

HOMRONG SAKURA: A COMPOSITION FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM

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Introduction

“Homrong Sakura” is a new composition by Bussakorn Sumrongthong completed in May 1999. This composition is an example of a Thai traditional overture intending to express a warm rapport and collaboration between the people of Thailand and Japan during the current financial crisis in Asia. The main theme is a melody chosen from one of the better known pieces in Japan called “Sakura”, an ancient traditional Japanese melody since 1888. The composer of this piece is still anonymous.

Sakura, arranged in the Thai version, is full of colour and variety. The first two parts represent the activities between Thai and Japanese when greeting, discussing and working together. The original melody in the centre of the composition represents happiness and joy while they are singing and dancing with each other. The final section describes how hard work and dedication are used to get the job done on time. A sweet final coda displays the fulfilment and achievement of their task with a relaxing expression. This study aims to present an analysis of Homrong Sakura as a new alternative way of Thai music composition. Even though “Sakura”

has already been arranged by Thai music composers in a Thai pop music version, there is yet to be a version arranged in the Thai traditional style. A short description of Thai composition methods will be presented followed by a description of Homrong Sakura. Finally, some suggestions about the trend of Thai music composition style in the New Millennium will be made. This paper intends to display the Human content in the musical circles of Thailand during the ‘Civil Society’. It reflects the freedom of Thai music composers to create their works according to their preference without any anxiety about legal implications. Creative compositions have never been controlled by the Thai government.

Contents

Thai Composing Method

Thai music composing methods can be expressed in three ways.

- 1 Augmentation
- 2 Diminution
- 3 Initiation

1. Augmentation

This composing style takes account of the original piece as the main melody to be augmented. (see example 1)

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Ex. 1 : |-1 - 2|- 3 - 4| (original melody)

Augmentation a: |---1|---2|---3|---4|
(this melody is double the size of the original one above)

Augmentation b: |1231|3232|2123|1234|

There is an original melody, which the composer can use as a main theme, then he or she will augment it to produce his or her own composition. It can be seen that 1, 2, 3, and 4 can be augmented with, or without adding more notes to decorate each main note (1,2,3,4), but it is necessary to augment the length to double the size of the original one. The composer can make variations on the main theme as she or he wants so long as the main melody 1,2,3,4 appears as a falling succession of notes (The core note will remain the original central structure of the main melody)

2. Diminution

This can be explained as the reverse of Ex.1.

Ex:2: |0001|0002|0003|0004|

Diminution: |-1 - 2|- 3 - 4|

Diminution is used to halve the length of the original Composition.

3. Initiation

This style of composition allows the composer to freely initiate his own melody within the Thai composing patterns.

Description of Homrong Sakura

Inspiration:

After coming back from England, the writer heard about the financial crisis in Thailand, which had, by then, spread throughout the Asian region. She received the impression that during the crisis, a large amount of financial help was offered to the Thai people by the Japanese Government. The purpose of the two loans package, was to help in the further development of Thailand. She was so impressed by this collaborative offer to maintain Thailand's financial status in Asia that she was inspired to compose a piece of music to express her pleasure at the welcome assistance from the Japanese Government.

Musical form:

In this composition, the writer has taken 'Sakura' an old popular Japanese melody from 1888, as the main melody. Three of the parts are Thai versions as shown in part 1,2 and 5. The original theme has been put in the middle of the piece: part 3 and 4 (see chart below).

part I (Thai)

part II (Thai)

part III (Original with fiddle or percussion ensemble)²

² See western notion for embellishment of Sakura performed by percussion ensemble (*). The original Sakura can be performed by Thai fiddles (see Sakura in G minor).

part IV (Original in modernized tempo)

part V (Thai)

A set of variations based on one theme which can be outlined as:

A1-A2- A3- A4- A5-coda

Rhythmic pattern

The rhythmic pattern is mostly controlled by small, thick cymbals called “ching”. The sounds produced by this instrument are ‘ching’ and ‘chap’. The symbol used for the ‘ching’ is “o” , and “+” for the ‘chap’. The responsibility of the cymbal is analogous to the job of a conductor. The regular ‘ching-chap’ continues throughout the piece. The ‘ching’ stroke is equal to the up-beat, while the ‘chap’ stroke falls on an important note. To accompany the ching, the rhythmic pattern of the drums, called na thap, acts as a time-keeping instrument. In this composition, the na thap named ‘song mai’ is applied.

Ching

|---- |--- o |---- |--- + |---- |--- o |---- |--- + |

Nathap song mai

|---1 |2-3 |2-3 |2-3 |4-4 |545 |4-4 |545|

(1=taring, 2=jo, 3=ja, 4=ting, 5=tum)

Notation

Notation is written in both Thai and western styles to provide a listening outline. The Thai style is given in the text, the latter can be viewed in the appendix.

4. 5. 6. 7. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1 2
3 (Thai)

ซอล ลา ที โด เร มี ฟา ซอล ลา ที โด เร มี ฟา ซอล ลา
(Western)

Note : Notations above are used only for descriptions on the listening outline of Homrong Sakura

Listening Outline

Part 1

1a

|----|---8|---9|8654|---4|--56|8898|-565|

1s

|----|---4|---4|---5|----|---4|---4|---5|

(s=Sakura theme)

An augmentation is used in this part as seen in 1a and 1s. The first variation is softly introduced by Ranaat Ek, a leading instrument of the ensemble, with the largo movement in tremolo style. The musical introduction is intended to reflect the atmosphere of greeting, between the Japanese people and the Thai people. It shows the warmth and humility shared by the two nations.

1b

|444|5656|444|5656|666|89-8|-6-5|-4-2|
|--55|6541|--55|4568|-55|6541|-6-9|86-5

Performed by the whole ensemble the tree-note motive appears three times in the first line, followed by the two-note motive in the second line. The melody is balanced and symmetrical.

1c

| -444|5656|-444|5656|-666|89-8|-6-5|-4-2|
| -65|4141|-85|4568|--65|4141|9865|----|

The first line is a repetition of the first line of 1b, but the second line is changed. In particular, an unexpected pause is put at the end of this phrase to make it very different. This is because there is a repetition of the original theme in the same lines.

1d

| ---4|4.454|---5|5.565|---8|8.898|---5|5.565|

An identical melodic pattern is repeated 3 times. The restriction of this phrase is to make the whole ensemble perform the exact notes. Usually, this melodic pattern allows the performers to improvise their own lines, especially the leading instrument. But the composer's intention is to fix it to emphasize the unique melodic pattern which is hardly heard in previous Thai composing style.

1e

| -11|1112|--33|3334|--55|5556|5456|78-8|

A single rhythmic motif short-short-short-short-short-long is performed three times. The repetition of the four-note motif is a step higher accordingly. This is also unique because the whole ensemble must play together instead of the leading instruments which just tends to happen in general composition.

As all of the instruments begin to play, the melody expresses some of the efforts being made to develop, and use wisely, a

budget in collaboration with Japan to further the needs of both countries.

Part 2

2a

| -444|-444|-2-1|-555|----|1245|6545|----|
|8888|-6-4|8--6|-555|----|1245|6542|----|

2b

| -4-4|4.4-2|-4-4|4.4-5|----|8987|8765|----|
| -8-8|8.8-6|-8-8|8.8-5|----|8765|42--|----|

The opening section of the second part continues from the final coda of part one without a break. This creates an enormous contrast of tempo. Tension and expectation are generated from the very beginning. Two pairs of dialoging phrases appear in similar style -with two bars paused in each line. The differences at the end of line two with a longer gap intended to provide reaction time for the leading instrument to introduce the next phrase (2c).

2c

| -42|4241|--65|6598|--42|4241|8685|----|
|lead.....follow....lead.....follow.....|

The leading instruments start at the first dialogue analogous to an opening question. The following instruments perform different fragments to follow up the identical leading melody.

2d

| ---4.-|4-5| ---6.-|6-5| ---8.-|8-9| ---
8.-|8-5|
sweep>>> sweep>>> sweep>>>
sweep>>>

The 'Sweeping' technique is applied four times by the whole percussion instruments.

2e

|--11|--22|--33|--44|--55|--66|5456|78.-8|

The two-note motif is performed, alternately with syncopation, by the leading and the following instruments from downward to upward scales. The excitement is suddenly interrupted by an unexpected final tremolo note. This is intended to be a bridge from the rapid notes to the long sustained one in order to resolve the tension before starting a largo part. This part represents the dynamic relationship which we hold with Japan, and the fusion of different cultures and ideas. There is a discussion going on during office hours.

Part 3

---	---4	---4	---5	---	---4	---4	---5
---	---4	---5	---6	---5	---4	---5	4-2
---	---8.	---6.	---8.	---9.	---8.	---6.	---5.
---	---4	---5	---6	---5	---4	---5	4-2
---	---8.	---6.	---8.	---9.	---8.	---6.	---5.
---	---4	---4	---5	---	---4	---4	---5
---	---1	---2	---5	4-2	---1	---1	---1

The original Sakura melody is displayed in this part in order to show the main theme of the composition. It comprises five melodic phrases. The two repetition pairs appear in lines 2-5. This main theme has been intentionally adapted for performance on the fiddle instead of Japanese musical instruments. The objective is to maintain the minor scale which is used in a traditional Japanese musical ensemble. The fact is that,

naturally, Thai tunes have a diatonic scale - seven full tones equidistant, as a result, the original Sakura melody which is usually performed in a minor scale on Japanese instruments cannot be played on Thai melodic percussion instruments. In this case, Sakura is performed by the potential Japanese musicians (Thai artists) trying to preserve the real mood and feeling of the original one.

The atmosphere created in part 3 is that, after a short discussion, it is decided that the workers should take a break to relieve the build up of stress. A banquet has been arranged for them. It is time to rest and be entertain. The happy and relaxed mood that the workers now feel is introduced.

Part 4

---	---4	---44	---45	---55	---54	---44	---45
--55	--54	--45	--56	--65	--54	--45	--42
--22	--21	--16.	---6.1	---12	--21	--16.	---6.5.
--5.5.	---5.4	---45	---56	---65	---54	---45	---42
--22	--21	--16.	---6.1	---12	--21	--16.	---6.5.

A sudden change of the rhythmic pattern from the touching and sad mood in part 3 leads to a staccato motif played loudly by the ensemble, returning of course, to Thai scale. The transposition can, in fact, be made to fit the type of Thai musical ensemble in any key, depending on the limitations in the practicability of each instrumental group according to the Thai whole-tone scale as mentioned earlier. My objective in changing the rhythmic style based on the same theme is to make this part vivace and try to involve the

audience in the dancing atmosphere.

4a

|---|---4|4444|4445|---|---4|4444|4445|

This phrase is a 'dynamic accent' which allows the performer to play more loudly than the tones allow.

4b

|---|---4|---5|---6|---5|---6|---7|---8|

The speed of the rhythmic pattern is increased before getting into the final phrase. This is intended to express the idea that the workers are now keen to get back to work.

Part 5

5a

|---4|---5|---6|---7|---6|---5| (follow)

|--4|--5|--6|--8|--7|--6|--5| (lead)

The final part is stated in a staccato style. The techniques of syncopation are used from the beginning.

5b

|---4|---7|---4|---2.|---6.|---7.|---1.|---2.| (follow)

|4--|5--|6--|7--|45|67--|4567|89-9| (lead)

(the numbers in bold represent the leading melody)

Putting a small phrase of contrary motion in the second half of 5b shows the intention to examine the musicians'

attitude. It is hoped to be a guideline from the new composer in order to create something different from the old composing style.

5c

|---|---|---|---|---|---2.|---3.|---4|---5| (follow)

|9>>>|>>>>|---|---8*|---9|---8|---6|---5| (lead)

The tremolo technique is applied on Ranaat ek in 5c, not only to show the contrasting line of the melody between the leading instrument Ranaat ek and the other melodic percussion instruments, but also to emphasise the unique note at '*' while the other instruments are pausing. Having tried that, the special note '*' becomes problematic because of its unusual beat against the pause of the other instruments which is background.. It could mislead the whole ensemble who may easily lose the down beat.

5d

|4.456|4.456|4.456|4.456|8888|6968|6968|6542|

|6564|5241|5.4.6.5.|1.6.2.1.|6564|5241|8685|---|

The sudden change of texture contributes to the hectic mood. The movement becomes feverish. The persistence of this melodic pattern gives the music a sense of urgency. Yet the melody is symmetrical. Questioning downward leaps are answered by upward scales.

5e

{---4|4445|---4|4445|---8|8887|7776|6665|

The theme is dominated by the five-note motif. The rapid rhythmic pattern increases the excitement and produces a hectic atmosphere. Before ending the piece, the fluttering technique is performed on *Ranat ek* as the highlight of this part before moving to the final coda. In this, the final section, we have the people of the two nations working together and helping each other in mutual trust. The aim is to finish the job in hand. The tempo increases again slightly. This shows the increased efforts being made to finish the work on time.

5f

|---8|---6|---5|---3|---2|---1|

Leading to a different emotional effect, the final coda is expanded and made more dramatic to end the piece with happiness and fulfilment. This can be said to express that achievement is eventually made possible by the cooperation of Japanese and Thais.

Conclusion

When "Homrong Sakura" is seen as a whole, it can be seen that this style of composition is rendered unique by its composing characteristics. It can be claimed that this piece is a new style of composition. It is different from other compositions because the operation of the instrumental section has been strictly fixed by the composer. Some parts of the basic melody, as performed by other melodic percussion instruments have never been performed using the pact general pattern. It was a writer's intention to compose something different to represent the changing attitudes towards music. The

distinction of this composition aside from mentioning its theoretical aspects, is the description accompanying each part. The writer's suggestion to the composers of the new millennium is literally to put their objective and the meaning of each composition alongside their written notation. This will serve to help the next generation to understand the imagination of the piece without having to guess. Knowing and understanding the composition in both theory and meaning can make the performer feel sure of his performing responsibilities, and can maintain the essence of the piece. It would make it easier for the school teacher, or lecturers in universities to teach each composition in their classroom without feeling any uncertainty. At the moment, because of the lack of description with pieces, instructors have to guess and conduct the performances as they think them should be. If every composer were made aware that producing a description of each new piece and writing it as a documentary makes the final analysis of form and performance so much easier compared to the past then the results would be worth the effort. It is hoped that this composition will be used to guide the Thai composers of the new Millennium to alternative ways of expressing their thoughts and feelings, using music as the mediacy. It will make their work more meaningful to the "Music Circle" in Thailand, and will help to lead the world towards a happier and more peaceful existence.

Finally, the writer would like to express her sincere thanks to master Montree Tramote and master Prasit Thavorn, national artists of Thailand, who introduced her to the knowledge of

composition. For more detail, please
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Appendice

Sakura in G minor

15

A handwritten musical score for a piece titled 'Sakura in G minor'. The score is written on seven staves, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first staff has a bracket above it with the number '15' written inside. The notation consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests. The piece appears to be a short, melodic fragment.

Homrong Sakura: A Composition for the New Millennium

Homrong Sakura

Follow

Lead

1a

1b

1c

1d

con 8va

The musical score is written for piano and voice. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked 'con 8va'. The score is divided into four systems, each labeled with a measure number (1a, 1b, 1c, 1d). The piano part is written in the left hand, and the vocal part is written in the right hand. The vocal part is labeled 'Follow' and 'Lead'. The piano part features a complex, rhythmic melody with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The vocal part is a simple, melodic line. The score is written on a single page, and the page number '45' is at the bottom.

1c

cont~

2a

cont~

con 8~

2b

con 8~

cont~

2c

R

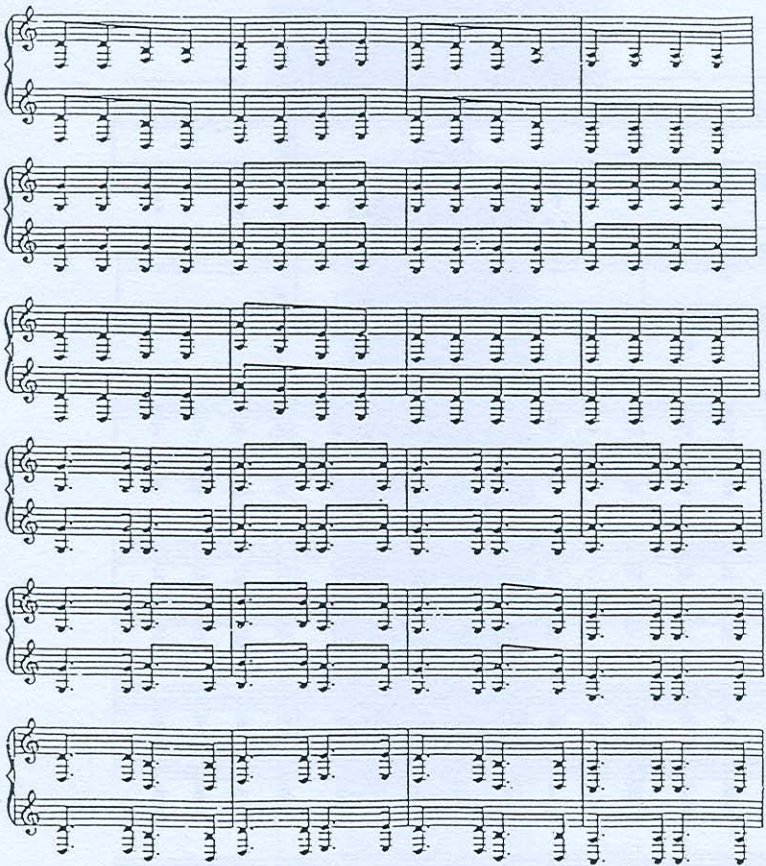
Homrong Sakura: A Composition for the New Millennium

2d

2e

R L R

(*)



Homrong Sakura: A Composition for the New Millennium

The image displays a musical score for a piano accompaniment, consisting of six systems of music. Each system is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The score is organized into six systems, each with a unique label: 4a, 4b, 5a, and 5b. The first system (4a) features a complex, multi-measure rest in the right hand. The second system (4b) shows a similar pattern. The third system (5a) includes a multi-measure rest in the right hand. The fourth system (5b) features a multi-measure rest in the right hand. The fifth system (5a) includes a multi-measure rest in the right hand. The sixth system (5b) features a multi-measure rest in the right hand. The score is written in a standard musical notation style, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a time signature of 4/4.

The image displays a handwritten musical score consisting of five systems of piano notation. Each system is written on a grand staff, with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The systems are labeled with dynamic markings: *5c*, *5d*, *5e*, and *5f*. The first system is marked *5c* and includes a *con 8* marking. The second system is marked *5d* and includes a *con 8* marking. The third system is marked *5e* and includes a *con 8* marking. The fourth system is marked *5f* and includes a *con 8* marking. The fifth system is marked *5f* and includes a *con 8* marking. The notation is written in a clear, legible hand, and the overall layout is organized and professional.

Homrong Sakura (ใหม่โรงอาทิตยอุทัย)

Part 1	—	—8	—9	8654	—4	—56	8898	—565	1 a
	—444	5656	—444	5656	—666	89-8	—6-5	—4-2	1 b
	—55	6541	—55	4568	—55	6541	—6-9	86-5	
	—444	5656	—444	5656	—666	89-8	—6-5	—4-2	1 c
	—65	4141	—85	4568	—65	4141	9865	—	
	—4	4.454	—5	5.565	—8	8.898	—5	5.565	1 d
	—11	1112	—33	3334	—55	5556	5456	78.-8	1 e
Part 2	—444	—444	—2-1	—555	—	1245	6545	—	2 a
	8888	—6-4	—8-6	—555	—	1245	6542	—	
	—4-4	44-2	—4-4	44-5	—	8987	8765	—	2 b
	—8-8	88-6	—8-8	88-5	—	8765	42—	—	
	—42	4241	—65	6598	—42	4241	8685	—	2 c
	—4.	—4-5	—6.	—6-5	—8.	—8-9	—8.	—8-5	2 d
	—11	—22	—33	—44	—55	—66	5456	78.-8	2 e
Part 3	—	—4	—4	—5	—	—4	—4	—5	1 s
	—	—4	—5	—6	—5	—4	—5	—4-2	
	—	—8.	—6.	—8.	—9.	—8.	—6.	—5.	
	—	—4	—5	—6	—5	—4	—5	—4-2	
	—	—8.	—6	—8.	—9.	—8.	—6.	—5.	
	—	—4	—4	—5	—	—4	—4	—5	
	—	—1	—2	—5	—4-2	—1	—1	—1	
Part 4	—	—4	—44	—45	—55	—54	—44	—45	
	—55	—54	—45	—56	—65	—54	—45	—42	
	—22	—21	—16.	—6.1	—12	—21	—16.	—6.5.	
	—5.5.	—5.4	—45	—56	—65	—54	—45	—42	
	—22	—21	—16.	—6.1	—12	—21	—16.	—6.5.	
	—	—4	4444	4445	—	—4	4444	4445	4 a
	—	—4	—5	—6	—5	—6	—7	—8	4 b
Part 5 Follow	—4	—5	—6	—5—	—8	—7	—6	—5	5 a
Lead	—4—	—5—	—6—	—5—	—8—	—7—	—6—	—5—	
	—4	—7	—4	—2.	—6.	—7.	—1.	—2.	5 b
	—4—	—5—	—6—	—7—	—45	67—	4567	89-9	
	—	—	—	—	—2.	—3.	—4	—5	5 c
	9>>>	>>>>	—	—8*	—9	—8	—6	—5	
	4456	4456	4456	4456	8888	6968	6968	6542	5 d
	6564	5241	5.4.6.5.	1.5.2.1.	6564	5241	8685	—	
	—4	4445	—4	4445	—8	8887	7776	6665	5 e
	—8	—6	—5	—3	—	—2	—	—1	5 f

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