

## **Crystal Pheasant**

Music from Thai Classical tune “Soy Saeng Daeng”

Crystal Pheasant was Nat’s first composition which was premiered by the composer in an inaugural piano recital at the Main hall, Thailand Cultural Centre in 1987. The piece was performed as part of the Royal command performance, the official opening of the Thailand Cultural Centre. The historical event was marked by the nation-wide televised performance with the presence of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej The Great (King Rama IX) presiding over the event.

“Crystal Pheasant” is a mystical creature from the story of “Phra Lor”. In this tale, Crystal pheasant was used to lure the main character, Phra Lor. It was said that the pheasant was so beautiful and fascinating to those who set eyes on her. The beauty of this mystical creature is portrayed through music. The composer uses a variation form to guide the audience through different angles so one may observe this beauty up close.

## เพลงพระราชนิพนธ์ “ฝัน”

พระบาทสมเด็จพระเจ้าอยู่หัว ทรงพระราชนิพนธ์ทำนองเพลง “Somewhere, Somehow” ขึ้นก่อน และโปรดเกล้าฯ ให้พระเจ้าวรวงศ์เธอพระองค์เจ้าจักรพันธ์เพ็ญศิริ ทรงประพันธ์คำร้องภาษาอังกฤษ และนายศรีสวัสดิ์ พิจิตรวรการ ประพันธ์คำร้องภาษาไทย ชื่อเพลงว่า “ฝัน”

## Somewhere, Somehow

His Majesty first composed the melody for “Somewhere, Somehow” and requested H.H. Prince Chakrabhandh Pensiri to write the English lyrics. The Thai lyrics of “Fun” which translates as “Dream” written by Mr. Swasdi Pichitworakarn.

## **Siam Sonata**

Siam Sonata, a composition dedicated His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej The Great (King Rama IX) on the occasion of his seventy-fifth birthday in 2002.

Siam Sonata combines the uniqueness of each four regions of Thailand in a musical form of solo piano sonata. The composition is divided into four movements, beginning with the majestic Central Region, the lively Northeast, the graceful North and ending with the vibrant South. The spirit of Thai culture is portrayed in each custom, tradition and dialect of each region. Despite the diversity, we find strength in unity which is the key to the country's well-being. This composition symbolizes the harmony of the love in the composer's homeland, Thailand.

### **The Northeast (Allegretto Scherzando)**

Beginning with *Ho Sam La* (three salutes) followed by *Toey Sam Changwa* (three rhythmic sections of Toey Song), the movement begins with an imitation of the sound of "Kaen", a traditional wind instrument which represents the characteristic of the region. The first two sections open the movement with the second being an interplay of two independent parts, the left hand challenging the right hand. The middle section is in a major key, which is reminiscent of the gentle and sincere nature of the Northeastern people. The third Toey section comes in during the last refrain. Its playfulness symbolizes a Northeastern dance as well as happy and lively nature of Thai People.

## Glory To Our Great Kings

The first Thai piano sonata ever written in the history of classical music of Thailand, the piece was composed in 1995 in celebration of the Golden Jubilee of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej The Great (King Rama IX). The composer uses four Thai classical melodies composed by past monarchs of the Chakri Dynasty as the main theme of each movement. These melodies are *Bulan Loy Luen* (Floating Moon) by His Majesty King Rama II; *Kluen Kratop Fang* (Breaking Waves), *Ratree Pradap Dao* (Starry Night) and *Khamen La-or Ong* by His Majesty King Rama VII. In addition, six romantic songs composed by His Majesty King Rama IX are also used to intertwine with the first four melodies, employing western harmony with Thai overtones.

The last movement (Allegro ma non troppo) of the piano sonata bears a Thai title which translates "Long Live the King". It is a rondo which opens with the melody of *Khamen La-or Ong*, followed by *Maha Chulalongkorn*, and then returns to the first section in a higher key of A flat major. The next section introduces the melody *Yoong Thong* (Golden Peacock) before the return of the first section in the original key of F major. The movement is rounded off with a coda of *Yoong Thong* and *Maha Chulalongkorn* playing against each other, leading to a triumphant and joyous conclusion. *Yoong Thong* and *Maha Chulalongkorn* were composed by HM King Rama IX to be the anthem of the two most prestigious universities of Thailand namely Thammasart University and Chulalongkorn University respectively. Students from both universities know the anthems by heart. The overall mood of the movement is lively, using unusual pianistic techniques that partly imitate the sounds of the Thai gamelan (percussive instruments mainly made of bronze). *Maha Chulalongkorn* is the only composition by His Majesty King Rama IX in the pentatonic scale. It was transcribed for the pentatonic scale by Khun Kru Devaprasit Patayakosol, to be played by the Thai Pipat Orchestra at the request of the late King in 1954 - the year of the composer's birth.

## **Suite for Piano and Percussion “ The Prodigal Son”**

accompanied by Thai folk drama performance “Likay”

The composition is inspired from a biblical reference, the parable “The Prodigal Son” (Luke 15:11-31). It is divided into 4 parts – Life, Truth, Repentance, Reconciliation - using the piano as the main melody accompanied by a Thai drum "Tapon" and other percussion instruments to enhance the dramatic aspect of the piece. The Thai folk drama “Likay” is known for its playful dialogue between the performers. However, for this composition, the composer challenges the old tradition by using Likay in a form of a ballet performance, leaving the storytelling solely to the music.

### **1. LIFE**

This piece begins with a Likay tradition with an overture called *Wa*, followed by *Pleng-ork-kaek* or an introductory song to Likay. *Wa* overture return again to introduce the characters of father and daughter -- the older sister. These two are contemplating the beauty and harmony of their family together. Then, the prodigal son is introduced with his own theme song from *Kra-tai-ten* (the dancing rabbit). It's a very playful piece of music. His entrance is a cheerful sight to the scene until he starts lying about leaving for his studies in the far away town then asking his father for his share of inheritance. His sister openly opposed the idea but the son is angry and physically abused her. Finally, the father had to give in and gave what he wanted. The scene ends with the happy and satisfied young man who is excited to explore the world.

### **2. TRUTH**

The scene begins with a courtesan admiring her own beauty. She is imagining how she can lure a rich man into giving her diamonds and jewelry. The melody of *Loy-krathong* song is used as a fundamental theme. This song tells of Loy-krathong festival that is celebrated every year for the good grace of the goddess of water that blesses Thailand. Though it is meant to be for the goddess of water, many young couples take this opportunity to have their own Thai version of Valentine's day. The sweet melody of *Loy-krathong* slowly evolves to a festive *Kinnaree-ron*. The prodigal son arrives and is seen mingling with the courtesan. By this time, the lady brings in more friends to join the party, inviting the prodigal son to spend more and more of his fortune on his pleasure until it was all gone. *Loy krathong* song comes in various forms including in a jazzy style. This piece ends with such painful call for reality for the prodigal son. After all the fortune is gone, he now sees the truth of life.

### **3. REPENTANCE**

The scene begins with the prodigal son who is trying to work through his poor destiny in a faraway land with no one to care for him. A melody of *Kaek-pattani* comes in after a poignant introduction followed by *Thorani-kan-saeng* (“tears from the earth”) in the middle section. The latter song reflects the sadness and regret in the prodigal son's heart. From a rich man's son, he is now feeding and eating with pigs in a farm in the middle of nowhere. This scene ends with the prodigal son realized his crime and decided to return home to ask for forgiveness from his father.

### **4. RECONCILIATION**

The prodigal son travels back home, accompanied by melody from *Dom-kai* with an anxious heart because he does not know how he would be received. He reaches home, the melody changes to *Prachao-loytaad-song-chan*. After the father forgives him, the celebration begins and the melody changes to *Prachao-loytaad-chan-diaw*. However, when the sister found out, she was furious and thought that the father didn't love her as much as her brother. It was only after the prodigal son pleaded for forgiveness from his sister that he was forgiven. The harmony in the family is then restored with the melody of *Yokee-tawai-fai* in a joyous happy ending.