

Making Inventory of Craftsmanship and Performing Arts of Mon Traditional Musical Instruments

Date	-	2-7-2014
Location	-	Mawlamyine Township
No	-	Ma La Ma/ Mon/ 1 (M)
Name of Instrument	-	Vat-gine (Crescent-shaped Gong) Mon Traditional Crescent Gong
Material	-	Yamanay wood, Bronze, Cane
Background History	-	Vat-gine or crescent-shaped gong is one of the Mon traditional musical instruments that has been used since the ancient time. The original crescent-shaped gong was consisted of 14 gongs and used to be played only in Nat (Spirit) propitiation ceremony. But, an additional gong tuned to Nga Pauk (Fifth Note) is added to play since the late 1962. This crescent-shaped gong is played in Mon national celebrations, Hin-tha dance, solo dance performance, Mon traditional dance and national ceremonies such as Union Day and Mon National day.
Making Process	-	Firstly, the two ends of fine Yamanay wood is smeared with mud. After its bark is stripped off, the log is smeared with mud again and left for six months to dry by itself so that the wood becomes well seasoned. The rattans are attached to arrange the 13 crescent-shaped gongs. It is painted with the original colour of the wood and embellished in Mon traditional decorations. The left side of instrument is carved into head of Kainnayi bird and the right one its tail. The stands are carved into the two legs of this bird.
How to play	-	The Crescent-shaped gong consists of 14 gongs which are arranged in ascending order from right to left. The pitch of gongs is higher from left to right and the player has to strike them with two mallets.
Size	-	68 inches in length

46 inches in height

9 ¼ inches in the breadth of middle hollow

9 inches in length of Kainnayi Head

7 ¼ inches in tail



Vat-gine
(Crescent-shaped Gong) Mon
Traditional Crescent Gong

Date	-	2-7-2014
Location	-	Mawlamyine Township
No	-	Ma La Ma/ Mon/ 2 (M)
Name of Instrument	-	Crocodile Zither (known as "Kyam" in Mon Language), 3-stringed musical instrument
Material	-	Wood (Ya-ma-nay, Padauk, Taung-pain-ne, Htain), silk string, and ox leather
Background History	-	The crocodile-shaped zither was one of musical instruments that Pyu delegation performed in China in AD 802 as part of cultural exchange programme. Michael Sign, one of members of Eastern India Company delegation visited King Bodaw Phaya in 1795, wrote about this musical instrument in his book. There are two types of crocodile zithers, of which one must be played with fingers and other with plectrum.
Making Process	-	The fine wood must be smeared with mud and left dry by itself. After it becomes well seasoned, it is curved into the shape of crocodile. The body must be made hollow. There is a sound hole underneath in which the sound is resonated. The three strings are stretched from its head to tail. There are two tuning pegs on the jaw of crocodile. The sound hole and the tuning pegs lie in different position. The strings are made of silk or nylon or alloy. Thirteen wooden frets are placed with the use of beeswax under the strings.
How to play	-	The 3-stringed Crocodile Zither must be played with plectrum by strumming with the right hand, and fretting and plucking the strings with left hand. The first and third strings are tuned to LayPauk (Fourth Note), while the second string to ThanHman Tapauk (First Note).
Size	-	68 inches in length 7.5 inches in breadth 10.5 inches in height 17.5 inches in circumference



*Crocodile Zither (known as "Kyam" in Mon Language)
, 3-stringed musical instrument*

Date	-	2-7-2014
Location	-	Mawlamyine Township
No	-	Ma La Ma/ Mon/ 3 (M)
Name of Instrument	-	Htaung Tayaw (Upright), which is called "Jor" in Mon language
Material	-	Yamanay or Mahorgani wood, and silk string
Making process	-	Yamanay or Mahorgani wood is used to make Htaung Violin (Upright), one of Mon traditional string musical instruments. Its scroll is curved into the shape of Kainnayi or Hintha birds. There is an endpin under the lower bout.
How to play	-	When playing 3-stringed Mon Htaung violin, the instrument is upright and leaned against the player's body. It is played with a bow which is made of horse hair. The first string is tuned to NgaPauk (Fifth Note), the second string to ThanHman TaPauk (First Note), and the third string to LayPauk (Fourth note). The strings are made of silk or nylon. There is no fret on its finger board, and it must be played by pressing the strings with the fingertips from up to down. It can play the scales of flat and sharp notes.
Size	-	29 inches in length 5 ¼ inches in height of body



*Htaung Tayaw (Upright),
which is called "Jor" in Mon language*

Date	-	2-7-2014
Location	-	Mawlamyine Township
No	-	Ma La Ma/ Mon/ 4 (M)
Name of Instrument	-	Mon traditional guitar, a string musical instrument which is called "Gwi" in Mon Language
Material	-	Wood, silk string
Making Process	-	The body of Gwi or Mon Traditional guitar is in the shape of a leaf. The body and fret board are made hollow and 7 wooden frets are placed with gap distance of 0.5 or 1 inch. The 3-stringed instrument is used two wooden bridges to stretch its strings. Unlike the other types of guitar, the sound hole of Mon traditional guitar is on the back surface of its body.
How to play	-	Silk or nylon is used to made the strings of this musical instrument. The player must play it by strumming the strings with the right hand and plucking or fretting with the left hand.
Size	-	Leaf-shaped body 21 inches in length 11.75 inches in breadth 44 inches in total length



Mon traditional guitar, a string musical instrument which is called "Gwi" in Mon Language

Date	-	2-7-2014
Location	-	Mawlamyine Township
No	-	Ma La Ma/ Mon/ 5 (M)
Name of Instrument	-	Bamboo flute, which is called "Ta-Lut" in Mon Language, Wind instrument
Material	-	Bamboo
Making process	-	Ta-Lut flute is made of bamboo. The holes of this flute are to be perforated at distances according to the size of flute. There are a total of 10 perforated holes including 7 finger holes, a thumb-hole, a membrane hole and a vent hole. In perforation process, mark the three divisions on the bamboo stick with the same distance. The lowest finger holes must be perforated at the starting point of second division, and the six finger holes at the same gap according to diameter of bamboo stick. The thumb-hole is perforated on the lower side of the flute at the point half- way between the upper sixth and seventh hole. The vent hole is perforated between the topmost finger hole and the tube end. The membrane hole is between the vent hole and the seventh hole.
How to play	-	This wind instrument consists of a hollow tube and has to be played by blowing through a open hole at one end. Its melody includes vibration frequency according to Mon traditional songs.
Size	-	1 feet and 5 inches in length 1.5 inches in diameter



*Bamboo flute, which is called "Ta-Lut" in
Mon Language, Wind instrument*

Date	-	2-7-2014
Location	-	Mudon Township
No	-	Ma Da/ Mon/ 1 (M)
Name of Instrument	-	Crocodile-shaped Harp, which is called "Hta-na" in Mon Language, string musical instrument
Material	-	Yamanay or Shar wood
Making Process	-	The body of harp is made of Ya-Ma-Nay wood. The wood is into shape of crocodile before it is completely dry after being smeared with mud for several months. The top of the resonator body is tightly stretched with a deer or goat skin with small sound holes.. The sound box is embellished in Mon traditional decoration. The crocodile's tail-shaped neck endpiece of harp is decorated with Hin-tha bird. The tuning pegs are fixed along the neck. The strings are made of silk or cotton or nylon.
How to play	-	The strings are tuned in traditional way. It is played in similar way of playing Myanmar traditional harp. Today, the number of strings have been increased to 15 to 16 in order to add the additional notes.
Size	-	39 inches in length 29 3/4 inches in height 7 1/2 inches in body height



Crocodile-shaped Harp, which is called "Hta-na" in Mon Language, string musical instrument

No	-	Mon/ 1 (M)
Name of Instrument	-	Mon Traditional Gong Ensemble
Material	-	Yamanay wood, Brass
Making Process	-	The wooden frame of the gong circle is made of Yamanay wood. Like Myanmar gong circle, 12 brass gongs are housed in the circle of crescent-shaped wooden frame.
How to play	-	12 brass gongs are arranged in a circular order. The pitch of gongs are higher from left to right. It has more than 2 major and minor scales. The player strikes the bosses on the gongs with two mallets.
Size	-	56 inches in length 39 inches in height 9.5 inches in breadth 32.5 inches in circumference

No	-	Mon/ 2 (M)
Name of Instrument	-	Ancient Mon Traditional Violin
Material	-	Wood (Yamanay, Mahorgani), and silk string
Background History	-	Ancient Mon traditional violin was created by Mon nation since the ancient time without deriving from any other nations. Unlike the violin from foreign countries, it has to be played upright by standing up with its endpin on the ground in similar way of playing Myanmar traditional flat violin. This string musical instrument has been played in Mon traditional ceremonies since the ancient time. Unlike Shan and Rakhine traditional violins with two strings, it has three strings. It is also in similar shape of violin that is played in Dawei Traditional-Dain Than dance.
Making Process	-	The ancient Mon violin is made of wood. The scroll above the tuning pegs is curved into Hin-tha bird. There is an endpin under the body.
How to play	-	The 3-stringed musical instrument is played with a bow made of horse hair. The first string is tuned to NgaPauk(Fifth Note), the second string to ThanHman TaPauk(First Note), and the third string to LayPauk(Fourth note). There is no fret on its fingerboard, and it must be played by pressing the strings with the fingertips from up to down. It can play the scale of flat and sharp notes.
Size	-	29 inches in length 4 inches in height 8 inches in width 20 inches in circumference

No	-	Mon/ 3 (M)
Name of Instrument	-	Mon Traditional Kyidauk Violin
Material	-	Wood (Yamanay, Mahorgani), and silk string
Background History	-	One of Mon tradition string instrument, Kyidauk Violin, was created in ancient time and it has been included in the traditional troupe till to date. Unlike the violin from foreign countries, it has to be played upright by standing up with its endpin on the ground in similar way of playing Myanmar flat violin.
Making process	-	The body, peg box, and neck are attached each other. The body is made of 0.76 cm-thick wood. And the neck has a length of 6 inches. The scroll is carved into flying-Hintha bird. On the surface of the body near F-hole is decorated with floral pattern of 6 petals and 2 leaves. The square-shaped tuning pegs and peg box are gilded.
How to play	-	The 3-stringed musical instrument is played with a bow made of horse hair. The first string is tuned to NgaPauk (Fifth Note), the second string to ThanHman TaPauk (First Note), and the third string to LayPauk (Fourth note). There is no fret on its fingerboard, and it must be played by pressing the strings with the fingertips from up to down. It can play the scales of flat and sharp notes.
Size	-	16 inches in length of body 4 inches in breadth of body 6 inches in length of neck

No	-	Mon/ 4 (M)
Name of Instrument	-	Mon Traditional Violin
Material	-	Wood (Ya Ma Nay, Ma Hor Ga Ni), and silk string
Making process	-	Body, peg box and neck of this violin are made of wood. It is 3-stringed musical instrument and in design of traditional shape.
How to play	-	The player must pull the bow made of horse hair along the strings to emanate the sound.
Size	-	22 inches in length 5.6 inches in height of body

No	-	Mon/ 5 (M)
Name of Instrument	-	Mon Hak-Swal Xylophone
Material	-	Wood (Yamanay, Mahorgani), and bronze
Making process	-	According to the definition about this xylophone stated in Mon's dictionary, it is shaped three-fourth of circle. Therefore, it is assumed that its shape is similar to Mon traditional crescent-shaped musical instrument.
How to play	-	It is assumed that the playing style is in similar way of playing Myanmar xylophone (Patala).
Shape	-	Three-fourth of Circle

No	-	Mon/ 6 (M)
Name of Instrument	-	Mon Traditional Crocodile-shaped Xylophone
Material	-	Wood (Yamanay, Mahorgani), and iron
Making process	-	The wood is carved into the shape of crocodile. Thirteen iron slates or keys graduated from 2.25 by 1 to 3.5 inches by 1 inch are hold with a rope in length of 37 inches from head to tail.
How to play	-	It is assumed that it has to be played with plectrum.
Size	-	55 inches in length 6.5 inches in breadth 8.5 inches in height