

## “Siam Duriya Likhit” Thai Music for Piano Solo



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### Abstract

The innovative research, *Siam Duriya Likhit* is an arrangement of five selected traditional Thai music, drawn from different genres — *Aiyaret Overture*, *Saen Khamnueng in Thao Variations*, *Vivahaphrasamut Suite*, *Sut-sa-nguan Sam Chan*, and *Phra Athit Ching Duang Song Chan* — for piano solo. Research Innovation implies the application of western classical as models in interpreting Thai traditional music, bringing them up to a new sonic experience and characteristic while preserving the identity of the traditional Thai melodies. In the arranging procedures, two music masters are used as models: Khru Sumitra Sucharitkul and Col. Choochart Pitaksakorn (2010 National Artist in Western Performing Arts).

Variety in styles, contrapuntal techniques, along with the characteristics derived from the study, are implemented in the arrangement of these five traditional Thai songs for a better musical interpretation and a unique style. By constructing the composition like western piano literature, this arrangement can bring forth the sonority of both western and eastern music. Hence, the result is Thai traditional music in a solo piano composition that conveys international style while generating further development of Thai national musical heritage.

## บทคัดย่อ

งานสร้างสรรค์ดุริยางคศิลป์ “สยามดุริยางคศิลป์” เป็นผลงานการเรียบเรียงเสียงประสานเพลงไทยสำหรับเดี่ยวเปียโน 5 บท เลือกมาจากเพลงไทยต่างประเภทกัน ได้แก่ เพลงโหมโรงไอเอเรศ สามชั้น เพลงแสนคำนึง เถา เพลงดับวิาวาพระสมุท เพลงสุดสงวน สามชั้น และเพลงพระอาทิตย์ชิงดวง สองชั้น วัตถุประสงค์หลักของการเรียบเรียงคือเพื่อสร้างสรรค์วรรณกรรมเปียโนที่มีเอกลักษณ์ และเพิ่มพูนวรรณกรรมเปียโนของชาติ ในกระบวนการเรียบเรียง ผู้วิจัยได้ศึกษาเทคนิคการประพันธ์เพลงของบทเรียบเรียงเพลงไทยสำหรับเดี่ยวเปียโน ผลงานของนักดนตรีต้นแบบ 2 คน คือครูสุมิตรา สุจริตกุล นักเปียโนต้นแบบของการเดี่ยวเปียโนเพลงไทย และพันเอกชูชาติ พิทักษากร ศิลปินแห่งชาติ สาขาศิลปะการแสดง (ดนตรีสากล) ประจำปีพุทธศักราช 2553

วิธีการเรียบเรียง ใช้เทคนิคการประพันธ์เพลงตะวันตก เป็นการทดลองแนวคิดใหม่ แต่อยู่ภายใต้ขอบเขตสำคัญคือการรักษาทำนองดนตรีไทยไว้ครบถ้วน สามารถบรรเลงตามขนบของดนตรีไทยได้ ใช้กรอบแนวคิดเกี่ยวกับประเภทของบทประพันธ์เพลงคลาสสิกสำหรับเดี่ยวเปียโนแนวทางในการตีความและสร้างบุคลิกให้แก่เพลงไทยทั้ง 5 เพลง การใช้แนวคิดของวรรณกรรมเปียโนตะวันตก ทำให้บทเรียบเรียงมีเนื้อหาสาระเชิงบทประพันธ์เพลงที่ผสมผสานสำเนียงดนตรีของตะวันตกและตะวันออก สามารถสร้างสรรค์ให้เพลงไทยสำหรับเดี่ยวเปียโนเป็นวรรณกรรมเปียโนของไทยที่มีความเป็นสากลมากขึ้น นอกจากนี้ยังเป็นการต่อยอดจากบทเรียบเรียงเพลงไทยสำหรับเดี่ยวเปียโนที่มีมาแต่เดิมให้มีพัฒนาการด้านวิชาการดนตรีมากขึ้น

## Background/ Problem Statement/ Statement Significance

Since the reign of King Rama V (1868 – 1910), Khun Samarnprahasakij (Klaew Watcharabol, 1869 – 1943) was the first pianist who played traditional Thai music on piano. The melodic line was played by using both hands playing parallel octaves like the way of playing Ranad (Thai Xylophone). Later, during the reign of King Rama VI (1910-1925), Khru Sumitra Sucharitkul (1907-1986), the female court pianist became well-known. She was the first piano soloist of traditional Thai music, who created the arrangements of traditional Thai music for piano solo. The arrangements were combining the basic western harmony with Thai musical idioms, while the fundamental melodic lines of the traditional Thai music were strictly preserved. Khru Sumitra Sucharitkul also originated in creating the new way of playing traditional Thai music on piano by using left hand playing harmonic accompaniment.

During 1970 – 1983, Col. Choochart Pitaksakorn (1934 – present), 2010 National Artist in Western Performing Arts (western music), created six arrangements of traditional Thai music for piano solo; Somsongsang in Thao variations, Nok Khamin Sam Chan, Saratee Sam Chan, Sai Yoke Sam Chan, Lao Pan and Fon Ngiew. Still based on the western diatonic harmony, his arrangements permeated with the chromatic harmony, and also employed the western counterpoint, while strictly maintained the original melodic lines.

Without any written out music notation, those arrangements have been passed on by rote from Khru Sumitra Sucharitkul and Col. Choochart Pitaksakorn to their only disciple, Professor Dr.Natchar Pancharoen, who becomes the recent day's prototype pianists of traditional Thai music and also created the new arrangements of traditional Thai music for piano solo.

"Siam Duriya Likhit" the arrangement of Thai music for piano solo, takes its inspiration from the previous arrangements of two music masters. It is created for generating further development of traditional Thai music for piano solo of the past masters.



*Left: "Siam Duriya Likhit"*

*Right: Lecture recital program on May 7, 2015*



*Lecture recital on May 7, 2015*

*Siam Duriya Likhit performed by the virtuosic pianists; Jamorn Supapol (3<sup>rd</sup> from left), Pornpan Banternghansa (4<sup>th</sup> from left) and Jintaarah Sitalayan (1<sup>st</sup> from left), with guests musicians, Anant Narkkong (2<sup>nd</sup> from left), Apirak (2<sup>nd</sup> from right) and **Nadis Boonrod (1<sup>st</sup> from right)**. The others are two masters, Col.Choochart Pitaksakorn (3<sup>rd</sup> from right) and Professor Dr.Natchar Pancharoen (4<sup>th</sup> from right)*

**Objective / Aim**

1. To create the literature of traditional Thai music for piano solo in an exclusive compositional style.
2. To enlarge the solo piano repertoire for traditional Thai music

**Methodology**

Five pieces in this collection of arrangements had chosen from the different genre of Thai music, including the overture, Thao variations, solo piece, suite and the farewell piece. The arranging methodology is based on western composition techniques together with innovative ideas of Thai melodic preservation, to enhance Thai performance potential. Along with western composition techniques, the composition framework is designed in the scope of classical solo piano repertoire including sonata, theme and variations, Romantic character piece, nationalistic repertoire, as well as piano arrangement from vocal repertoire. In studying the composition techniques, the Thai music for piano solo arranged by two masters, Khru Sumitra Sucharitkul and Col. Choochart Pitaksakorn, from the “Piano Literature of Siam” had been analyzed. The arrangements used the intermediate through the advance level of piano technic in order to make them suitable for those levels pianists.

**Conclusion and Significance**

Through research procedures, the researcher has acquired knowledge, experience, and skill in the area of music composition, arranging, and Thai music knowledge and skill, especially the potential to advance creative works with musical scholarship. Accomplishments in problem solving and untangling obstacles in this innovative research have resulted in vivid and splendid music with its explicit character and identity, along with creating new principles and theories that can benefit further creative works.

**Program Notes Form including these details:****Lecture Recital of “Siam Duriya Likhit”**

“Siam Duriya Likhit: Thai Music for Piano Solo” is a collection of arrangements of selected traditional Thai music for piano solo. Five different genres of traditional Thai music were selected. Western’s musical idioms had been utilized in these arrangements but the main traditional Thai melody and traditional Thai music’s performance practice had been strictly preserved.

Five selected traditional Thai music are *Aiyaret Overture*, *Saen Khamnueng in Thao Variations*, *Vivahaphrasamut Suite*, *Sut-sa-nguan Sam-chan*, and *Phra Athit Ching Duang Song Chan*.

### 1. Aiyaret Overture

A lively and graceful *Aiyaret Overture* possesses many charming musical tricks of Thai traditional music. The melodic line should be played with gentle touch. Like in the performance practice of Thai traditional music, it starts off with a rather slow tempo and gradually moving forward. The first movement is has a fugue-like manner followed by the livelier syncopated rhythm counterpoint in second movement. The last two movements move faster with gradually thicker texture. Pianists are free to properly add articulations and dynamics.

### 2. San Kamneung in Thao Variations

San Kamneung in Thao Variations has melodic line accompanied by chords. To gain more stylistic of Thai sound, pianists can add ornamentations. Although the main melodic line had been elaborated with Thai traditional musical tricks and ornaments, pianists can also play without them. *Song Chan*, which carries the familiar tune, can be played separately. *Chan Diew* is lively and getting faster until the end of “look Mod” (coda)

### 3. Vivahaphrasamut Suite

Tab or suite-like piece consists of songs in rhythmic cycle of *song chan* playing one after another. Tab *Vivahaphrasamut* or *Vivahaphrasamut suite* normally consists of three songs, *Khluen Krathop Fang*, *Bang Bai* and *Khaek Sarai*. The concept of Classical three-movement sonata was adapted in combination with the idea of the Romantic character piece. The first song, *Khluen Krathop Fang* imitates the sound of Classical sonata. Like a barcarolle, the second song, *Bang Bai* has triplets. The last song, *Khaek Sarai* has different tone color and character, emphasizing on articulations and the octave shifting.

### 4. Sut-sa-nguan, Sam Chan

This arrangement of *Sut-sa-nguan, Sam Chan* is a one-movement piece for piano solo, demonstrating the skill of the pianist. Comparing to other pieces in this collection, the style of this piece is closest to idioms of traditional Thai music. The advantage goes to pianists who have some experiences and understanding of traditional Thai musical language, especially in *Tiew Hwan* (slow section). In *Tiew Keb* (fast section), which the style of two-part invention has

been used, the music becomes more decisive. The sound of running passages should be solid but never too harsh. Wide dynamic range can be incorporated.

#### 5. Phra Athit Ching Duang, Sorng Chan

Phra Athit Ching Duang, Sorng Chan is a song for voice accompanied by instruments. Like a postlude, it is usually performed at the end of musical performance or poetic reading. In this arrangement, the traditional lyric had been brought in use together with the melody. By adding the colorful harmony, the piece became more like a character piece. The lyric shown here is to help pianists to understand while playing the role of accompanying part. Other parts, where there is no lyric shown, the music became more embellished and more melismatic. When performing with a singer, the piano should play gently underneath the singer's voice.

**Presenter's name** Assistant Professor Dr.Pimchanok Suwannathada

**Presenter's profile picture**



#### **Brief biography of Presenter**

A Graduate with honour from the Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Chulalongkorn University, Pimchanok completed her Master of Arts degree in Music Education from Mahidol University and a Doctor of Fine and Applied Arts degree from the Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Chulalongkorn University. Pimchanok studied both classical piano and traditional Thai music for piano solo with Professor Dr.Natchar Pancharoen, and also studied classical piano with Dr.Bennett Lerner. Currently Pimhanok serves as a full-time instructor at the Faculty of Music, Silpakorn University. One of her major works is notation of "Piano Literature of Siam."

**Youtube link (song to perform 4 minutes)** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7pkUyzGrpsw>

(Date of Performance: 7 August 2015)

#### **Note:**

- The performance of creative works must be research-based and should be clearly stated in the abstract
- The performance of the creative work may be solo or ensemble based
- Please provide a Youtube link to a four minute video except of your performance in

the space allocated in the online submission form. This performance video must not be more than 12 months old. 2-3 pages description of the research component (background, contribution & significance) should also be submitted.

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