

**THE BEAUTY OF LIFE AND DAILY LIFE ACTIVITIES
OF THE ETHNIC MINORITY COMMUNITIES**

**BY
CANG LAM VAN**

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Fine Arts Program in Visual Arts
at Maharakham University**

October 2015

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OF THE ETHNIC MINORITY COMMUNITIES**

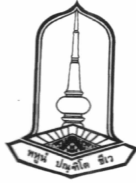
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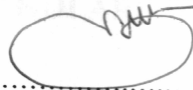



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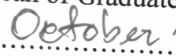
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Cang Lam Van



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ABSTRACT

This visual arts thesis, *The Beauty of Life and Activities of the Ethnic Minority Communities* consisted of two purposes, which were 1) to study how to express the happiness, well being, of life of the community of ethnic minorities in *Tay Nguyen* through their daily life activities, their festivals, ceremonies, and 2) to create visual arts through painting that expressed via form *Cong Chieng* gongs; festivals and ceremonies; was used from engraving lacquer painting; which conveyed my love and feeling for *Tay Nguyen*. It also reflects the nature of the traditional festival and ceremony in specific, and the beauty of life of the ethnic minority communities in *Tay Nguyen*. It reminds everybody to conserve and to develop the valuable traditional culture. The operation of this creation was collected field data, documentary data, and influence from creative work. The data analysis was clearly analyzed in order to theme, form, technique, and process through visual element and visual principle to satisfy of concept and special character for more than twenty five pieces.

The result of this creation revealed a series in traditional festival and ceremony of the ethnic minority communities in *Tay Nguyen*. This arts creation thesis reflects an aspect of the traditional cultural value of engraving lacquer painting. If it can be done successfully, it will become a precious collection that last through time in spirit and physical value. And this creation also brought about the new particular appearance.



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บทคัดย่อ

วิทยานิพนธ์การสร้างสรรค์ผลงานทัศนศิลป์เรื่อง ความงามแห่งชีวิตและกิจกรรมของชนกลุ่มน้อย (The Beauty of Life and Activities of the Ethnic Minority Communities) มีจุดมุ่งหมายเพื่อศึกษา 1) ศึกษาการแสดงออกทางวัฒนธรรมและสังคม ชีวิตความเป็นอยู่ของชุมชนคนกลุ่มน้อยใน *Tay Nguyen* ผ่านการดำรงชีวิตประจำวัน งานเทศกาลและพิธีกรรมต่างๆว่าเป็นอย่างไร และ 2) เพื่อสร้างสรรค์ผลงานจิตรกรรมที่แสดงถึงภาพของ *Cong Chieng-gong*; งานเทศกาลและพิธีกรรมในรูปแบบการแกะสลักพิมพ์ลายแล็กเกอร์ เพื่อถ่ายทอดความรักและความรู้สึกที่มีต่อกลุ่มคนเชื้อชาติ *Tay Nguyen* อีกทั้งยังสะท้อนถึงธรรมชาติของชนบทรรมนิยมประเพณีและพิธีกรรมในลักษณะพิเศษ รวมถึงความงดงามของชีวิตของกลุ่มชาติพันธุ์ สังคมความเป็นอยู่ของชนกลุ่มน้อยใน *Tay Nguyen* ซึ่งทำให้ระลึกถึงทุกคนที่ร่วมกันรักษา ทำให้คงไว้และพัฒนาให้เกิดคุณค่าทางวัฒนธรรม การดำเนินงานสร้างสรรค์ได้ดำเนินการรวบรวมข้อมูลจากภาคสนาม ข้อมูลด้านเอกสารและอิทธิพลจากผลงานศิลปกรรม วิเคราะห์ข้อมูลเพื่อหาความชัดเจนของแนวเรื่อง รูปทรงสัญลักษณ์ และเทคนิควิธีการสร้างสรรค์โดยใช้ทัศนธาตุและหลักการทางทัศนศิลป์ เพื่อตอบสนองแนวความคิด เกิดเป็นผลงานที่มีลักษณะพิเศษเฉพาะตน จำนวน 25 ชิ้น

ผลการสร้างสรรค์พบว่า เรื่องราวของงานประเพณี งานเทศกาล และพิธีกรรมต่างๆ ของสังคมชนกลุ่มน้อยใน *Tay Nguyen* มีการออกแบบจัดเตรียม มีความเป็นอิสระและไม่ได้เกิดขึ้นพร้อมกันกับผู้สร้างสรรค์อื่นๆ การสร้างสรรค์มีลักษณะใหม่โดยใช้รูปแบบการแกะสลักพิมพ์ลายที่ใช้ลักษณะเส้นบางเบาและเส้นหนัก ผู้สร้างสรรค์ผลงานได้สะท้อนให้เห็นถึงคุณค่าของชนบทรรมนิยม ประเพณีผ่านงานแกะสลักพิมพ์ลายแล็กเกอร์ ผลงานสำเร็จ และเกิดความล้ำค่ายอดเยี่ยมของการสะสมที่ผ่านช่วงเวลาทั้งของจิตวิญญาณและร่างกาย และเป็นการสร้างสรรค์ที่ก่อให้เกิดข้อค้นพบใหม่ในแบบลักษณะเฉพาะตน



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Primary Inspiration

In 1976, when I was a only 11 years old kid, my family came from Quang Nam to *Tay Nguyen* to settle. From a son of the middle coastal lowland (Quang Nam), I came to the highland (*Tay Nguyen*) which is full of strange things, strange people, especially the ethnic minority who are different from us from how to eat, how to drink, how to dress to how to think,... For example: men are often strip to the waist, they only wear a small cloth called kho (G-string or loincloth), women often wear vay (a type of skirt)... Far away from the familiar hometown, far away from the relative, I felt so strange, so scared,... but fortunately, it was only for the beginning.

Time after time, I grown up here, I have discovered that my love for *Tay Nguyen* has become bigger and bigger, in other words, it has increased with months and years. Finally, I realize that *Tay Nguyen* have, naturally, become my second hometown from when that I even don't know.

I discovered that the nature of *Tay Nguyen* is so special: this land is full of sunny (day) and windy (night), this land has giant forests with species of animals (I am interested in the elephant), plants,...

I love *Tay Nguyen* not only because of its nature but also of the people living there. I also discovered that the strange ethnic minority that day is so very good-nature, plain, honest and kind-hearted,...

The most enjoyable thing that I am interested in is the unique culture of ethnic minority in *Tay Nguyen*: *Cong Chieng* festival (maybe translated to the festival of gongs), folk tales, folk songs,... All of them are really, really, interesting.

These foundations became my source of inspiration for creating my artworks. This series of artworks is named: "*The beauty of life and daily life activities of the ethnic minority communities in Tay Nguyen*".



Concept

The daily life and the culture of the community of ethnic minorities in *Tay Nguyen* make a deep impress in my mind, give me to the inspiration to build up ideas and create this painting series - “*The beauty of life and daily life activities of the ethnic minority communities in Tay Nguyen*”. The safe and sound, well-off, joyful,... life of the community of ethnic minorities in *Tay Nguyen* was described honestly through their daily life activities from my point of view, my feelings and my experiences.

This concept is described through many characters: human, elephant, bird, crocodile,... ; things: che ruou (small jar of wine), Cong Chieng (gongs),..., nature: mountain, tree, river, ... The image of Cong Chieng (gongs) is used often because it is the central symbol of the space of gong culture, represents the value of traditional culture, cultural space. The Space of gong culture in the Central Highlands of Vietnam was recognized by UNESCO as a Masterpiece of the Intangible Heritage of Humanity on November 25, 2005. This heritage has attracted many tourists when they travel to Viet Nam.

Purpose of Creation

1. To study how to express the happiness, well-off,... of the life of the community of ethnic minorities in *Tay Nguyen* through their daily life activities, their festivals,...

2. Create the visual arts painting in semi-abstract style. This is expressed through many characters: human, elephant, etc., things: che ruou (small jar of wine), Cong Chieng (gongs), etc., nature: mountain, tree, etc. The ideas are conveyed through lacquer paintings. The surface forming and tackling technique is the combination of traditional and modern technique (smooth or rough).



Scope of Creation

1. Theme

Reconstitute daily activities of the community of ethnic minorities in *Tay Nguyen* in order to express the close-knit, unity of people in the process of discover the desolate and extensive nature.

Building form symbols and lay-out to express the concept based on the experiences and knowledge directly collected in the time living with the community of ethnic minorities in *Tay Nguyen*, combine with information collected from other authors, books, magazine, internet,...

2. Form

Oftentimes, characters were described in festivals, such as: Le Cau mua (praying for rain festival) which expresses the expectation of timely rains and favorable weather, good harvest, well-of life,... Lots of people show the close-knit in work and life.

The Cong Chieng symbol is put at high position in the artwork because of its important role in traditional and historic meaning. It has a very close-knit in all cultural activities of people in this land.

“Ruou can” is a kind of wine which is used to drink or is used in kowtow.

3. Techniques

In order to express the idea of the concept above, some featured techniques below are used:

Egg roasting/baking: Use the dry egg shell to roast or to bake above fire, adjust the roasting/baking time to determine the color of the of the product.

Voc making:

Choose plank (plywood) to make “voc” – *voc* is the multilayer painted plain plank (plywood) which is used as the background for lacquer painting (*also known as board by the foreigner*).



Plank must be processed through many steps to become *voc*: One layer of lacquer is applied to the plywood, which is left to dry. Next, thin cotton cloths soaked in clay are attached to both sides of the plywood. After the cotton/clay mixture dries, the board will be smoothed and polished. This process is repeated many times. Layers of black lacquer are then applied, and the board is left to dry and is then polished.

Thus, the final product appears as a piece of black board, very smooth and durable. It consists of several layers, is very resistant, and will not crack due to fluctuations in temperature or humidity. It may warp slightly due to these changes, but it is quite easy to straighten it again, as it remains flexible.

Encrust: Use the roasted/baked egg shell, upward or downward, to incrust the rough part. Egg shell can be crushed to become smooth flour, use this flour to make soft surface.

Surface banking: make the uneven (convexo-concave) part on the surface (if needed).

To colour: the artwork will be colored layer by layer which is overlapping each other in order to make eye-catching artwork.

Carving lacquer painting: Use carving tools which are different in shape and size to carve on the surface of the painting up to the purpose of the artist.

Operation of Creation

1. Data collection

1.1 Field data

Tay Nguyen is the land of cultural space, festivals, Cong Chieng gongs, Can wine, sepulchres, folk tales, epics,... *Tay Nguyen* is also the land of jungles, wild elephants,... an unwholesome environment. The fanciful, mysterious and unique of *Tay Nguyen*'s life has become the source of inspiration for many composers, artists, poets,... to create many well-known artworks.



For me, 25 years living on this land has given me many unforgettable feelings, experiences and a deep impression, in order to express the feelings inside my heart and my mind through visual art art-works, I am willing to try my best on the theme: “The beauty of life and daily life activities of the ethnic minority communities in *Tay Nguyen*”.

1.2 Documentary data

Data used for creating this thesis are collected from many sources:

My knowledge, feelings and experiences about Tay Nguyen after more than 30 years living in this land with the community of ethnic minorities.

Information from photos, pictures, etc.; through books, magazines, movies etc. ; artworks of other artists, on the internet.

1.3 Influence from creative work

In the process of creating new artworks, the artist that has a lots influences on me is Y Nhi Ksor – he is a man of Ede people, and a friend. Through him, I understand more about his people’s cultural life.

Some of his artworks, such as: *Mua tra hat* (1993), *Hoi xoang rap* (1998), *Di du hoi* (2000), *Le trao vong* (2004),... also affect my work.

These paintings express the neglected, mysterious beauty of the life and the soul of people in *Tay Nguyen* through their activities, their festivals, their spyched life,...

2. Data analysis

2.1 Analysis of theme

The main theme of my artworks was built from what I saw, what I collected from books, movies, picture,... about cultural life of the community of ethnic minorities in *Tay Nguyen* through festivals.

2.2 Analysis of form symbols

The main content of my artworks was built from what I saw, what I collected from books, movies, picture,... about cultural life of the community of ethnic minorities in *Tay Nguyen* through festivals.



The image of *Cong Chieng* (gongs) and *che ruou can* (special wine drunk out of a jar through pipes) are used as the symbols to express the well-off life in *Tay Nguyen*.

2.3 Analysis of techniques

2.3.1 Use roasted/baked egg shell (pieces or flour) to make the the soft background/ soft surface.

2.3.2 Bank paint into rough surface to express the geographic features of the High land of this land.

3. Creation of works

3.1 Making sketches

3.1.1 Sketch ideas with black pencil.

3.1.2 Sketch ideas with color pencil, gouache.

3.1.3 Make model by steel and fabric.

3.2 Creation of works

3.2.1 Create main frame by iron or steel fibers with small form according to sketch.

3.2.2 Crochet wool into small sheets.

3.2.3 Put, tie wool sheets on the form.

4. Stages of disseminating works

4.1 Disseminating works in the form of exhibition

4.2 Writing documents in supplement to creation

4.3 The article of thesis should be published full paper in journal or international Conference Proceeding/ journal: 1. Thai-Journal Citation Index Centre[TCI], 2. Excellence in Research for Australia [ERA].

Definition of Terms

1. Quang Nam : a province on the South Central Coast of Vietnam. This province has two UNESCO World Heritage Sites: the ancient town of Hội An and the Mỹ Sơn temple complex. It also lies on the World Heritage Road which connects different World Heritage Sites in Central Vietnam.



2. *Tay Nguyen* : translated as Western Highlands and sometimes also called Central Highlands, is one of the regions of Vietnam. It contains the 5 provinces: Dak Lak, Dak Nong, Gia Lai, Kontum and Lam Dong.

3. Kho : known as G-string or loincloth. Ede men wear loin clothes and long sleeve pull-over with V-shaped neck. A floral pattern strip is woven in front of the dress as an indication of masculine.

4. Vay : Ede women wear long sleeve pull-over with two lines of buttons on the waist. Colorful threads are knitted along the shoulder and reach knees.

5. Cong Chieng : type of gong, a musical with copper alloy, when mixed with gold, copper and silver or black. Gong is a knob, no nipple gongs. This instrument has many sizes, from 20 cm to 60 cm in diameter, maximum of 90 cm to 120 cm. Gongs can be used alone or used as staging, sets from 2 to 12 or 13 the, even where from 18 to 20 the. In general, taboos regarding Cong Chieng customs differ from ethnicity to ethnicity. The Cong Chieng bears great significance and value for many ethnic groups in *Tay Nguyen* where almost every family has at least one set of the Cong Chieng.

6. Can wine : also called tube wine, is a fermented rice wine produced in Vietnam, in particular in mountainous areas like *Tay Nguyen* area. This kind of wine is often stored in a jar and drunk out through pipes. Can Wine is typically drunk for special celebrations or ceremonies such as weddings, festivals, or harvest feasts. People often dance and play music (in *Tay Nguyen*) after drinking. When you are invited to drink Can wine by the locals, it means that you are seen as distinguished guest.

7. voc : is the multilayer painted plain plank (plywood) which is used as the background for lacquer painting (*also known as board by some translators*).

8. Lacquer painting : a form of painting with lacquer which was practiced in China and Japan for decoration on lacquerware, and found its way to Europe both via Persia and by direct contact with Asia. The genre was revived and developed as a distinct genre of fine art painting by Vietnamese artists in the 1930s, where the genre is known as “*son mai*”.



9. Ethnic minority communities : *Tay Nguyen* region is home to a large population of ethnic minorities such as the people of Malayo-Polynesian languages (Jarai and Ede) and the people of Mon-Khmer languages (Bahnar and K'hor). They have made up the majority of the region's population for a long time. Their unique cultures have made Tay Nguyen become an interesting land for tourists.



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to the purpose of the creation, this thesis study focuses on “The well-of life in *Tay Nguyen*”. To support the study purpose, the framework of process is selected accordingly. This chapter reviews related literature, covering the following topics:

1. Field data
2. Documentary Data
3. Influences from Creative Work

Field Data



Figure 1 Clothes of Ede people





Figure 2 Patterns on clothes of ethnic minority people
Photo by author at Dak Lak on 2005





Figure 3 Cong Chieng gongs



Figure 4 Cong Chieng gongs in museum.



Figure 5 Cong Chieng festival



Figure 6 Men gongs team

Photo by author at Dak Lak on 2003



Figure 7 Women gongs team

Photo by Tan Vinh at Tay Nguyen on 2000



Figure 8 Cong Chieng are being used in festival





Figure 9 *Tay Nguyen* people drinking Can wine in their festival



Figure 10 Activities in praying for rain festival 1



Figure 11 Activities in praying for rain festival 1



Figure 12 Activities in praying for rain festival 2



Figure 13 Activities in praying for rain festival 2



Figure 14 Elephants are now being used for tourist services



Figure 15 Elephants are now being used for tourist services



Figure 16 Prepare for a festival



Figure 17 Buffalo thrusting festival



Figure 18 Buffalo thrusting festival



Figure 19 Elephant racing festival

Documentary Data

Tay Nguyen has been represented through many forms of work, such as: paintings, writings, movies, multimedia, etc. Each of them are different from others but the point of views of authors on Tay Nguyen are usually look like each other.

The love for Tay Nguyen of Nguyen Cuong – a composer - is appear to be so exciting and proud through his song “*Con yeu nhau thi ve Buon Me Thuot*” (If we still love each other, come back to Buon Me Thuot) – Buon Me Thuot is a city of Dak Lak province in Tay Nguyen region. Lyric of this song is available online in Vietnamese at website <http://loibaihat.info>. It can be translated in general like below:

Seeing you again in rain season, here the old road
 Seeing you a gain, night tilts in bowls of invited wine
 This look, this voice, I still always love
 Windy and sunny, nothing changes
 The greetings like the smile in the old days, the rhythm of thigh swaying is
 still the same



If we still love each other, come back to Buon Me Thuot (ah! ah! ah! uh!)
 If still love each other, come back to Buon Me Thuot (ah! ah! uh!)
 You – the legend high lands, you – the high lands of wild grass
 A high land inside me, also so near, also so far (oh hoh)
 There is windy, there is sunny, there is nostalgia
 without name, you know

Nguyen Cuong (1973)

The love for Tay Nguyen can also moreish, deeply, unforgettable in “Tro ve Tay Nguyen” (*Come back to Tay Nguyen*) of Nhu Mai – a writer who has many works about Tay Nguyen.

It can be translated in general like below:

“Tay Nguyen doesn’t give my birth, doesn’t feed me to grown up, but it teaches me how to live to fulfill the obligations. Not a long time but the most beautiful time in a human life, enough to make a deep impression that cannot be forgot about a time that I had lived. Aspirations, dreams may be haven’t come true yet but that is this place where gives me the wings, so that, today return, I feel that Tay Nguyen is so close to my heart, as my flesh and blood.”

Extracted from “Tro ve Tay Nguyen” – Nhu Mai (2013)

Influence from Creative Work

I started to build up ideas of my visual arts artworks base on my own perception. Then, I widen my scope of study and my source of inspiration by looking for information, documentary, etc. Through this, I found that other artists work can give me many fresh ideas, and valuable perceptions.

Below are some paintings of artist Y Nhi Ksor – a well-known artist about *Tay Nguyen*. Work of Y Nhi Ksor is evaluated by many reviewers. Here is some reviews of Nguyen Phuong Lien – a reviewer – extracted from paper “Sắc màu Tây Nguyên trong tranh họa sĩ Y Nhi Ksor” (*Colors of Tay Nguyen through Y Nhi Ksor’s work*):



1. “Paintings of Y Nhi Ksor do not stop at the surface of the culture and people in Tay Nguyen through appearances, such as: communal house, charnel house, Can wine, festival, kowtow,... He also targets the innermost feelings and the soul of this high land and its people”.

2. “Audience will feel the breath of Tay Nguyen from the first day coming to mountain field with native people through the artwork “*Mua tra hat*” (Fig 2.10), to the last day on their happiness of good harvest through artwork “*Duoc mua*” (Fig 2.11). It can also be the spontaneous joy of waiting for kowtow and festival through “*Di du hoi*” (Fig 2.8), or the beauty of the native traditional culture in wedding through “*Le trao vong*” (Fig 2.12), or the completely drunk in space of Can wine jar and Cong Chieng gongs sound through “*Ruou mung*” – (wedding wine) ...



Figure 20 Artist : Y Nhi Ksor

Title : DI DU HOI (go to the festival)

Size : 110 x 150 centimeter

Technique : Oil on canvas





Figure 21 Artist : Y Nhi Ksor

Title : HOI XOAN RAP (Xoan Rap festival)

Size : 950 x 1400 centimeter

Technique : Oil on canvas





Figure 22 Artist : Y Nhi Ksor

Title : MUA TRA HAT (seed the seed seasons)

Size : 105 x 150 centimeter

Technique : Oil on canvas





Figure 23 Artist : Y Nhi Ksor

Title : DUOC MUA (Good harvest)

Size : 110 x 150 centimeter

Technique : Oil on canvas





Figure 24 Artist : Y Nhi Ksor

Title : LE TRAO VONG (Giving the bangle kowtow)

Size : 110 x 150 centimeter

Technique : Oil on canvas

Here are some of my opinions about Y Nhi Ksor's artworks and what I have learnt from him:

1. His artworks are often oil paintings. The main color style is usually hot - with red and black. Piece and line are simple, strong, liberal. Bright and dark parts are apart. Hot and cold are enough. It fits with the harsh and also the enduring life of this land.

2. With a simple oil painting technique, he is successful in describing the neglected and plain beauty of life and soul of people in Tay Nguyen through their daily life activities and festivals, but his style is quite classical.

3. Each artwork reflects honestly an aspect of life, but overall, his artworks are still not in a united single concept.

I also influenced by the style of painting of artist Thavee Rachaneekorn whose artworks are represented below. These artworks are extracted from *Moca Bangkok, Museum of Contemporary Art* (2012: 114-115).



Figure 25 Artist : Thavee Rachaneekorn

Title : Belief and Faith

Size : 190 x 300 centimeter

Technique : Oil on canvas



Figure 26 Artist : Thavee Rachaneekorn

Title : Bones

Size : 200 x 300 centimeter

Technique : Oil on canvas



Here are some of my opinions about Thavee Rachaneekorn's artworks and what I have learnt from him: Although Thavee's theme and concept is very far different from mine, I have learnt from him how to feel and how to express the soul, the spirit, the "belief and faith" through natural things; which gives me a further step to improve my color and painting style. I try to use a simpler way to describe objects, characters,... something called "all appear at the first look", but also can convey the meanings and the feelings, which is very deep inside, to the audience; it really makes a very deep impression.

Conceptual of Framework

Idea concept

The field data and documentary data above: songs, writings, photos, artworks of Y Nhi Ksor and Thavee Rachaneekorn, etc. have gave a deep impression, gave me many fresh ideas, and valuable perceptions, encourage me to make my own artworks. I want to create a series of modern artwork with the same content (about the culture of *Tay Nguyen*'s ethnic minority communities) but different point of view (concept), different way of form.

Process

I started to build up ideas of my visual arts artworks base on my own perception. Then, I widen my scope of study and my source of inspiration by looking for information, documentary, etc. Through this, I found that other artists work can give me many fresh ideas, and valuable perceptions. The songs and writings have intensify my love for *Tay Nguyen*. Y Nhi KSor – he is himself a man of Ede people, so, I understand more about his people's cultural life through his artworks, such as: *Mua tra hat* (1993), *Hoi xoang rap* (1998), *Di du hoi* (2000), *Le trao vong* (2004), etc. I also influenced by the style of painting of artist Thavee Rachaneekorn when I study some of his artworks, such as: *Belief and Faith* (2007), *Bones* (2007), etc.



Result

I am willing to create a series of modern artwork with title “*The beauty of life and daily life activities of the ethnic minority communities in Tay Nguyen*”. This series will have a deeper research inside the daily life of people in this land. Lacquer painting and engraving lacquer painting techniques will be used to achieve the purpose, because they can conveyed not only the plain, simple nature but also the traditional spirit, belief factors.



CHAPTER III

CREATIVITY METHODS

This chapter gives an outline of the study design and procedure. The procedure of the study concluded from chapter two and other frameworks which involve with “The well-off life in *Tay Nguyen*”. This creation will be presented according to the following topics:

1. Sketches
2. Material and Equipment
3. Work creation

Sketches

After analyzing all the collected information to set up the content, ideas, symbols,... Sketches are made in order to find out good layouts for the artworks. Sketches also show the artist’s expectation of the incoming work. For me, sketch making is a process of finding new experiences, more than any other processes.

1. First, using pencil, I find new layouts by drawing preliminary lines. Then, compare these layouts and choose the good ones.
2. Second, I distinguish dark and bright parts, draw more details by using pencil, brush, pen nib,...
3. Third, due to the remarks of the advisors, sketches can be edited.
4. Final, I review, summarize to learn from experience for next sketches.

Material and Equipment

Material and equipment are elements from which we create artwork. I chose lacquer painting to express this concept because lacquer painting is my strong point and it also suit the roughly characters, things, space in *Tay Nguyen*.



My material and equipment consist: pencil, charcoal, color, paper, paper fastener, wood or plywood, different kinds of engraver,... In the process of creation, some featured material and equipment below are used:



Figure 27 Painting Materials

1. Roasted/baked egg: Dry egg shell is roasted or to baked above fire, adjusting the roasting/baking time to determine the color of the product. While encrusting, the roasted/baked egg shell can be put upward or downward on the board. Egg shell can be crushed to became smooth flour, use this flour to make soft surface.

3. Black lacquer paint or AB glue is mixed with alluvial flour and plaster. Use this mixture to bank where we need to rise on the surface, then, use graver to make the better shape.

Work Creation

1. Works in step 1

Using pencil, brush, pen nib, etc. sketches are made to find new layouts by drawing preliminary lines, distinguish dark and bright parts, draw more details... Then, compare these sketches and choose the good ones. Third, due to the remarks of the advisors, sketches can be edited.

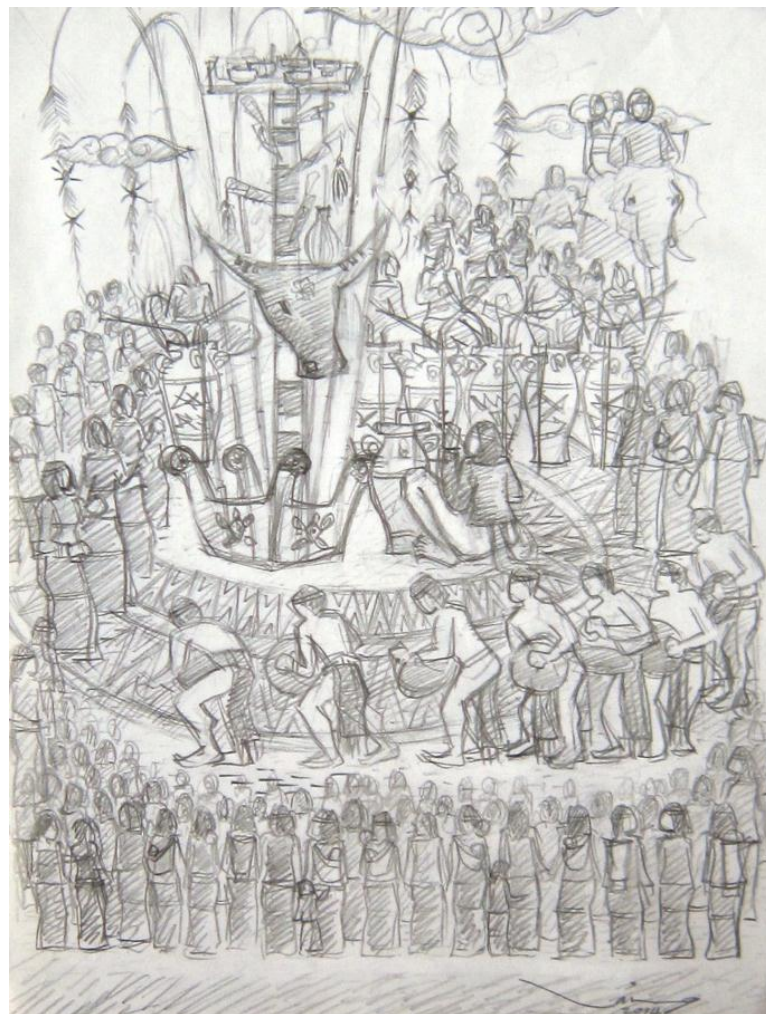


Figure 28 Sketch

2. Works in step 2

2.1 In this step

Choose the suitable size plank, and then, make the board (*voc*). Choose paper that have the suitable size (width and height) with the board. Use pencil or charcoal to draw the layout from the sketch on the paper, edit and improve the layout, images. Find the dark and light part, determine the main and supplement part, get involve in more details. Handle the rough part on the surface, such as: inlay the egg shell, bank, stick other materials (if needed).

Next, rub white titan powder evenly over the back of paper of previous enlarged sketch. Then, use the paper fastener to keep the paper fixed on the board. After that, use pencil or ball-point pen to re-draw the image. Due to the white titan powder in the back of the paper, the image will be scanned clearly manually into the board.

Below are some photos of this step.



Figure 29 Use pencil or ball-point pen to re-draw the image





Figure 30 Process of manual scanning.





Figure 31 The layout on the board after scanning



During the engraving process, our hand movement can make the white line dime, distorted or dislocated. Therefore, we need to use a-ra-bich gum mixed with white titan powder, then, use small brush to redraw the line to make it stable.

For engraving lacquer painting, after previous steps, we use engravers of different size to engrave the vignettes into the board. Prepare a smooth large brush to sweep engraved wood, dust,... to prevent them to scratch the board.

After engraving, the work will be washed under water to clear the dust in the line, clear the white powder. Take care to rub gently, not to rub hard, so that it do not jag engraved lines, small details,...

Then, use clean towel to absorb water, wait for dry and come to the next step: coloring.



Figure 32 Process of engraving





Figure 33 The engraved work



3. Works in step 3: color the work

Before coloring, I color all the vignettes by white color to form a color background. The purpose of this white background is to make latter color layers become more freshly, should not color directly on opaque. When the white background is dry, we will color the work like the sketch.



Figure 34 Process of white background coloring



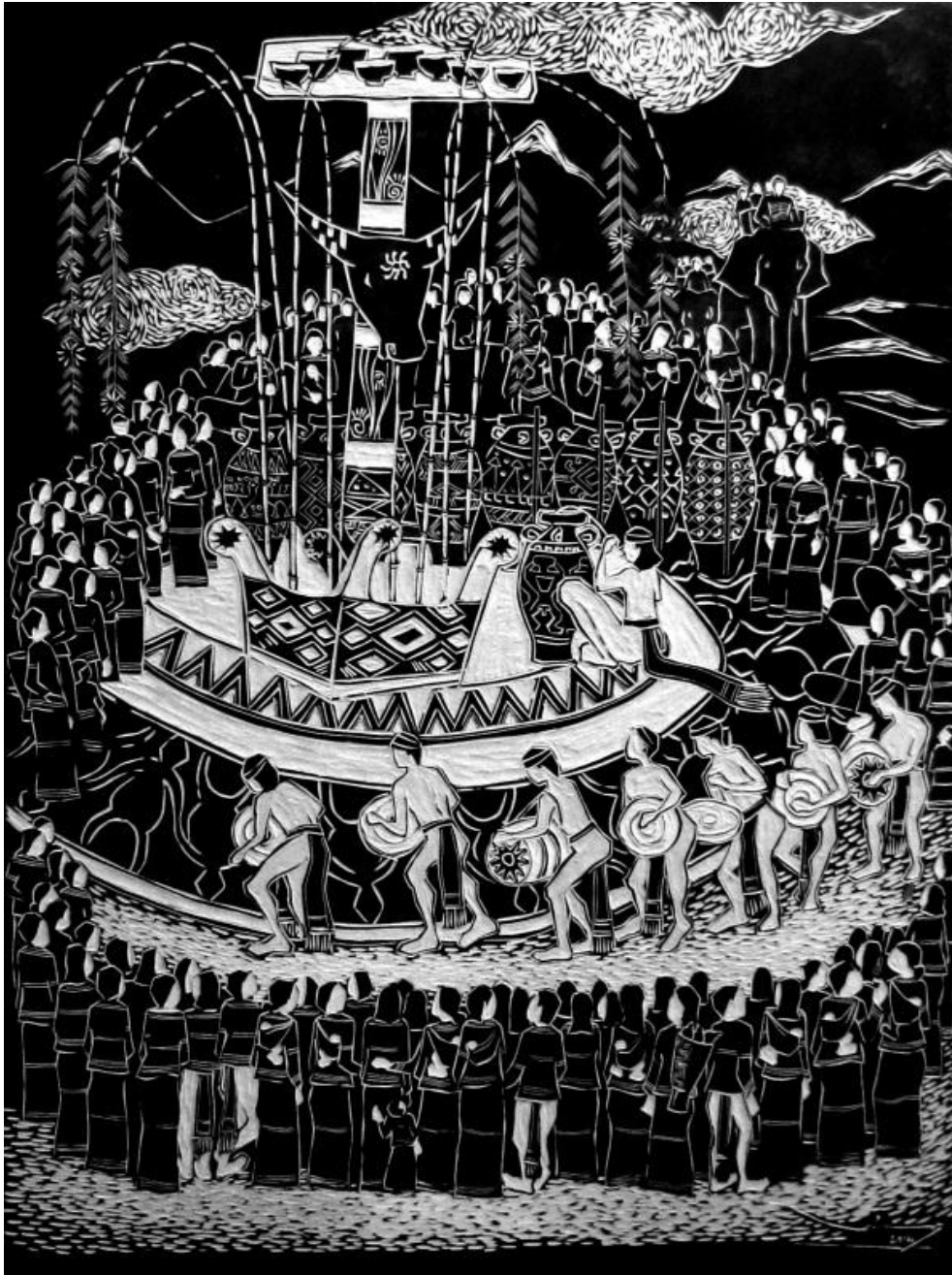


Figure 35 Work after white background coloring process





Figure 36 Process of coloring





Figure 37 Work after coloring

If it is a multilayer lacquer painting: Layer by layer is colored (by one color). When a layer (a color) is dry, I color the next layer. When all colors are dry, I use the brown-red paint to cover the work totally. Wait for 2 or 3 days for this paint to dry, then, conduct to whet, carve and polish the work. If it is a carved lacquer painting, I carve first, after that, color the work.

Conclusion

In my opinion, the created artworks have expressed the coincidence with the initial concept, and achieved the initial purposes.

The style, method and color is improved through each stage: new painting method is conducted through the ways of engraving, new color patterns are also tested, new characters are concluded,...

In comparison with my artworks from the beginning of the program (course), the latter ones are more plentiful, diversified and more abstract. The artworks had come from simple to complex, and then came to simple again but at a higher level.



CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter intends to *The beauty of life and daily life activities of the ethnic minority communities in Tay Nguyen*. The focus of this chapter is to illustrate to the results. Thus, the results of this creation are shown into the following topics:

1. Thesis works phase 1
2. Thesis works phase 2
3. Thesis works phase 3

Thesis Works Phase 1

1. Content

The inspiration of my artworks usually originates from my love and my living experience. Hence, due to my love for *Tay Nguyen*, and my experience of living on this land, I have chosen “The beauty of life and daily life activities of the ethnic minority communities in *Tay Nguyen*” as the content of this thesis.

Daily life activities of the ethnic minority communities in *Tay Nguyen* have a closely relationship with nature, such as farming, hunting, picking,... The faith of these people also extreme plentiful, they believe that all phenomena are connected with spirit or deity (the culture of polytheistic spirit). In this culture, rites and festivals play an very important role. Through these festivities, such as, Gongs festival, Praying for rain festival, Buffalo thrusting festival,... people come in, create, and conserve many valuable customs, which partly contribute to make the strong foundation for national culture. In general, all the cultural festivals help people live in a better way, realize and respect the value of their culture, also, widen the exchanges among people. My feeling and idea has come from there.



In the process of completing this thesis, I often use familiar images of this land, and my country: plain and indulgent people, cloths and things created by themselves,..., and the gongs (*Cong Chieng* gongs), which is the central symbol of The Space of gong culture in the Central Highlands (*Tay Nguyen*) of Vietnam, which was recognized by UNESCO as a Masterpiece of the Intangible Heritage of Humanity on November 25, 2005.

Through these images, I want to convey my feelings for *Tay Nguyen*, where I grew up. Besides, I want to express a message to remind people to remember, to conserve and to develop the traditional cultural values of their country.

2. Form

I have chosen festivals to represent in my artworks, because festival is the best way to convey the features of life of the ethnic minority communities in *Tay Nguyen*. In my artworks, there are always many peoples, which express the solidarity, support each other in work as well as any other activity in life, with the aim to avoid wild beast and protect the village. The image of *Cong Chieng* (gongs) are usually represented because of its historic and cultural origin, it is also the most valuable things that must be used in festivals. In addition, *Can* wine is also a valuable wine which was made manually by people in this land and is used as a drinking in festivals.

3. Technique

In the process of making this thesis, I have tried and experienced some techniques. First, I used traditional lacquer painting, but it cannot convey all the feelings about the content. Then, I tried using wood, combine with traditional lacquer painting, banking to make the rough surface. Finally, I chose engraving lacquer painting to represent my artworks. This choice is related to several reasons: this technique helps me to solve the the problem easier with the layout of a crowd, many persons of the topic of festival. The engraving technique makes the lacquer painting stronger, which is suitable with the character of the sinewy people and the wild nature of this land. It also create a deeper space for the artwork, include more hidden feelings.



4. Work Creation : 3 works of different size (85 x 120 cm. or 80 x 120 cm.)

4.1 Thesis works phase 1 work 1

4.1.1 Works in step 1

The very first is picking up the idea. In *Tay Nguyen*, according to the polytheistic belief, all spiritual and productive activities need to be allowed by deities before conduct. After completing the activities, expressing their gratitude is compulsory. Any action that violates the community rule must be confessed and pray for forgiveness. This is why there are many festivals on this land. In this sketch, I want to depict the atmosphere in *Tay Nguyen* at the beginning of the festival season.

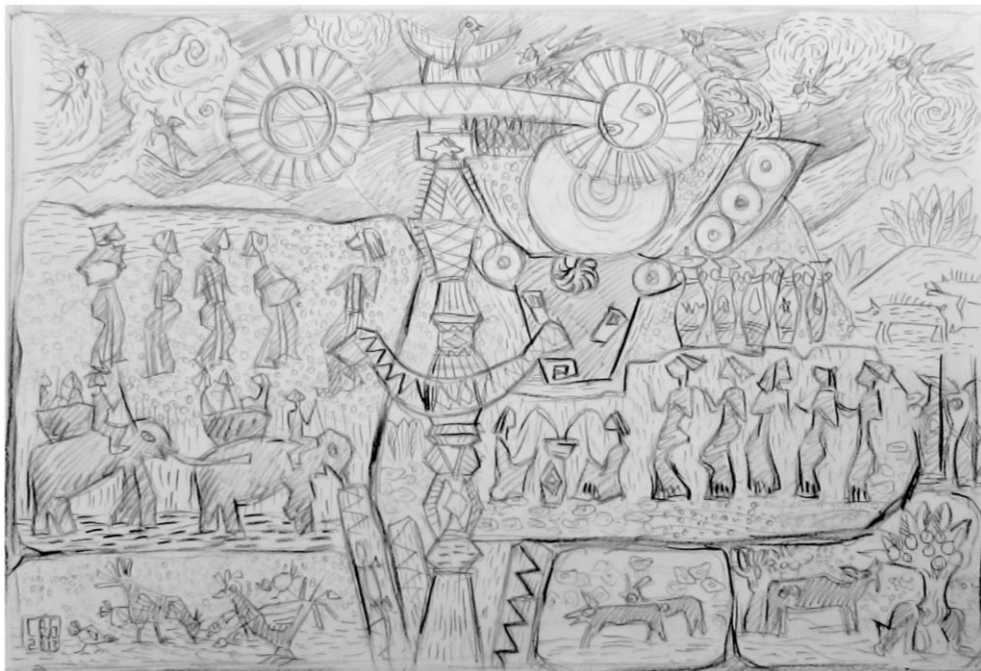


Figure 38 Sketch of work 1 phase 1

This artwork, like its title, represents the atmosphere in *Tay Nguyen* at the beginning of the festival season. The festival season starts from December to March (next year), after the harvesting. This time, paddy is already at home, the next season have not come yet. It is a very convenient time for people to celebrate rites and festivals.



In this artwork, I use the landscape orientation in order to widen the space, the sky and the land), on this space, birds are flying, chickens and buffalos are feeding, people are moving and dancing with the rhythm of the gongs,... It is a liberal and thrill atmosphere at the beginning of the incoming festivals. The main blue color of the background with the red scale color also describe the poetic, dreamlike, and warm atmosphere of this season.

4.1.2 Works in step 2

After having sketch, I make the board. Choose paper that have the suitable size with the board. Use charcoal to draw the layout from the sketch on the paper, edit and improve the layout, images. Find the dark and light part, determine the main and supplement part, get involve in more details. Next, rub white titan powder evenly over the back of paper of previous enlarged sketch. Then, use the paper fastener to keep the paper fixed on the board. After that, use pencil or ball-point pen to re-draw the image. Due to the white titan powder in the back of the paper, the image will be scanned clearly manually into the board.

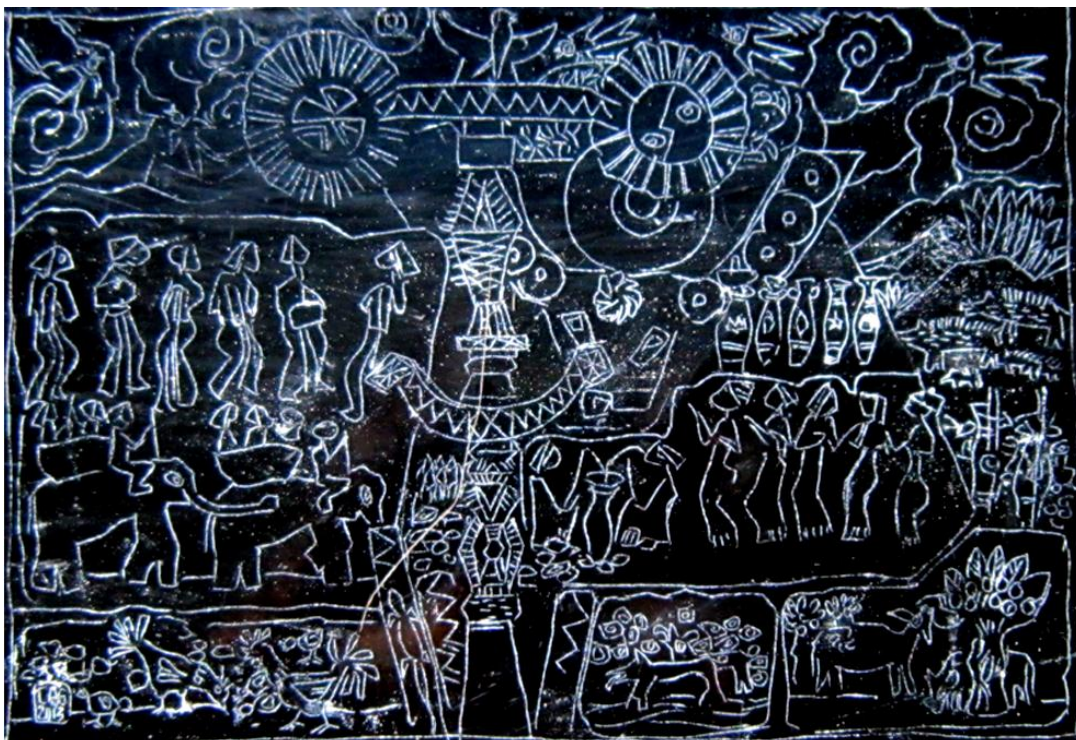


Figure 39 Phase 1 work 1 in step 2



4.1.3 Works in step 3

Use small brush to redraw the line to make it stable by gum mixed with white titan powder. Use engravers of different size to engrave the vignettes into the board. For technique, I used engraving lacquer painting without using traditional lacquer painting techniques (such as egg or shell encrust,...). I use the engraving technique to take away the outline or to make circles of different size. All of these actions are aim to create sparkling feeling for the artwork when it is lightened.



Figure 40 Phase 1 work 1 in step 3

After engraving, the work will be washed under water to clear the dust in the line, clear the white powder. Next, wait for the work to become dry. Then, I color the shape outline of characters, the background color is the black color of the board.



4.1.4 The results

This artwork is commented by the committee as tilting in narration, and does not has a depth space enough to express the feelings. I need to make a deeper space for my artworks next time. It is an inconvenient beginning, but it also a challenge for me to go further.



Figure 41 Thesis works phase 1 work 1

Title : *Tay Nguyen* at the beginning of the festival season

Size : 80 x 120 centimeter

Technique : Engraving lacquer painting



4.2 Thesis works phase 1 work 2

4.2.1 Works in step 1

I use pencil to make sketch. In this sketch, I want to depict the praying for rain ceremony, one of the most important ceremony which is celebrated annually in March. This time is a mark of starting a new harvest season, and this ceremony expresses the wish of timely rains and favorable weather, better productivity,...



Figure 42 Sketch of work 2 phase 1



Different from the previous artwork, the orientation of this time is portrait. There are several reasons for this choice: First, it makes a higher, farther space, which is suitable with the expression of many peoples open their heart and send their message to the sky. Second, in ceremony, sacrifice must be set at a high and bright position to show the respect to deity. It is also the central point of the layout. The characters simple, strong, do not tilt in detail.

4.2.2 Works in step 2

Use charcoal to draw the layout from the sketch on the paper. Next, rub white titan powder evenly over the back of paper of previous enlarged sketch. Then, scan the image clearly onto the board.



Figure 43 Phase 1 work 2 in step 2



4.2.3 Works in step 3

I need to mix gum with white powder, then, use small brush to redraw the line to make it stable.



Figure 44 Phase 1 work 2 in step 3

After previous steps, I use engravers of different size to engrave the vignettes into the board. Prepare a smooth large brush to sweep engraved wood, dust,... to prevent them to scratch the board. Then, use water to clean the dust and wait for the work to be dry. Finally, color the work, first white background for lines, then multi-layer colors for the work.



4.2.4 The results

This artwork received good comments from the committee, although there are also some weaknesses, the layout, character and color is quite good, warm and sparkling. They make a good feeling. I can develop later artworks in this trend.

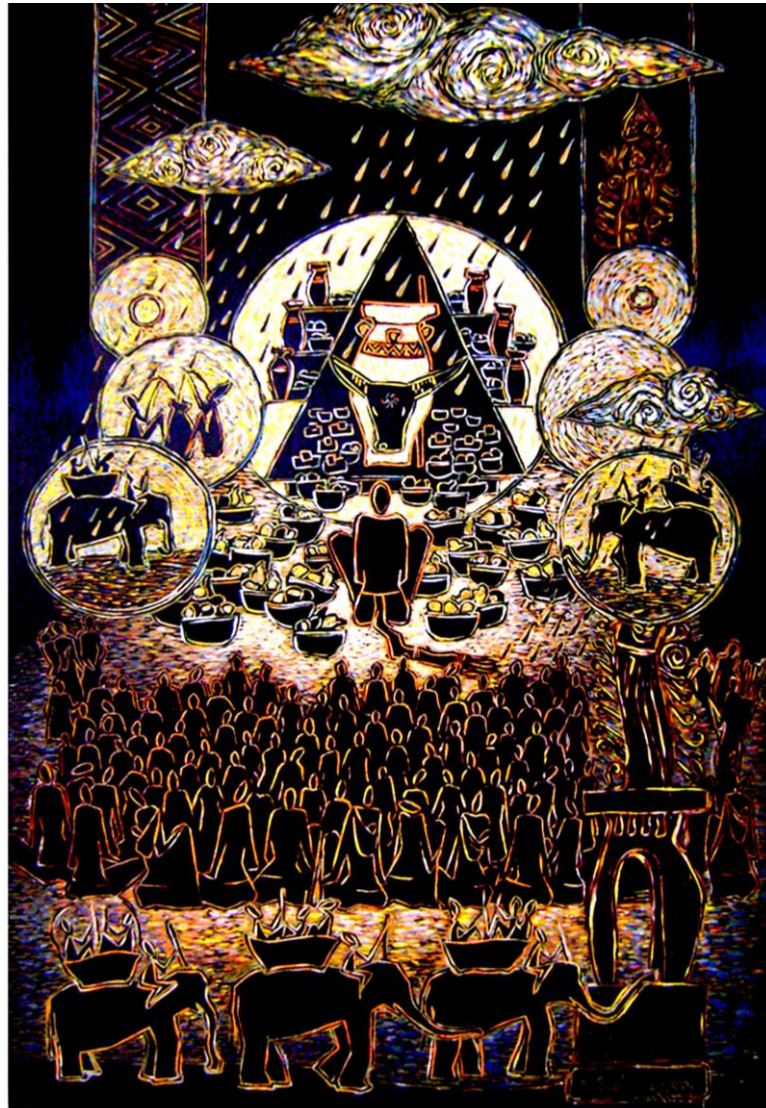


Figure 45 Thesis works phase 1 work 2

Title : Praying for rain ceremony

Size : 80 x 120 cm

Technique : Engraving lacquer painting



4.3 Thesis works phase 1 work 3

4.3.1 Works in step 1

Making sketch: In this step, I have made sketches on praying for harvest ceremony. This ceremony is quite similar to the praying for rain ceremony above, which is celebrated by most ethnic minorities in *Tay Nguyen*, such as *Ma* people, *Ba Na* people, *Co Tu* people, *Ede* people,... It expresses the hope for bumper harvest, for a well-off and happy life,...

Because of the similar above, I choose the portrait orientation to makes the distance between sky and land farther. The difference is that people are arranged in the below part of the artwork, and the characters are bigger in size, and less in number,... It is to make the land become airy, to make the audience feel the interminableness of *Tay Nguyen* land.

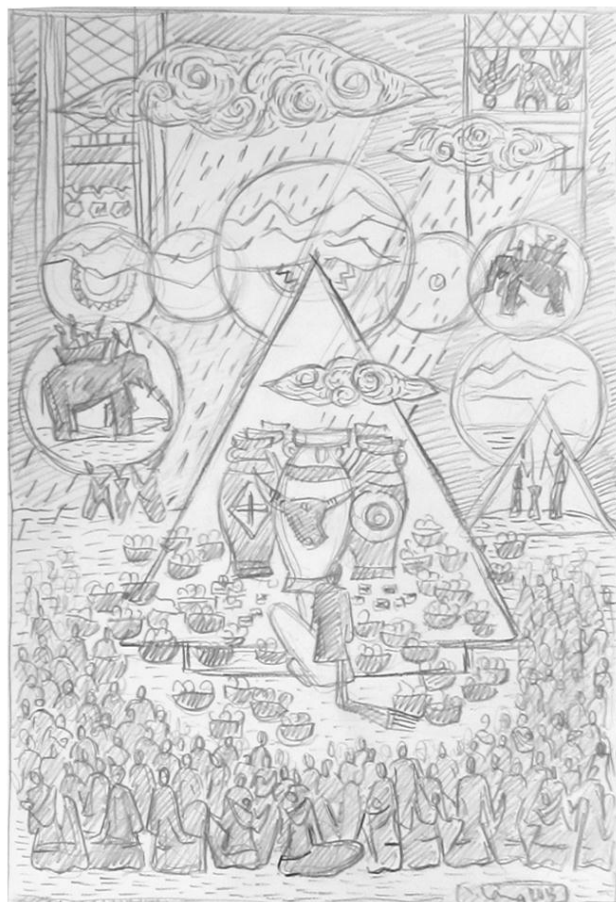


Figure 46 Sketch of work 3 phase 1

4.3.2 Works in step 2

In this step, I choose the suitable size plank, and then, make the board. Choose paper that has the suitable size with the board. Use charcoal to draw the layout from the sketch onto the paper. Next, rub white titan powder evenly over the back of paper of previous enlarged sketch. Then, scan the image manually into the board.



Figure 47 Phase 1 work 3 in step 2



4.3.3 Works in step 3

For technique, I use engraving lacquer painting combined with coloring similar to the work 2. For coloring, Before coloring, I color all the vignettes by white color to form a color background. Then, color all the work with multi-layers. Layer by layer is colored (by one color). When a layer (a color) is dry, I color the next layer until when all colors are dry.

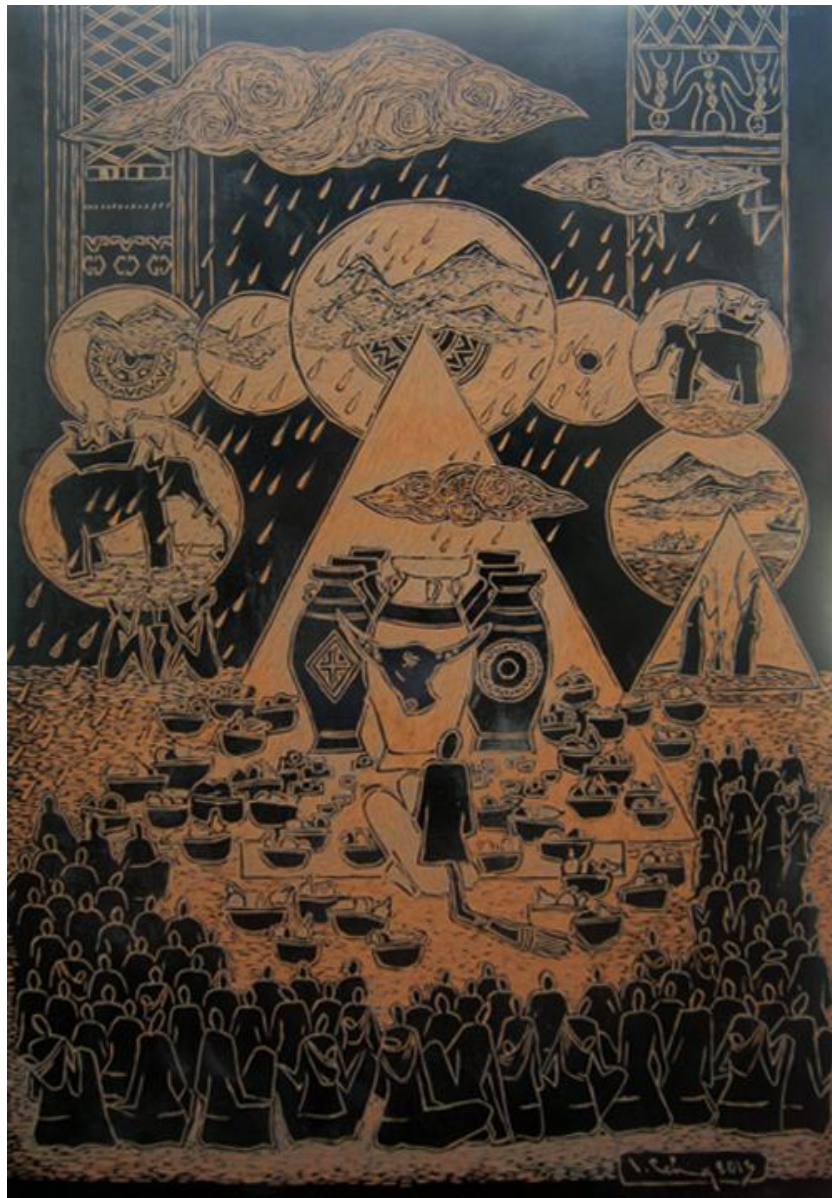


Figure 48 Phase 1 work 3 in step 3



4.3.4 The results

This artwork received the similar comments from the committee like the work 2 about layout, character and color. Ms. Knokwan Nithirattapat and Mr. Suchat Sukna said that the black background does not create enough deep, it is need to be solved by using and combining with other techniques.

In phase 1, I also received some general comments from lecturers from Silpakorn University, Bangkok.

Mr. Nonthivathn Chandhanaphalin said that my artworks are now clear in content and topic about *Tay Nguyen*, have the diversity in ways of representation, but the size may be quite small that makes it difficult to depict the diversity of culture in *Tay Nguyen*.

Prof. Preecha Thaothong said that work 2 and work 3 are good in depth, character, have a clear layout and feeling. Work 1 falls in telling story, does not have depth. I need to simpler the vignette and represent the depth of the artwork.

Mr. Amrit Chusuwan comments that my artworks have not come from myself, they look like to be expressed in the form of a people who are watching, not in harmony with the artwork yet. He also said that it is good to see I have developed through time, but some artworks need to be edited to achieve emotion.

Prof. Decha Warashoon said that I should focus on festivals and ceremonies to create a continuous series, the size big or small is not important, it is important that I need to express successfully their features. Work 1 falls in detail, its layout also too narrow, so it does not convey the topic successfully. Work 2 and work 3 are good. He also said that I have developed my artworks clearly in color, light, but some artworks have gradually become cramp. I should choose to represent one festival/ ceremony in each artwork, do not need to put all of them in an artwork because it will make the artwork become cramp, fall in telling story.



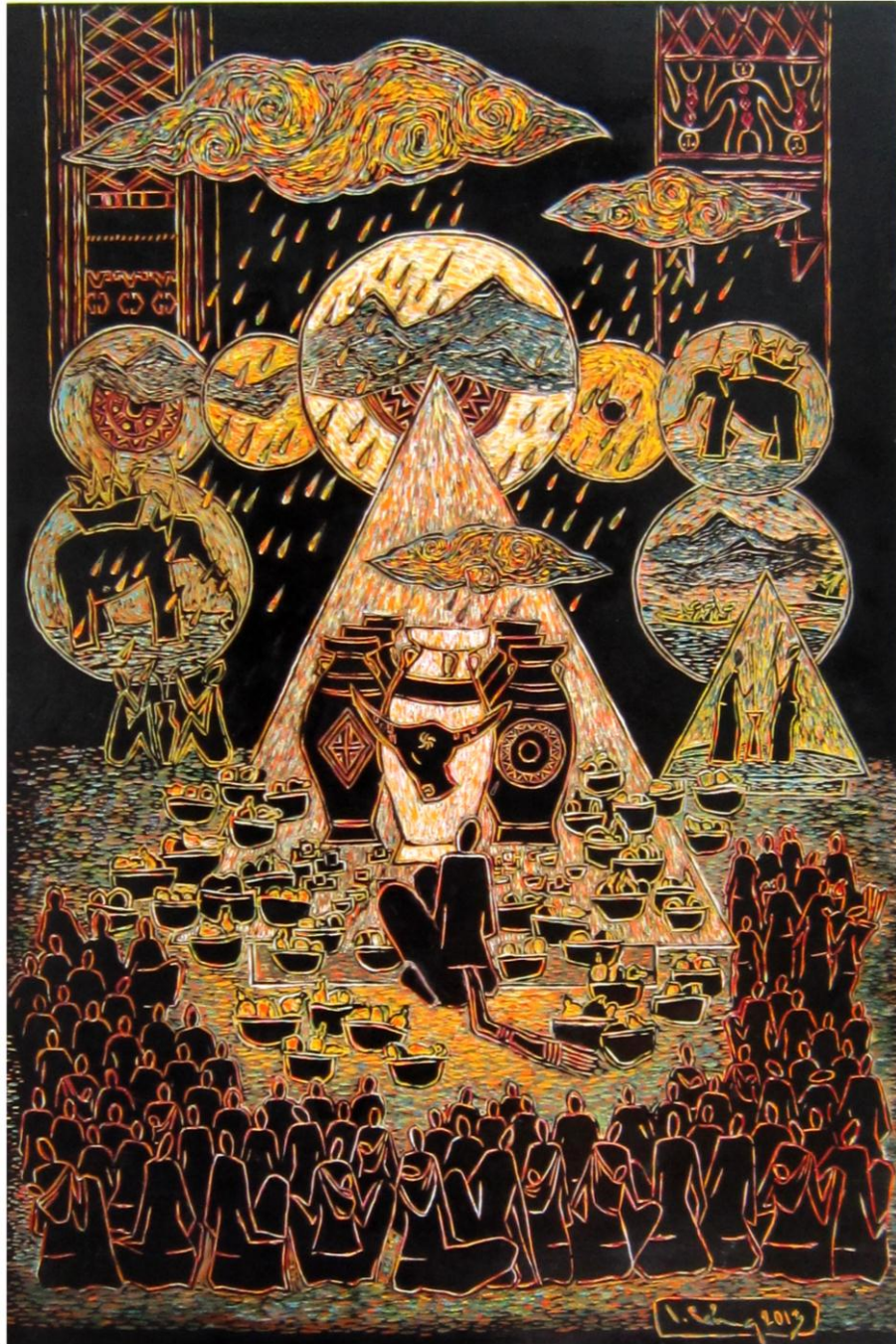


Figure 49 Thesis works phase 1 work 3

Title : Praying for harvest ceremony

Size : 85 x 120 centimeter

Technique : Engraving lacquer painting



Thesis Works Phase 2

1. Content

As the content was determined, I continue to go deeper in festival and ceremony of the ethnic minorities. Festival and ceremony are really good choices to reflect their communal life. Through these artworks, audiences can understand the life and culture of these ethnic minorities. It is the message that I want to send to everyone to help to understand, to appreciate, to conserve, and to develop the precious culture.

2. Form

I still keep and develop the strong points of previous form. Besides, with the suggestions of the committee, I have changed my subjective outlook. I managed to build more general and fresh simile and layout. It is full promise to get better visual affect, to convey meaning, reflect the concept more efficient, and to express feeling more natural.

3. Technique

All works in this phase are engraving lacquer painting whose advantages are pointed out in the previous phase. I have tried to improve the engraving technique with lines and parts. The coloring technique also improved to achieve the shimmer effect.

4. The results: 5 works, 90 x 120 cm.

4.1 Thesis works phase 2 Work 1

4.1.1 Works in step 1 : Making sketch

Thanks to the suggestions and opinions of experts from Silpakorn University, Bangkok and of my lecturers from the departments, I have learnt a lot of experiences during my creation process. When building ideas or making sketches, I always follow the topic based on the comments of my lecturers, especially the suggestion of Mr. Decha Warashoon at the second times of marking in the first phase, that is: I should consider the topic of festivals, ceremonies and should create works which form a series. Hence, the works in the second phase, I focus on ceremonies and festivals. Through these ceremonies, we can understand more deeply the features of communal culture of ethnic minorities in *Tay Nguyen*.





Figure 50 Sketch of work 1 phase 2

The first work is *Cong chieng (gong) festival*. This festival is the first, which marks the time that a lot of other festivals and ceremonies will follow in a year, such as: Thrusting buffalo ceremony, Drum worship ceremony, ... In each festival, Cong chieng (the gongs) are the mean for people to connect to gods, to heaven and earth,... and also to communicate with each other. Gongs have an important role in making festivals, ceremonies solemn; on other hand, they also produce a boisterous atmosphere. We can affirm that: Cong chieng (the gong) is the soul of festivals and ceremonies in *Tay Nguyen*. Any festival or ceremony cannot be celebrated without

Cong chieng. Cong chieng express all happiness or sadness, the communication and the unity of all people, all families in a community.

4.1.2 Works in step 2

In this step, I use charcoal to draw the layout from the sketch on the paper. Next, rub white titan powder evenly over the back of paper of previous enlarged sketch. Then, scan the image clearly onto the board.



Figure 51 Phase 2 work 1 in step 2



4.1.3 Works in step 3

In this step, I use small brush to redraw the line to make it stable by gum mixed with white titan powder. Use engravers of different size to engrave the vignettes into the board. The engraving technique, with many sizes of burin, makes the stroke different and lively.



Figure 52 Phase 2 work 1 in step 3

I also cover some layers of color on the lines to make it smoother and more sparkling.



4.1.4 The results

In this picture, the characters are arranged to form a pyramidal shape, which is strong and robust. However, the gongs team and the people dancing around are flexible and supple. These two features are combined harmoniously and complement each other. In addition, the watching people, pots of wine and elephants which are followed the law of perspective create the depth for this work.

In this picture, the main gong in strong bright color is a background. It creates an emphasis and impresses the audiences.



Figure 53 Thesis works phase 2 work 1

Title : Cong Chieng festival

Size : 90 x 120 centimeter

Technique : Engraving lacquer painting



4.2 Thesis works phase 2 Work 2

4.2.1 Works in step 1 : Making sketch

Every year, after harvest, the ethnic minorities in *Tay Nguyen* organize some rites to give the thanks for gods, especially *Yàng N'du* god in the highest position, because of their protection, support and help. One of these rites is Saropu (which is called Thrusting buffalo rite) held from December to March following the Lunar calendar. *Thrusting buffalo rite* is one of works about topic of festival and rite which is the field I am doing research. Thrusting buffalo rite represents the culture of people here, this rite shows the solidarity of all members in community. The rite often held in a large free ground of the village or a large yard in front of the communal house. In the first day of rite, gongs are rung to invite and welcome the god and all attendees.

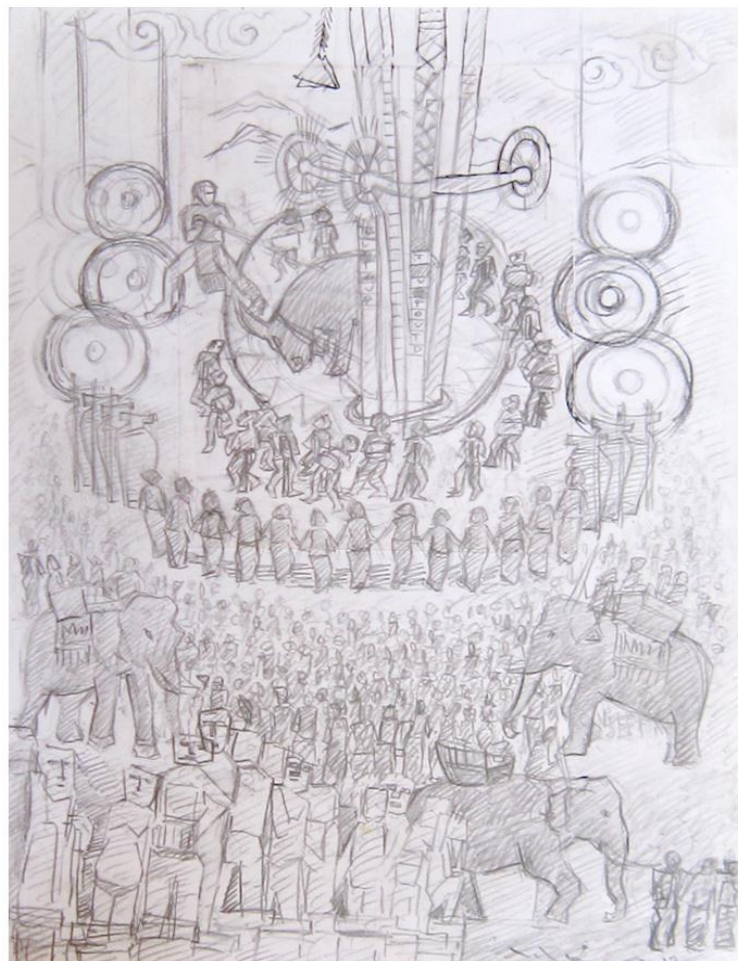


Figure 54 Sketch of work 2 phase 2

4.2.2 Works in step 2

Use charcoal to draw the layout from the sketch on the paper. Next, rub white titan powder evenly over the back of paper of previous enlarged sketch. Then, scan the image clearly onto the board.



Figure 55 Phase 2 work 2 in step 2



4.2.3 Works in step 3

I need to mix gum with white powder, then, use small brush to redraw the line to make it stable. In this work, I also use the engraving lacquer painting technique like the previous one. I use engravers of different size to engrave the vignettes into the board. Prepare a smooth large brush to sweep engraved wood, dust,... to prevent them to scratch the board. Then, use water to clean the dust and wait for the work to be dry. Finally, color the work, first white background for lines, then multi-layer colors for the overall work.

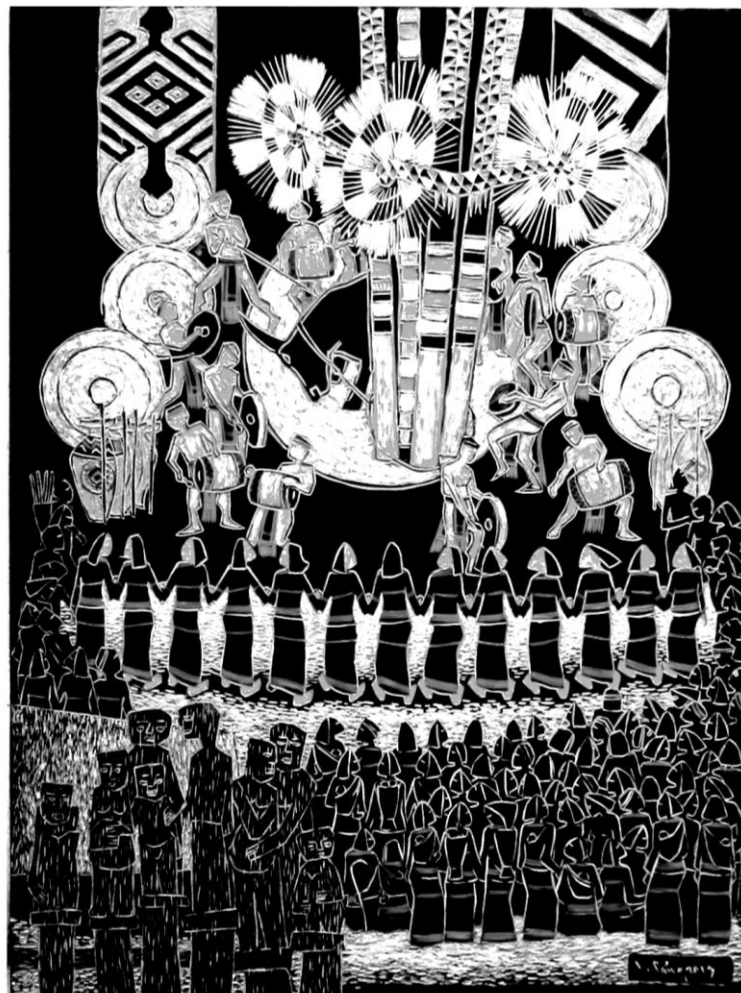


Figure 56 Phase 2 work 2 in step 3



4.2.4 The results

The orientation of this work is portrait. The main part of the work is *Gingga* pillar with meters height. The trunks of small pillars are decorated with colorful patterns and the top is decorated with fake sun rays made of bamboo. At the trunk of the pillar, there is also a big buffalo tied there. Around, behind and in front of the trunk, there are other images like: human, gongs, pots of wine, and statue of sepulcher... formed on pyramidal shape and obeyed the law of perspective in a uniform block.



Figure 57 Thesis works phase 2 work 2

Title : Thrusting buffalo rite

Size : 90 x 120 centimeter

Technique : Engraving lacquer painting



Therefore, when looking at this picture, we can see the solidarity, strong attachment of ethnic minority communities in this region. As the same as my other works, main colors in this picture are hot and strong colors. These colors not only describe the properties of the rite but also the color of this land. At the center of the picture there are gongs of various sizes in bright color. They are the emphasis and the link the images of main characters to the space of picture.

4.3 Thesis works phase 2 Work 3

4.3.1 Works in step 1 : Making sketch

The content of my third work is named *Bo ma* rite, which is a big rite of minorities (*Ede, Giarai, Bana,...* people) in *Tay Nguyen*. This rite is organized to pay one's respects to dead people and accompany them to their eternal rest place and is held after the harvest in the year, from December to March following the solar calendar. This is a traditional rite with many activities, such as: sacrifice animal, worship, giving fortune to dead people, gongs performance, singing and dancing... This is also a rite summing up various cultural and artistic activities. This rite is considered as the most lively and skillful rite in *Tay Nguyen*.



Figure 58 Sketch of work 3 phase 2



4.3.2 Works in step 2

In this step, I choose the suitable size plank, and then, make the board. Choose paper that has the suitable size with the board. Use charcoal to draw the layout from the sketch onto the paper. Next, rub white titan powder evenly over the back of paper of previous enlarged sketch. Then, scan the image manually into the board.



Figure 59 Phase 2 work 3 in step 2



4.3.3 Works in step 3

Although used the engraving - painting technique like others, in this work, concave engraving strokes are changed about size to make the picture livelier.

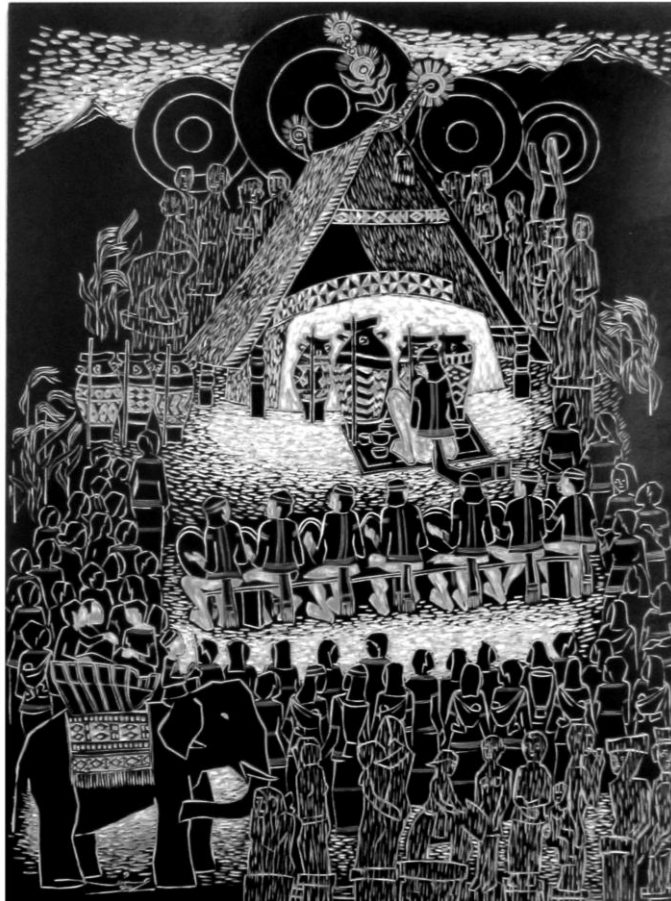


Figure 60 Phase 2 work 3 in step 3

4.3.4 The results

In this picture, the characters are symbolized and arranged in pyramidal shape on the black background due to law of perspective. The difference of this work from previous works is that: the central part of the picture such as: the roof of tomb, the grave, the shaman, a pair of gongs are formed up a rectangle. The bright color of the grave is an emphasis to create the clearness about principal and accessory parts and to give the audiences more feeling.





Figure 61 Thesis works phase 2 work 3

Title : Bo ma rite

Size : 90 x 120 centimeter

Technique : Engraving lacquer painting



4.4 Thesis works phase 2 Work 4

4.4.1 Works in step 1 : Making sketch

Follow the advice from the committee, I continue to develop the topic through festival and ceremony by create the artwork named Drum worship ceremony. Drum is a valuable fortune of *Ede* people. It is a big drum whose diameter of the drum surface around 1 meter. The drum is made from a whole tree-trunk from a large tree in the jungle, without combining any parts. This kind of drum also has a sacred position in life of *Ede* people. That is why the person who wants to have the drum must invite the shaman to worship. When the drum is completed, the drum is brought home and place at a solemn position at one end of the house, then, the worship is begun. The gongs is rung, people dance, the shaman report the deity that a drum was completed.



Figure 62 Sketch of work 4 phase 2

4.4.2 Works in step 2

In this step, I use charcoal to draw the layout from the sketch on the paper. Next, rub white titan powder evenly over the back of paper of previous enlarged sketch. Then, scan the image clearly onto the board.

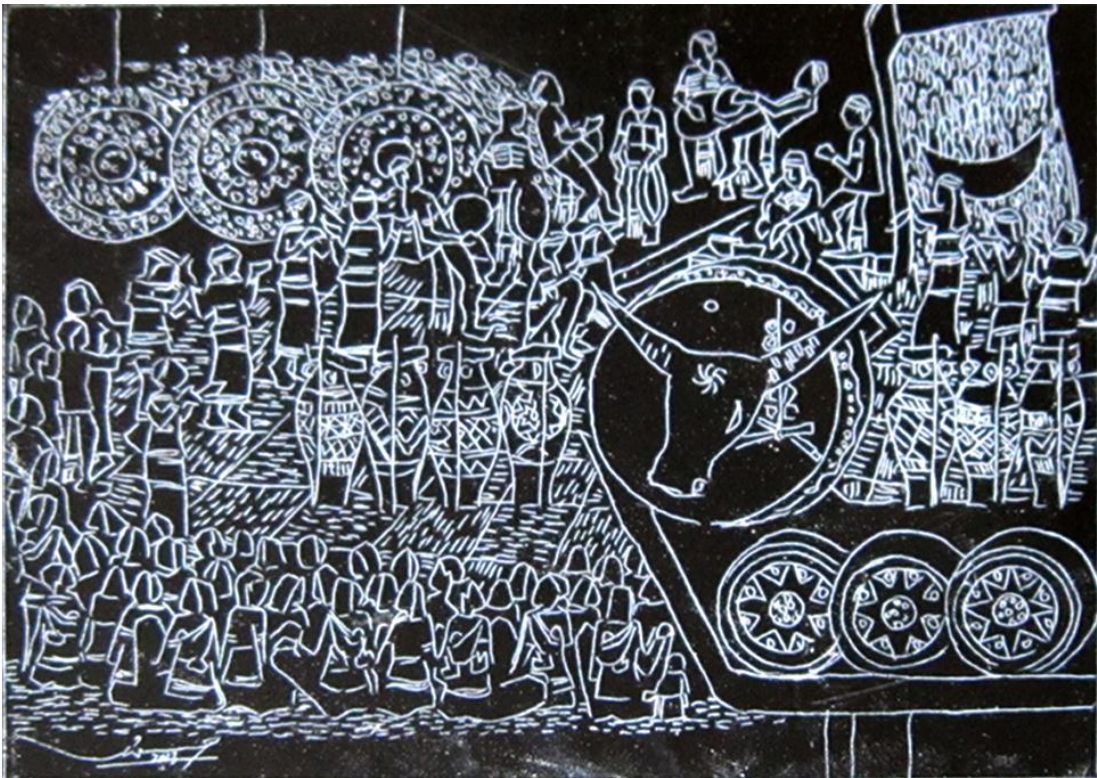


Figure 63 Phase 2 work 4 in step 2

4.4.3 Works in step 3

In this step, I use small brush to redraw the line to make it stable by gum mixed with white titan powder. Use engravers of different size to engrave the vignettes into the board. The engraving technique, with many sizes of burin, makes the stroke different and lively.



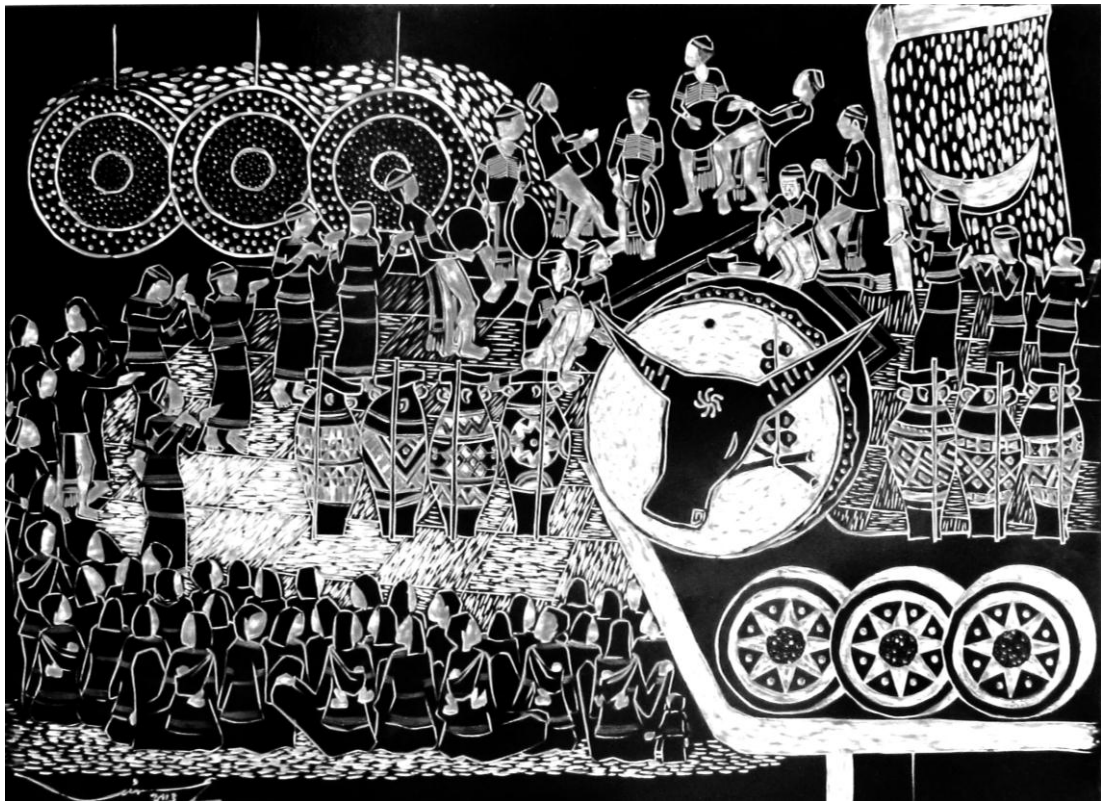


Figure 64 Phase 2 work 4 in step 3

4.4.4 The results

For form, the most noticeable point in this work is that the characters are arranged by following the rhythm, supple and flexible. The sitting people, the dancing women, the gongs team,... are followed by each other, create a line toward the central point of the work. The character is simple, the color is warm, which is suitable with the jubilant atmosphere of the ceremony. Mr. Vuthipong Roadkasamsri says that in the work *Bo ma* rite, the upper part has shown the atmosphere of the rite but the lower part has not...





Figure 65 Thesis works phase 2 work 4

Title : Drum worship ceremony

Size : 90 x 120 centimeter

Technique : Engraving lacquer painting



4.5 Thesis works phase 2 Work 5

4.4.1 Works in step 1

In this step, I choose the idea and make sketch. Wedding ceremony of the ethnic minority communities in *Tay Nguyen* in general, and *Ede, Ba Na* people community in specific, today, is still influenced by the matriarchy. It means that the woman suggests the wedding and the new family will live with the wife family. In engagement ceremony, exchanging the wedding necklace is a very important ceremony. The necklaces represent the love of the woman and the man, when they still keep the necklace, they are still a family.



Figure 66 Sketch of work 4 phase 2

4.4.2 Works in step 2

First, I use charcoal to redraw the layout from the sketch on the paper. Next, rub white titan powder evenly over the back of paper, then, scan the image onto the board.



Figure 67 Phase 2 work 4 in step 2

4.4.3 Works in step 3

In this step, I first mix gum with white powder, then, use small brush to redraw the line to make it become hard to be cleared. Next, I use engravers of different size to carve. Prepare a smooth large brush to sweep engraved wood, dust, . . . to prevent them to scratch the board. Then, use water to clean the dust and wait for the work to be dry. Finally, color the work, first white background for lines, then multi-layer colors for the work.





Figure 68 Phase 2 work 4 in step 3

4.4.4 The results

This work, which named Exchange the engagement necklaces ceremony, was created to represent this culture, through it, remind people to respect their love, to conserve and to develop this fine cultural ceremony. The characters in this work are arranged in the pyramidal shape, all of them are united. It implies that the love of the young couple is unshakeable like high mountain and thick forest in *Tay Nguyen*, and will last forever.

The main color pattern of this artwork is hot color, which expresses the warmness, happiness of the ceremony. The central point is the scene that the couples exchange their necklaces, entrust each other the hope of a happy future. The strength of this artwork is that there are many characters, but they are united and arranged, the artwork does not fall in telling story, the layout does not cramp. This is also an engraving lacquer painting like previous works.





Figure 69 Thesis works phase 2 work 5

Title : Exchange the engagement necklaces ceremony

Size : 90 x 120 centimeter

Technique : Engraving lacquer painting



Thesis Works Phase 3

1. Content

From the previous phase, the content was determined and became stable. Hence, all works in this phase will be, continue, on festival and ceremony of the ethnic minorities. In my point of view, festival and ceremony are special and unique features of these ethnic minorities. Through these artworks, audiences can understand the life and culture of these ethnic minorities. It is the message that I want to send to everyone to help to understand, to appreciate, to conserve, and to develop the precious culture.

2. Form

Strong points of form from previous works will be kept and developed. Besides, I have tried to build some fresh layouts with other arrangements and meanings. It is hoped to bring back better visual affect, to convey meaning, reflect the concept more efficient, and to express feeling more natural.

3. Technique

Engraving lacquer painting will be used for all works in this phase. New types lines and parts are tried. The coloring technique also considered to be improved to achieve the shimmer effect.

4. The results : 3 works, 90 x 120 cm.

4.1 Thesis phase 3 Work 1

4.1.1 Works in step 1 : Making sketch

During the previous phase, experts from Silpakorn University, Bangkok and of my lecturers from the departments continue to give me precious comments. Mr. Apichart Saengkrai comments that the techniques are not diversified enough. Mr Satit Tesana says that I can choose only one of the festival or ceremony to describe. Mr. Vuthipong Roadkasamsri says that in the work *Bo ma* rite, the upper part has shown the atmosphere of the rite but the lower part has not... From that, I can determine the next direction to develop my concept is continue to focus on festival and ceremony topics. In this phase, I concentrate specific on Thrusting Buffalo Rite.



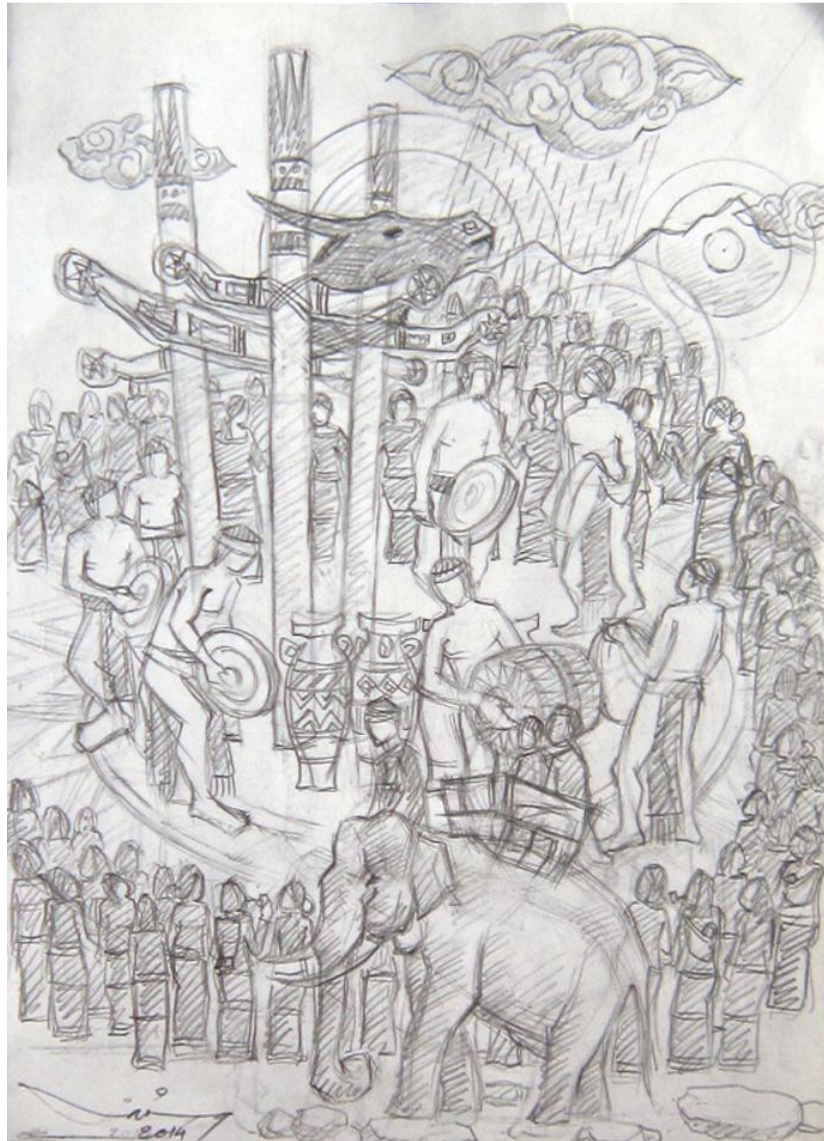


Figure 70 Sketch of work 1 phase 2

4.1.2 Works in step 2

In this step, I choose the suitable plank to make the board. Then, use charcoal to redraw the layout from the sketch onto the paper. Next, rub white titan powder evenly over the back of paper of the enlarged sketch. Then, scan the image onto the board.

The orientation of this work is portrait, the central point is image of *Can* wine, dancing men and women, carefully decorated Gingga pillars. On the top of the pillars is the head of big buffalo which is used to worship the deities. All of them are united with others to form an emphasized point in the layout of the work. Although the pyramidal shape layout and perspective rule continue to be used, the difference in this work is that I widen the central part of the work.



Figure 71 Phase 3 work 1 in step 2



4.1.3 Works in step 3

Although used the engraving - painting technique like others, in this work, concave engraving strokes are changed about size to make the picture livelier.

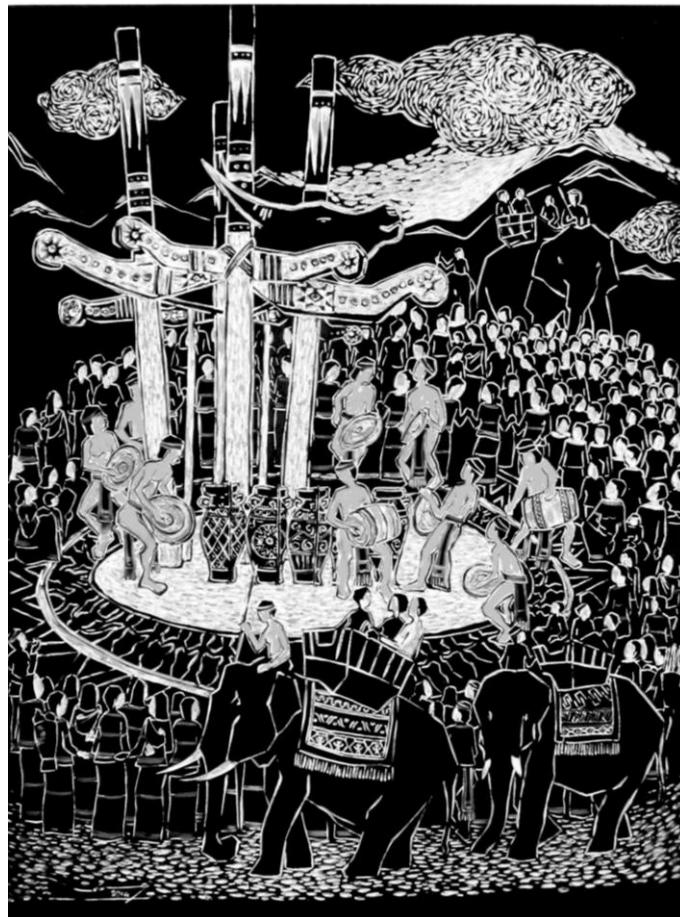


Figure 72 Phase 3 work 1 in step 3

4.1.4 The results

The main color pattern of this artwork is hot color, which expresses the exciting of the rite. The engraving technique, with many sizes of burin to engrave different size lines and parts, makes the work livelier. After engraving, I color the engraved part with white color to form a light background. Next, I color by overlap with many layers to make the color looks ripe and more sparkling.



As same as other works, the work Thrusting Buffalo Rite 2 indicates the people spirit and the unity of all members in the ethnic minority community in *Tay Nguyen*.



Figure 73 Thesis works phase 3 work 1

Title : Thrusting buffalo rite 2

Size : 90 x 120 centimeter

Technique : Engraving lacquer painting



4.2 Thesis works phase 3 Work 2

4.2.1 Works in step 1 : Making sketch

The content of this work, *Thrusting buffalo rite 3*, is similar to two previous works: *Thrusting buffalo rite* and *Thrusting buffalo rite 2*. This rite marks the finishing of a harvest season, people have time to relax for the next one. On this occasion, the people express their gratitude towards god N'du and other deities for giving them a bumper crop, and happiness life. Therefore, they, through this rite, kill the buffalo to rise to the deities.



Figure 74 Sketch of work 2 phase 3

4.2.2 Works in step 2

In this step, I use charcoal to draw the layout from the sketch on the paper. Next, rub white titan powder evenly over the back of paper of previous enlarged sketch. Then, scan the image clearly onto the board.



Figure 75 Phase 3 work 2 in step 2

4.2.3 Works in step 3

In this step, I use small brush to redraw the line to make it stable by gum mixed with white titan powder. Use engravers of different size to engrave the vignettes into the board. The engraving technique, with many sizes of burin, makes the stroke different and lively.





Figure 76 Phase 3 work 2 in step 3

4.2.4 The results

Via this work, we, again, the community spirit and the unity of all members in the ethnic minority community in *Tay Nguyen* which cannot be separated. The layout of this work is based on circular shape. All the similes, such as: the gongs team, dancing team, *Gingga* pillars and the buffalo revolve around to form the central point. On the left side, we can see a tree-trunk without leaves – a familiar image in dry season in *Tay Nguyen*. Far away, there are also some small houses, which are secondary similes, assist main similes to form a close layout without causing the narrow feeling.

The main color pattern of this work is deep, pass and low pattern but they still can express the exciting and interesting of the rite. Compared to others, the images in this work are drawn larger, in more details. For engraving technique, beside the familiar straight line, there are circles of different size which makes the work livelier.



Figure 77 Thesis works phase 3 work 2

Title : Thrusting buffalo rite 3

Size : 90 x 120 centimtere

Technique : Engraving lacquer painting



4.3 Thesis works phase 3 Work 3

4.3.1 Works in step 1 : Making sketch

Festival of eating buffalo for bumper crop and celebrating New Year, is one big among other festivals in which the people sacrifice buffalos for deities, such as: Praying for rain rite, *K'pan* rite,... This is one of the most important festivals, so that, the villagers have to prepare for months. Men go to jungle to bring home valuable wood for making New Year's tree. Women make pretty clothes. Elderly people have wine, glutinous rice and a corpulent buffalo prepared. The gongs team invites people of other village to come to the festival. In general, the atmosphere of festival preparation is very excited.

This is also the content of my work. *Festival of eating buffalo for bumper crop and celebrating New Year* is one type of cultural communal activity which indicates the united spirit and the solidarity of the ethnic minority in *Tay Nguyen* in building and protecting the village. It is a nice festival which need to be maintained.

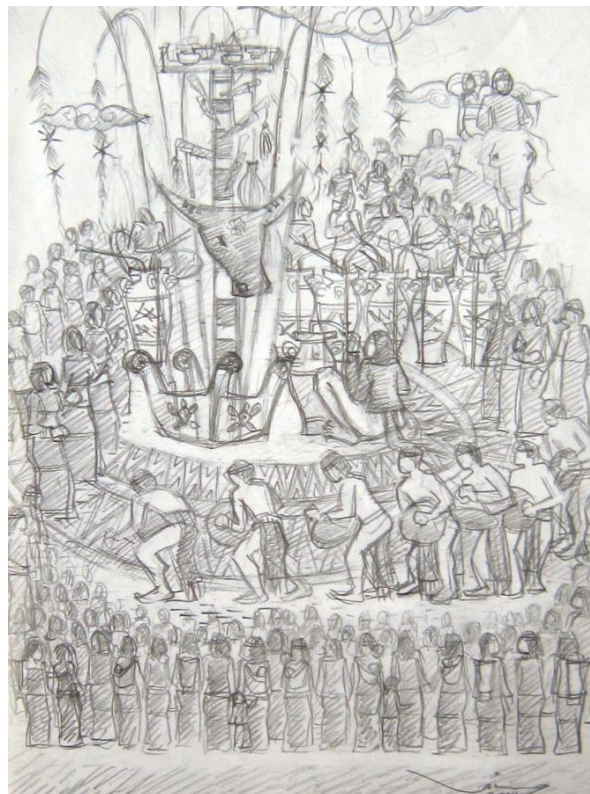


Figure 78 Sketch of work 3 phase 3

4.3.2 Works in step 2

In this step, I make the board by suitable size plank. Use charcoal to draw the layout from the sketch on the paper that have the suitable size with the board. Next, rub white titan powder evenly over the back of paper. After that, scan the image onto the board.



Figure 79 Phase 3 work 3 in step 2



4.3.3 Works in step 3

I mix gum with white titan powder, then, use small brush to redraw the line to make it stable. After that, I use engravers of different size to engrave the vignettes into the board. Prepare a smooth large brush to sweep engraved wood, dust,... to prevent them to scratch the board. Engraving technique is almost the same as previous work but different in size. After engraving, the work will be washed under water to clear the dust in the line, clear the white powder. Take care to rub gently, not to rub hard, so that it do not jag engraved lines, small details,... Then, use clean towel to absorb water, wait for dry and come to the next step: coloring.



Figure 80 Phase 3 work 3 in step 3





Figure 81 Phase 3 work 3 in step 3

4.3.4 The results

Form: The orientation of this work is portrait. The layout is arranged in pyramidal shape. The main part of this work is images of people in gongs team, sorcerer, *Gingga* pillars, *Can* wine and women who are drinking. All of them are in harmony to form the emphasized point of the work. Other supplement parts, such as altar, clouds, the audience, decorated pattern, warm main color,... make the layout form close series full of excited and interested atmosphere of the festival.

Another difference of this work is that main characters are arranged due to rhythm, revolving; leads the audience to the central of the work.





Figure 82 Thesis works phase 3 work 3

Title : Festival of eating buffalo for bumper crop and celebrating
New Year

Size : 90 x 120 centimeter

Technique : Engraving lacquer painting



Conclusion

Through the process of studying, choosing the concept and giving creative solutions - composing my works, I want to give a thanks to Assoc. Prof. Boontan Chettasuret, Mr. Yuttana paigapat Co-Adviser, the lecturers and experts from University in Thailand (Mahasarakham, Kon Kean, and Silpakorn - Bangkok,...) for the advices and enthusiasm suggestions for my works. From the first works in phase 1, which are commented that the idea, the content and the form still do not closely follow the topic, still diverge from fact and sometime fall into telling story but less emotion... To repair these mistakes, first, I must change the way of thinking, study deeply about the topic and practice more and more. Now my works already have some certain achievements of researching purpose, idea, content, technique, the unification and have been corresponding to the goal of the topic.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter examines the extent to which the study problems have been resolution by the work, study and how the findings add to the existent literature. Conclusion about the creation purposes and the creation resolution are drawn based on the results findings. It will be presented according to the following topics:

1. Conclusion
2. Discussion
3. Recommendation

Conclusion

This visual arts creation thesis, *The beauty of life and daily life activities of the ethnic minority communities in Tay Nguyen* will be presented the conclusion according to the following topics:

1. Source of Inspiration

Living in *Tay Nguyen* from early days of my life, witness the custom of people living there makes my love for this land increase with time. Over time, from reading books, magazines,... I progressively understand more about the beauty of their living life style and life culture. Until December 25th 2005, the space of gong culture in the Central Highlands (*Tay Nguyen*) was recognized by UNESCO as a Masterpiece of the Intangible Heritage of Humanity, I really happy. I decided that I need to introduce this beauty and remind people to conserve and develop them through my artworks. That why I choose “The beauty of life and daily life activities of the ethnic minority communities in Tay Nguyen” as the concept of my creation.



2. Content

This creation is a series of visual artworks about the beauty of life and daily life activities of the ethnic minority communities in *Tay Nguyen*. It focuses on festival and ceremony and gives prominence to the valuable traditional cultural value, of the ethnic minority communities. Through them, this creation reminds people to conserve and to develop the valuable traditional culture.

3. Form

Through this creation, I created a new layout arrangement, which expresses my own visual style. Although I still use traditional material and technique of engraving lacquer painting, I have made many differences in building art character. Traditional engraving lacquer painting often uses line, small line, even a part also made up by small lines and tilts in realistic style; I, differently, using abstract and cubism style. In my creation, the characters are both realistic, and fictitious. *“Too realistic will flatter life, too fictitious will deceive life, painting must be halfway between realistic and fictitious”* - *Ch'i Pai-shih*, Chinese artist. In my point of view, the combination between realistic and fictitious helps the artworks do not fall in to a simple copy of life, they must have ability to convey the subjective mind of the author. It helps the artworks not only stir the creativity, but also widen the perception of the audience about the deep meaning of life. In my creation, human is the central point, so, it was built halfway between realistic and fictitious.

4. Technique

In this creation, I use burin to engrave on the board to form line, dot or ying (negative) and yang (positive) part. In order to make the line become more lively, I used burins of different kind and different size. After engraving, I color the artwork by many color layers to create the harmony, blush and the shimmer.

5. Result

After completed, the arts creation forms a series in traditional festival and ceremony of the ethnic minority communities in *Tay Nguyen*. This series can express my love and feeling to the audience. It can also reflect the nature of the traditional festival and ceremony in specific, and the beauty of life of the ethnic minority communities in *Tay Nguyen*. It reminds everybody to conserve and to develop the valuable traditional culture.



Discussion

The result of creation was discovered which indicated

1. The new finding/ The new knowledge is the layout arrangement, which is independent, new, and do not overlap with other authors. Creating new types of engraving lines by using bright-dark rule of point, dot. The creation also gives further enrichment of the shimmer of color when it is shown in light.

2. The personality of creator such as the topic about festival and ceremony of the ethnic minority communities in *Tay Nguyen*, the choice of engraving lacquer painting to express the idea, or creating the diversity in engraving line, part,...

3. The originality was that engraving lacquer painting is the kind of creation only one version. In arts, almost types of creation can be copied, but it is extremely difficult, or impossible, with engraving lacquer painting. It is not only because the engraved lines on the board are usually small, but also are so diversity (vibration, deep, dry, big, small,... which depends on the feeling and expression of the author. This type of art creation is rare and there is not many artists work on it.

4. The values were that this arts creation thesis reflects an aspect of the traditional cultural value on type of engraving lacquer painting. Artworks which are on this topic were rarely represented in abstract or cubism style and even more rarely on engraving lacquer painting. That may be because the limit in style of expression and the difficulty in feeling conveyance. However, if it can be done successfully, it will become a precious collection that last through time in also spirit and physical value.

5. The effects or reaction on social or technical field was that it gives prominence to the precious traditional cultural value, especially on festival and ceremony of the ethnic minority communities. On one side, it will strengthen the solidarity of different peoples in the country. On the other side, it reminds everybody to conserve and to develop the valuable culture for Vietnam in general, and *Tay Nguyen*, in specific.



Recommendation

As the result of completing this thesis, I have created a series of visual artworks on the topic “*The beauty of life and daily life activities of the ethnic minority communities in Tay Nguyen*”. It focuses on festival and ceremony and gives prominence to the precious traditional cultural value, of the ethnic minority communities. Through this process, I have learnt and built new ways to represent and have managed to discover new insight about the topic. I think it have achieved some good results as represented about. However, *the beauty of life* in general, and also festival, ceremony and culture in specific, are really large fields of research; hence, my thesis is only a small piece in order to help to discover them. I, in future, and anyone who concerns can continue to do a lot of research on this field by research more deeply or more broadly, about content or about technique. It can be seen that techniques I used have not make a breakthrough yet, it need to be improved significantly. I also realized that my understanding of the culture of these minorities is not enough, it need a deeper understanding and a deeper experience to make the author really become a part of these minorities. This concept can also be expressed through different materials, such as: media, documentary film, photograph,... In my point of view, any further research on this concept can bring positive results on the conservation and development of precious traditional cultural value.



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