

A GRAPHIC PRESENTATION AND PRESERVATION
OF VIETNAMESE STORYTELLING MUSIC
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Long abstract (500 words limit): Areas of difficulty in preserving and teaching Vietnamese traditional and folk music to non-Vietnamese include the aural-oral tradition, the use of non-Western European scales and extensive multiple pentatonic scales, their associated airs and modes, the heterophonic texture when musicians in an ensemble improvise a tune freely, the Vietnamese linguistic tones, and the Vietnamese-specific sentence-based poetic structure of the piece—sometimes described as non-metrical. Vietnamese have been recounted their stories by verses, and sung them in their own styles, and in a rich tradition of lullabies, mostly composed by women. By analyzing voices and instruments, a group of community organizers in the Bronx attempt to set up an initial guide identify, preserve, and disseminate folk musical heritages. This involves searching for original musical pieces and identifying the scales, ranges, background knowledge, melodic contour, sequences, motives, and temporal characteristics before visual representations of the pieces can be suggested for documentation. A recording of *Ru con miền Nam* “Lullaby from southern Vietnam” is fed to a peak frequency engine. This produces the pitch/intensity contour, or **PIC**, in real time. The rhythmic patterns and metrical structure are displayed in Hertz, Decibels and milliseconds. They are further notated by a music staff, melisma cuts, sentence boundaries, and *key pitches in context*, or **kp ic**, that lay out the frequencies of occurrences of two, three, ... adjacent pitches, revealing dominant pitch patterns in the piece. Significantly, they suggest specific characteristics of the folk music therein while preserving the piece in graphic form.

Short abstract to be printed in program (100-word)

Difficulties in preserving and teaching Vietnamese traditional and folk music include the aural-oral tradition, nonstandard and extensive multiple pentatonic scales, their associated airs and modes, and Vietnamese linguistic tones... Vietnamese stories are told by verses, and sung them in different styles, including a rich tradition of lullabies. A community guide to identify, preserve, and disseminate folk musical heritages was initiated to search for original musical pieces and identify the scales, ranges, background knowledge, melodic contour, motives, and temporal characteristics. A recording of *Ru con miền Nam* “Lullaby from southern Vietnam” is fed to a peak frequency engine, producing a pitch/intensity contour in real time. A *key pitches in context engine* lays out frequencies of occurrences of multiple adjacent pitches, revealing dominant pitch patterns in the piece. All suggest specific characteristics therein while preserving the piece in graphic form.