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The editorial team follows a process for creating the journal, starting from receiving articles and proceeding through a thorough screening. The team selects experts with knowledge and expertise in each field to review the articles. This is the main standard criterion for requesting certification. The articles in this journal are diverse and comprehensive, which is one of the important goals of preparing academic journals.

The editorial department is willing to receive research articles and academic articles in the fields of visual arts and innovation to disseminate to educational institutions and others in the future. The editorial team thanks all those who submitted articles. Copyright of the articles belongs to the authors and Shinawatra University and is reserved by law. We also thank all the experts who sacrificed their time to review and provide suggestions that will be useful in developing and improving the journal for even greater quality in the future.

With kind regards,

Dr. Chanyanan Somthawinpongsai
Editor-in-chief

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Performance Art for Social and Political Communication II

Assoc. Prof. Sakon Phungamdee, Ph.D.¹

Abstract

This article examines how performance art functions as a medium for social and political communication through analytical case studies of two contemporary Thai performance artists: Jittima Phonsewak and Mongkol Plianbangchang. The study investigates how their conceptual approaches, symbolic materials, bodily actions, and site-responsive performance strategies address themes such as state power, environmental degradation, cultural identity, and community struggles. Rather than merely presenting examples of artworks, this article critically analyzes how performance art constructs meaning, generates public discourse, and transforms personal expression into sociopolitical commentary. The analysis demonstrates that performance art serves as an alternative form of communication capable of confronting dominant narratives, amplifying marginalized voices, and stimulating public reflection on social realities.

Keywords : Performance Art, Art for Social, Political Communication, Jittima Phonsawak, Mongkol Plianbangchang

Introduction

Performance art has long played a significant role in contemporary visual art practices, serving as a dynamic and interdisciplinary medium that integrates the body, space, action, time, and symbolic objects into a unified communicative form. According to Goldberg (2011), performance art functions as a live, action-based practice rooted in both visual art and theatrical expression, making it particularly effective in conveying social and political messages.

In Thailand, social, political, environmental, and economic challenges—ranging from state violence and cultural conflict to environmental destruction and industrial exploitation—have continually inspired performance artists to use their practices as acts of resistance and social commentary. Performance art, therefore, becomes a powerful means through which artists articulate personal perspectives, confront structural injustice, and provoke dialogue among audiences.

This study focuses on two influential Thai performance artists, Jittima Phonsewak and Mongkol Plianbangchang, whose works exemplify the communicative power of performance art within sociopolitical contexts. Instead of presenting biographical information as raw data, this article critically analyzes selected performances to understand how each artist employs the body, materials, and symbolic actions to construct meaning and stimulate awareness.

Literature Review

Performance art has been widely discussed in global scholarship as a medium that challenges conventional modes of artistic communication. Fischer-Lichte (2008) emphasizes the transformative nature of performance, wherein the body becomes a site of meaning and social negotiation. Bishop (2012) highlights how participatory and performance-based practices often confront political structures by engaging audiences directly.

In the Thai context, performance art emerged prominently during periods of political unrest, reflecting tensions between state authority, cultural identity, and public dissent. Scholars of Southeast Asian art have noted that Thai performance artists frequently address environmental issues, rapid urbanization, and the erosion of local cultures through symbolic gestures and public interventions. This literature establishes a conceptual foundation for examining how Thai artists utilize performance art as a medium for sociopolitical critique.

3. Methodology

This study adopts a **qualitative interpretive methodology**, using two complementary analytical frameworks:

1) Interpretive Visual Analysis

Assessment of bodily actions, gestures, spatial composition, use of materials, and symbolic meaning.

2) Contextual Analysis

Examination of sociopolitical conditions, cultural references, and community contexts influencing the artworks.

Data sources include:

- photographic documentation
- artist statements
- performance festival archives
- written interviews
- academic and critical texts

Three works from each artist were selected based on relevance to social and political communication, thematic clarity, and public impact.

4. Analysis of Selected Works

4.1 Jittima Phonsewak

4.1.1 Themes and Artistic Approach

Jittima's works address issues of neo-colonialism, cultural resistance, environmental degradation, and the exploitation of marginalized communities. She often employs her body as a symbolic site of confrontation, using simple but powerful materials soil, seeds, traditional objects, and everyday items to reflect social struggle.

4.1.2 Analysis of Key Works



Figure 1, Neo Colony Series, Part 1
Source: Jittima Phonsewak (Collection of Photographs), 2020

(1) Neo Colony Series (2020)

Set against colonial-era architecture, this work critiques the persistent influence of transnational capital and state complicity in resource exploitation. The setting itself functions as a metaphor for historical and contemporary oppression. The artist's actions and placement within the urban landscape highlight the tension between local communities and external power structures.

Communicative Function:

- Reveals forms of “invisible domination.”
- Uses historical architecture to comment on modern political control
- Encourages audience reflection on systemic inequalities



Figure 2. Neo Colony Series, Part 2
Source: Jittima Phonsewak, Collection of Photographs, 2020.

2) Green Revolution Series (2020)

This series explores global corporate control over seeds and agriculture. Through gestures involving soil, seeds, and her body, the artist transforms the politics of agriculture into a tangible and emotional experience.

Communicative Function:

- Draws attention to food sovereignty
- Critiques industrial agriculture as a threat to rural autonomy
- Uses the body to symbolize the vulnerability of communities



Figure 3. *Green Revolution Series, Part 1*

Source: Jittima Phonsewak, Collection of Photographs, 2020.



Figure 4. *Green Revolution Series, Part 2*

Source: Jittima Phonsewak, Collection of Photographs, 2020.

(3) Let Me Dance (2020)

Inspired by the Nora fingernail a symbol of Southern Thai cultural identity, the performance reflects on cultural repression and the politics of identity. The artist asserts her right to cultural expression through choreographed gestures, using the fingernail as a metaphor for resistance.

Communicative Function:

- Addresses cultural discrimination
- Emphasizes resilience against suppression
- Connects traditional identity with contemporary political struggle



Figure 5. *Let Me Dance Series, Part 1*

Source: Jittima Phonsewak, Collection of Photographs, 2020.



Figure 6. *Let Me Dance Series, Part 2*

Source: Jittima Phonsewak, Collection of Photographs, 2020.

4.2 Mongkol Plienbangchang

4.2.1 Themes and Artistic Approach

Mongkol's works often reflect poetic contemplation on human vulnerability, political tension, spiritual symbolism, and the fragility of existence. His performances integrate sound, ritual objects, and environmental elements to create layered meanings about life under sociopolitical pressure.

4.2.2 Analysis of Key Works



Figure 7. *The Mysterious Sense: Hidden Perception, 2018*
Source: Mongkol Plienbangchang, *Collection of Photographs, 2018*.

(1) The Mysterious Sense (2018)

Using ritual ashes, bells, water, and fragile clay vessels, the performance reflects the conflict between strength and fragility. The breaking of the vessel symbolizes the breaking of social structures, while flowing water represents liberation.

Communicative Function:

- Symbolizes systemic pressure and vulnerability
- Offers commentary on political uncertainty
- Uses ritualistic gestures to provoke introspection



Figure 8. *I Dream the DREAM: I Dream of the Dream, 2019 (Preparation Phase)*
Source: Mongkol Plienbangchang, *Collection of Photographs, 2019*.

(2) I Dream the DREAM (2019)

A participatory work in which audiences attach artificial butterflies to the artist's face. The butterfly symbolizes memory, dreams, identity, and fragility, while the artist's face represents the earth—a shared collective space.

Communicative Function:

- Models democratic participation
- Emphasizes shared human experience
- Uses metaphor to explore collective hope amid struggle



Figure 9. *I Dream the DREAM: I Dream of the Dream, 2019 (Part 1)*
Source: Mongkol Plienbangchang, *Collection of Photographs*, 2019.



Figure 10. *Close to Be: Self-Portrait Series, Sample Image 1 (2020)*
Source: Mongkol Plienbangchang, *Collection of Photographs*, 2020.

(3) Close to Be: Self-Portrait Series (2020)

Created during COVID-19 lockdown, this 103-day project uses household objects covering the artist's mouth and nose to symbolize scarcity, state mismanagement, and psychological pressure.

Communicative Function:

- Documents lived experience during crisis
- Highlights political failures and social vulnerability
- Transforms isolation into political reflection

5. Discussion

The analysis reveals that both artists use performance art not merely as aesthetic expression but as a communication strategy that:

1. challenges dominant political narratives;
2. highlights structural violence and marginalization;
3. transforms personal experience into collective reflection;
4. utilizes symbolic materials to deepen sociopolitical critique;
5. engages audiences emotionally and intellectually.

Their practices demonstrate how performance art transcends traditional art forms by employing the body as a discursive tool and by situating artworks within real social contexts.

6. Conclusion

This study illustrates that performance art is a powerful medium for social and political communication. Through the works of Jittima Phonsewak and Mongkol Plienbangchang, performance art becomes a platform for interrogating power, amplifying marginalized voices, and stimulating public dialogue. Both artists transform everyday materials, symbolic gestures, and bodily presence into potent communicative acts that critique structural inequalities and cultural conflict. Their contributions reaffirm the vital role of contemporary art in promoting social understanding and political awareness.

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The Application of TouchDesigner in Real-Time Interactive Projection for the Intangible Cultural Heritage Exhibition of Zhuhai's Sanzao Crane Dance

Shuoqi Zheng¹ Somchart Adulvajarameta²

¹Shinawatra University, ²Academy of Arts and Philosophy
Email: 364211865@qq.com¹ Email: therepublic@gmail.com²

Abstract

This paper explores the application of Touch Designer in real-time interactive projection to enhance the exhibition of Zhuhai's Sanzao Crane Dance, a nationally recognized intangible cultural heritage (ICH) in China. Traditional ICH exhibitions often lack interactivity and fail to engage younger audiences. Through a mixed-methods approach involving experimental design, surveys, and qualitative interviews, this study demonstrates how interactive projection enhances immersion, fosters cultural identity, and promotes active participation in cultural transmission. Findings offer strategic recommendations for applying digital tools in modern ICH exhibitions.

Keywords: Touch Designer, Interactive Projection, Intangible Cultural Heritage, Sanzao Crane Dance, Audience Engagement, Cultural Identity

Introduction

In recent decades, intangible cultural heritage (ICH) has gained increasing global attention as societies seek to preserve living cultural practices amid rapid technological and social change. Among these heritage expressions, the Sanzao Crane Dance from Zhuhai, Guangdong Province, stands as a representative example of Chinese folk dance rooted in local belief, community rituals, and the symbolic imitation of cranes.

Despite its cultural richness and symbolic significance, the traditional exhibition modes of the Sanzao Crane Dance often fail to attract younger generations. Static displays such as photos, artifacts, and textual descriptions limit audience interaction and emotional engagement. With the advent of digital media and real-time interactive technologies, however, new possibilities have emerged for revitalizing heritage practices through immersive exhibition formats.

This paper investigates the integration of Touch Designer a node-based visual programming platform widely used in new media art into the real-time interactive exhibition of the Sanzao Crane Dance. The study aims to explore how this technology can enhance the immersive experience, strengthen audience cultural identity, and foster greater engagement with heritage practices.

Research Objectives

The primary goal of this study is to explore how real-time interactive projection, facilitated by Touch Designer, can be strategically applied to enhance the exhibition of the Sanzao Crane Dance. Within this overarching aim, the study identifies three specific research objectives:

1. To enhance audience immersion and engagement through the integration of real-time interactive projection in ICH exhibitions.

2. To examine the role of interactive projection in fostering cultural identity and emotional resonance

with intangible heritage, especially among younger audiences.

3. To develop practical strategies and design guidelines

for curators and exhibition designers integrating interactive technologies in ICH contexts.

Rather than merely showcasing a technical implementation, this research emphasizes the interplay between technology and Cultural expression. It seeks not only to evaluate technological outcomes but also to address the Cultural depth and Experiential quality of Exhibitions.

Literature Review

In light of the growing urgency to modernize the presentation of intangible cultural heritage, existing scholarship offers valuable insights across three major domains: traditional challenges of ICH exhibition, immersive experience theory, and digital interaction technologies in cultural contexts. This section selectively reviews representative works to build a theoretical foundation for the present study.

First, conventional ICH exhibitions are widely critiqued for their static, text-heavy formats. According to Liu (2022), such approaches often fail to convey the dynamic, living essence of heritage, particularly in performing arts like dance. Ren (2023) highlights the disconnect between object-based displays and the emotional or ritualistic contexts that give heritage its cultural depth.

Second, the concept of immersive experience has evolved from entertainment to educational and cultural settings. Drawing on Csikszentmihályi's (1975) Flow Theory, Wang and Liu (2018) argue that multisensory immersion increases retention and emotional resonance. Dai and Peng (2023) extend this idea by showing that user-centered immersive designs can foster ethnic identity in heritage-based interfaces.

Finally, recent research has examined the application of interactive digital technologies like AR, VR, and real-time rendering in heritage spaces. Su (2020) emphasizes that TouchDesigner's modular environment lowers the technical threshold for artistic expression, enabling real-time feedback and audience interaction. In case studies like Digital Dunhuang and TeamLab Borderless, immersive projection is shown to bridge sensory engagement with historical depth (Han, 2022).

In sum, this literature reveals a critical shift from passive display to participatory interaction in heritage exhibitions. Yet, few studies explicitly link the technical affordances of Touch Designer with the cultural storytelling needed in ICH contexts. This gap justifies the present research.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a mixed-methods research design to explore how real-time interactive projection, specifically via Touch Designer, can improve audience experience and cultural engagement in ICH exhibitions. The methodology integrates qualitative and quantitative tools to ensure a robust and multifaceted understanding.

1. Experimental Setup

A controlled experimental environment was developed featuring two exhibition designs one using traditional static display methods and the other utilizing Touch Designer-based interactive projection. Both versions were built around the Sanzao Crane Dance narrative, with the interactive version enabling gesture-triggered visuals and audio responses.

2. Participants and Sampling

A total of 80 participants were recruited, including university students, local residents, and tourists. Participants were randomly assigned to either the control (traditional) or experimental (interactive) group, ensuring demographic diversity and minimizing selection bias.

3. Data Collection Methods

Three primary tools were employed Pre- and post-experience surveys measured changes in audience perception of cultural identity, emotional resonance, and exhibit effectiveness.

Observation checklists recorded behaviors such as dwell time, gesture frequency, and audience flow patterns.

Semi-structured interviews with 15 participants provided qualitative depth on emotional experience and cultural interpretation.

4. Analytical Framework

Quantitative data were processed using SPSS for t-tests and correlation analysis. Qualitative interviews were analyzed using NVivo software to identify recurring themes related to identity, immersion, and participation. A triangulation strategy was applied to cross-validate results.

This methodological framework Ensures a balance between Empirical rigor and experiential depth, suitable for studying the complex intersection of technology, audience behavior, and cultural storytelling.

Research Scope

This study focuses on the conceptual and experiential intersection of three domains:

1. **Digital media technology** (TouchDesigner) as a creative platform,
2. **Intangible cultural heritage** (Sanzao Crane Dance) as subject matter, and
3. **Audience interaction and cultural immersion** as behavioral outcomes.

The conceptual framework developed for this study is illustrated as a **three-tier model**

1. Input Layer – Cultural and Technical Resources

Incorporates the symbolic narratives, ritual gestures, and visual motifs of the Sanzao Crane Dance, along with TouchDesigner's node-based real-time rendering capabilities.

2. Interaction Layer – System and Experience Design

This layer defines how sensors, visuals, and sound are structured to respond to audience movement and participation. The choreography of interaction aligns with the logic of the dance.

3. Output Layer – Cultural Resonance and Reflective Engagement

This final layer evaluates the outcomes: audience immersion, identity construction, and emotional involvement, reflecting the effectiveness of the system.

By structuring the framework in this layered fashion, the study ensures alignment between cultural intention, technical implementation, and experiential outcome.

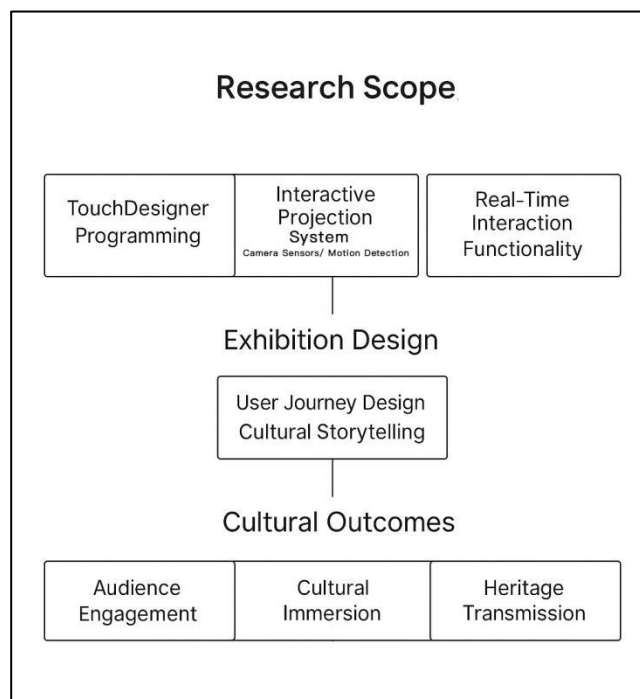


Figure 1. Conceptual framework illustrating the research scope for applying TouchDesigner in the interactive exhibition of Zhuhai's Sanzao Crane Dance.

Research Results

The results of this study provide compelling evidence for the impact of interactive projection using Touch Designer on the effectiveness of intangible cultural heritage exhibitions. Findings are organized across three key thematic domains aligned with the research objectives.

1. Enhanced Immersion and Engagement

Participants in the interactive exhibition group reported significantly higher levels of immersion compared to the control group ($M = 4.5$ vs. 3.2 on a 5-point Likert scale, $p < 0.01$). Observational data showed longer dwell times, more spontaneous gestures, and frequent emotional expressions (e.g., laughter, verbal interaction) within the TouchDesigner environment.

2. Cultural Identity and Emotional Resonance

Post-experience survey responses indicated a deeper emotional connection to the Sanzao Crane Dance and local culture. 85% of participants in the interactive group agreed with the statement: "This exhibition deepened my sense of connection to intangible heritage." Interviewees frequently used words such as "proud," "curious," and "moved." Notably, younger participants (aged 18–25) demonstrated the strongest emotional engagement, suggesting that digital interactivity bridges generational gaps in cultural understanding.

3. Participatory Transmission and Learning Potential

The interviews revealed an emerging theme: participants viewed themselves not just as spectators, but as co-performers and culture bearers. Several participants expressed interest in sharing the experience with peers or applying it in educational contexts.

These findings affirm that interactive projection does more than display culture it enables people to enact it. The Sanzao Crane Dance is no longer just observed, but felt and reimagined.

Discussion

The results of this study support the hypothesis that real-time interactive projection using TouchDesigner can significantly enhance audience experience and deepen cultural connection within intangible heritage exhibitions. In this section, we critically reflect on these findings by comparing them with prior literature and identifying implications for future exhibition design.

1. From Passive Spectatorship to Active Participation

Traditional heritage exhibitions often struggle to move beyond static display formats. This study confirms prior critiques (e.g., Liu 2022; Ren 2023) that such modes lack emotional depth. The interactive approach presented here breaks that limitation by enabling audiences to become embodied participants in the narrative. This reflects recent discourse on performative heritage, where culture is not only remembered but reenacted.

2. Technology as a Cultural Interface

While TouchDesigner is often framed as a visual effects tool in new media art, this research extends its role to a cultural interface a conduit for symbolic gestures, community memory, and identity transmission. Unlike VR headsets or AR devices that isolate users, TouchDesigner supports shared spatial experiences, aligning with the collective nature of traditional performances.

3. Balancing Authenticity and Innovation

One challenge in applying digital technology to ICH is the risk of “spectacularization,” where aesthetics may overshadow cultural meaning. Some interviewees expressed concern that the dance’s ritual significance might be diluted in overly gamified settings. This underscores the need for curators and designers to establish a balance between fidelity to tradition and audience-centered innovation.

4. Generational Bridging and Informal Education

The strong response among younger participants reinforces the potential of interactive exhibitions as tools for informal education. Unlike textbook-based approaches, these experiences stimulate curiosity and emotional learning. The implication is clear: digital exhibitions are not merely supplementary, but may become primary pathways for ICH transmission among digital natives.

Overall, this discussion highlights how Touch Designer-based exhibitions may redefine the boundaries of cultural display transforming passive remembrance into active co-creation, and shifting from information transfer to experience-driven engagement.

Conclusion

This study explored the integration of TouchDesigner into the real-time interactive exhibition of Zhuhai’s Sanzao Crane Dance and evaluated its impact on cultural experience and audience participation. Through a mixed-methods approach involving experimental design, surveys, and interviews, the research revealed clear benefits of digital interactivity in enhancing immersion, fostering emotional connection, and stimulating participatory learning.

Key contributions of this research include the development of a conceptual framework that maps the interaction between technology, heritage content, and audience engagement, and the empirical demonstration that such a model can support new forms of cultural transmission.

Importantly, this study positions Touch Designer not merely as a digital tool, but as a **cultural medium** that can interpret, embody, and renew traditional practices in meaningful ways. The Sanzao Crane Dance long rooted in ritual and community is reimagined here as a participatory narrative system capable of resonating across generations.

While limitations remain such as scalability and the risk of superficial engagement the findings strongly suggest that interactive projection represents a valuable strategy for rethinking how intangible heritage is exhibited, experienced, and passed on in the digital age.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings and reflections discussed, several recommendations can be made for future applications of interactive projection in intangible cultural heritage (ICH) exhibitions. These suggestions are divided into practical implementation strategies and theoretical research directions.

Practical Recommendations for Designers and Curators

1. Integrate modular interaction systems

that allow for real-time adjustments to audience movement and emotional responses.

2. Incorporate traditional experts in co-design

to preserve authenticity while exploring innovative formats.

3. Design spatial storytelling paths

that lead users through emotional and symbolic arcs, not just information points.

4. Develop evaluation tools

that measure not only engagement time, but affective impact and knowledge retention.

Theoretical and Strategic Recommendations

5. Frame interactive exhibitions as cultural ecosystems

where technology, ritual, narrative, and audience behavior are co-dependent.

6. Encourage cross-disciplinary collaboration

between heritage scholars, interaction designers, and data scientists.

7. Reframe digital heritage not as a substitution, but as a transformation

an evolution of embodied storytelling in the algorithmic age.

Together, these recommendations aim to ensure that future ICH exhibitions not only embrace technological innovation but do so in a way that honors the depth, meaning, and continuity of cultural practices.

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