



Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts

**COMBINATION OF MALAY TRADITIONAL AND CHINESE  
POPULAR MUSICAL ELEMENTS INTO A NEW MANDOPOP  
COMPOSITION**

**Lai Kee Nee**

**Bachelor of Applied Arts with Honours  
(Music)  
2017**

COMBINATION OF MALAY TRADITIONAL AND CHINESE POPULAR  
MUSICAL ELEMENTS INTO A NEW MANDOPOP COMPOSITION

LAI KEE NEE

Projek ini merupakan salah satu keperluan untuk  
Ijazah Sarjana Muda Seni Gunaan dengan Kepujian  
(Muzik)

Fakulti Seni Gunaan dan Kreatif  
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK

2017

UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Please tick (✓)

Final Year Project Report

Masters

PhD

**DECLARATION OF ORIGINAL WORK**

This declaration is made on the 16th day of June 2017.

**Student's Declaration:**

I, LAI KEE NEE, 47235, FACULTY OF APPLIED AND CREATIVE ARTS hereby declare that the work entitled COMBINATION OF MALAY TRADITIONAL AND CHINESE PUPILAR MUSICAL ELEMENTS INTO A NEW MANDOPOP COMPOSITION is my original work. I have not copied from any other students' work or from any other sources except where due reference or acknowledgement is made explicitly in the text, nor has any part been written for me by another person.

16/6/2017

Date submitted

  
LAI KEE NEE (47235)

**Supervisor's Declaration:**

I, DR. THIA SOCK SIANG hereby certifies that the work entitled COMBINATION OF MALAY TRADITIONAL AND CHINESE PUPILAR MUSICAL ELEMENTS INTO A NEW MANDOPOP COMPOSITION was prepared by the above named student, and was submitted to the "FACULTY" as a \* partial/full fulfillment for the conferment of BACHELOR OF APPLIED ARTS WITH HONOURS (MUSIC), and the aforementioned work, to the best of my knowledge, is the said student's work.

Received for examination by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(DR. THIA SOCK SIANG)

Date:

16/6/2017

I declare that Project/Thesis is classified as (Please tick (√)):

- CONFIDENTIAL** (Contains confidential information under the Official Secret Act 1972)\*  
 **RESTRICTED** (Contains restricted information as specified by the organisation where research was done)\*  
 **OPEN ACCESS**

#### Validation of Project/Thesis

I therefore duly affirm with free consent and willingly declare that this said Project/Thesis shall be placed officially in the Centre for Academic Information Services with the abiding interest and rights as follows:

- This Project/Thesis is the sole legal property of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS).
- The Centre for Academic Information Services has the lawful right to make copies for the purpose of academic and research only and not for other purpose.
- The Centre for Academic Information Services has the lawful right to digitalise the content for the Local Content Database.
- The Centre for Academic Information Services has the lawful right to make copies of the Project/Thesis for academic exchange between Higher Learning Institute.
- No dispute or any claim shall arise from the student itself neither third party on this Project/Thesis once it becomes the sole property of UNIMAS.
- This Project/Thesis or any material, data and information related to it shall not be distributed, published or disclosed to any party by the student except with UNIMAS permission.

Student signature: \_\_\_\_\_

(Date)

Supervisor signature: \_\_\_\_\_

(Date)

16/6/2017

Current Address:

19, Jalan Putra 1/23, Bandar Putra, 85000 Segamat, Johor.

Notes: \* If the Project/Thesis is **CONFIDENTIAL** or **RESTRICTED**, please attach together as annexure a letter from the organisation with the period and reasons of confidentiality and restriction.

[The instrument is duly prepared by The Centre for Academic Information Services]

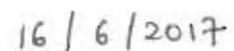
Project entitled '**Combination of Malay Traditional and Chinese Popular Musical Elements into a New Mandopop Composition**' was prepared by **Lai Kee Nee** and submitted to Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Bachelor of Applied Arts with Honours (**Music**).

Received for examination by:



(Dr. Thia Sock Siang)

Date:



## APPROVAL

Writer acknowledges that there is no research, produced or reported in this thesis was used as support material for a qualification or approval which has the same qualification to this university or other education institution.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lai Kee Nee', written over a horizontal line.

(LAI KEE NEE)

Matric No.: 47235

## **Acknowledgement**

First of all, I would like to thank and acknowledge my supervisor, Dr. Thia Sock Siang for her supervision, patience and moral support. My grateful thanks to Drs. Yoesbar Djaelani for his suggestions and guidance in the composition field. I am also grateful to all the lecturers including Associate Professor Dr. Hasnizam Abdul Wahid, Mr. Jurgen Frenz, Ms. Ng Sie Ai, Madam Connie Lim Keh Nie, Ms. Laura Pranti Tutom, Mr. Iran Amri Musoddiq and Mr. Mohd Fairuz bin Zamani for their advices and comments. Other than that, I am very grateful to the technician of the music programme, Mr. Lembad anak Subit for his technical support and advice.

Moreover, I would like to thank both my parents, Mr. Lai Wah Chiong and Mrs. Thein Ling Choon for their moral support, financial support as well as transportation. Special thanks to Dr. Loo Fung Ying and Mr. Hor Fook Ken for willing become member of experts to give comments and suggestion towards this research. Not forgetting to Ms. Lau Shu Lin who had sung my composition during the live performance.

Lastly, I would like to thank my friends, classmates, seniors and juniors who supported me throughout my research.

## List of Content

<b>Front Cover</b>	
<b>Declaration of Original Work Form</b>	
<b>Validation and Supervisor's Signature</b>	i
<b>Acknowledgement</b>	iii
<b>List of Content</b>	iv
<b>List of Excerpts</b>	viii
<b>List of Figures</b>	ix
<b>List of Tables</b>	x
<b>Abstract</b>	xii
<i>Abstrak</i>	xiii

### **CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY**

1.1	Background of Study	1
1.2	Research Scope	3
1.3	Problem Statement	3
1.4.	Research Objectives	3
1.5.	Research Hypothesis	4
1.6	Importance of the Study	4
1.7	Literature Review	5

## **CHAPTER 2 METHODOLOGY**

2.1	Introduction	13
2.2	Research Population	13
2.3	Sampling Techniques	14
2.4	Data Collection	15
2.4.1	Primary Data	15
2.4.2	Secondary Data	15
2.4.2.1	Audio/Video/CD	15
2.4.2.2	Book	16
2.4.2.3	Journal	16
2.4.2.4	Internet	16
2.4.2.5	Dissertation	16
2.5	Research Plan	17
2.6	Full Song List of Jay Chou's Composition	18

## **CHAPTER 3 DATA FINDINGS AND COMPOSITION**

3.1	Introduction	23
3.2	Findings	24
3.2.1	Analysis on Jay Chou's Composition	24
3.2.1.1	Form	24
3.2.1.2	Scale and Key	25
3.2.1.3	Harmony	26
3.2.1.4	Modulation	30
3.2.1.5	Mix Genres and Instrumentation	30

3.2.2	Analysis on Malay <i>Asli</i> Tunes	32
3.2.2.1	Tonal System	32
3.2.2.2	Texture	33
3.2.2.3	Melodic Pattern or Cadence	34
3.2.2.4	Ambience for <i>Asli</i> , <i>Inang</i> and <i>Joget</i>	34
3.3	New Composition – <i>Nian</i> 念 or “Missing You”	35
3.3.1	Form	35
3.3.2	Key and Modulation	35
3.3.3	Harmony	37
3.3.4	Melody	38
3.3.5	Lyric	39
3.3.6	Genres, Rhythm, Orchestration and Instrumentation	41

## CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH DISCUSSION

4.1	Introduction	44
4.2	Background of Expert Panel	44
4.2.1	Dr. Loo Fung Ying	44
4.2.2	Hor Fook Ken	45
4.3	Findings from Interview with Expert Panel	46
4.3.1	Dr. Loo Fung Ying	46
4.3.2	Hor Fook Ken	46
4.4	Findings from Questionnaire	49
4.4.1	Statement 1	49
4.4.2	Statement 2	50

4.4.3	Statement 3	50
4.4.4	Statement 4	51
4.4.5	Statement 5	52
4.4.6	Statement 6	52

## **CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION**

5.1	Conclusion	54
5.2	Suggestion	55

<b>REFERENCES</b>		57
-------------------	--	----

<b>GLOSSARY</b>		60
-----------------	--	----

<b>APPENDIX A</b>	<b>- FULL SCORES OF 念 MISSING YOU</b>	62
-------------------	---------------------------------------	----

<b>APPENDIX B</b>	<b>- QUESTIONS FOR EXPERT PANEL</b>	79
-------------------	-------------------------------------	----

<b>APPENDIX C</b>	<b>- QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESPONDENTS</b>	80
-------------------	--	----

<b>APPENDIX D</b>	<b>- INTERVIEW WITH EXPERT PANEL</b>	83
-------------------	--------------------------------------	----

<b>APPENDIX E</b>	<b>- AUDIO RECORDING OF 念-MISSING YOU</b>	85
-------------------	---	----

## LIST OF EXCERPTS

- Excerpt 1     Motive from bar 7
- Excerpt 2     Motive from bar 12
- Excerpt 3     Motive from bars 19-20
- Excerpt 4     Motive from bars 50-51
- Excerpt 5     Interaction with Dr. Loo Fung Ying
- Excerpt 6     Interaction with Mr. Hor Fook Ken
- Excerpt 7     Interaction with Mr. Hor Fook Ken (continue)

## LIST OF FIGURES

- Figure 1      Research plan
- Figure 2      Responses towards Statement 1
- Figure 3      Responses towards Statement 2
- Figure 4      Responses towards Statement 3
- Figure 5      Responses towards Statement 4
- Figure 6      Responses towards Statement 5
- Figure 7      Responses towards Statement 6

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Criterion of song selection
Table 2	List of Jay Chou's full-length album from year 2000 to 2016 and track
Table 3	Form of selected tracks from Jay Chou's album
Table 4	Scale and key of selected track from Jay Chou's album
Table 5	Chord progression of the song "Same Kind of Tune"
Table 6	Chord progression of the song "Hair Like Snow"
Table 7	Chord progression of the song "Twilight's Chapter Seven"
Table 8	Chord progression of the song "Faraway"
Table 9	Chord progression of the song "Chrysanthemum Terrace"
Table 10	Chord progression of the song "Blue and White Porcelain"
Table 11	Chord progression of the song "Mr. Magic"
Table 12	Modulation of selected tracks from Jay Chou's album
Table 13	Genres and instrumentation of selected tracks from Jay Chou's album
Table 14	Tonal system of Malay tune
Table 15	Texture of Malay tune
Table 16	Ambience for <i>Asli</i> , <i>Inang</i> and <i>Joget</i>

Table 17	Form of <i>Nian</i> 念 or “Missing You”
Table 18	Key and modulation of <i>Nian</i> 念 or “Missing You”
Table 19	Chord progression for <i>Nian</i> 念 or “Missing You”
Table 20	Lyric for <i>Nian</i> 念 or “Missing You”
Table 21	Orchestration and instrumentation of <i>Nian</i> 念 or “Missing You”

## ABSTRACT

Malaysia is well-known by the world as a multiculturalism country, build by over twenty different ethnics and race, customs, and culture. What make Malaysia really different from other nation is, there are cross-cultural exchanges in between. The term cross-cultural exchanges become the idea of mine to make something different in Malaysia's Mandopop. Mandopop is Mandarin language pop in short (Moskowitz, 2010), it is one of the subgenres from Chinese popular music or C-pop (Lee, 2012). The possibility of the combination of Malay traditional musical elements into new Mandopop composition that could be done in current 21<sup>st</sup> Century and accepted by the Malaysian audiences is a question mark for me. Based on the studies of Jay Chou's composition and Malay traditional music, I have combined the *Asli* Tune style melody and instrumentation into my new composition, and done determination of the feasibility of the new composition among Malaysian audiences, the cross-cultural exchanges have clearly formed through the composition.

## **ABSTRAK**

*Malaysia ialah sebuah negara yang dibentuk dengan seramai 20 lebih budaya, etika dan keturunan. Pertukaran silang budaya kerap berlaku dan merupakan satu keistimewaan negara ini. Pertukaran silang budaya telah menjadi idea saya untuk mencipta sesuatu yang baru di Mandopop industri dalam Malaysia. Berdasarkan Moskowitz (2010), Mandopop ialah perkataan singkatan kepada Mandarin language pop, ia merupakan salah satu genre kecil bawah kategori genre besar lagu popular berbahasa Cina atau C-pop. Dengan menggabungkan unsur-unsur muzik tradisional Melayu ke dalam komposisi baharu Mandopop yang berdasarkan kajian terhadap lagu-lagu Jay Chou, pertukaran silang budaya telah jelas kelihatan melalui muzik yang dicipta.*

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of Study

Mandarin language pop or Mandopop in short (Moskowitz, 2010), is one of the subgenres from Chinese popular music or C-pop, first imported from Shanghai to Taiwan during 1920s, then developed during 1950s. Although Malaysia's Mandopop industry is not highly productive compare to other local popular music industry, there are still number of Malaysian Mandopop songwriters and singers who are active in the industry. Good examples like Nicholas Teo, Rynn Lim, Fish Leong, Z-Chen, Gary Chaw, Michael Wong, Victor Wong, Penny Tai, and A-Niu, they are the famous Mandopop songwriter, singer and producer who currently active in the industry. By briefly listening through the songs selected based on the profile, countries and publicity of them, they are different in individual singing style, musical composition and language (Lee, 2012).

The most outstanding Mandopop artists in current twenty first century, without any objection, are Jay Chou and Lee-hom Wang. There is unique musical style that make them outstanding yet connecting this two artist together which is cross-cultural exchanges. These two artist famous with their cross-cultural musical style exchanges between the western and eastern countries in their music composition especially mix genres by adding Chinese

traditional music instruments into western musical style like R&B, Hip Hop and more to form their own Mandopop (Lee, 2012).

Malaysia is well-known as a multiculturalism country, build by over twenty different ethnics and race, customs, and culture. What make Malaysia really different from other nation is the frequent occurrence of cross-cultural exchanges in between its people. Nowadays, Malay people give away *angpau* or red envelope with pocket money inside to elders or children during *Hari Raya Puasa*, which adopted from Chinese New Year celebrations, showing the cross-cultural exchanges did happen in Malaysia and the term cross-cultural exchanges become the idea of mine to make something different in Malaysia's Mandopop.

In local Mandopop industry, there are only few number of trying done by the local artists. In year 2007, "Melodi", a Chinese pop song written and sung by a Chinese pop singer Rynn Lim, consists of a lyric that is written in both Malay and Chinese. This song was collaborated with Sheila Majid (Lim, 2007). In terms of genres and musical style, there are few innovations have been done. During year 1988, A song named "Say I Love You with the Passion of Malaysian Weather" -- 让我用马来西亚的天气说爱你 *rang wo yong ma lai xi ya de tian qi shuo ai ni* is composed by Teoh Yang Khoon 张映坤 by adapting the popular folk song *Rasa Sayang* into the song, he then re-arranged the song by adding in Malay, Chinese, and Indian instruments including kompang, accordion, tradisional Chinese flute, guzheng and tabla for singer A-Niu in 2006 (Tan, 2012a).

## **1.2 Research Scope**

The scope is set to accomplish this topic. Mandopop studies would be chosen from the composition by Jay Chou, while the suitable Malay traditional musical elements among the Malaysia popular music would be chosen and merge it into new Mandopop composition. The Malay traditional musical elements is scoped in terms of rhythm, melody, instrumentation, and harmony.

## **1.3 Problem Statement**

A problem is found out after the studies regarding the matter has been done which is there are no more such cross-culture exchanges happened in the Chinese pop music industry. The Malaysian Chinese Mandopop songs that combine both Chinese and Malay musical elements which were popular since 1988, were not composed after year 2008. This has make me wonder how high is the acceptance by the Malaysian with the combination of Malay traditional and Chinese popular musical elements into Mandopop.

## **1.4 Research Objectives**

The objectives of the research are to analyse the characteristics of Mandopop composition by Jay Chou, to compose a Mandopop with Malay traditional and Chinese popular musical elements and to determine the feasibility of combining both Mandopop and Malay traditional musical elements into a new Mandopop composition.

## **1.5 Research Hypothesis**

The combination of Malay traditional and Chinese popular musical elements into Mandopop able to receive positive responses from respondents and expert panel from Malaysia pop music industry.

## **1.6 Importance of the Study**

This research is important and necessary to be carried out as it is beneficial to the multi-racial community in Malaysia. By combining the Malay traditional and Chinese popular musical elements into the new Mandopop composition, Sinophone communities are given the opportunity to know more about the Malay traditional music. Through this composition, Mandopop is introduced to Malay speaking communities. Hence, cross-cultural exchanges are formed. This research able to reintroduce this type of composition to wider audiences.

## 1.7 Literature Review

In this modern age, pop music or pop songs have becoming a culture promoting tool or soft power, being exchanged between the world residents. The term soft power which coined by Nye (1990), a Rhodes Scholar and Oxford alumnus, is defined as the ability to attract and persuade. Shashi Tharoor further explained it as the “ability of a culture to tell a compelling story and influence others to fall in love with them” at TED talk during year 2013 (Wang, 2013). This soft power intensely influences people since its emergence during 1950s and 1960s. Without any dissent, pop music definitely bring the most impact towards people in current world, compared to other fact or issues. Pop music flavoured by the world regardless the races, social background, religious beliefs, language, and economics status. Stige (2010), suggests that people can become closer and form a connection with each other without saying or using any words through music. The current United Nation Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (2012) said, with the power of music, people can better understand the culture and civilisations of other people in this instability and intolerance era. Pop music from all over the world included English pop from America and Europe countries, J-pop from Japan, K-pop from South Korea, Malay pop music from Malaysia and nevertheless, C-pop from China and other Sinophone communities. Chinese popular music or C-pop is a main genre include other subgenres like Cantopop (Chantonese language pop), Hokkien pop, and Mandopop (Mandarin Chinese-language pop).

Mandopop was first imported from Shanghai to Taiwan in 1920s but only started to develop in the Taiwan market at 1950s. It commands a greater market share compare to other subgenres under the umbrella category of C-pop. Mandopop musicians’ range is ranging from

mainland China to other Sinophone communities all over the world including Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, Singapore, United States and even Canada. Sinophone literally means “Chinese Sounds.” Therefore, Sinophone communities refers to a Sinitic-language community whereby the Sinophone speakers are not necessary Chinese by nationality but they all connected by Mandarin which is the standard Sinitic language (Lee, 2012). These musicians use the main dialect, Mandarin dialect as the primary language in their music production and marketing. In mandopop industry, musicians released Mandarin-language albums, they only differentiate from each other by individual singing style, musical composition and regions of the world. Musicians included David Tao (Hong Kong), JJ Lin (Singapore), Nicholas Teo (Malaysia), Jay Chou (Taiwan), Faye Wong (Beijing), Lee-hom Wang (United States) and more, are the significant and well-known artists representing Mandopop and C-pop to the world. They all have their own singing style and have great achievement in their domain. Among these artists, Jay Chou and Lee-hom Wang are the bellwether in the world market.

Jay Chou or Chouchiehulun 周杰伦, a Taiwanese pop singer, songwriter, record producer, actor and director. Chou debut at year 2000 with his 1<sup>st</sup> full-length album, titled “Jay” and has gained acknowledgment throughout the Asia, such as Taiwan, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, South Korea, Japan, and other Asian communities in United States, Canada and Australia. Chou has titled as the King of Asian Pop at the cover story of Time magazine Asia version during year 2003 when he only debuted for 3 years. This has considered as big acknowledgement or success of an Asian singer whereby he brings big influence towards the Mandarin popular culture. Chou wowed the world with his unique cross-cultural musical style known as “Chou Style” or *Zhou Shi Feng Ge* 周氏风格. By regularly

merges the traditional Chinese instruments and style with western pop genre like Rhythm and blues (R&B), rap, and ballads, *Zhong Guo Feng* 中国风 or “Chinese Wind” style was formed which defined as “Chinese Style Music”. Unlike the common pop music, this musical style mostly composed with Pentatonic Scales rather than common Diatonic scale. Besides of his “Chou Style”, Chou is best known for his another musical style namely KUSO style and sophisticated melodies. KUSO which originating from Japanese slang *kuso*, has evolved in Taiwan as meaning of comedy or parody version of something. This musical style allows Chou to play around with creative word in Mandarin and Taiwanese dialect and uses atypical genres example country and ragtime in his music. Lyricist Vincent Fang, who is known for his traditional Chinese poetry writing style, works together with Chou created the best Chinese Style Music and recognised by the mandarin music industry and received nominations and won several awards as acknowledgement of his works. *Qinghuaci* 青花瓷 or “Blue and white porcelain” integrates poetically written lyrics with the combination of Chinese and western instruments, sending the message of longing between two person through the motifs found on blue and white porcelain. The lyrics of this song has been included into the *ShanDong* Higher Education Level Basic Test question and *JiangSu* Higher Education Entrance Examination question, recognising the impact brought by this popular culture towards the communities.

Another well-known musician from this C-pop industry Wang Lee-hom – 王力宏, who is an American-born Chinese, having the same standing with Jay Chou in Mandopop music industry. As soon as Wang graduated from Williams College and Berklee College of Music, he started to contribute Mandopop albums since 1995. Wang best known with his “Chinked-out” musical style whereby he combine the Chinese musical elements such as Beijing Opera,