Title: **“Visualizing Stravinsky”** motion graphic for live philharmonic orchestra performance
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Background

“Visualizing Stravinsky” is a project involving an original motion graphic projection created to accompany live philharmonic orchestra performances of Igor Stravinsky’s ‘The Rite of Spring’. The final multimedia piece was launched in January 2020 during two Stravinsky concerts by the Thailand Philharmonic Orchestra. It was well-attended by patrons of the arts and members of the community, including those associated with Mahidol University where the venue, Prince Mahidol Hall, is located. The goal in developing the work was to create visuals that harmonize with the music, yet are impactful and add aesthetic value to the orchestra’s performances. Although ‘The Rite of Spring’ was originally composed for ballet, the motion graphics were a substitute for dancers with a set on a stage, thereby creating a more contemporary environment for the music.

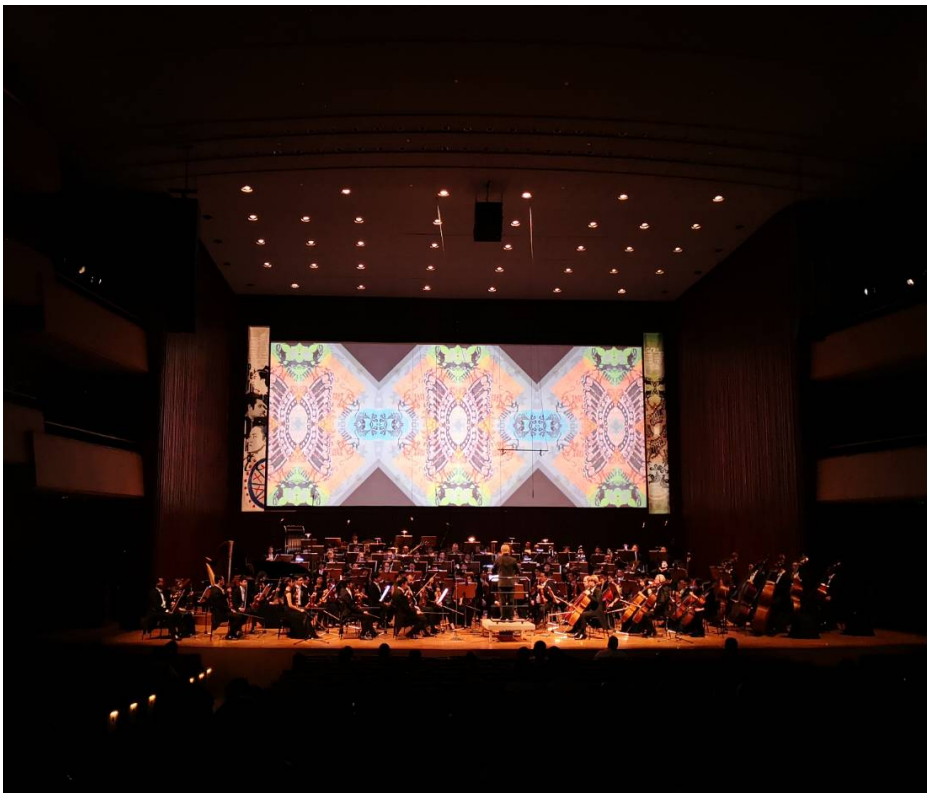
Research Methodology

Various forms of methodology were employed in the process of developing the creative work, including content analysis, qualitative study, and practice-based research. The process involved dissecting the complex story of ‘The Rite of Spring’, studying the musical score which contains Russian folk melodies, as well as interpreting video performances of the piece by international ballet companies. The research also entailed an historical investigation of Stravinsky and his work, visual research focusing on examples of Russian Folk and fine art, as well as set design. As digital media was utilized to produce the work, the initial investigation involved studying more about multimedia storytelling and the use of multiple platforms.

Execution

The research was then applied to the creation of a 25 minute-long multimedia work that brings together music and performance with art and digital media. The development of the piece started with the creation of hand-painted motifs of rabbits, horses, and birds, as well as organic elements relating to the music’s theme of Spring and inspired by examples of Russian folk art. Other formal elements, including color and space, were derived from the folk art, in addition to consideration of the mood and tone of the musical composition. Design elements were then organized into graphic compositions with grid-like formations to produce unity and a sense of rhythm and repetition relating to the traditional patterns found in Russian folk art and folk melodies. The images were subsequently set into motion to generate an abstract kaleidoscopic effect with vibrating movement meant to synchronize with the

music. The motion graphics were divided into shorter “scenes” to alleviate issues related to timing, as the tempo of the music slightly changes with each orchestra performance of the piece.

Remarks

Like the music itself and the original ballet, the motion graphics are intended to allow for a multitude of interpretations. The images suggest elements from the story of ‘The Rite of Spring’, the sound of the instruments, and the musical score, however the overall abstract quality was devised to link to the avant garde nature of Stravinsky’s work, and specifically to this particular musical masterpiece. Regardless of how the work is interpreted, the outcome of this project was the creation of a new type of aesthetic experience for those who enjoy classical music and ballet. It is an experiential piece as it involves listeners and viewers in new ways, beyond only observing the members of the orchestra playing their instruments.