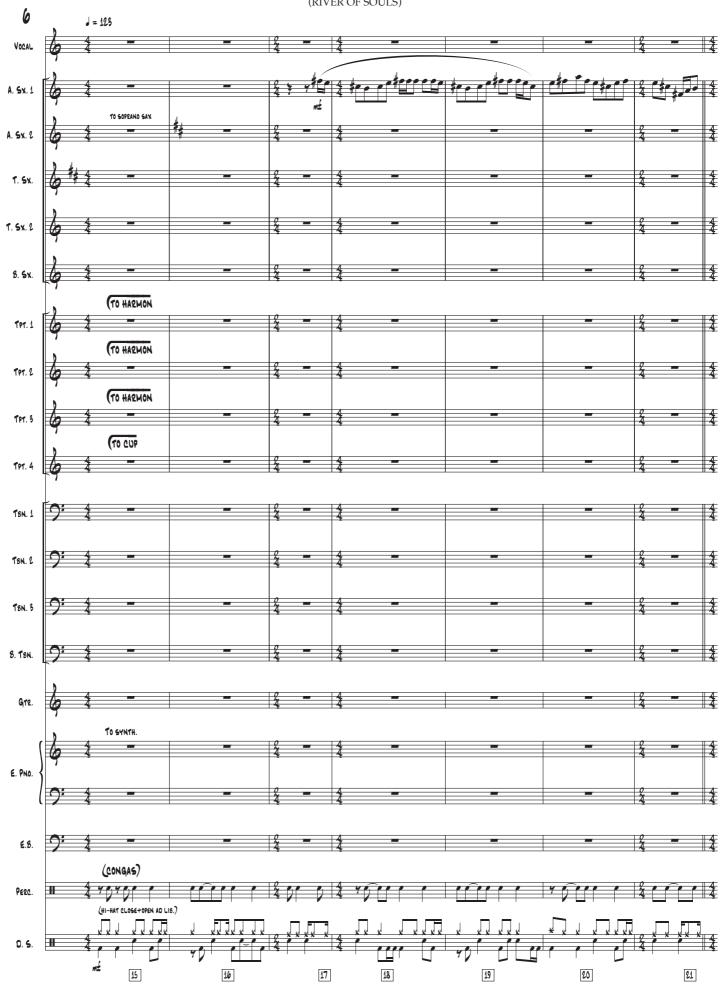
Drum Set

## MEKONG (RIVER OF SOULS)

### Transposed Score (Even 8ths)

TANARAT CHAICHANA











































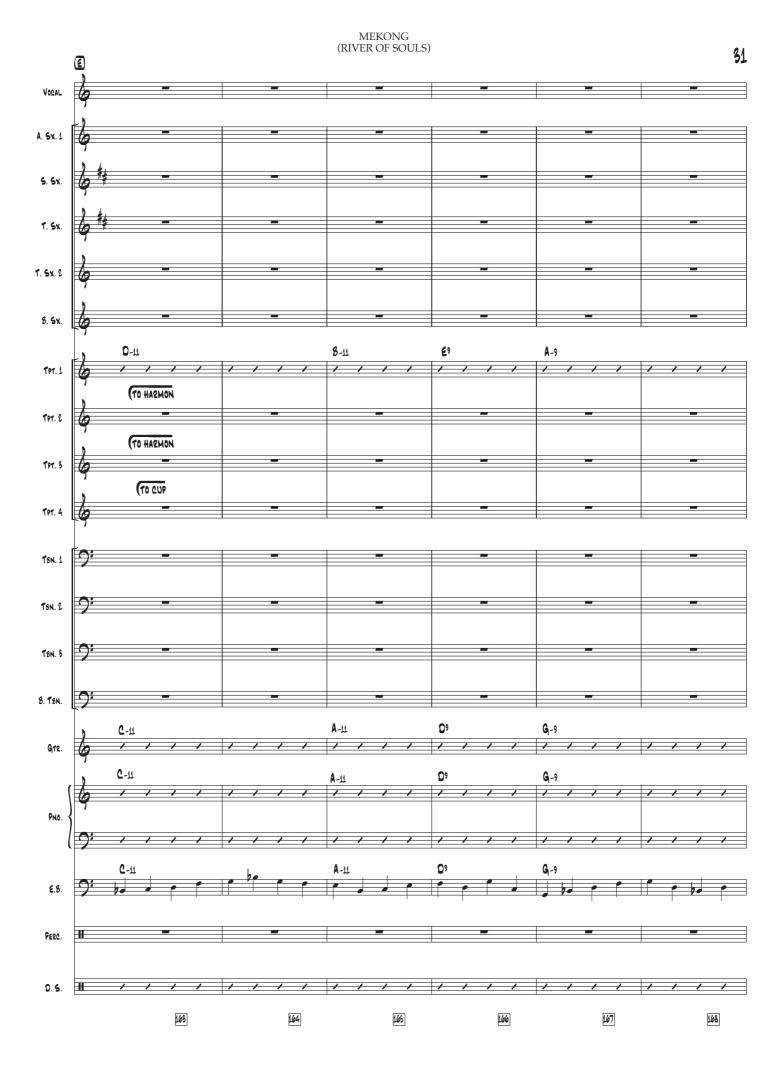








































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# PHUEN BAN (VILLAGE SONG)

BY TANARAT CHAICHANA

## PHUEN BAN (VILLAGE SONG)

#### FOR JAZZ ORCHESTRA

#### **INSTRUMENTATION**

#### Vibraphone

Alto Saxophone 1/ Flute Alto Saxophone 2 / Soprano Saxophone/ Flute Tenor Saxophone 1/ Flute Tenor Saxophone 2 / Clarinet Bass Clarinet / Baritone Saxophone

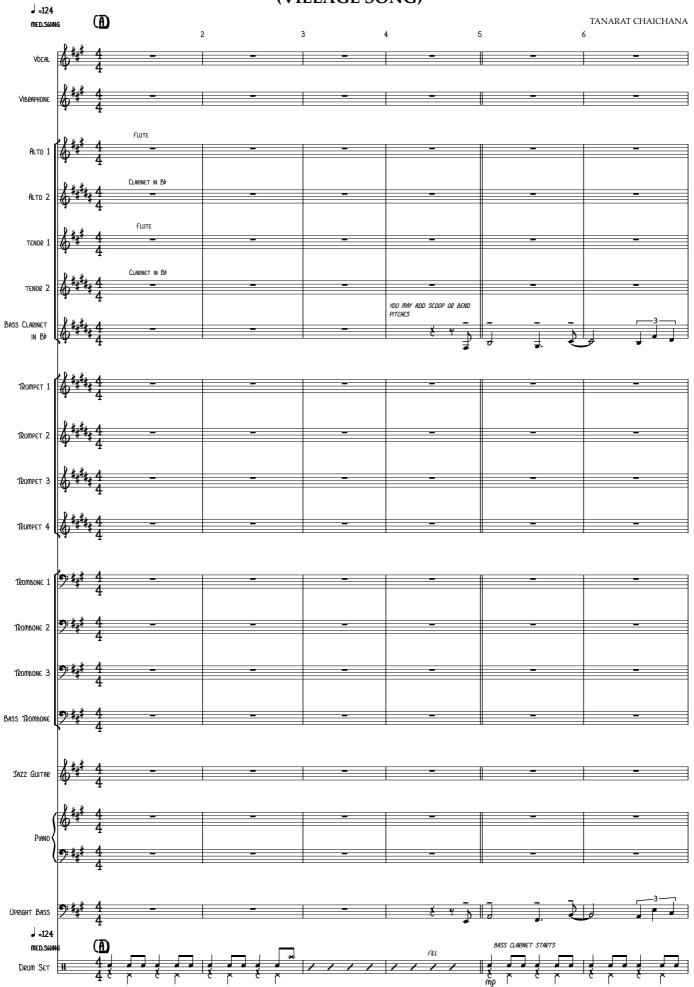
4 Trumpets

3 Trombones 1 Bass Trombone

Electric Guitar Piano Upright Bass

Drum Set

### PHUEN BAN (VILLAGE SONG)



























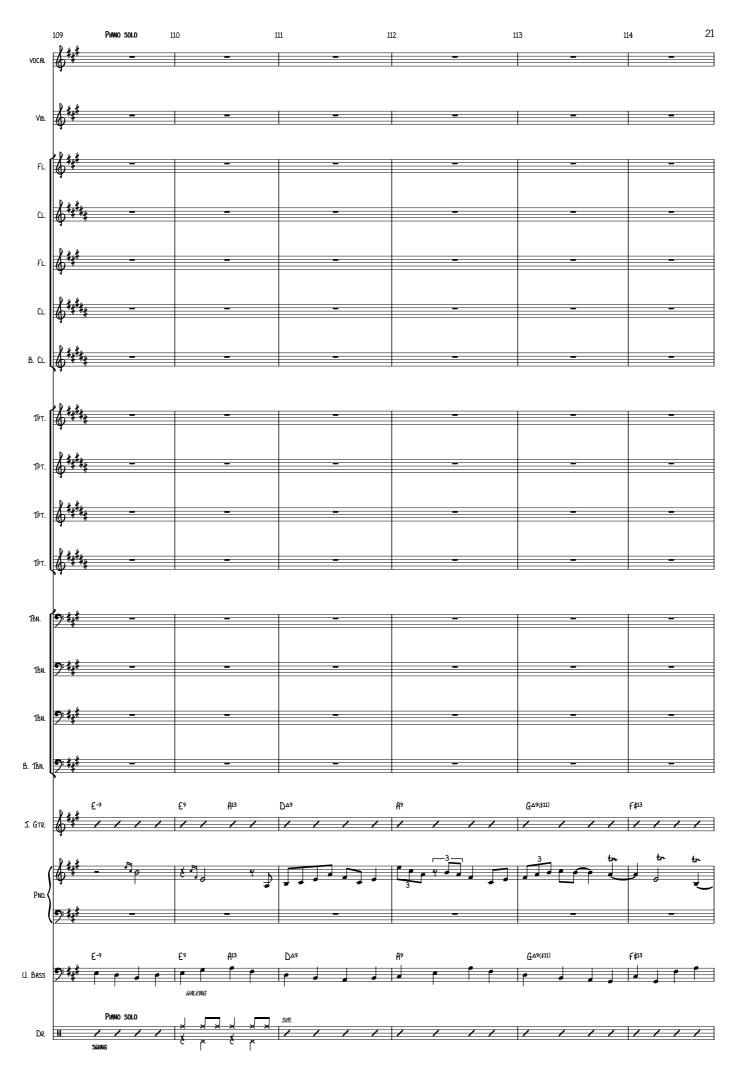








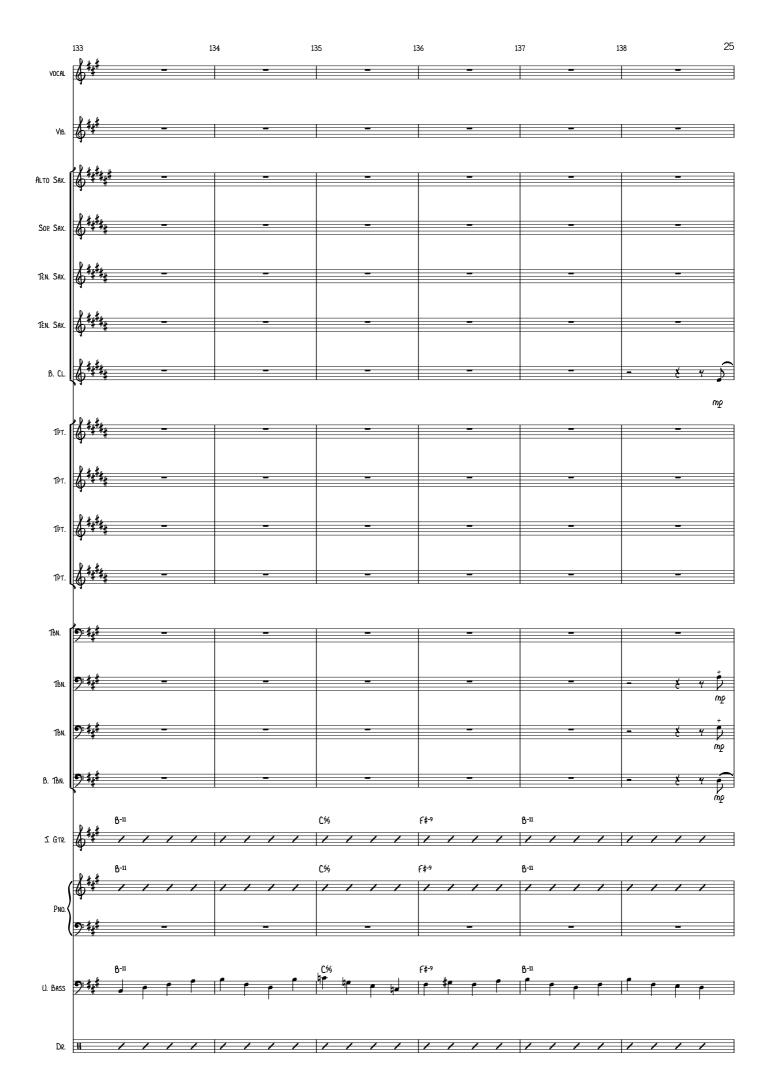




















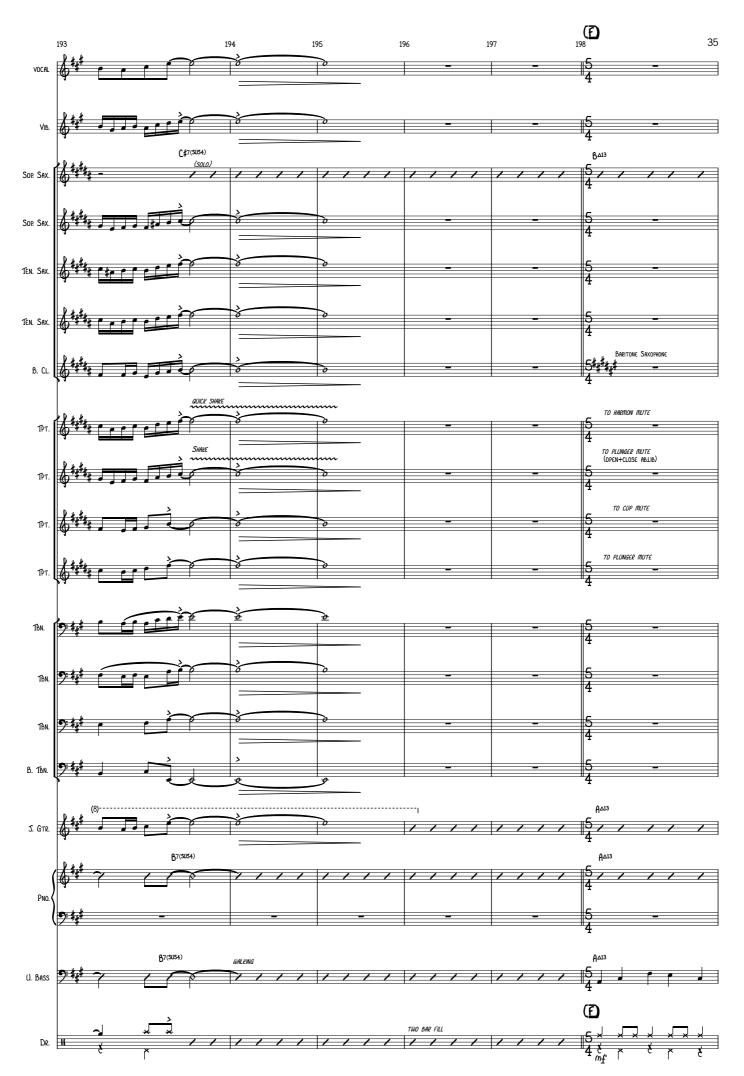




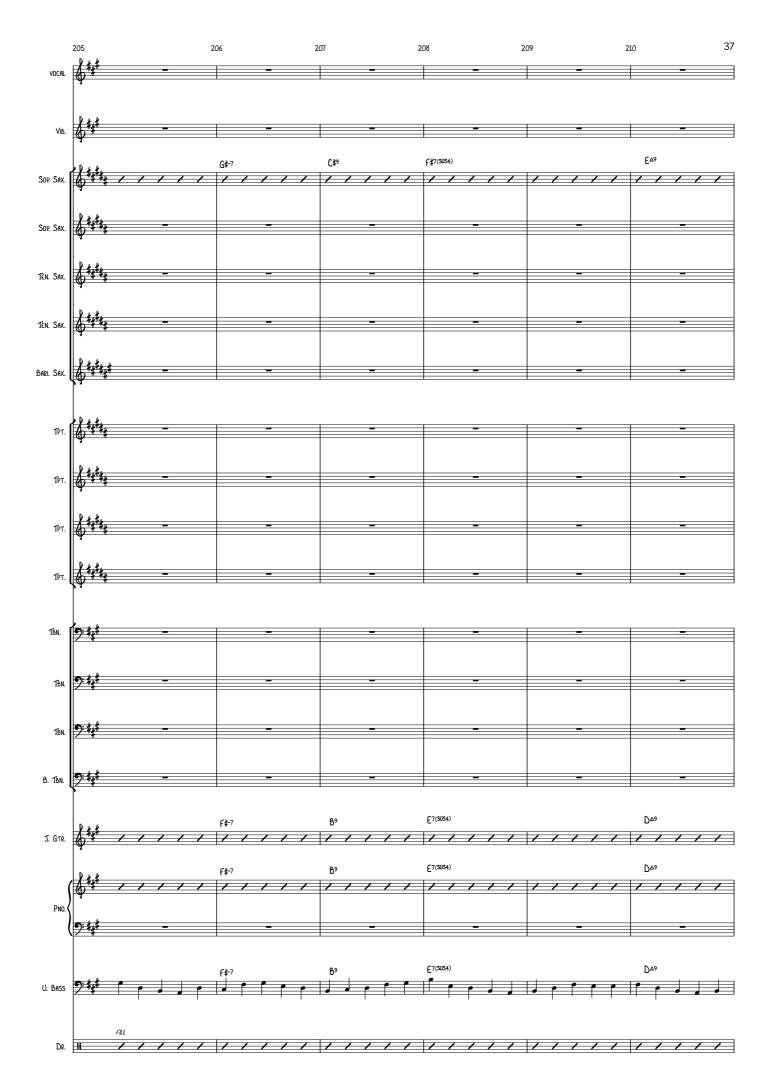




















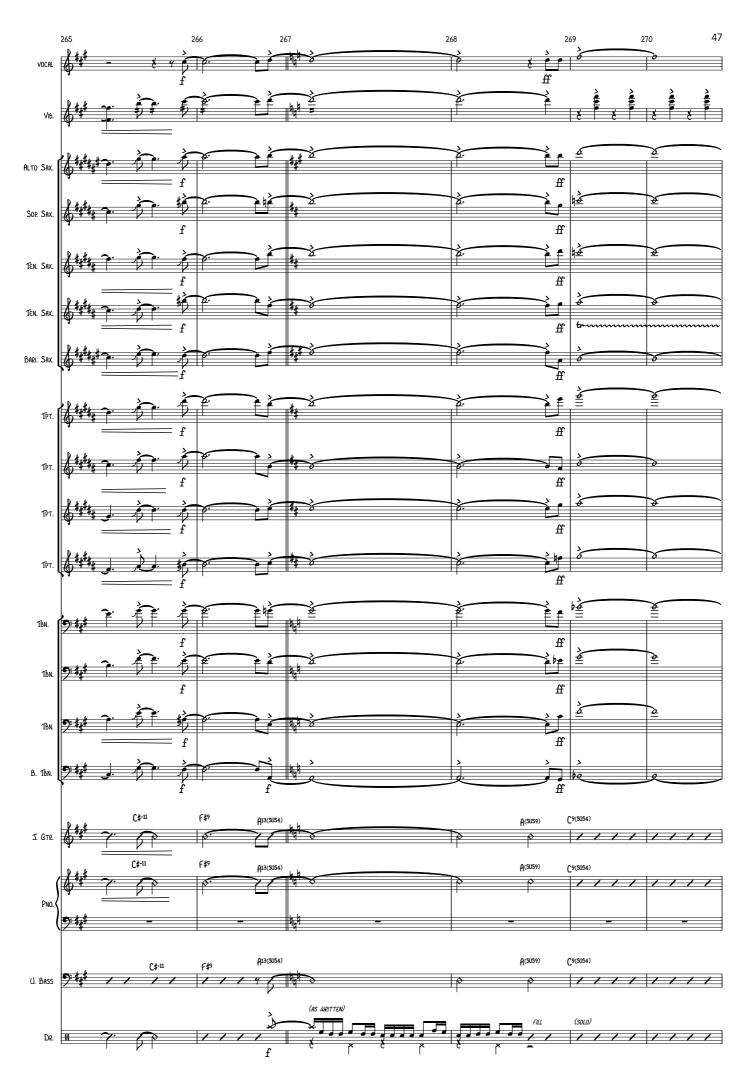














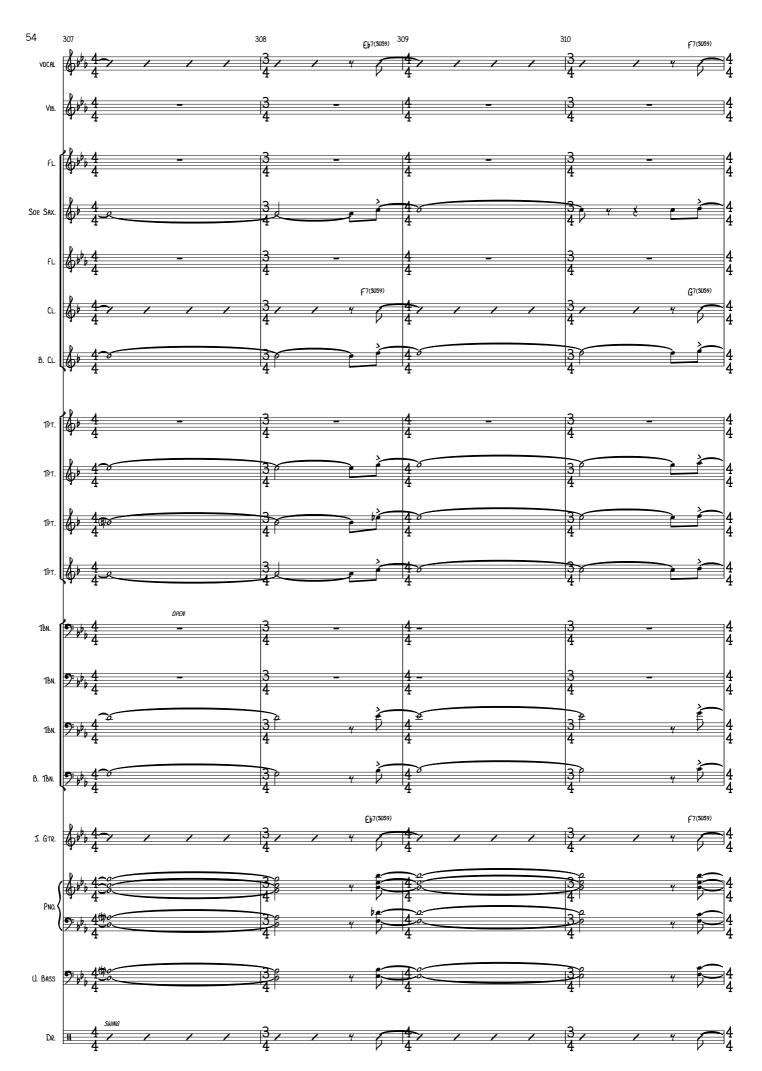














# WIANG HAENG (THE NORTHERN RHAPSODY)

BY TANARAT CHAICHANA

## WIANG HAENG (THE NORTHERN RHAPSODY)

## FOR JAZZ ORCHESTRA

#### **INSTRUMENTATION**

Vocal

Alto Saxophone 1/ Soprano Saxophone/ Flute Alto Saxophone 2 / Flute Tenor Saxophone 1 / Clarinet Tenor Saxophone 2/ Clarinet Baritone Saxophone/ Bass Clarinet

4 Trumpets/ Flugelhorns

3 Trombones 1 Bass Trombone

Electric Guitar

Electric Piano/Synthesizer/Organ

**Electric Bass** 

Drum Set

## TRANSPOSED SCORE

## WIANG HAENG (THE NORTHERN RHAPSODY)















































# DANCE OF KINNARI (SINGORA)

BY TANARAT CHAICHANA

# DANCE OF KINNARI (SINGORA)

### FOR JAZZ ORCHESTRA

#### **INSTRUMENTATION**

Vocal

Alto Saxophone 1/Soprano Saxophone Alto Saxophone 2 Tenor Saxophone 1/Soprano Saxophone Tenor Saxophone 2 Baritone Saxophone

4 Trumpets/ Flugelhorns

3 Trombones 1 Bass Trombone

Electric Guitar

Electric Piano/Synthesizer

**Electric Bass** 

Percussion (Vibraphone/Congas/Rain Stick/Wind Chime/Tambourine)

Drum Set

#### Monologue 1 (m.25-m.58)

Pra Suthon and Manora is a story of forbidden love between a human and a female mythical figure, who is half-bird and half-human and lives beyond the Himavanta forest. One day, while taking a bath in an ancient lake in the mysterious forest of the human realm, Manora is captured by Phran Boon, a ferocious hunter, who later hands her over to Pra Suthon, the heir to the Kingdom of Uttarapancala. As soon as they see each other, they fall in love because of the loving spirit that they had in their past lives. However, a jealous brahmin falsely tells the king, Artit Wong, Pra Suthon's father, that Manora would bring about a deterioration of his reign and requests the sacrifice of Manora. So reluctantly, Manora leaves Pra Suthon behind without saying goodbye and secretly flees to Mouth Kailash, where humans are unable to go.

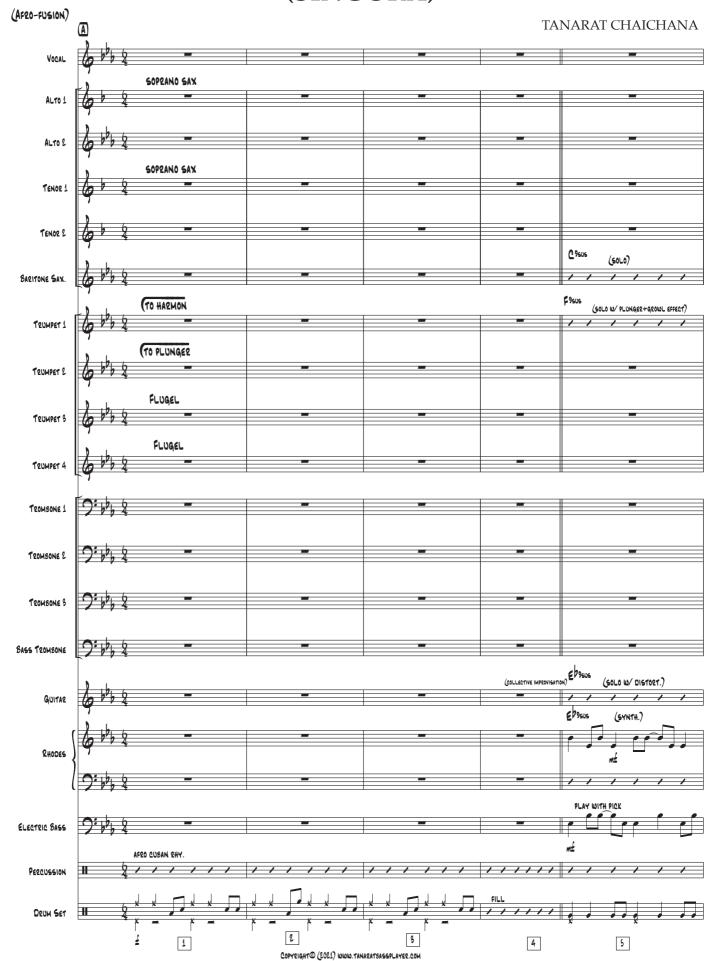
#### Monologue 2 (m.215- m.244)

"I insistently forbid him to follow me because the journey to the realm of Kinnari, a world of half-bird and half-human, is extremely perilous. The route to my world is certainly not for humans, but for non-humans only," says Manora. However, despite the warning, Pra Suthonstill relentlessly chases her and wishes to bring his lover back. Along the way, Pra Suthon encounters several poisonous forests and a flooded river where a colossal python lies as an obstacle. Then he must sneak into the nest of the gigantic birds in the mythical world, where he must be patient and wait until all ferocious creatures fly away so that he can slowly climb up to the top of Mouth Kailash where he will eventually be reunited with his love. The journey of Pra Suthon and Manora took seven years, seven months, and seven days, providing us with a great story of persistence and showing usthe power of love to overcome difference—in this case, between human and non-human."

### TRANSPOSED SCORE

J = 210

## DANCE OF KINNARI (SINGORA)











































































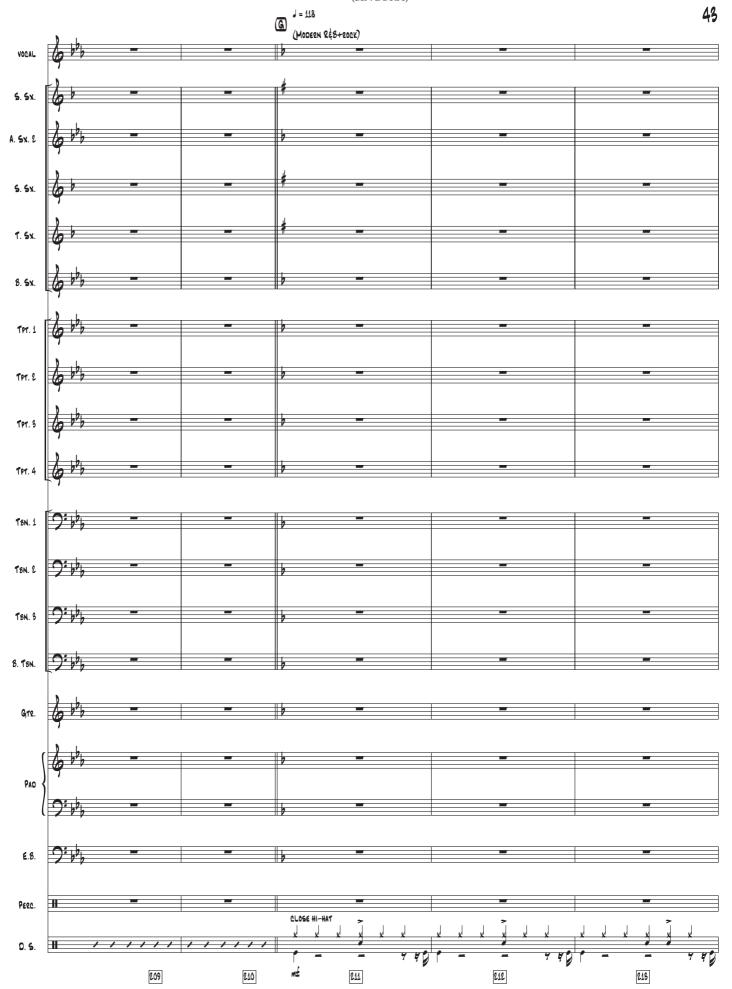


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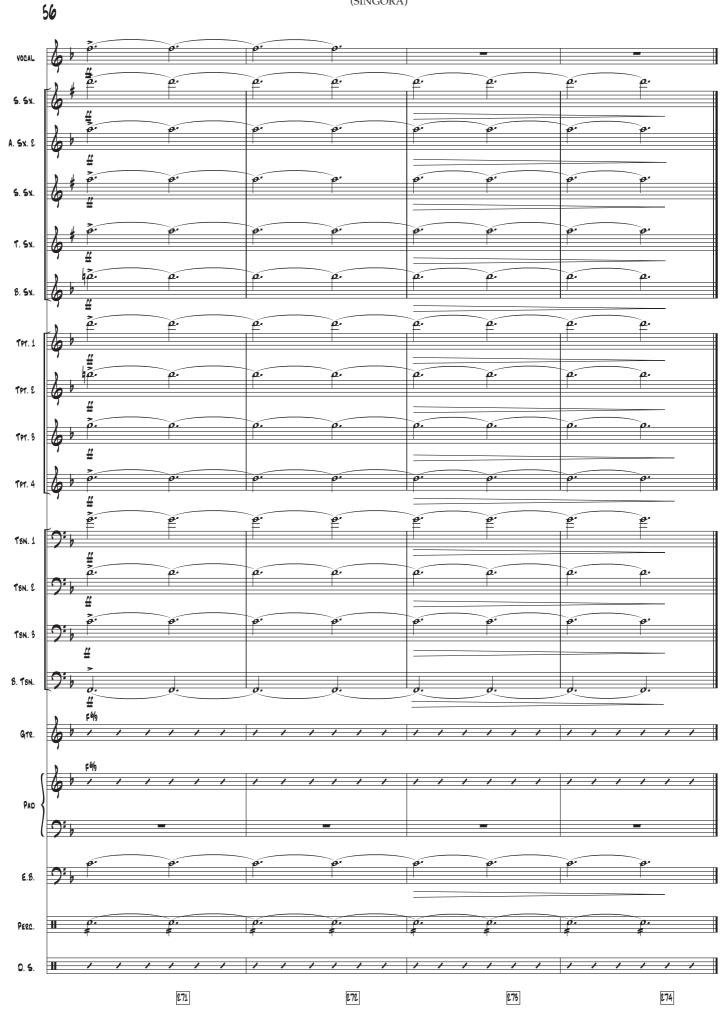












## SAMNIANG JIN (PORCELAIN)

BY TANARAT CHAICHANA

## SAMNIANG JIN (PORCELAIN)

## FOR JAZZ ORCHESTRA

**INSTRUMENTATION** 

Vocal

Vibraphone

Alto Saxophone 1/Flute Alto Saxophone 2 /Flute Tenor Saxophone 1/ Soprano Saxophone Tenor Saxophone 2 Bass Clarinet / Baritone Saxophone

4 Trumpets/ Flugelhorns

3 Trombones 1 Bass Trombone

Electric Guitar Electric Piano/Organ/ Synthesizer Electric Bass

Drum Set





































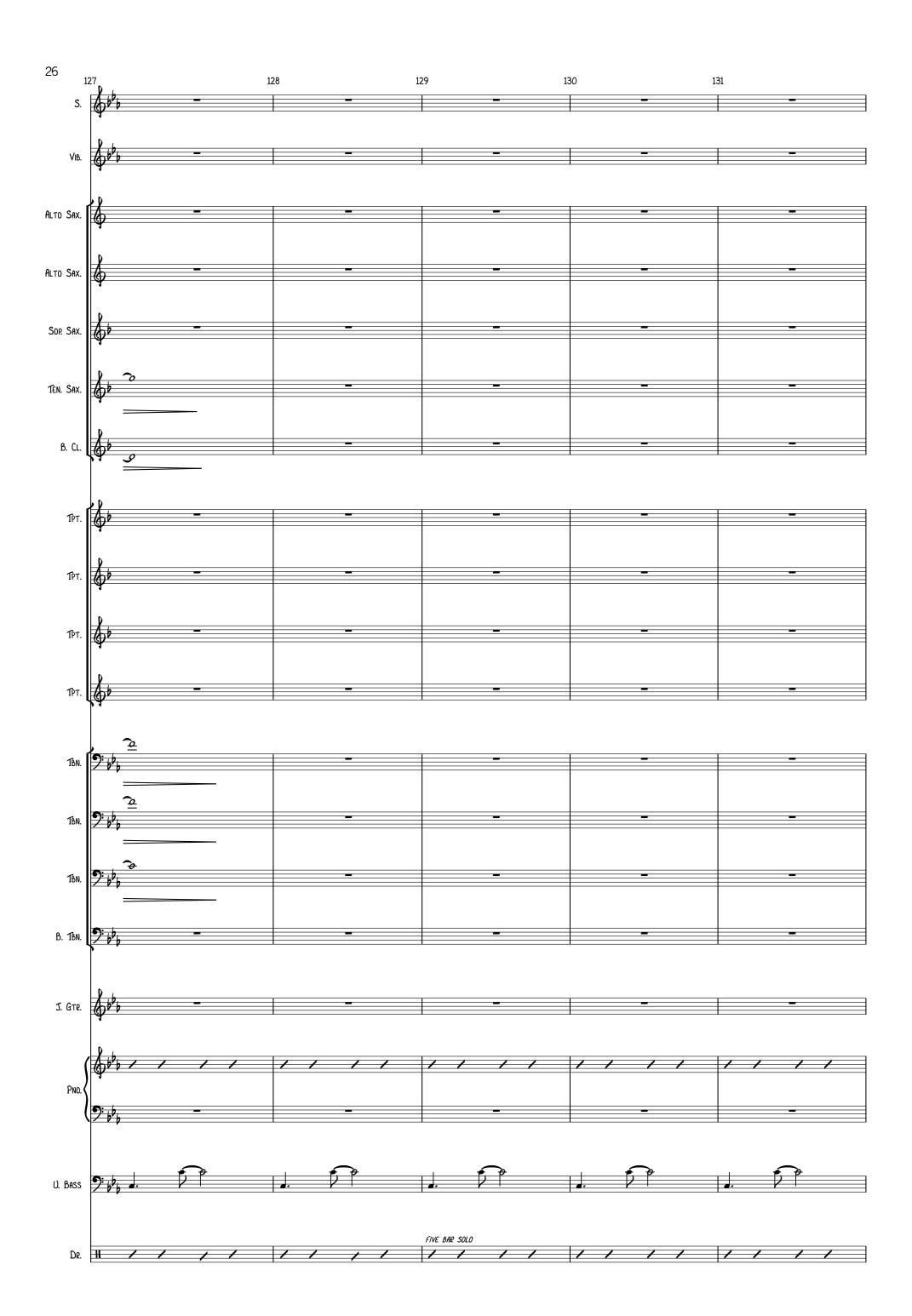




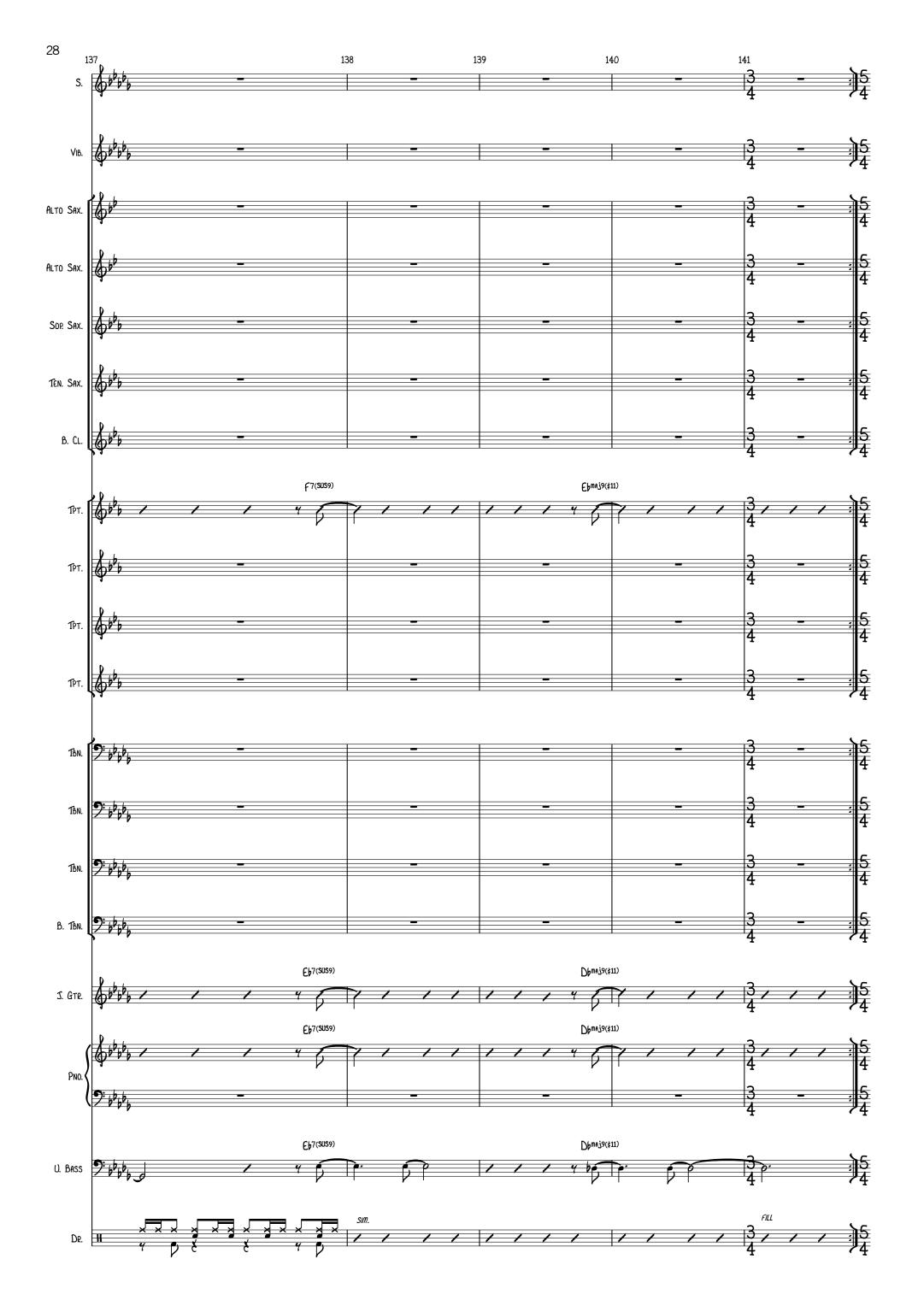


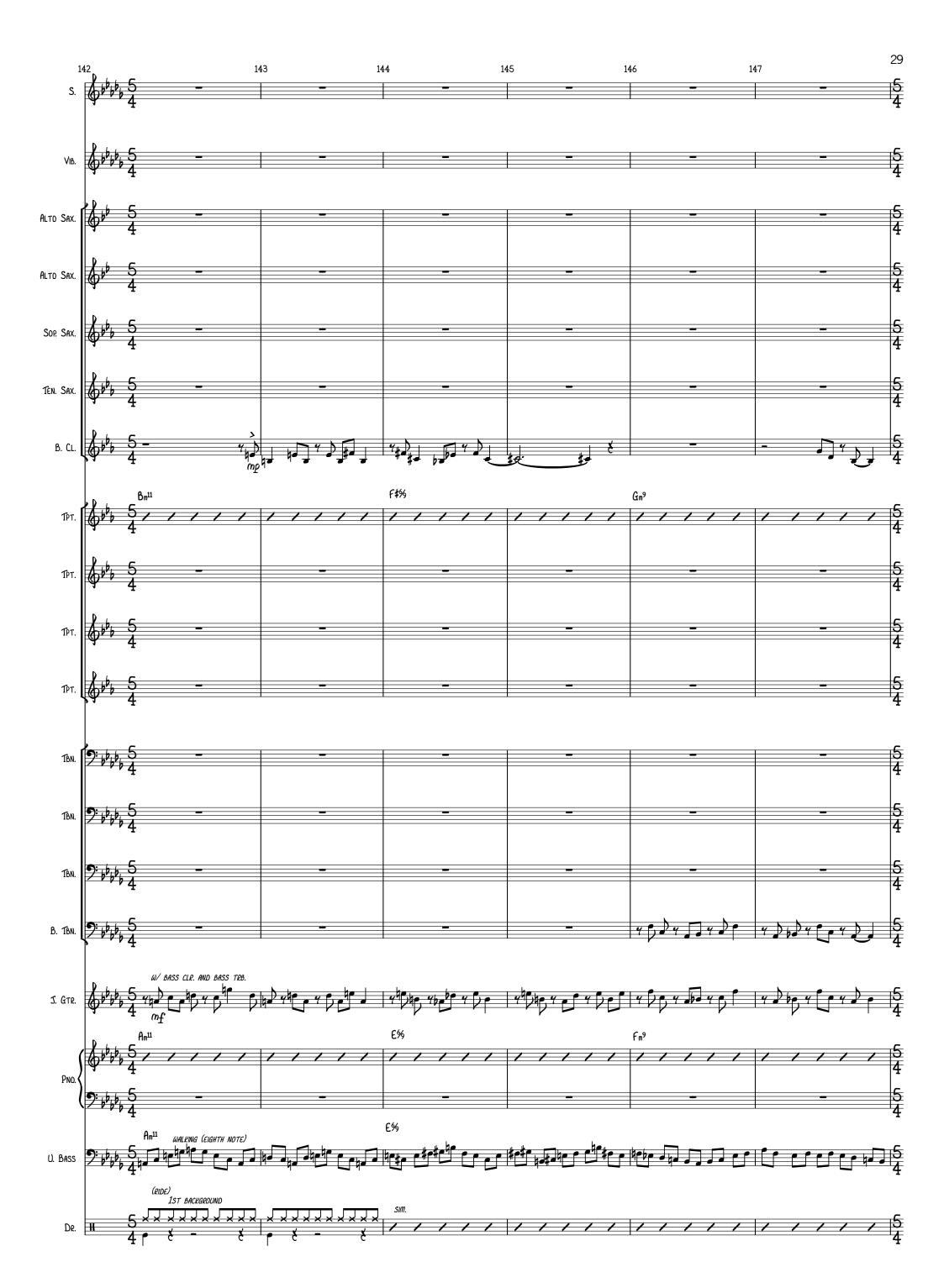




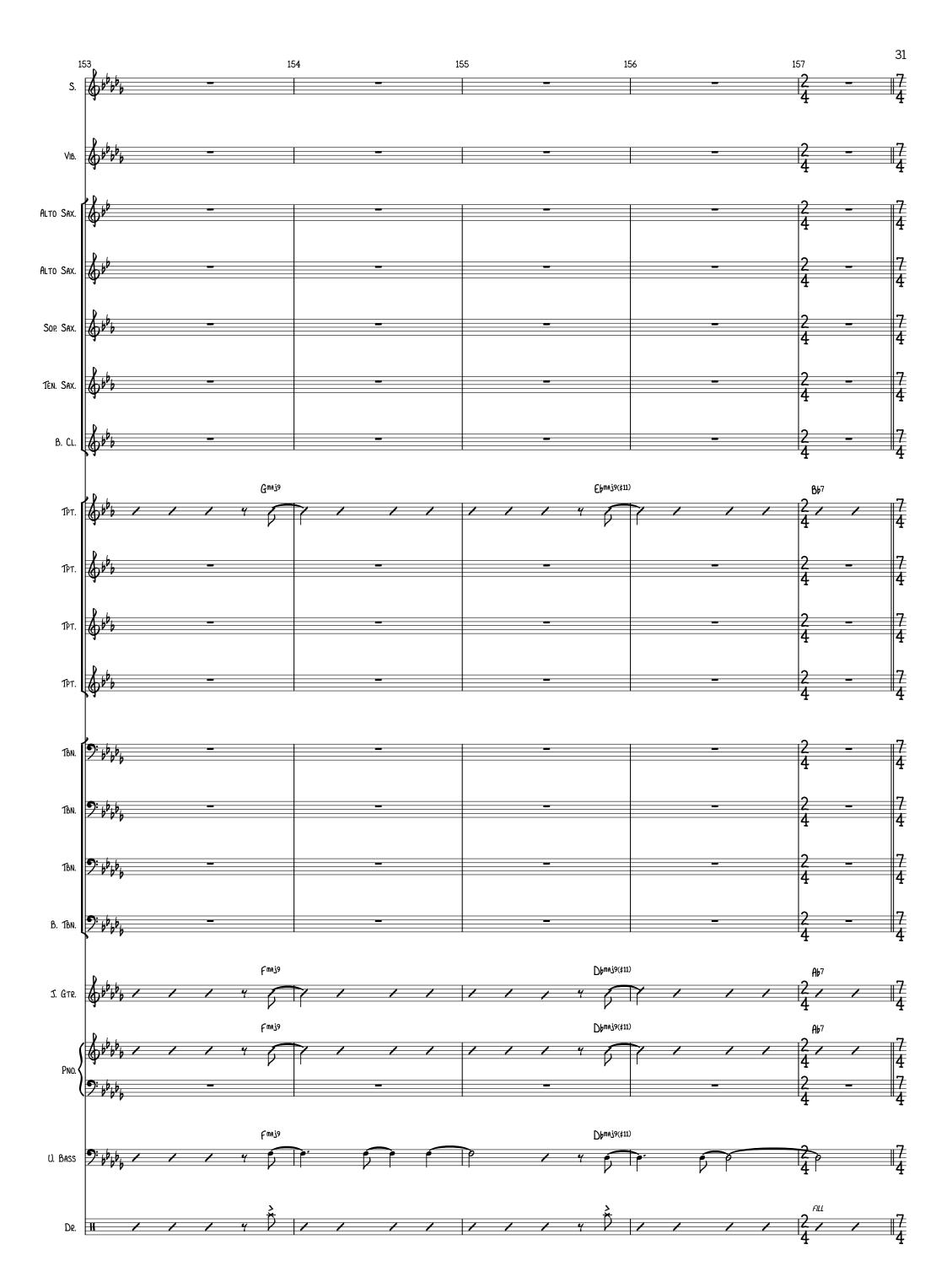






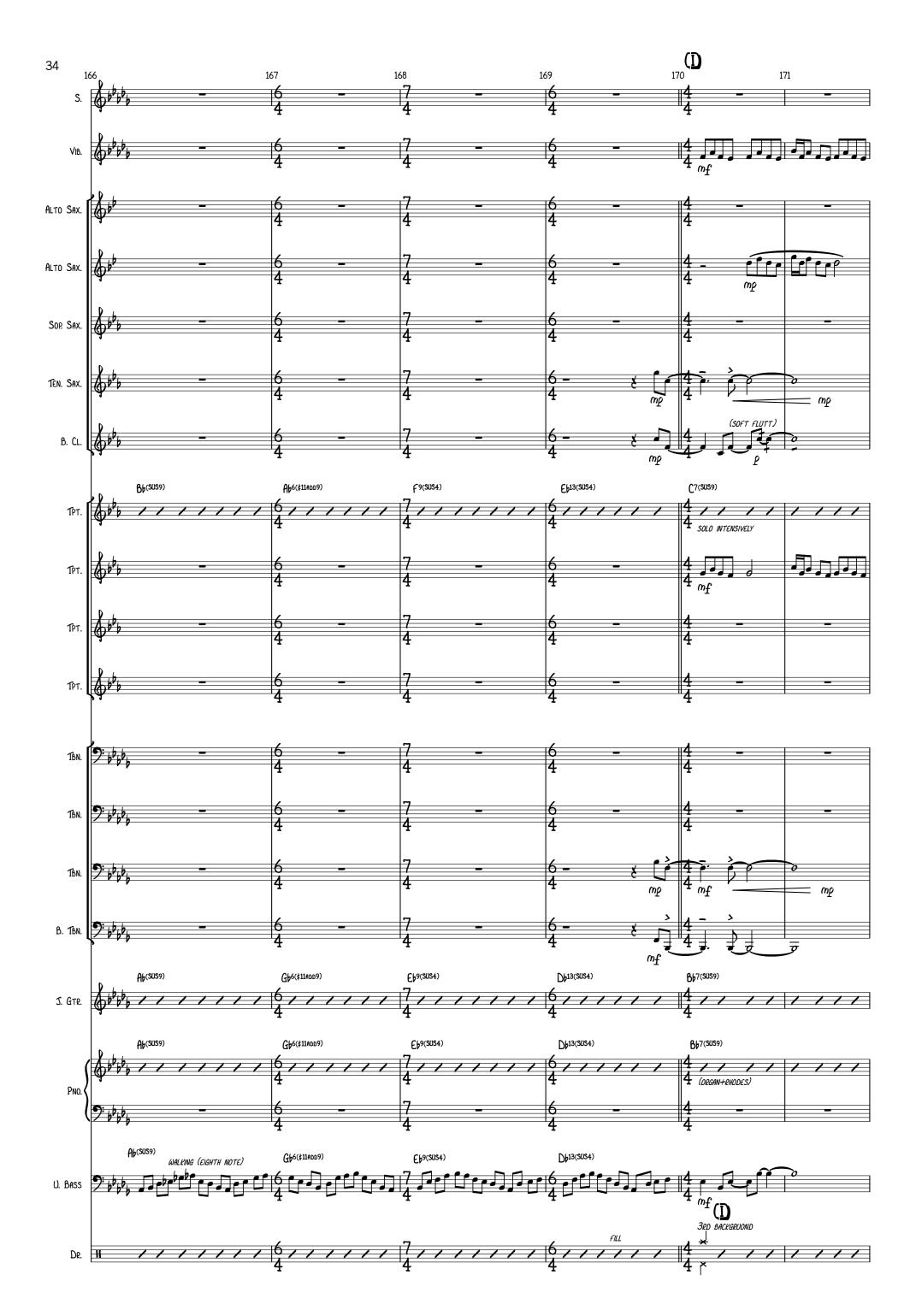














































# EPILOGUE (PATCHIM)

BY TANARAT CHAICHANA

# EPILOGUE (PATCHIM)

### FOR JAZZ ORCHESTRA

**INSTRUMENTATION** 

Vocal

Alto Saxophone 1/Flute Alto Saxophone 2 Tenor Saxophone 1/Soprano Saxophone Tenor Saxophone 2 / Clarinet Bass Clarinet/Baritone Saxophone

4 Trumpets/ Flugelhorns

3 Trombones 1 Bass Trombone

Electric Guitar

Electric Piano/Synthesizer

**Electric Bass** 

Percussion (Vibraphone/Congas/Rain Stick/Wind Chime/Tambourine)

Drum Set

#### (Poem) mm.317 - 345

The sunrise and the moonset, we used to live happily together.

But now we have to depart. Only the empty sky will remind the old to be sad.

Oh, my dearest jasmine, why do you have to remind me of the dewdrop on your leaf?

The feeling that I used to touch, the delicate fragrance that I used to smell.

It is at this time that the wind blows and flutters and brings the clouds to the sky, and my eyes could not follow.

Does no one know how deep is the ocean? Does no one know how deep is your heart?

Oh, my dearest dahlia, the flower of my love, the flower I carefully planted, but no one knows who has taken. Now my heart will be broken, and my soul will be lost.

It is at this time that we nearly see each other, but we still remain apart.

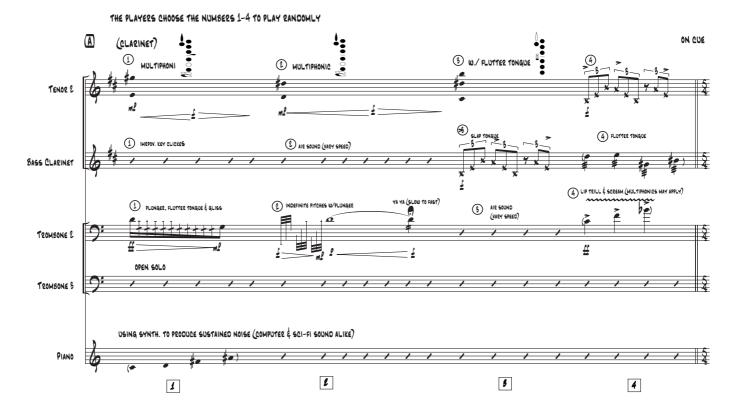
Because you are the moonset at dawn and I'm the sundown at dusk. Thus, we cannot see each other in the same sky.

Tanarat C. 25/01/2021

## EPILOGUE (PATCHIM)

### TRANSPOSED SCORE

TANARAT CHAICHANA



2021 WWW.TANARATBASSPLAYER.COM





































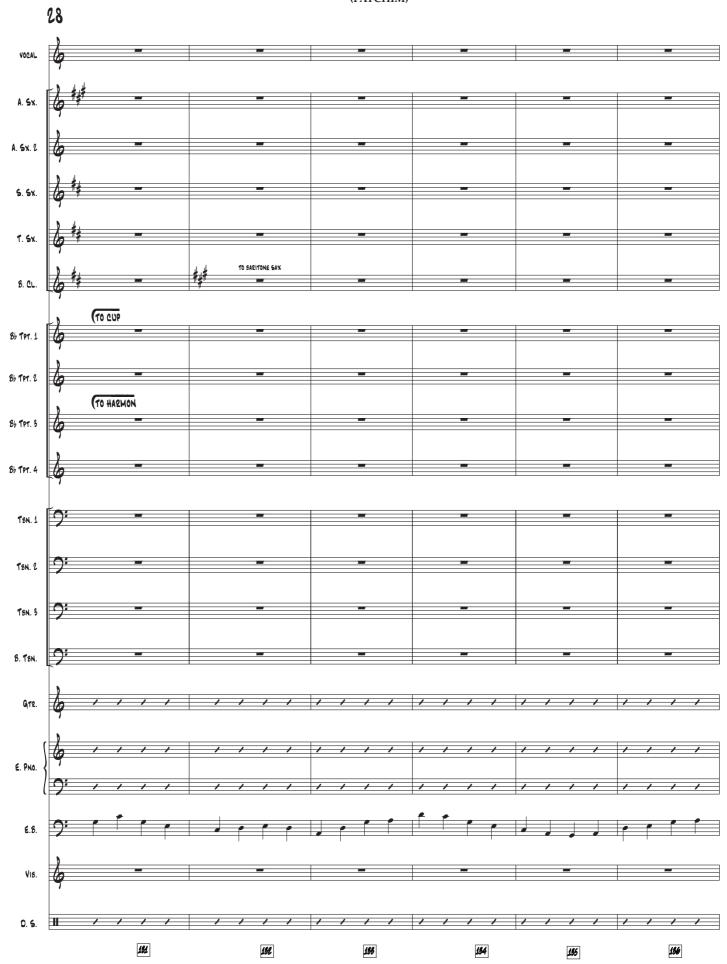


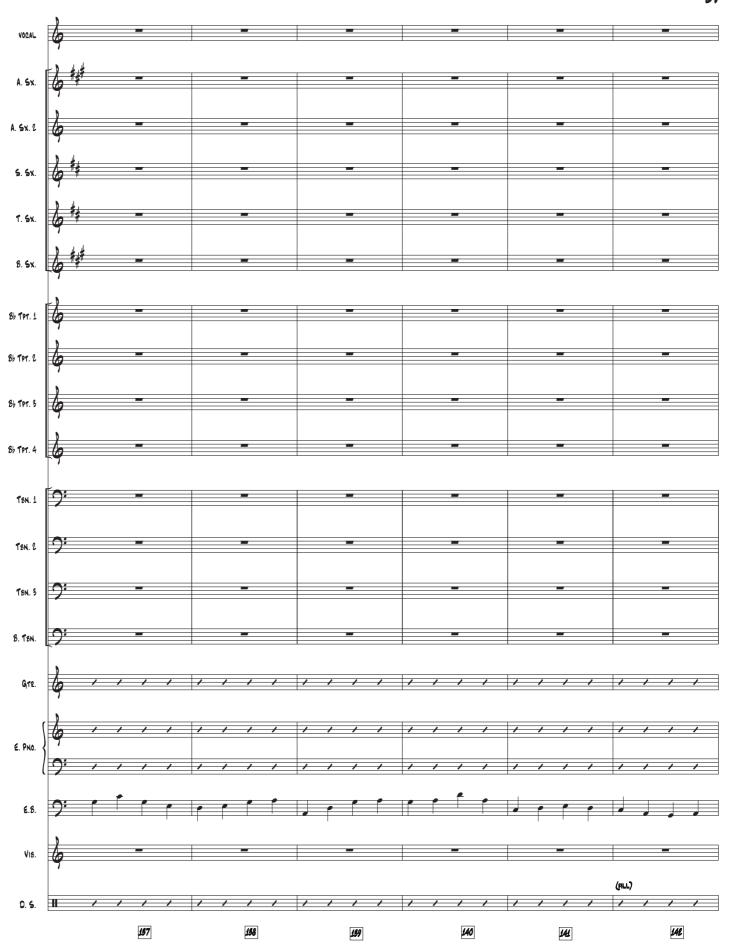


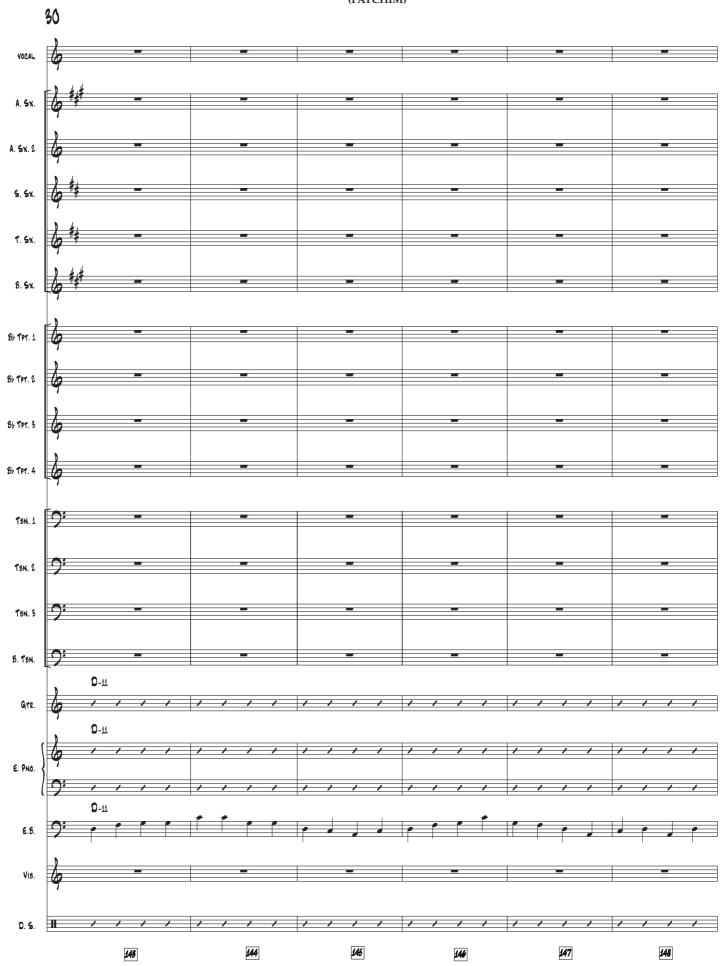




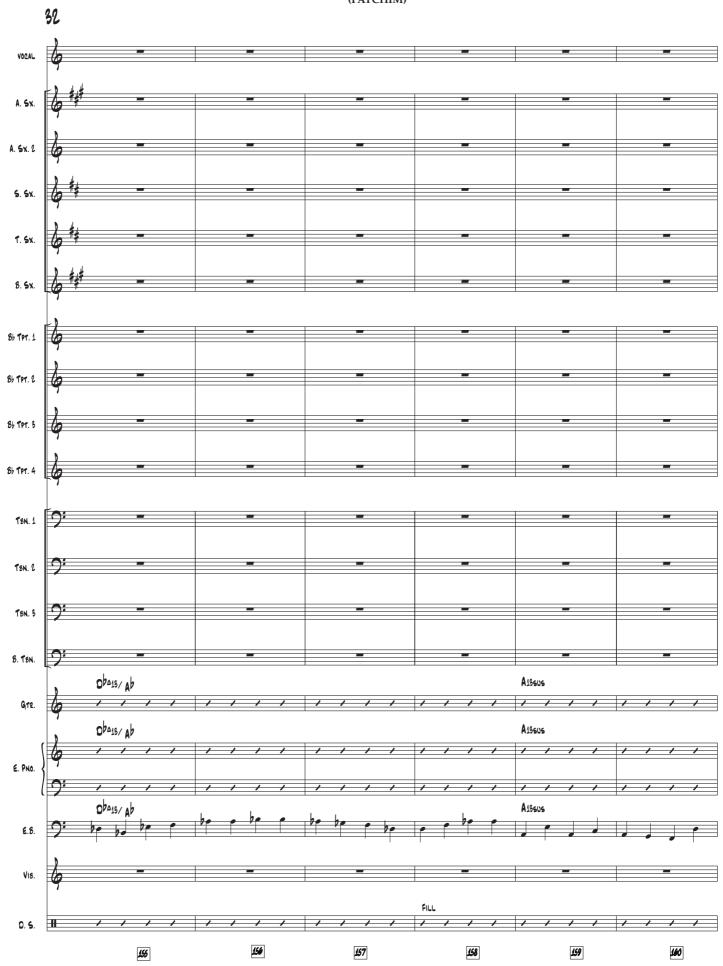


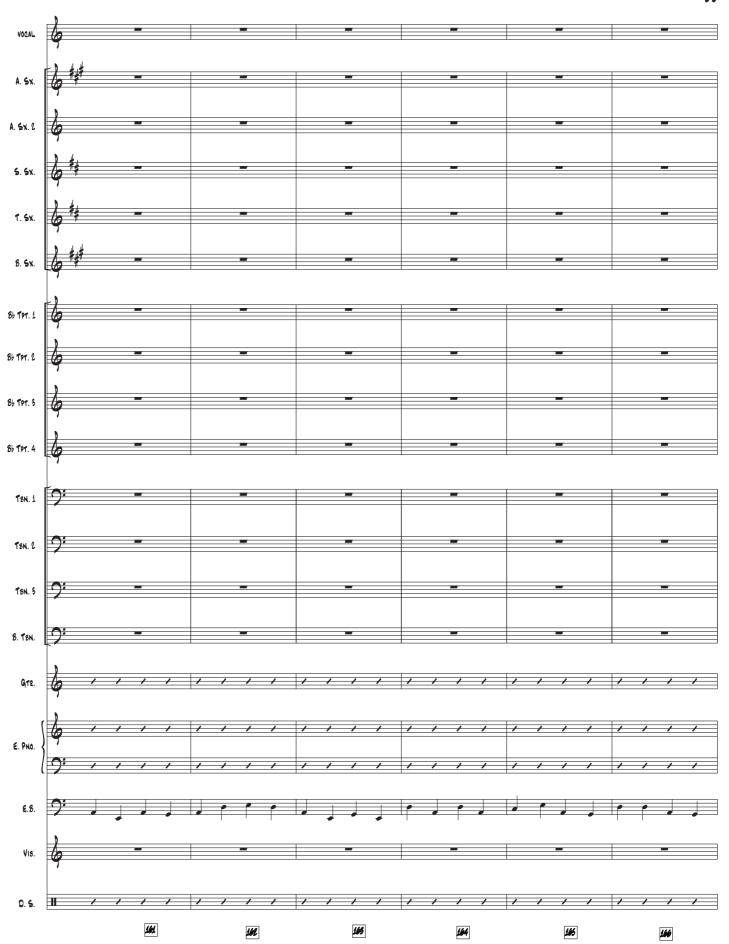


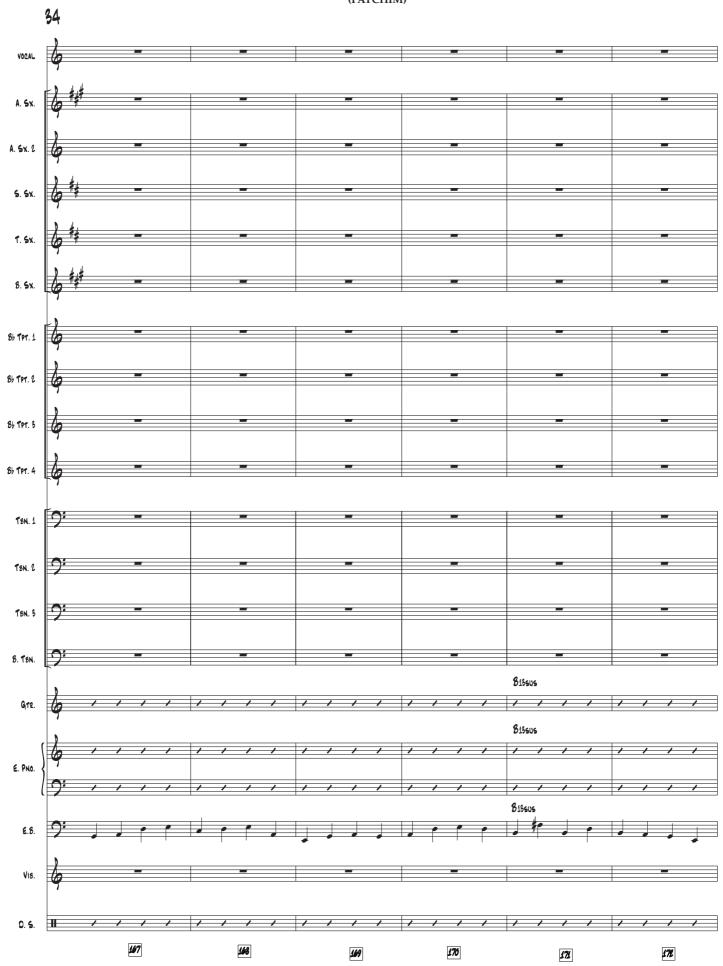






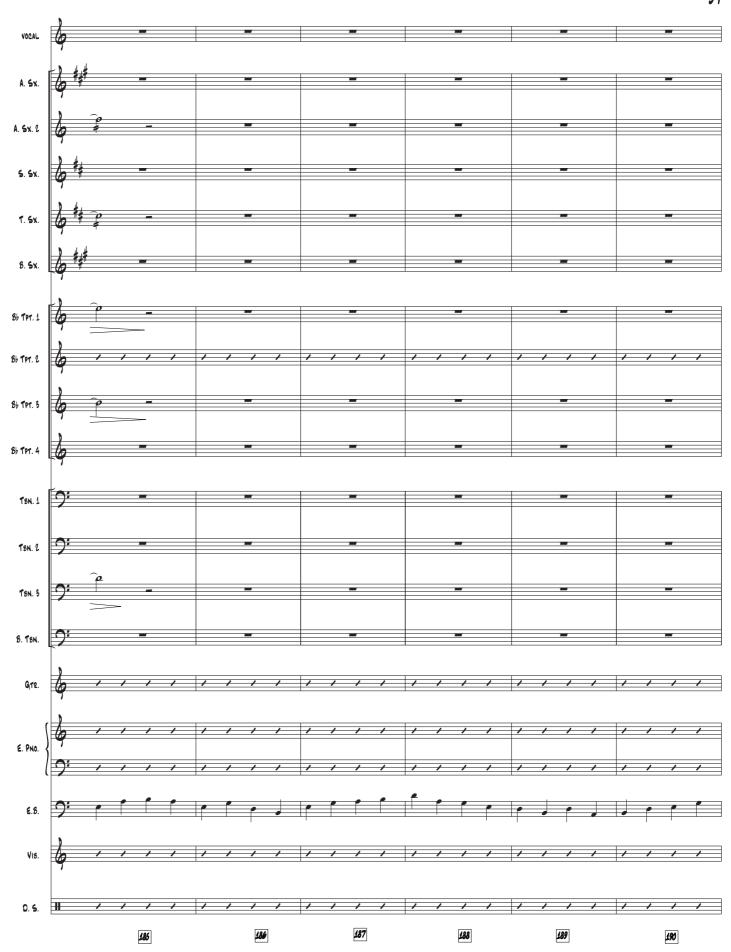






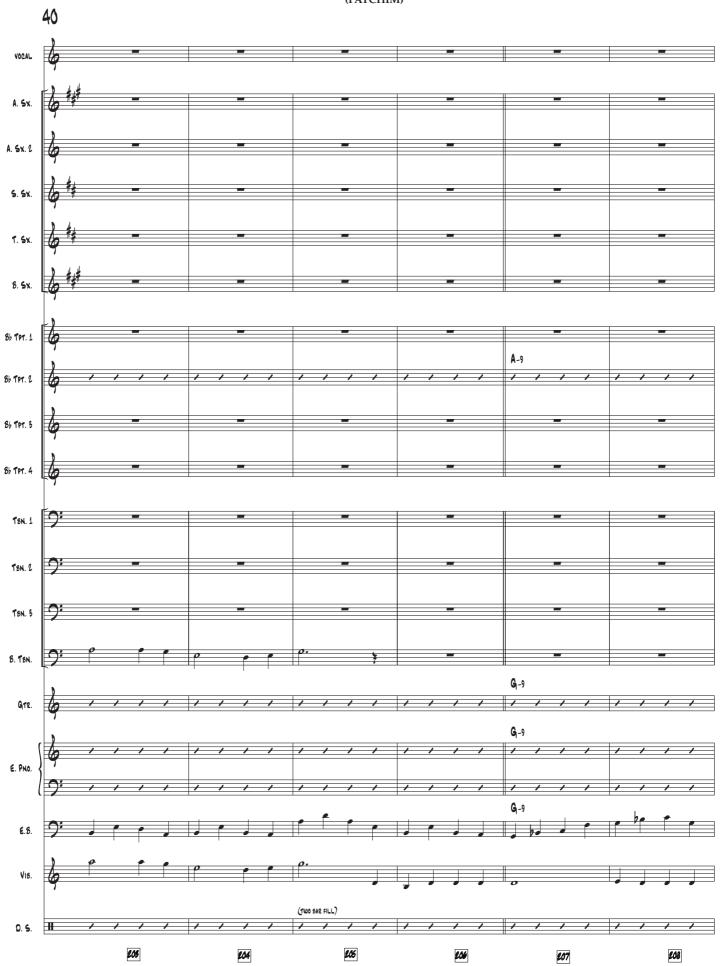




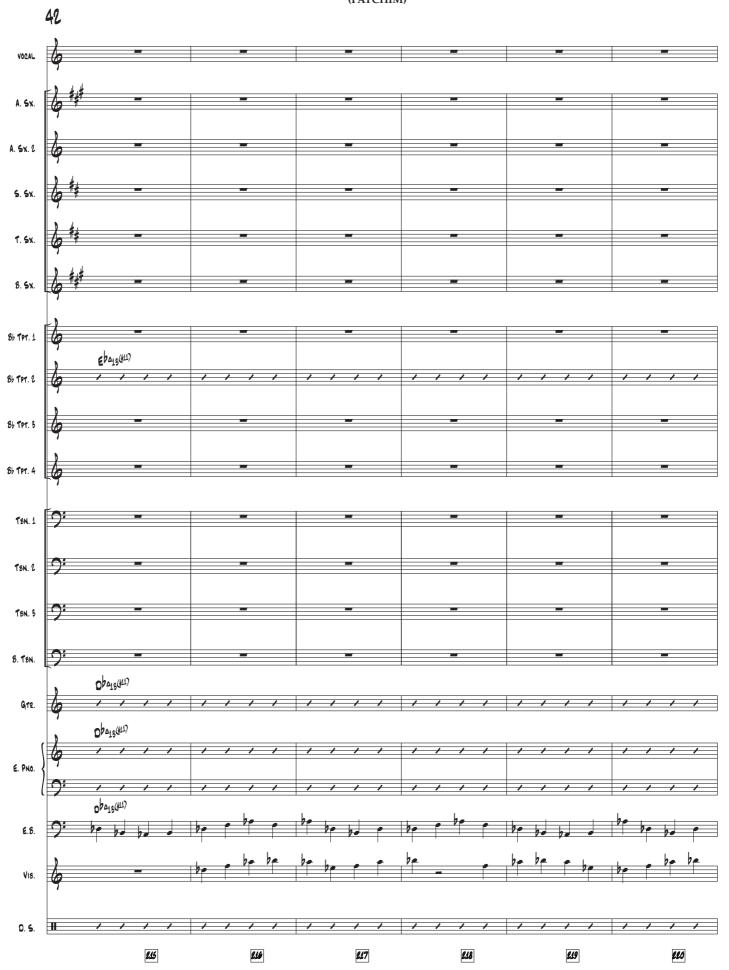








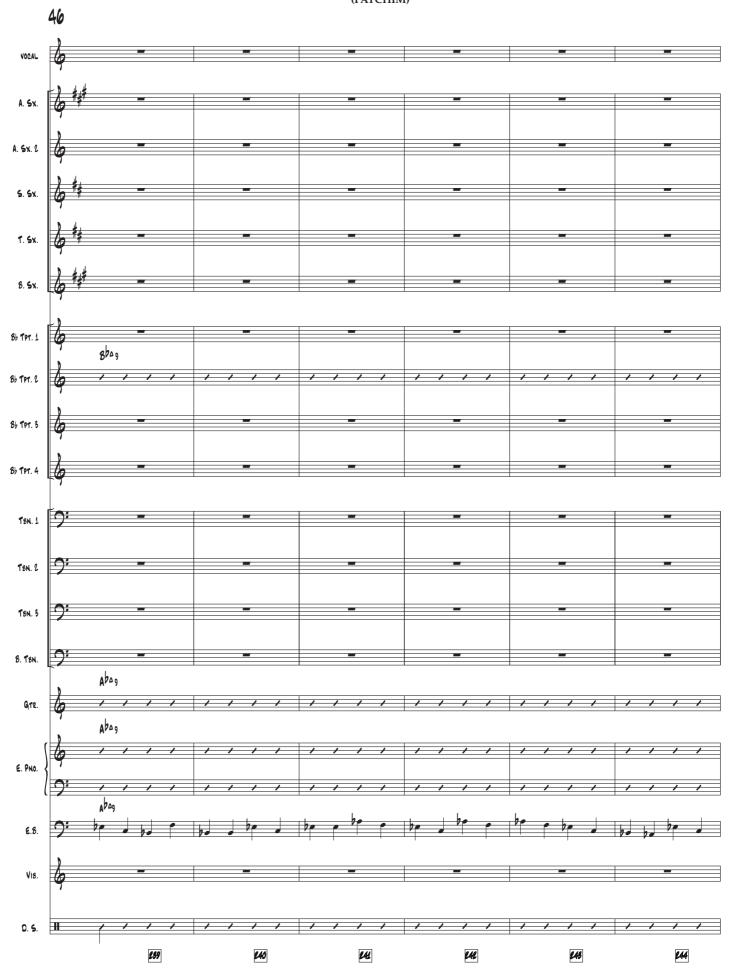




















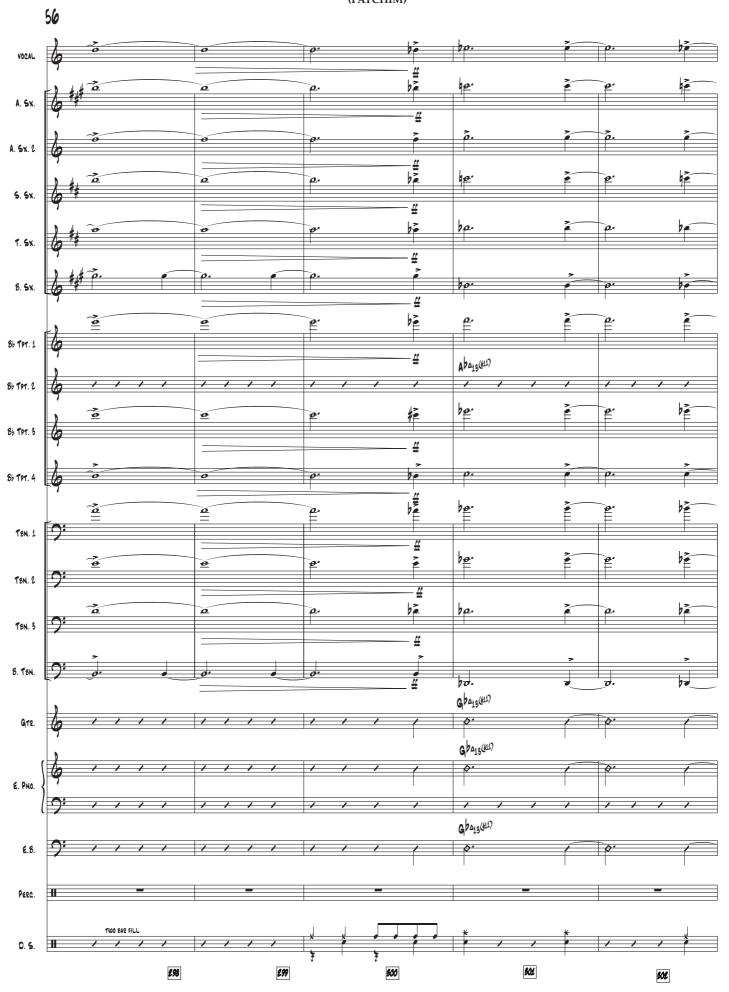




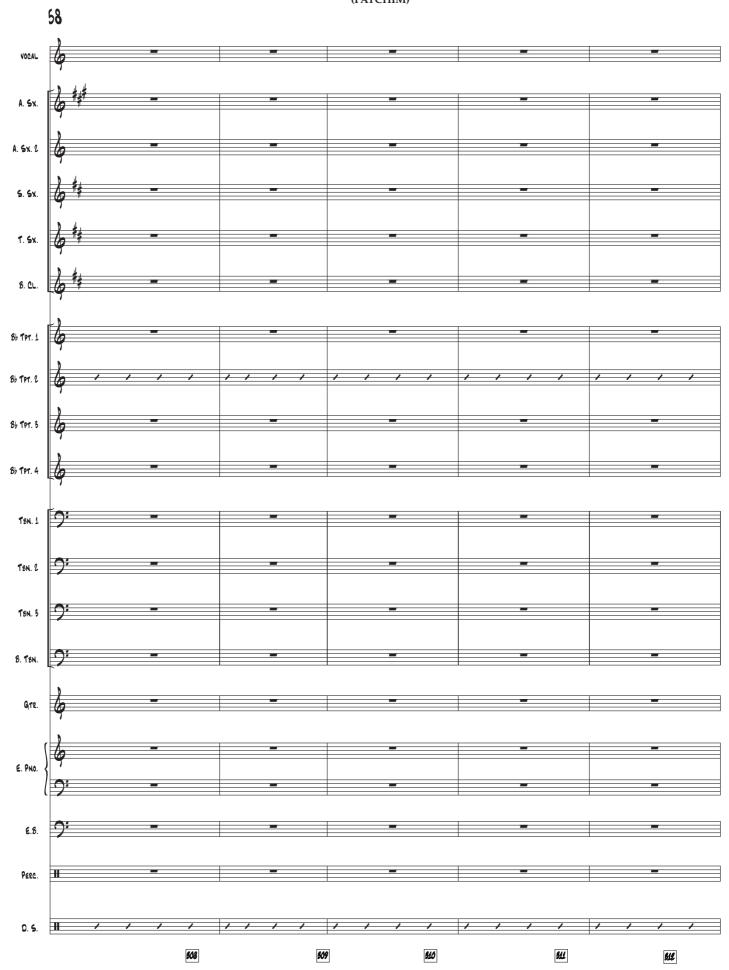


















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