

แนวทางและวิธีการผสมผสานดนตรีไทยและดนตรีสากลในบทเพลง  
“เกษตร-กษัตริย์” บทเพลงพระราชนิพนธ์ในสมเด็จพระกนิษฐาธิราชเจ้า  
กรมสมเด็จพระเทพรัตนราชสุดาฯ สยามบรมราชกุมารี  
INTEGRATING THAI AND WESTERN MUSIC: A CASE STUDY OF  
THE ROYAL COMPOSITION OF H.R.H. PRINCESS MAHA CHAKRI  
SIRINDHORN’S KASET-KASAT

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## บทคัดย่อ

การสร้างสรรคผลงานที่มีการผสมผสานดนตรีตะวันตกเข้ากับดนตรีไทยเริ่มเด่นชัดขึ้นในรัชสมัยของพระบาทสมเด็จพระจุลจอมเกล้าเจ้าอยู่หัว โดยโปรดเกล้าฯ ให้เจ้าพระยาเทเวศร์วงศ์วิวัฒน์คิดค้นการแสดงละครประกอบดนตรีโดยได้รับอิทธิพลจากโอเปร่า ซึ่งเรียกวงดนตรีประเภทนี้ว่า “วงปี่พาทย์ดึกดำบรรพ์” โดยการแสดงนี้นับว่าเป็นจุดเริ่มต้นของการผสมผสานระหว่างดนตรีไทยและแนวความคิดการบรรเลงแบบตะวันตก ซึ่งทำให้ต่อมาได้มีการผสมผสานดนตรีไทยและดนตรีตะวันตกในรูปแบบอื่น ๆ เกิดขึ้นมากมาย งานวิจัยชิ้นนี้มีจุดประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาแนวทางในการผสมผสานดนตรีไทยและดนตรีสากลในบทเพลง “เกษตร-กษัตริย์” บทเพลงพระราชนิพนธ์ในสมเด็จพระกนิษฐาธิราชเจ้า กรมสมเด็จพระเทพรัตนราชสุดาฯ สยามบรมราชกุมารี โดยกระบวนการในการสร้างสรรคผลงานประกอบไปด้วยการประพันธ์เบื้องต้น (ดนตรีไทย) การผสมผสานดนตรีสากล และการฝึกซ้อมและปรับความสมดุลระหว่างดนตรีไทยและดนตรีสากล ซึ่งผลการวิจัยพบว่า แนวทางและวิธีการผสมผสานดนตรีไทยและดนตรีสากลในบทเพลง “เกษตร-กษัตริย์” ประกอบด้วย การเพิ่มมิติของเสียงจากเพลงไทย การเลือกใช้เสียงเพื่อให้เกิดความกลมกลืน การเพิ่มแนวรั้วและการสอดทำนอง การควบคุมลักษณะเสียง และวิธีการอื่น เช่นการสอดทำนอง และการเล่นประสานแนวรั้วของเพลงไทย โดยแนวคิดหลักคือการให้วงดนตรีไทยเป็นหลัก ไม่ทำลายคุณลักษณะบันไดเสียงตามหลักการของดนตรีไทย

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## ABSTRACT

The integration of Thai and Western music occurred and became more apparent in the reign of King Rama V of Thailand. At that time, the King appointed Prince Deveswongwiwat to create music with dance that was similar to Western opera and named this kind of performance Pi-pat Deuk Dam Ban. This has been renowned as a music innovation that initiated the integration of Thai and Western music. Afterwards, the integration of Thai and Western music occurred in various forms. This paper aimed to investigate the methods of integrating Thai and Western music Kaset-Kasat, the royal composition of H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn. The processes of integrating Thai and Western music included initial composition (Thai music), integrating Western music, rehearsing and adjusting, and creating music scores. The study found that the methods and processes of integrating Thai and Western music include using Western music to enhance Thai music, not ruining Thai characteristics by not tuning Thai musical instruments to a Western scale or tuning Western musical instruments to a Thai scale, adding more texture to original Thai music, sound selection for consonance, using doubling and countermelody, controlling articulations, and using other techniques such as using countermelody and accompanying Thai vocal line.

**Keywords:** Integration of Thai and Western music / Royal composition in H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn / contemporary music / music creation

## Introduction

Music has been developing continuously in every culture. With regards to the music of Thai people, evidence showed that musical instruments and music bands have existed since the Sukothai period<sup>1</sup> and has been developing in numerous forms<sup>2</sup>. Thereafter, when Thai society had more connections with many foreign countries, many forms of Western culture were brought into Thailand, including music. At first, however, Western music was brought in without any modifications. Later, foreign musical instruments were brought in and performed with unique characteristics of each country. The integration of Thai and Western music occurred and became more apparent in the reign of King Rama V. At that time, the King desired to have Thai music performance to welcome and entertain official foreign visitors. Consequently, he appointed Prince Deveswongwiwat (with the help of Prince Narisara Nuwattiwong, a music expert) to create a performance by selecting existing songs to be played with Pi-pat ensemble. Later, Prince Narisara Nuwattiwong arranged music with singing such as Ramayana and I-Nao, then Prince Deveswongwiwat added dance and story lines. This type of performance was used sometimes to welcome official foreign visitors. However, the performance was played only in a ballroom.

When Prince Deveswongwiwat returned from Europe, he had a conversation with Prince Narisara Nuwattiwong to extend the play to be similar to Western opera. Further, the theatre for this kind of performance was established and named Deuk Dam Ban theatre. This name was first purposed to be the name for the ensemble, but people called this type of performance as Pi-pat Deuk Dam Ban<sup>3</sup>. So, this performance was named after the theatre since then. Pi-pat Deuk Dam Ban is renowned as a musical innovation that initiated the integration of Thai and Western music. Afterwards, the integration of Thai and Western music occurred in various forms.

Kaset-Kasat was first performed on March 26, 2011 in a Pi-pat Deuk Dam Ban performance at Chulalongkorn University Auditorium on the occasion of H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn coming for the celebration of the 94th Anniversary of Chulalongkorn University. Also, this performance has been performed many times on many occasions, for example, "Maha Duriyang Thai-Sakol Chaloem Phra Kiat", presented by bands from Royal Thai Army, Royal Thai Navy, Royal Thai Air Force, and Thai Police together with Chulalongkorn University's band in 2013.

The lyrics of Kaset-Kasat was written by H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, which consisted of five themes: water, soil, plants, animals, and fisheries. The first theme of water, began with a royal composition of King Bhumibol Adulyadej (King Rama IX), Sai Fon. The content was about solutions for drought such as artificial rain from the Department of Royal Rainmaking and

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1. Panya Rungreong, *Thai Music History* (Bangkok: Thai Watana Panich Co., Ltd, 1974), 48.

2. Sa-ngobsuk Thammawiharn, *Thai Music* (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 2002), 89.

3. Poonpit Amatayakul. *Five Reigns of Kings' Music Annals: Documents Research and Chronology 1868-2006* (Bangkok: Luang Pradit Pairon (Sorn Silpbanleng) Foundation, 2007), 72.

Agricultural Aviation as well as various irrigation projects. The soil theme described ways to nourish the soil, for example, applying fertilizer, watering, and planting vetiver grass. The animals theme included King Bhumibol's dairy farming that helped to encourage Thai people to drink more milk. Also, the lyrics portrayed other projects of King Bhumibol; products from dairy, cattle bank, and promoting to raise animals that were appropriate to the local environment. The final theme, fisheries, presented about interbreeding tilapia fish (*Tilapia nilotica*) that King Bhumibol received from the Emperor of Japan once the Emperor was a Crown Prince. Additionally, the lyrics narrated the royal duties of King Bhumibol regarding fisheries, for example, researching and studying Siamese giant carp, making fish ladder, and researching other fish species and aquatic animals. H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn desired to add Japanese music to this theme.

The performance included a singing and Thai music performance from the Saiyai Chamchuri band and a Western music performance from Chulalongkorn University's Student Affair band. The Pi-pat Deuk Dam Ban performance has been supported by H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn since 1986. Also, the Princess has been giving valuable advice and allowed Chulalongkorn University to restore and disseminate this kind of performance effectively.

Every 26<sup>th</sup> of March is an anniversary of Chulalongkorn University. H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn comes and watches the performance and performs music with the ensembles annually. In some years, the Princess composed new lyrics and had Dr. Sirichaicharn Fakchamroon, 2014 national artist in Thai music, written Thai music for the lyrics. While Assist. Prof. Choowit Yurayong, one of the authors, was responsible for integrating Western music into Thai music in many performances.

This kind of music was first performed in 2007 with the piece *Ar Noo-Ar Sim* and many other pieces were performed in later years. For example, the series of *Khak Khao*, *Ok Rabam Nang Kopee*, and *Rabam Ar Bang* in 2009; the series of *Nang Sin* in 2010 *Kaset-Kasat*, the royal composition of H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn in 2011; the piece written by the Princess to celebrate Queen Sirikit's 80th birthday in 2012; *Mong Pok Kayieng* in 2013; and the *Thai Bamboo* and *Arrogant Sunflower* performance in 2014. Assist. Prof. Choowit Yurayong was the key person who integrated Western music into these pieces.

In integrating Thai and Western music, there are many issues which need to be worked out by specialists regarding the differences between Thai and Western music, for example, tuning, sound, melody, and other musical elements. In every creation, there are valuable musical

processes. So, the authors were interested in investigating the methods in integrating Thai and Western music with regards to the royal composition of H.R.H Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Kaset-Kasat. This piece was a result of the Princess's initiative to combine Thai and Western music. This work will be useful for further compositions, research, textbooks, and academic works regarding the integration of Thai and Western music.

## Methodology

In order to integrate Thai and Western music in Kaset-Kasat, the royal composition of H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, the literature related to the integration of Thai and Western music, for example, history, theories, and principles were reviewed first. After that, the processes of integrating Thai and Western music were as following:

### *- Initial Composition (Thai music)*

The creation of this work started from receiving the lyrics of Kaset-Kasat written by H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn. The lyrics illustrate the duties of King Bhumibol Adulyadej in five themes: water, soil, plants, animals, and fisheries. Dr. Sirichaicharn Fakchamroon then composed Thai music for the lyrics. He also considered the integration of Thai and Western music while writing the music; where to put Western music and how the melody would be written. In Dr. Fakchamroon's viewpoint, the music has to be developed from the Thai traditional music but not totally new and strange. After the Thai music was composed for the lyrics, it was recorded and ready to be used for the next process.

### *- Integrating Western Music*

The authors, as arrangers, first listened to the recording of the Thai music, then organized and structured the arrangement with the composer. In creating this work, Western music played a supporting role in integrating music from different cultures, as can be seen in many countries. The principle of arranging this piece was to prioritize Thai music; allowing it to be presented clearly, while Western music was the supporter which makes the piece more interesting without diminishing the role of Thai music. The important aspect in integrating two different types of music was that the sound must not be too strange or dissonance. If some dissonances occur, then it was made background or accompaniment or if some sounds were closed, it was made even closer in order to minimize dissonances.

### *- Rehearsing and Adjusting*

The practice for this kind of music started with Thai and Western music ensembles

practicing separately. Thai music performers practised as a band, while Western music performers practised individually. When these two groups of performers practised together, the adjustments in many aspects occurred in order to create balance to the piece. After the arrangement was well-adjusted, the music scores in both Thai and Western systems were created.

## Findings

The methods of integrating the Thai and Western music of Kaset-Kasat were a result of the authors' experiences in working, adjusting, and creating various works over a long period. The techniques used in this work can be summarized as following:

### *Adding more texture to original Thai music*

Western music was responsible for giving more texture to Thai music by using methods as following:

- *Using bass notes.* The bass notes were represented by low pitch musical instruments which delivered a wide range of pitches. As in bar 323, the bass notes accompanied the main melody which gave a wider range (Figure 1).

Figure 1 shows a musical score for bars 322 and 323. The score is written for a string ensemble, including Strings, Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Double Bass (Db.). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. The score is divided into two systems, with bar 322 in the first system and bar 323 in the second system. The Strings staff has a melodic line starting in bar 322. The Vln. I and Vln. II staves have whole notes in bar 322. The Vla. staff has a whole note in bar 322. The Vc. staff has a whole note in bar 322. The Db. staff has a whole note in bar 322. In bar 323, the Strings staff continues its melody, while the other instruments have whole rests.

Figure 1 Using bass notes to create texture in bar 323-335

Source: Choowit Yurayong

- *Using chord progressions.* The chord progressions were applied to support the main melody. The chord progressions aimed to make the main melody more explicit and helped to create clear musical phrases. Nonetheless, the chord progressions were not used throughout the piece in order to avoid dissonance.

- *Creating cadences.* After the chord progressions, a cadence or a pause was necessary in order to define the ending and the separate musical phrases.

### ***Sound selection for consonance***

Due to the fact that the pitches of these two music did not sound exactly similar, techniques that helped to create consonance were needed as following:

- *Using prolonged notes.* Prolonging notes in the harmony line and making fewer changes in the pitch were to reduce overlapping and obscuration of the Thai main melody. This also reduced dissonance because when audiences listened to the main melody with the prolonged notes, they tended to pay more attention to the melody, while the prolonged notes were just passing notes. In Figure 2, the prolonged notes occurred in the strings section as a backup which made the main melody more explicit.

The image displays a musical score for a string ensemble, starting at measure 52. The instruments listed on the left are Strings, Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., and Db. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 4/4. Above the Strings staff, chord symbols B, G#m, C#m, A, and E are indicated. The Vln. I staff features a melodic line with a slur over measures 54-57. The Vln. II, Vla., and Vc. staves show sustained, prolonged notes in measures 54-57, which are highlighted by a large black rectangular box. The Db. staff contains rests throughout the entire passage.

Figure 2 Prolonged notes in bar 54-57  
Source: Choowit Yurayong

- *Using heterophony harmony;* each line played the same melody but in different variations which emphasizes the horizontal element more than the vertical.

### ***Using doubling and countermelody***

Doubling was to repeat the same note (significant note such as the root) in other sections. It could be a doubling within the octave or wider than the octave. Countermelody in Thai music

occurs in the form of imitation of the melody. While the countermelody in Western style is quite similar to the main melody or the new composed melody. In this piece, the Western countermelody was used.

- *Doubling*. Using doubling was to make the main melody more interesting by highlighting the main melody, making it more prominent than the other parts.

- *Countermelody*. The countermelody in this piece occurred in two patterns: using the melody and using a rhythmic pattern. In Figure 3, the countermelody, using the melody, was used as an imitation of the main melody. Also, it was played more softly (*p*) than the main melody (*mf*). The countermelody, using a rhythmic pattern, was similar to the countermelody using the melody. It occurred in such a form that the rhythmic pattern imitated the main melody.

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The image shows a musical score for a brass band. The score is for a piece in F# major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The parts are: Tpt. 1, Tpt. 2, Tpt. 3, Tpt. 4, Tbn. 1, Tbn. 2, Tbn. 3, Tbn. 4, and Guide. The score is for bars 220 to 235. The countermelody is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic and is played in the right hand of the Guide part. The countermelody is an imitation of the main melody, using the same notes but with a different rhythmic pattern.

Figure 3 Countermelody, using the melody, in bar 228-235

Source: Choowit Yurayong

### *Controlling articulations*

The articulations were controlled by markings, for example, accent, staccato, slur, finger and bow signs for strings, and dynamic markings. The articulation markings were used in various purposes such as highlighting the main melody, transferring between each part, or imitating of each instrument. In Figure 4, staccatos and slurs were used alternately.



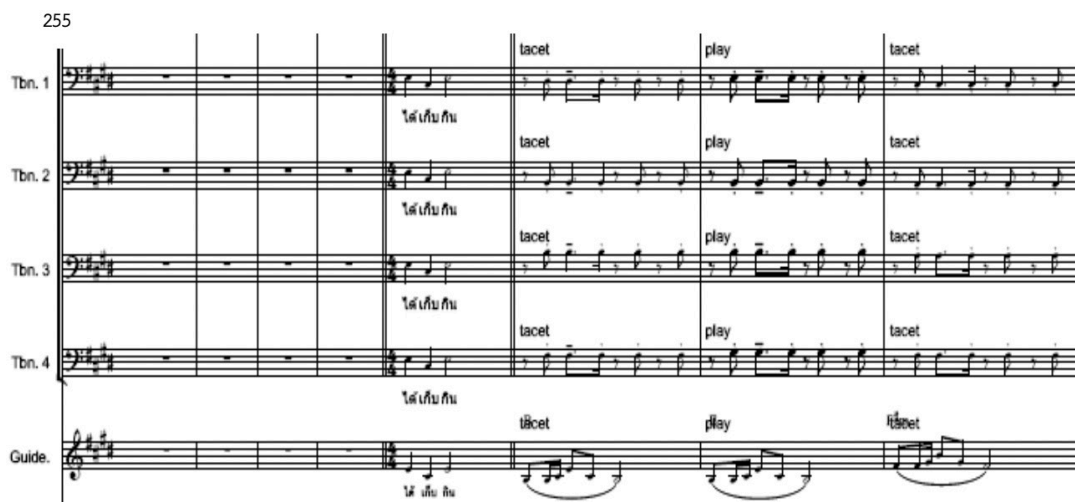


Figure 4 Using articulation markings in bar 260-262  
Source: Choowit Yurayong

### Other techniques

There are other techniques that can be used, depending on types of the types of music band, instruments, vocal accompaniment, and structure of the piece.

- *Using countermelody to emphasize cadence.* In Figure 5, string sections represented the countermelody that helped to create the cadence.

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Figure 5 Using countermelody to create cadence in bar 19-20  
Source: Choowit Yurayong

- *Accompanying Thai vocal line.* The Thai vocal line was accompanied by Western instruments. As in Figure 6, violins, viola, and cello accompany the vocal line, which helped to increase the more color and beauty of the vocal.

The image shows a musical score for a piece, specifically bars 76-84. The score is written for a Western orchestra and includes a vocal line. The instruments listed on the left are Guide, strings, Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., and Db. The Guide staff (top) contains the vocal line, which is highlighted with a dashed rectangular box. The instrumental accompaniment, consisting of Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., and Vc., is highlighted with a solid rectangular box. The strings and Db staves are also present but not highlighted. The music is in a key with three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 4/4 time signature. The vocal line features a melodic phrase that is repeated and varied across the bars. The instrumental accompaniment provides a harmonic and rhythmic support to the vocal line.

Figure 6 Accompanying Thai vocal line in bar 76-84  
Source: Choowit Yurayong

## Discussions

Before integrating Western music into Thai, an understanding of each other's music is necessary. The key to integrating Thai and Western music for this piece is not to ruin the principle of Thai music; not tuning Thai musical instruments to a Western system or tuning Western musical instruments to a Thai scale. Western music is the supporter which makes the piece more interesting by using counter melody, chord progressions, and bass lines. This integration concept also helps to spread national music culture perfectly without losing its identity. Moreover, this can be adapted to other different types of music, not only local and Western music, for example, music from different cultures in one nation, music from different ethnic groups, music from different period of time.

Since the key concept was not to ruin Thai characteristic, the solution was to tune the G note in Thai music as equal to the E in Western music. Other notes were still one whole step away from each other as in regular Thai music. The tuning for this arrangement stuck to the original tuning of each type of music which was different from other works that adjust one type of music to fit another. The integration in this work was to find a mutual sound between Thai and Western music because the notes of Thai music cannot fit perfectly with Western, for example, the C note of Thai music was not similar to the Western C. The Thai music scale was approximately one

minor 3<sup>rd</sup> lower than the Western. Therefore, the transposition was one solution to solve this problem in order to produce as little dissonance as possible. Kaset-Kasat was a newly composed piece in which both Thai and Western elements were simultaneously tuned, based on Thai music principally. The G note in Thai music was similar to the E in Western music, so this piece was in E major.

Originally, there were some Thai music instruments that could not be transposed such as Klui (Thai flute). However, in the present day, it could be transposed by changing the length of the body which was more comfortable than in the past. Apart from the difference sound of music instruments from different culture, venue of performance was another issue that needed to be considered carefully. Different venue such as in a concert hall or outdoor provided different effects, especially for instruments made from wood. Hence, before any performances, these conditions needed to be taken into consideration.

In creating this work, the first step was to structure the piece by considering what to do, how to use the harmony to create more depth in each part. For example, in the singing section, Thai music would stop playing while Western music was added as a background to make the piece more interesting or in some opening sections that required magnificence, they would begin with Western music because various instruments could be started simultaneously, and then followed by Thai music.

The success of integrating Thai and Western music in Kaset-Kasat by the Saiyai Chamchuri band and Chulalongkorn University's Student Affair band resulted from an experiment of the composers in combining different types of music, adjusting, and creating music pieces. The methods were based on the notion that Western music would not ruin the characteristics of Thai music. This was called "Sangkeet Patana". Since "Sangkeet Pattana" was not to compose a new piece but to integrate Western music into an invented piece, there was some valuable knowledge to be gained from balancing music from different cultures, which could be summarized as Figure 7.

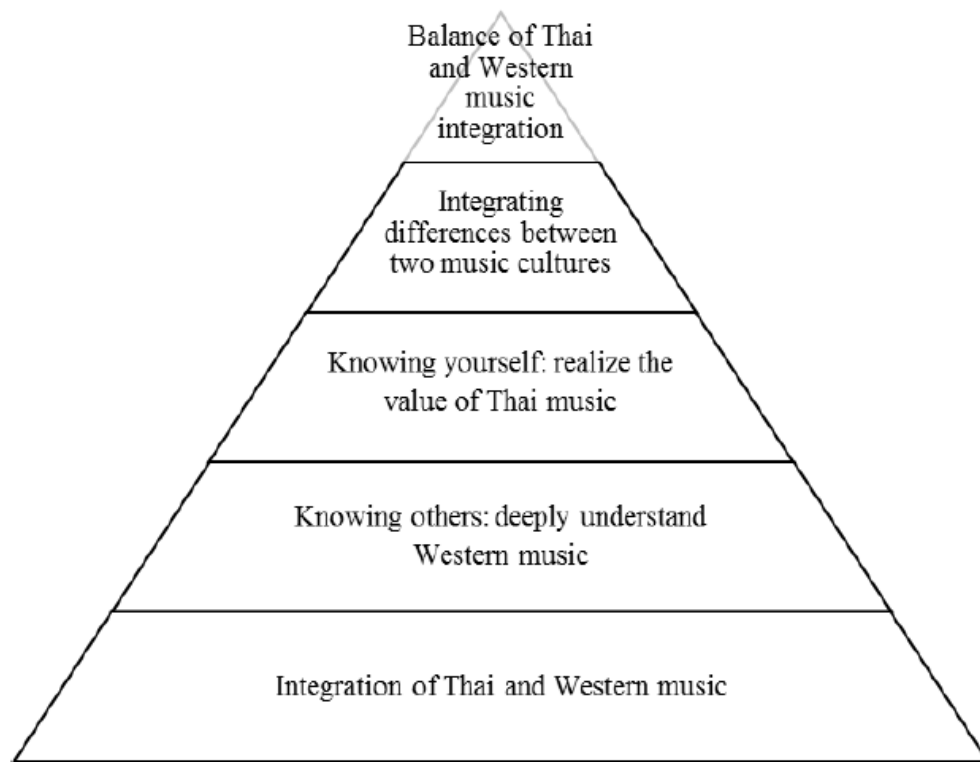


Figure 7 "Sangkeet Patana" model  
Source: Choowit Yurayong

From Figure 7, the critical starting points were "Knowing others" and "Knowing yourself", which meant to have expert knowledge of Thai and Western music. The knowledge of "Sangkeet Patana" was a result of accumulation of learning as well as experiences in western theory teaching and music performances of the authors. This was a challenging task to present a work from Western culture to Thai audiences. This work of integration was a result of the authors' interests as well as experiences in teaching Western music to undergraduate students of Chulalongkorn University, which provided the authors with an understanding of Western music and a Thai context. For example, Western melody, rhythm, harmony, pattern, and composition techniques in Thai society. This understanding led to methods of integrating Thai and Western music that were totally different in terms of theory, pitch, color, dimension, instruments, rhythm, composition techniques, performing, and conducting.

In addition, the authors needed to seek more knowledge regarding the integration of Eastern and Western music from the past until present, then developed and adjusted, and finally concluded that the best way to unite two different music cultures was to "find the balance". This was not to destroy characteristics of either culture; Thai music lovers still sensed Thai characteristics, but Western music was blended for a more elegant sound. The acceptance from the audiences to this new kind of music was the real success in integrating Thai and Western music. The Kaset-Kasat performance is available via <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DtCxOPYc-ZI&t=255s>

## Conclusion

The principle of integrating the Thai and Western music of Kaset-Kasat, the royal composition of H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, was to use Western music to enhance Thai music by giving priority to Thai music. The concept of arranging this piece was to prioritize Thai music; allowing it to be presented clearly, while Western music was the supporter which made the piece more interesting without diminishing the role of Thai music. In addition, this arrangement did not ruin Thai characteristics by not tuning Thai musical instruments to a Western scale or to tune Western musical instruments to a Thai scale. The solution was to tune the G note in Thai music as equal to the E in Western music. Other notes were still one whole step away from each other as in regular Thai music. The techniques used in this work could be summarized as following:

1. Adding more texture to original Thai music by using Western musical instruments. Still, this did not lessen the complexity of Thai music but enhanced what was missing. The methods included using bass notes for a more interesting melody line and chord progressions.

2. Selecting sound for consonance by prolonging notes and using heterophony harmony.

3. Using doubling and countermelody. Doubling was used in order to make the main melody more interesting by highlighting the main melody, making it more prominent than the other parts. While the countermelody was used to imitate the main melody which, in this piece, occurs in two patterns: using the melody and a rhythmic pattern.

4. Controlling articulations by using indication markings, for example, accented, staccato, slur, finger and bow signs for strings, and dynamic markings. These articulations were presented by Western musical instruments to help the main melody performed by Thai musical instruments to be more prominent.

5. Other techniques used in this arrangement included using countermelody to emphasize cadence, and accompanying Thai vocal line.

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