
The Doctoral Music Composition: “The King of Thailand,” the Symphony Orchestra Work Tribute to the Great King

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Abstract

"The composition, "The King of Thailand", is the doctoral symphonic composition which tells of the long lasting impression of the composer about King Bhumibhol Adulyadej, the present King of Thailand. The program music aims to conjure in the listener's mind the image of the great king, who loves his subjects dearly and who has worked tirelessly for the happiness and better life of all Thai people. More importantly, he is truly regarded as the spirit of the whole nation. The Symphonic piece with the duration of approximately 30 minutes. is consisted of 4 unique movements which are; 1) In The Heart of Every Thai 2) Reigning in Righteousness 3) Under his Graciousness, and 4) Long Live The King.

The main themes are inspired by traditional Thai melodic variations whereby the heterophony approach has been well crafted moving independently within the Western musical form. The unique characteristic principle of this contemporary musical style is the blending technique of the Thai musical culture to the Western music instrumental idiom.

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Introduction

King Bhumibhol Adulyadej was born on December 5th, 1927, as the third child of Prince Mahidol and Somdet Phra Srinagarindra. He had been enthroned as the 9th King of Chakri Dynasty on June 9th, 1946. He is the beloved King of all Thai people according to his righteousness and contribution to country. His commitment on Coronation Day, May 5th, 1950, "I will reign the nation with righteousness for the happiness of Thai people" has proved its roles to ensure the country's wellness and gratefulness.

He has put all of his effort and enhanced the economic efficiency as the intelligible mainstream for being the key success in all of the 4000 royal projects. He has been visited to every location no matter how hard and stubborn journey. As the words; "No place where the King never visits in Thailand", it is to minimize poverty and enhance standard of livings. Wherever he goes, Thai people praises "Long Live The King".

The Doctoral Music Composition, "The King of Thailand" is composed to express King Bhumibhol Adulyadej's impression in 4 main contexts as followed;

1) In The Heart of Every Thai

The Composer's impression toward the massive crowd of Thai people who gathered to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of His Majesty ascension to the Throne, the longest period among all Kings of Thailand, and the world, at Anantasamakom Throne Hall, King Rama the V Monument Square, Rajdamnern Road, June 9th, 2006.

2) Reigning in Righteousness

The context was derived the King's speech of the committed on 10 royal virtues or ethics to ensure happiness to all of his subjects.

3) Under his Graciousness

The context has expressed happiness and peacefulness of Thai people under the King's charismatic reign.

4) Long Live The King

The context had been inspired by blessings of Thai people toward the 84th King's Birthday on December 5th, 2011, who was showing their love, loyalty and gratefulness to their King. Composer has conveyed the message through the words "Long Live The King".

Scope of composition:

"The King of Thailand" is composed for Symphony Orchestra in the form of program music, symphonic poem that described and illustrated the impression toward the King's righteousness and love to his people.

Explanation of composition:

The Doctoral Music Composition has included various concepts that blend Western classical music, Thai music principle, and uniqueness of contemporary music into the symphonic poem's context. The composition is written for symphony orchestra, which applied unique musical forms, composing techniques. In the meantime, the instrumental combination had approached by using choir, fanfare, and Thai musical instruments were applied effectively. Composer also transformed the traditional Thai melodic variations, heterophonic texture, and genre to mix with synthesizer. Compositional concepts of this composition are as followed;

Movement I: In The Heart of Every Thai

The music has expressed the impression of Thai people who gathered to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of His Majesty ascension to the Throne. The sound of brass and strings played important role, accompanied by choir, woodwind and percussion.

Composition Ideas - The First Movement:

Composer created melodies based on The King' s Birthday on December 5th, or 5 DEC, in which 5 of C scale refers to Sol voice (G), DEC is Re, Mi, Do, respectively. Number 9 refers to the order of the enthronement of Chakri Dynasty so D note or number 9 of C scale is the theme of this song.



Figure 1. Motive

Motive is created from The King's Birthday and become the main content to initiate the theme for the next Movement.



Figure 2. Theme

Theme is developed from motive that focused on 9 (D) note. The first motive has been applied the Fanfare and honking which are the instruments used in Royal ceremonies to create theme that represented the King who has tremendously been recognized in country.

The second motive illustrates the vast group of people who gathered to pay tribute to the King who is the heart of the nation. Composer has created Theme B which is developed from Theme A. The representing of the repeated melodies in order to disseminate theme by variety of musical instruments, representing Thai people gathering around. Composer also created the new melodic trasforming to mix with the theme that being developed to perfectly blend with melodies.

Figure 3. The distribution of them among musical instruments

Figure 4. The combination of new theme and current theme

Movement II: Reigning in Righteousness

The first and foremost quote of the King at the beginning of Coronation, "I will reign the nation with righteousness for the happiness of Thai people"

Composition Ideas - The Second Movement:

Composer has applied the King's speech context during Coronation ceremony in which the movement of the symphonic portrays contribution and perseverance of the King's contribution to country and maintaining ten virtues or righteousness to country.

Movement of the symphonic poem has three forms in minor scale that mix with Dorian mode and 4/4 rhythm. Flowing of music has showed an excitement, liveliness, confusion, exhaustion, and relaxation based on the of musical idioms. Composer created theme and progression chord by applying techniques such as repetition of the melodies, frequent key changing, and conveying of the message that the King exploited his capabilities to solve various problems.

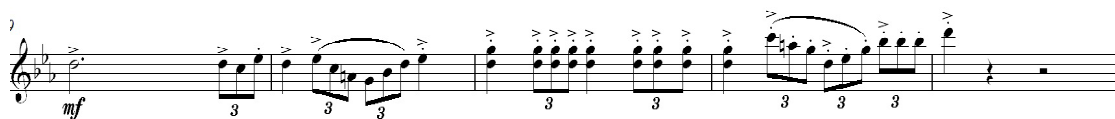


Figure 5. Theme of the 2nd movement in minor scale mixed with Dorian

Figure 6. Progression Chord in the 2nd movement

Composer applied the Retrograde technique which reversed backward the last note to the first one, and Augmentation to magnify melodies, representing the revision of idea as the relaxation.



Figure 7. Old melodies

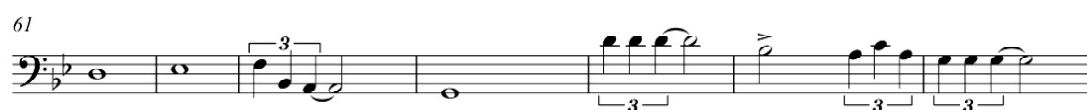


Figure 8. Creating melodies by applying Retrograde and Augmentation techniques

Movement III: Under his Graciousness

"No place where The King never visits in Thailand"

Composition Ideas - The Third Movement:

The context depicts peaceful living and wellness of Thai people under The King's graciousness

In Movement 3, composer applied global trend that blended Western music and Thai music. Composer also mixed Thai musical instruments such as flute, treble fiddle, and electronic instrument such as synthesizer. Theme and Variation are developed from Thai music and the melodies are designed to representing happiness for all people. Western music would be played to impersonate Thai musical instrument. Some parts included Heterophony texture which could possibly be the freely varied to many genres. Pentatonic scale applied using in this movement which is moderately slow, showing calmness and relaxation.



Figure 9. Theme from Thai melodies, Pentatonic scale, 3/4 movement



Figure 10. Dissemination of melodies to flute, oboe and clarinet, and impersonation of Thai music



Figure 11. Dissemination of melodies to violin, horn, and trumpet and impersonation of Thai music

The musical score for Figure 12 is a multi-staff arrangement. It begins with a rehearsal mark 'a2' and a measure number '49'. The instruments listed on the left are Bsn., Hn. I, Hn. II, III, Timp., Tri., Cym., Tub. B., Synth., Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., and Cb. The score shows various musical notations including notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as *mf*, *p*, and *mp*. A 'div' (divisi) marking is present for the Violin II staff. The music is written in a key with one flat and a 4/4 time signature.

Figure 12. Variation of melodies by Heterophony

Movement IV: LONG LIVE THE KING

The idea of this song is to celebrate The King's 84th birthday on December 5th, 2011

Composition Ideas - The Fourth Movement:

Composer applied March genre to this composition to celebrate the loyalty of Thai people toward their beloved King and chanting "Long Live The King".

Two main themes include Theme A, frequently adapted to represents celebration and Theme B refers to elegance of The King.



Figure 13. Theme A

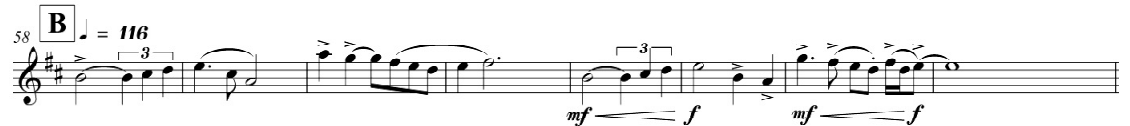


Figure 14. Theme B represents elegance of The King.



Figure 15. The 1st variation of Theme A



Figure 16. The 2nd variation of Theme A



Figure 17.



Figure 18.

Public Concert Performances:

The 1st concert, "The King of Thailand" was held in the 3rd Chula International New Music Festival and Conference 2013, performing contained 2 movements which are the 1st movement: In The Heart of Every Thai and the 3rd movement: Under his Graciousness. The 2nd concert which incorporated all 4 movements was held at Maha Chulalongkorn Building, Recital Hall 111, on March 31st, 2014, with 200 audiences.

The 2nd concert has been recorded in DVD and CD in order to distribute publicly and hoped to be beneficial for musical arts development in the future.



Figure 19. The 1st "The King of Thailand" concert



Figure 20. The 2nd "The King of Thailand" concert



Figure 21. DVD, CD, and DVD cover

Discussion:

The doctoral composition, "The King of Thailand", symphonic poem is completed based on predetermined scope; written for Symphony Orchestra, There are several limitations of the research methodology, for instance, limited time for practice, different of vocalists and musicians. These aspects can be improved by securing financial support from sponsors in order to ensure completeness of research methodology of composition.

Despite many problems, however, "The King of Thailand" concert was successfully held. The composer was so proud to express loyalty and gratitude toward the beloved King of Thai people, as well as the aesthetics of music composition for audiences.

Conclusion:

The composition, is the musical arts masterpiece that expresses loyalty and respect to the King. The composition is meaningful and artistically pleasant, thus valuable for musical arts enthusiasts.

As composer, is believed that the composition, not only conveys loyalty of Thai people to the King, but also supports music to motivate and ensure sustainable development of societies.



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