

# Journal of Urban Culture Research

Volume 10 Jan - Jun 2015

Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts Chulalongkorn University  
ISSN 2228-8279 (Print) ISSN 2408-1213 (Online)



Chulalongkorn  
University



# *Journal of Urban Culture Research*

Volume 10 Jan - Jun 2015

Published jointly  
by  
Chulalongkorn University, Thailand and Osaka City University, Japan

The views and opinions expressed herein are those of the individual author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the policies or opinions of the *Journal (JUCR)*, its editors and staff, Chulalongkorn University, or Osaka City University.

Authors authorize the JUCR to publish their materials both in print and online while retaining their full individual copyright. The copyright of JUCR volumes is retained by Chulalongkorn University.

© 2015 BY CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY  
ISSN 2228-8279 (Print) ISSN 2408-1213 (Online)

JUCR is listed in the Thai-Journal Citation Index-TCI  
This publication is a non-profit educational research journal not for sale.

# Journal of Urban Culture Research

## Executive Director

Suppakorn Disatapandhu, *Chulalongkorn University, Thailand*

## Editor in Chief

Kjell Skyllstad, *University of Oslo, Norway*

## International Editor

Alan Kinear, *Chulalongkorn University, Thailand*

## Contributing Editors

Bussakorn Binson, *Chulalongkorn University, Thailand*

Shin Nakagawa, *Osaka City University, Japan*

## Managing Editor

Pornprapit Phoasavadi, *Chulalongkorn University, Thailand*

## Editorial Board

Frances Anderson, *College of Charleston, USA*

Bussakorn Binson, *Chulalongkorn University, Thailand*

Naraphong Charassri, *Chulalongkorn University, Thailand*

Dan Baron Cohen, *Institute of Transformance: Culture and Education, Brazil*

Gavin Douglas, *University of North Carolina, USA*

Made Mantle Hood, *University of Putra, Malaysia*

Geir Johnson, *Music Information Centre MIC-Transposition, Norway*

Zuzana Jurkova, *Charles University, Czech Republic*

Prapon Kumjim, *Chulalongkorn University, Thailand*

Le Van Toan, *National Academy of Music, Vietnam*

Rachel Lev-Wiesel, *University of Haifa, Israel*

Celine Motzfeldt Loades, *University of Oslo, Norway*

Svanibor Pettan, *University of Ljubljana, Slovenia*

Leon Stefanija, *University of Ljubljana, Slovenia*

Deborah Stevenson, *University of Western Sydney, Australia*

Pornsamong Vongsingthong, *Chulalongkorn University, Thailand*

## Layout & Design

Alan Kinear, *Chulalongkorn University, Thailand*

## Webmaster

Alan Kinear, *Chulalongkorn University, Thailand*

## Contact Information:

Journal of Urban Culture Research

Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts

Chulalongkorn University

Phayathai Road, Pathumwan

Bangkok, Thailand 10330

Voice/Fax: 662-218-4582

Email: [jucr.chula@yahoo.com](mailto:jucr.chula@yahoo.com)

Website: [www.cujucr.com](http://www.cujucr.com)



Cover image of 'locks of love' left by couples on the mountain just below the Namsan Seoul Tower in South Korea was provided by Alan Kinear.

# Contents

## Editorial

- A Call For Partnership – A Climate For Change 4  
Kjell Skylstad Editor in Chief

## Guest Author

- Performing Transformation in the Community University of the Rivers (Part 1) 8  
Dan Baron Cohen (Brazil)

## Articles

- Understanding Artists' Relationships to Urban Creative Placemaking Through  
Documentary Storytelling 24  
Brian Plow (U.S.A.)
- Accessing Shared Culture for Conflict Transformation – The Arts of Pattani 40  
Hilde Kvam (Norway)
- Thai Classical Music Composition – *Pleng Ruang Puja Nakhon Nan* 52  
Pattara Komkhum & Kumkom Pornprasit (Thailand)
- Evaluating Problem-based Learning in a Musical Drama Training Program in  
Cilincing Sub-district, North Jakarta 64  
Melina Surya Dewi Widjaja (Indonesia)

## Case Study

- Composing a Thai Symphony – An Emblem of Victory 84  
Woraket Tagosa (Thailand)

## Conference Reports

- Partnership for Change – Oslo May 2015 98  
Kjell Skylstad Editor in Chief

## Reviews

- The Living Local Cultural Sites of Bangkok 102  
Kjell Skylstad Editor in Chief

## Journal Policy

104

# Editorial

# A Call For Partnership – A Climate For Change

Kjell Skyllstad<sup>+</sup> Editor in Chief

In a poem the Poet Laureate of Norway Henrik Wergeland envisages an encounter in the desert between a Muslim Mullah, a Jewish Rabbi and a Christian Priest. The sun is rising and all are eager to meet the new day with a prayer. But being of different faiths they hesitate, afraid of offending each other. Suddenly they discover and are overwhelmed by the polyphonic choir of birds singing in the tree above them, and they join in the chorus of praise to the Creator.

The vision and hope of our poet that our common links to nature would overcome religious divisions has many decades after this poem was written still remained a utopian dream. And this in spite of many of the Holy writings containing not only similar visions outlining a way of regeneration of life and restitution of the balance of man and nature, but also containing prophecies and graphic warnings of an approaching ecological disaster.

In line with the Biblical creation myth, Islamic literature abound in descriptions of the paradisaical garden with the Celestial Tree, the Tube or Sidra. The ninth century Abu Bayad of Bistam calls this garden “the Field of Eternity” where he beholds “the Tree of Oneness” Thus the ecological vision is tied up with the concept of the integration of man, the oneness of mankind, the ultimate real mode of being for which the soul thirsts.

<sup>+</sup> Dr. Kjell Skyllstad, Professor Emeritus, University of Oslo, Department of Musicology, Norway

The 14th century poet Hafez paints this picture:

On the holy boughs of the Sidra  
High up in the heavenly fields,  
Beyond terrestrial desire,  
My soul-bird a warm nest has built

The Tree of Life is associated with man re-finding a center, establishing a new order. As a means of re-finding this order the Islamic mystic philosophers conceived of a world of vision (alam-al-mithal) or a world of imagination (alam-i-malakut) mediating between the realms of intellect and sense perception. Imagination to these men is a central human faculty bridging sense and intellect.

All societies in ecological balance have of course attached the greatest importance to the role of artistic creativity in maintaining the ecosystem. Throughout the long history of human existence it is through this activity of artistic and symbolic interaction that social and ecological attitudes were being formed in an innovative process. In the artistic manifestations of different civilizations we find artistic forms that were modeled in this process, thus containing incentives and stimuli for ecological and social reconstruction.

During my travels and research among tribal peoples of Southeast Asia I have found this very foundation to be threatened through the blow to natural habitats, the brutal destruction of the tropical rainforest, and the forced relocation, or the modern expulsion from paradise so to speak, of the very peoples that possess the wisdom that could save us from the final disaster. Among these tribes every dance, every song now becomes a potential manifestation of the resistance to processes that within a few years threaten to turn their country into a wasteland.

During my first visits to the upper tributaries of the Rejang river of Malaysian Sarawak and the Batak tribes of Lake Toba in Northern Sumatra it became evident how artistic activities are linked to the idea of nature preservation, not least through the ceremonies where contracts with nature are being renewed. These rituals are often, like in the Tunggal Panaluan rituals of Northern Sumatra centered around the ceremonial planting and veneration of the Tree of Life.

It all brings us to the question of building partnerships. For me it meant involving myself in the activities of NGO's working to protect traditional habitats and natural resources like our pristine forests and threatened rivers The Rejang, Salween and Mekong. For an ever growing part of the worlds population in Asia and elsewhere it also means building partnerships to fight climate change. At the recent flooding disasters affecting Bangkok our Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts at Chulalongkorn University joined forces with the Urban Research Plaza in exploring ways to help affected artists and restore endangered art monuments and disrupted cultural venues.

But there are accounts of other reactions to a similar disaster. Some forty years ago I was asked to introduce a new opera for Norwegian radio listeners: Hans Magnus Enzenberger's and Hans Werner Henze's play "The End of a World." The cultural and artistic elite is seen gathering for a congress on an idyllic island outside Venice, They are discussing the latest finds like the rediscovery of two Baroque flute sonatas considered lost. During a performance the water begins to rise, and at the end of a beautiful Adagio movement the island and its distinguished festive visitors slowly disappear. As the text goes it only later turned out that the acclaimed sonatas for which the audience was risking their lives in fact were fake.

The question we should consider is: What partnerships are we willing to build? Motivation for the arts community is everywhere to be found. The interplay of man with nature was an often overheard theme of classical composers, nowhere more touchingly and emphatically expressed than in Haydn's oratorio *The Creation*. In this magnificent work Haydn in his Finale voices a warning to man not to transgress his own bounds by misusing his power over nature. In fact the ensuing European Romanticism in music may be interpreted on the backdrop of a reaction against the rising industrial age with its factories belching poisonous smoke, and thus bringing the relationship between urban and rural development into focus.

Many will mean that the times are now ripe for the arts community to invite to forming a comprehensive urban-rural partnership engaging in solving our cultural, social and not least environmental challenges. Creative ideas are needed that could confront the rise of divisiveness on the local, national, regional and international arena. The Urban Research Plaza therefore cordially invites all our journal readers to attend the 14th Forum hosted on the Chulalongkorn University campus on March 3-4 with the theme: Urban Culture - Rural Culture: Overcoming a Dichotomy. Wergeland's vision should come true.





# Guest Author Performing Transformation in the Community University of the Rivers *(Part 1)*

Dan Baron Cohen<sup>+</sup>

## Abstract

In this two-part article, I seek to present our emerging Community University of the Rivers through the languages of storytelling (poetry, song, image and theatre) to bring to life the context and pedagogy of Transformance in action, in the Afro-Indigenous community of Cabelo Seco (Portuguese: Dry Hair), founding community of Marabá city, Pará, in the Brazilian Amazon. I use this strategy to ensure that you meet and might identify with my collaborators in our Community University of the Rivers, as living subjects. By privileging human narration, I do not mean to privilege action over reflection, as our dramatic performances and our actors are highly analytical. I am simply embedding theoretical concepts and analyses in our lived experience, valuing oratory, in the search for an aesthetics of transformation. This polyphonic, narrative-based (and less-logocentric) methodology is how all our projects develop, and might be more familiar to practitioners-theoreticians in the 'global south.'

**Keywords:** *Community, Cultural Literacy, Transformance, Art education, Amazon*

<sup>+</sup> Dan Baron Cohen, Director, Community University of the Rivers, Rua Quintino Bocaiúva, 238 Cabelo Seco, Marabá, Pará, Amazônia, Brazil. voice: (55) 91-98842-0521 email: riosdeencontro@gmail.com website: [www.riosdeencontro.wordpress.com](http://www.riosdeencontro.wordpress.com)

*This article is published in two parts across volumes 10 and 11 of JUCR.*

### **Introduction**

*So much partying  
I almost didn't notice the future already happening  
right there, my love, in front of us  
enclosing our homes  
and videoing our squares.  
But my love, when I heard the giants  
in the voices of our dancing bulls  
playing our tambourines  
stained with açaí, the penny dropped!*

*They're rooting themselves in our culture  
and mining our dreams  
to industrialize and steal the Amazon!  
Let's rescue the future, my love  
and throw the spear for the River Tocantins!*

In 1998, I was granted a visiting professorship at the State University of Santa Catarina in Brazil to develop community theatre as pedagogy. This collaboration inspired artistic and cultural collaborations with Brazil's landless, indigenous, trade-union and university communities, and culminated in a series of national sculptural monuments. I decided to leave Wales in 1999 and in partnership with art educator Manoela Souza, have dedicated the past 17 years to the development of a transformance pedagogy—artistic performance for transformation based in cultural literacy – across Brazil and in collaboration with arts education networks and universities in Africa, Asia, Latin America, North America and Europe.

More recently, our transformance pedagogy has been applied in the areas of health, security, sustainable agriculture, creative cities and special needs, in the constant (re-)search for an aesthetics of education which cultivates a paradigm of sustainable cooperation through the arts. Since 2009, I have lived in the urban Afro-Amazonian riverside community of Cabelo Seco, where our project 'Rivers of Meeting' prepares children and young people as artists, capable of applying their performance confidence as community leaders and pedagogical practitioners inside their own schools. Deeply critical of the present industrialization of the Amazon, the 'Rivers of Meeting' project has won national awards for its youth-led micro-projects from the Brazilian Ministry of Culture and UNICEF.

From 2004 to 2010, I served as President of the International Drama/Theatre Education Association (IDEA), co-founding and chairing the World Alliance for Arts Education (2006–2010). I am currently president of the Brazilian Network of Art educators (ABRA), member of the Latin American Network of Arts for Transformation and of the International Council of the World Social Forum, and part of the Latin American campaign for 'Points of Culture.'

## Section I

The afternoon before Black Awareness Week 2013, in the Afro-Indigenous community of Cabelo Seco, Camila comes to our window. *Mikael, you know, Eliza's 4 year-old brother, has died. We are stunned. What happened?* Camila, one of our teenage teachers, afro-contemporary costumes piled high in her arms, shrugs and disappears. We cancel her dance classes and all our courses. I text Eliza, one of our percussionists. *What happened?* She replies in seconds. *He died with a bloated belly. He went for surgery and didn't resist. I'll text after I feed the baby.*

In the narrow street, the community is huddled in groups, indignant. In this region of southeast Pará, where the largest iron and gold reserves in the world are about to be plundered, babies still die of worms! Yet, here in Marabá, third most dangerous city for young people in Brazil, where young people are twelve times more likely to be assassinated than in any other region, and where there is not enough space in the newspapers to report the daily genocide, the anger subsides before nightfall and the party quickly revives. The pain just 'vanishes'. To where?

In our *Casinha de Cultura* (Cottage of Culture), Mano and I exchange messages with Eliza who has been moved with her own toddler son, her two sisters and her mother Elizângela, one of our community organizers, from this tiny *cabocla* (afro-indigenous) community between the River Tocantins and River Itacaiúnas to the distant neighborhood of Liberdade, out of reach of the revenge of the man who has just been released for the murder of her teenage uncle. *How are you? And Elizângela? Shall we come over?* Not even time to wait for an answer. *As you like. João Pietro's asleep.*

How to respond, to mark Black Awareness Week? In our Community University of the Rivers, every day is dedicated to recovering, reinventing and nurturing Afro-Indigenous identity, to question the accelerating industrialization of the rivers. It has taken us five years to transform scores of children and teenagers gyrating above empty upturned beer bottles into a community program of youth-led music and dance projects, a street cinema and video collective, supported by the twice-weekly theatre intervention, and 'dialogic English' courses they have requested. From night to day, the federal government program 'My House, My Life' transported a third of the community to a distant periphery, facilitating the transformation of Cabelo Seco into theme park for an international resort. Two of our youth action-researchers are among the disappeared.

I pick a photo of Toím, the teenage percussionist assassinated at the end of January, smiling into my camera, among his group of five marked, 'considered' friends, index fingers and thumbs cocked in celebration of their friendships with those who rule the streets, and their knowledge of how to survive: brazen or naive? Camila's seventeenth birthday was Toím's last party. Could this self-portrait be the image for Black Awareness Week, for our people's gallery in the community square? I study a few other possible candidates, but I know this is the one.



Figure1. Final portrait of Toím (far left) with his four close friends (2012).

I look deep into Toím's eyes. I recall his stare of disbelief when I invited him to help me repair the roof of this cottage, just hours after he had slipped through its ceramic tiles, drugged, at five in the morning, to remove all our technology, and twenty-five years of digital archives, to fund his addiction. *We returned it all Dan, for the first time in living memory, and you ask me to fix the roof!* I recognized the questions in his flickering voice, from Soweto, Derry, Moss Side, the Gaza and the Rhondda. The silences that lowered and lifted his eyes, his alert, on-stage presence even at dawn, and his subtle, caboclo frown of questioning *astúcia* (canny intelligence), well-hidden behind inherited shyness: the only popular resources that might protect the open veins of the Amazon from their brutal industrialization by the largest mining companies in the world.

*Brega* from the square is already permeating every corner of our cottage. I begin to type a sonnet of questions that might accompany the collective portrait.

Guys  
 who erased my memory  
 and enclosed me in shame?  
 Who straightened my *Cabelo Seco* (dry hair)  
 and called me 'Francisco Coelho'?  
 Why do I always smile 'yes'  
 when I want to affirm 'no'?

In this week, my friends  
 from *Barão*, PAC and Pontal territories  
 let's throw the spear  
 for the life of our rivers  
 sing our roots  
 and celebrate  
 our afro-amazonian beauty!

The next morning, Camila passes by. I invite her to look at the proposed intervention, and she reads it aloud. *Massa! Approved!* She rereads, now to herself. I smile 'yes' when I should say 'no'! She understands. Zequinha passes to collect water. We invite the mestre of popular culture into the circle of chairs to study the proposal and he chews his upper-lip in a visceral mix of anger and panic. By the time he speaks, he has found safe, waist-high *capoeira* territory to avoid the risk of public humiliation that his enslaved great-grandparents left in the skin of his lyrics. He'd seen them plant the seeds they'd smuggled out in their hair and the hems of their dresses as they sang the recipes of their great-grandparents. He reads the rivers every day, to see when all this will turn to dust. Toím's daughter, Kaline, will suffer every day she walks by. *It's your decision, but think of the child. She still cries every night. She still thinks Toím is coming home.*

I try to reason with Zequinha. The community needs to see its vanished pain, through a portrait that celebrates and questions, so that it can read the centuries of internalized violence it writes into its children, through the compulsive intimate violence that we hear every night. But Zequinha cannot hear the proposal. Like so many parents on the street, one son has been assassinated and the other is consuming himself. He cannot be sure he will survive the reflection. And Toím was his brother's son, an addict, who lived next door. In the absence of police support, Antonio had walked a thousand yards, carrying his dead son from the public space of his spectacular execution to the community space where the journalists lifted him onto the front page of the papers. *Think of Kaline, Dan. Three years old.* Zequinha leaves, confident he has been heard.

Yolanda, Kaline's grandmother disappears into the small home of Crisiel which faces our cottage. If we now consult her and Antonio, we will undermine Zequinha, our project mediator, the mestre. Five years of confidence. I show the other photos to Camila and she goes to the window and whistles through her teeth. In seconds, Yolanda is in the circle, reading the proposed intervention, suffused with pleasure. I describe Zequinha's concern, as objectively as I can, and she interrupts me. I've explained to little Kaline. *She's was inconsolable. She suffered, yes, but she's calm now. She knows the police murdered her daddy. She looks again at Toím and the marked boys. You must publish that photo. It's so beautiful!*

Zequinha returns, chewing his upper lip, securing a river of grief. I begin to explain how the morning has unraveled. As soon as he recalls the moment Kaline heard Toím had 'traveled', Yolanda is reliving the sleepless months she held her granddaughter to her breast and Zequinha nods gravely to me. *Let's ask Kaline!*, says Camila. In a second, she is leading the child by the hand into the circle. *Who's that?* asks Yolanda, pointing at the photo. *Toím, my daddy!* Kaline smiles, at peace with the world. *And who killed him?* asks her grandmother. The police. We look at the *mestre*. He is watching, fascinated. *Sing your favorite song, my love,* Yolanda smiles. Kaline looks at us all.

*In the sweet waters of the river  
and refreshing waters of the rain*

*the hair of african humanity  
never becomes wet, never becomes wet.*

Then she dances the choreography she has learned watching Camila dance in the little square with *AfroMundi* (AfroWorld). Zequinha roars with laughter and hugs Kaline. *Approved, approved!*

\*\*\*

The last person we consult is Crisiel, a tall, handsome silent nineteen year-old who was obviously once a warrior, but who today just sits. No-one can remember seeing Crisiel lose his calm. *The only male here who never hit a woman*, Camila once remarked. He cannot read books or write with a pen, but he reads the surface of the river that runs behind his cottage, and composes silent poems into nets that he knows will never again catch fish. I call him in from the street and invite him into the circle. He stares at Toím. And he stares. Gradually, we all become aware of Toím's presence. Crisiel has brought him back to life. We all reread Toím in silence, his childhood, making kites, his first kiss. Even the sun stands still, suspended in respect above the founding community of Marabá, once a *quilômbô* (community of slave resistance), now the vulnerable, contested *imaginário* of the region. Is Crisiel crying, inwards? Does he approve? His eyes never change their focus. Slowly, eventually, he walks backwards, out through the door, without removing his eyes from Toím.

## Section II

We sit in a circle of tiny wooden chairs in the kindergarten, Elizângela and two mothers from our community development nucleus, their close friends, Zequinha, two of his brothers, his sister, cultural developers, community leaders, members of his band, and twelve English language students and their teacher from the Federal University. The mothers are exhausted from washing clothes in the river beneath the sun. The circle is tense with uncertainty, expectation, centuries of distance, betrayal and prejudice.

I ask Zequinha and Manoel Gato if they would like to sing, as the hosts. The brothers glance at one another and Zequinha chooses *Cabelo Seco* (Dry Hair), a lyric that he has composed from the introduction to our 2011 Calendar, a narrative poem about our second year of cultural action in the community. Like me, Zequinha wants the university students and teachers to feel the knowledges and literacies that pulse in his fragile but resistant riverside community, carried by the rivers. But he has chosen a gentle song, one that does not protest or confront, nor hide behind playful gesture. He knows that this will not be a course extending out from the university like a *xicote* (whip), held behind the back of a neocolonial plan. It will be an exchange between cultures, between worlds of knowledge, a dialogue between a network of insecure power and a powerless community of solidarity. He chooses a song that might just create a living theatre of reflexive empathy.

Zequinha plucks a few strings and Manoel Gato smiles in recognition. *I haven't been here in 45 years*, he laughs richly, his bulky body spilling over the edges of his toddler's chair. *Even these wee chairs are the same!* He will die of pneumonia,

aggravated by diabetes, in a snap illness, in just a few months, leaving us all staring in shock at his empty chair of daily composition in Zequinha's doorway. He begins to sing, a counter-tenor so pure, trembling with such operatic emotion, that in this very first class, the students struggle to reconcile such beauty emerging from such a huge African frame, in this derelict periphery:

*Nas águas doce dos rios  
e refrescante da chuva  
o cabelo da humanidade africana  
nunca se molha, nunca se molha.*

*Meu cabelo é assim  
de mel com terra e pixaim  
exatamente como a natureza criou  
afro-tupiniquim  
filho do tocantins  
no encontro dos rios  
esse sonho se realizou.*

*Pulsam nas veias ideais  
herança dos ancestrais  
a cultura viva remanescente a brotar  
tanto sonharam nossos pais  
acreditando em quem traz  
a força e a coragem para viver e lutar.*

All the Cabelo Seco residents join in on the chorus of this landmark song, singing with a proud shyness, revealing their personal and community histories in their mixture of emotions, and the emotions of their day. Though they do not know how to read them, the Federal University participants all realize this is no *favela*. This will be like no other course they have given or suffered in class. They watch the two brothers, self-taught mestres, accentuating each word with the weight of centuries of exile, exclusion and simmering rage, cadenced in a complex grammar of exchanged glances, half-smiles and tentative celebration. Manoel Gato conducts an imaginary choir in a dialogue that few understand as pedagogy, making present that which 'vanished', transforming it into what might become.

I thank them both and Zequinha, with no request or verbal agreement necessary, holds out his guitar to the half-moon of students. Kenny, the youngest, almost reaches to take it, but his teacher Jairo, blinded by his desire to belong, grasps its neck and hands out a song-sheet that he has 'prepared for this class'. As the social, political and pedagogical significance of the song is explained, everyone gradually lowers their eyes. Jairo begins to sing, struggling to recompose the circle. He sings well, plays well, but he is climbing a steep hill. Felizmar unsheathes his guitar and sings the second voice. Gradually, effortlessly, the half-moons rejoin and a possible, new community returns.

I ask everyone to form into pairs, exactly where they are sitting, and to point their chairs to face one another, so the chairs conspire to motivate a first dialogic whisper. I then propose the residents invite a visitor from the university to sit beside them. In their first exchange, each pair exchanges the first nickname gained in life, and then, the most important quality each wants to see practiced in this circle. The laughter of intimate revelations, unexpectedly recovered, mingles with shared and new insights. The intimacy spills beyond each pair of wooden chairs, envelops the entire classroom and creates a stage of confidence, each person risking to share what was suffered in school, ached for, imagined, some in this very classroom. No-one is aware of the risk, or of how much time has passed, or that they have lowered barricades into thresholds, until the sound of spinning seeds of the *chek-chek* invites them to give their final two minutes to the person who has spoken least.

A fractional pause, an explosion of resumed conversation, and then, the pairs thank one other, in any appropriate way. That embrace, torture chamber of so many unspoken 'nos', backyard well of lost memory and first homes, unconditional offer of solidarity, defines new hope.

We return to the full moon and listen to a sequence of human and pedagogical rights, announced by each pair.

No need to explain how the complicity was created, nor how this community will be created. Each word is translated into English: *care, respect, patience, playfulness, cooperation, equality, generosity, exchange, affirmation, community*. And we then turn towards the board, where I have chalked up lyrics that might be the participants here looking back through their ancestors' eyes from the banks of Africa, or their ancestors, looking forward to reuniting with fragments of their families in the diaspora. The black gringo lyric holds depths of vanished emotion in its beguiling simplicity.

*I'm packin up  
gettin ready to go  
I'm goin to see  
my people over there  
I'm just packin up  
gettin ready to go...*

I sing, we sing, Zequinha reflects, we pause. I sing, we sing, now Elizângela reflects, we pause, Jairo and Kenny exchange a glance with Felizmar. I return to the beginning of the lyric, and as the dialogic pedagogy unfolds, we hear Manoel Gato's contralto voice finding the harmonies practiced for 45 years in the street, in Zequinha's doorway. We sing the entire verse again, more confident, opening our breasts into an experimental afro-indigenous blues, rhythms now pinpointing reflections, silences, a shared sense of the knotted street, the choking rivers, the stubbly forests, a region that still does not dare to know itself. Here we are, in the epicentre of the Amazon, the great-grandchildren of slaves have chosen to liberate themselves on toddlers' chairs, through Dialogic English.



### Section III

I touch the iPod. *Mindjer Dôce Mel* begins. Segun Adefila, our resident visiting choreographer, stands in front of thirty-two aspiring ballet-dancers, all in black leotards with a splash of colour subversively braided into their hair, around their wrists, ankles or waists. He leans back, opens his chest and sensually begins to rotate his hips to the right, all the joints of his body synchronized to the circular rhythm of the music, while opening and closing his elbows like the handles on a vase, hands on hips, to the regular movement of his breathing. Behind him, as the young *cabocla* women mirror his movements, all begin to smile. Camila laughs out loud, a throaty eruption of joy and understanding spilling out of her loose hand-ripped yellow t-shirt draped across her honed body, imprisoned inside the taut leotard. The shyest laugh to themselves, two gay *caboclo* youth exchange glances of approval, all effortlessly find and integrate themselves into the playful improvisation.

Segun begins a new pirouette which brings him even lower to the ground, arches his back, enlarges the sensuality of his circling hips, brimming with a subtle but unmistakable seduction. In less than two minutes, centuries of internalized tuts and grunts of moral judgement in doorways, windows, mirrors and on street corners are being slinked off, changing the carriage of heads, the contours of backs, the scaffolding of shoulders, liberating breasts, and now more of the young dancers are laughing aloud, but to themselves. They appear a dance company that has been rehearsing for months. Their synchrony is uncanny, and they have all noted it and its celebration of the erotic, without taking their eyes off the body of their Nigerian teacher.

Two hours later, they sit in a circle, elegant, elated, alert. They have created a dance narrative about *Cabelo Seco*, each excavating and contributing elements of their childhood and adolescent experience and perception to the stage. The netting and cleaning of fish, the building and repairing of canoes, the sudding, scrubbing and wringing of clothes slapped onto the surface of the River Tocantins and River Itacaiúnas and then pegged between banana and açai trees or electricity posts. Each gesture and fragment of lived experience. All have all been woven into a choreography of shared knowledges, values and pride of producing and sustaining life, lightened by hopscotch, flicking stone-marbles, jiggling kite-strings to play the wind and skipping elastic gates, even lowering their gyrating open thighs over upturned beer-bottles in a humiliating dance of impish sexual availability.

How do you feel, asks Segun. I translate. All the young artists have willingly dedicated themselves to years of silent, disciplined obedience and humiliating public castigation, but no-one needs to be coaxed. Words emerge from different points in the circle: *free ... elated ... liberated ... proud ... capable. Camila smiles. Now I know myself. I never knew my life could become dance. In reality, that there is so much dance in our life. She begins to cry, too suddenly to conceal, but lets the tears fall. I can breathe. My skin is lighter, looser. I feel so much ... desire! A circle of laughter of complicity and recognition. Like anything is possible!*



Figure 2. Camila discovers transference through dance (2011).

A full year later, Camila stands poised in perfect stillness, on the points of her toes, her body that iconic symbol of authoritarian aristocratic grace. *Lambarena's* exhilarating transition from Bach to Africa begins to shake her statuesque purity, unsettling first her feet and then gradually pulsing through her ankles, calves and thighs, her belly, her breasts and her head, her entire being trembling into terrifying disequilibrium. Camila looks at her own body as it teeters into disorder and asymmetry, her hands, elbows and arms falling and opening to find a new centre and steadying herself from falling, a look of horror, shame and fascinated excitement flickering across her eyes and lips until she has discovered how to balance all the moving liquids within herself.

Her workshop of primary and secondary school teachers watch spell-bound, forgetting to breathe. Gradually, over what seems to be an eternity, balancing between helplessness and discovery, terror and intention, Camila descends to stand flat-footed on the stage, her arms and hands transforming her into a human vase. Her entire body begins to pulse, now from the abdomen and womb, as she throws herself to all the corners of the world, a bold declaration of fertility, daring anyone to ever again even try to imprison her needs and potentials in an icon of voiceless submission and subordination.

*Ok. Before we talk about what you've read from the outside, let's read the interior, from within. Please stand up again, everyone, and find a place behind me.* The teachers fill the stage behind their seventeen year old teacher from the Community University of the Rivers. Camila has already warmed up the space, agreed principles and embodied the aims of tonight's workshop. The teachers are not afraid. Some of them taught her when she was a rebellious child. A few taught her this morning. None have ever seen her out of school uniform.

#### Section IV

Zequinha is late. However much he plans, the watch on his wrist still ticks to emotional rhythms which follow the tides of the Tocantins, Itacaiúnas and Araguaia, where arranged meetings by boat or on land were for so long determined by the confluence of the rivers, the movement of the moon and the fish. And tonight, Zequinha's rhythm is reflexive, slowed by an unexpected early afternoon meeting with the Secretary of Culture who has offered his homeless first-born son, Elvis, a new guitar, if he will give up crack and *cachaça* and realize his potential as a remarkable guitarist. Both Zequinha and his son know this gesture is calculated to enslave them to the Secretary and distance the *mestre* from the Community University of the Rivers, but neither can refuse. They need the patronage. This might be the final intervention that saves Elvis from demons that inspire and torture him, the muses of his remarkable creative intelligence and the chorus of accusation, judgement, complicity and self-hatred that compel him to be victim, despot, torturer and chronicler. And the *mestre's* wife wants an indoor toilet and needs to brick their backyard inside windowless walls to protect her from Elvis and the 'considered' boys.

While waiting for Zequinha, Évany has tuned her guitar and is practicing arpeggios and experimenting in how to translate *jongo* and *samba* into how she plucks the chords. Like her aunt, she may never grow taller than the adolescent she is now, but just in the last year, she has become a striking cabocla woman whose glowing beauty and fierce percussive intelligence create an onstage presence no audience forgets. The coordinator of the art education research nucleus from the nearby Federal University enters the workshop, followed immediately by a cultural entrepreneur, a teacher-mother returning to study and a mature student, and all unsheathe their guitars, mildly surprised to find Évany in the *mestre's* chair.

They are immediately drawn to her unselfconscious intense and virtuoso experimentation, forgetting that she is just 14 years old. Évany welcomes them with her dazzling smile and guides them with her eyes to sit in the circle of chairs. Just as Zequinha has guided her and his other pupils the day before, she then lures them into the rhythm of the exercise she has been rehearsing, transforming it into the pedagogical performance of an easy dialogue between her pupils and the creation of a community of exchange, solidarity and cooperation. She studies the strumming, plucking and fingering of the four as they watch hers, pausing to correct the position of the university professor's fingers, demonstrating the transition between arpeggios to the cultural entrepreneur and the teacher-mother, showing the student how to correct her posture to improve her coordination, and gradually leads them into an improvised *jongo*.

Zequinha enters almost at the very end of the workshop, too scarred by the violations he inherited and suffered to apologize, too respectful and aware of all that he sees before him to even smile his approval. He sits and watches. Technically, Évany is still finding the exercise, but she is also creating it. But she is also developing her own way of teaching, itself a manifestation of the confidence

she has acquired onstage, based on Zequinha's five years of precise artistic formation within a pedagogical circle of storytelling and story-making, passed across centuries in backyards beside the river. Zequinha does not unsheathe his guitar. He is learning from Évany, how to improve his teaching and how to integrate her percussive sensitivity into plucking techniques. They stop suddenly and Évany laughs out loud, a rich, throaty, uninhibited arpeggio of pleasure, shyness and pride, which mingles with Zequinha's laughter and then the laughter of all present. No need to speak. Everyone knows what this circle has created, is creating.



Figure 3. Évany teaches mestre Zequinha in a dialogic exchange (2014).

Zequinha nods, genuinely happy. *The confluence of the rivers. The rivers decided that I should arrive late.*

### References

- Bachelard, Gaston. *The Poetics of Space*. Beacon Press, Boston, 1994.
- Bakhtin, Mikhail. *The Dialogic Imagination*. Texas University Press, Texas, 1983.
- Baron Cohen, Dan. *Theatre of Self-Determination: The Plays of Derry Frontline 1987-92*. Guildhall Press, Derry, 2001.
- Baron, Dan. *Alfabetização Cultural: A Luta Íntima Por Uma Nova Humanidade*. Alfarrabio. Sao Paulo, 2004.
- Baron, Dan & Vozes do Campo. *Harvest in Times of Drought: Cultivating Pedagogies of Life for Sustainable Communities*. Transformance, Marabá, 2011.

- Bharucha, Rustom, *The Politics of Cultural Practice: Thinking About Theatre in an Age of Globalization*. OUP, New Delhi, 2009.
- Brecht, Bertold. *The Messingkauf Dialogues*. Methuen, London, 1979.
- Dussel, Enrique. *Ética da Libertação: Na idade de globalização e da exclusão*. Editora Vozes, Petrópolis, 2002.
- Fanon, Franz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. Grove Press, New York, 2004.
- Fanon, Franz. *Black Skins, White Masks*. Grove Press, New York, 1967.
- Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish*. Vintage Books, New York, 1995.
- Fromm, Erich. *Fear of Freedom*. Routledge Classics, London & New York, 2001.
- Freire, P. & Shor, Ira. *Freire for the Classroom: A Sourcebook for Liberatory Teaching*. Peter Lang, New York, 2010.
- Holzman, Lois. *Vygotsky at Work and Play*. New York, Routledge, 2009.
- Jameson, Fredric. *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*. Cornell University Press, 1982.
- Olivier, Christiane. *Jocasta's Children: The Imprint of the Mother*. Translated by George Craig. Routledge, London & New York, 1989.
- Mitchell, Juliet. *Psychoanalysis and Feminine Sexuality: A Radical Reassessment of Freudian Psychoanalysis*. Penguin, London 2000.
- Said, Edward. *Culture and Imperialism*. Vintage Books, New York, 1994.
- Santos, Milton. *Por uma Outra Globalização*. Rio de Janeiro: Record, 2000.
- Touraine, Alain. *Um Novo Paradigma: Para compreender o mundo de hoje*. Editora Vozes, Petrópolis, RJ, 2006.
- Thiong'o, Ngugi Wa. *Decolonising the Mind*. Heinemann, London, 1984.
- Thompson, James. *Performance Affects: Applied Theatre and the End of Effect*. Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2009.
- Williams, Raymond. *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford University Press. Oxford, 1977.





# Articles

- Understanding Artists' Relationships to Urban Creative Placemaking Through Documentary Storytelling  
Brian Plow (U.S.A.)
- Accessing Shared Culture for Conflict Transformation – The Arts of Pattani  
Hilde Kvam (Norway)
- Thai Classical Music Composition – *Pleng Ruang Puja Nakhon Nan*  
Pattara Komkhum & Kumkom Pornprasit (Thailand)
- Evaluating Problem-based Learning in a Musical Drama Training Program in Cilincing Sub-district, North Jakarta  
Melina Surya Dewi Widjaja (Indonesia)



# Understanding Artists' Relationships to Urban Creative Placemaking

*Through Documentary Storytelling*

Brian Plow\* (U.S.A.)

## Abstract

This essay utilizes the extensive research developed for the documentary film, *A Day in the Sun*, and offers a focused case study of the relationship between arts-driven development practice (creative placemaking) and individual artists in the dense, micro-urban space of York, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. In doing so, it explores the relevance of narrative encounter and creation in understanding the motivations and actions of artists and those of practitioners or administrators in the arts development environment. Utilizing an interdisciplinary composition of research in economics, urban planning, organizational theory and arts development, as well as hours of the documentary's raw and unedited audiovisual material, this essay explores storytelling as a viable means of understanding the relationship between artists and their creative urban spaces.

**Keywords:** Artists, Creative Placemaking, Storytelling, Documentary, Urban Renewal, Economic Development

\* Brian Plow, Associate Professor, Ohio University, 1 Ohio University, Athens, OH. 45701 USA. voice: 001-740-566-7031  
email: plow@ohio.edu website: <http://mediaschool.ohio.edu/brian-plow>.

## Introduction

Building on past work, and my interest in working artists, I spent three years documenting the emergence of an arts “movement” in York, Pennsylvania, U.S.A., and produced a 30-minute Public Television documentary, *A Day in the Sun* in 2012. This effort drew me to many artists, as well as professionals working to develop an arts district within an old, industrialized city. Although the documentary advocates for the importance of the arts within the economy, my perspective evolved throughout the process of encountering and telling the story. I now seek to unpack and assess the experiences I gathered in crafting the documentary, in order to 1) cultivate a deeper understanding of York’s creative placemaking within the context of existing research and 2) validate knowledge creation through storytelling in the arts/commerce confluence.

From the beginning, the project posed interesting challenges with respect to documentary storytelling. One important narrative thread in the documentary follows the city’s ardent push to gain recognition as an arts destination. Other threads are woven together from artists’ individual stories, revealing the daily beauty and struggle of artistic creation and sustenance. The storytelling challenge arose from the attempt to reconcile two very different storylines, each comprised of characters with very different motivations and actions, despite the common narrative of “the arts” and their importance to the city.

### York’s Emerging Arts Community

Surrounded by one of the fastest-growing counties in Pennsylvania, the City of York is a small, dense urban space between Baltimore, Maryland and Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. York is also positioned close to Philadelphia (90 miles to the east) and Washington D. C. (90 miles to the south), and lies within 150 miles of over 28 million people along the densely populated American east coast corridor (Destination Development International, 2009:11).

York felt the sharp economic declines experienced by most American cities beginning in the 1950s, especially those with heavy investment in industry. Like many other urban centers, York’s leadership developed a variety of development strategies for renewal throughout the late 1990s and 2000s, including amenities like sports and cultural heritage activities (Sheets, 2010; Schreiber, 2010).

York has been home to many artists over its long history. Painters like Lewis Miller (1796-1882), Horace Bonham (1835-1892), as well as the potter Johann Pfaltzgraff, namesake of the internationally known Pfaltzgraff Company, made their homes in York. The city can claim a continuously operational fine arts academy since 1952 and many of its graduates are regionally known painters and sculptors. Most impressive is York’s claim to one of the most famous living artist today. Jeff Koons was born in York County, resides part-time on a large farm in the county and takes part in major arts events and celebrations in the area.

York’s long association with the arts combined with its urban development efforts in 2002. City leaders recognized the arts as a much-needed economic development

strategy with its first “York Arts District Conceptual Plan.” In 2006, the city developed an Arts District Task Force and the city’s redevelopment authority launched a city-wide Artists’ Homestead Program, which was intended to attract artists to the city. The overall movement developed decisively in 2009 with the formation of the *York County Community Cultural Plan*. The plan employed a nationally recognized cultural change agent, convened a 75-member steering committee, surveyed 290 artists, profiled 65 non-profit agencies and published the definitive road map for developing arts and culture in York County (Cultural Alliance of York County, 2009:4-8; Riley, 2009). Almost simultaneously, Downtown Inc., a non-profit development corporation, hired Destination Development International, an internationally recognized community branding firm, and published *Downtown York Strategic Branding, Development and Marketing Plan*. This resulted in “Creativity Unleashed,” and claimed the convergence of industrial heritage and the growing creative community as York’s unique brand (Huntzinger, 2013).

These developments attracted the attention of the Pennsylvania Governor’s office, and in 2009, York was named the host city for the annual Governor’s Awards for the Arts. This event honors individual artists, arts groups, communities and philanthropists for their contributions to arts and is informally known as “the Oscars for Pennsylvania artists.” The ceremony is hosted by a small or mid-sized city each year, chosen by the Governor’s office (Sheets, 2010). This opportunity represented York’s turn to be recognized and the documentary’s story structure was forming naturally around this major event.

During this time, Pennsylvania was experiencing a monumental budget crisis, which delayed the legislature in passing the annual budget by almost four months. During that time, all state funding to municipalities and organizations, including arts organizations, ceased and resulted in the delay or suspension of many arts programs (Pullo, 2009; Riley, 2009). Furthermore, the legislature considered a budget that included Senate Bill 850, which would have removed all state funding for the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, “essentially eliminating the agency.” (Hershaur, 2009). Under such fiscal strain and heated debate, the Governor’s office canceled its Awards for the Arts ceremony, which was to be held in York on October 8th, 2009. Georg Sheets coined the title of the film during his interview, when explaining the deflation that seemed to occur. “We were told that we’re going to get this great day in the sun. And then the day came and the sun didn’t shine.”

The main narrative thread of the documentary concludes during the spring of 2010. The ceremony had been reinstated by the Governor’s Office, and on April 8th York finally had its “day in the sun,” heralding the grand achievement in creative placemaking. The ceremony was held in a beautifully restored performing arts center, and was attended by a small host of famous artists and notable personalities: Jeff Koons, Del McCoury, Rocco Landesman (National Endowment for the Arts) and Governor Ed Rendell, among many others known throughout the region. It was regarded as one of the largest and most publicized celebrations in York and provided the documentary’s story with a triumphant denouement.

## The Artists

Although the city's journey provided the structure for the story of the documentary and the topics or ethos of the film, I deemed the stories of individual artists working and living in the city as essential to film as well. Although there are dozens of artists in the city and hundreds in the county, five artists, representing the energy and "soul" of the city, emerged as main characters of the film.

### 1. Pat

I was born in New York City and I came here even though my family really thinks I'm crazy (she laughs). But they can say that I am happier than I've ever been, simply because I have a lot of people around me here, and I'm doing what I love to do and my art is selling. And it just started to sell and I am 70 years old (laughs again).

I visited with Pat several times between August 2009 and August 2011, and we often ran into each other at arts events and galleries (she seemed to be everywhere). During my first visit to her home, she set up a large piece of canvas on the back porch floor, opened up several cans of furniture paint and proceeded to make an absolute mess, lashing and swiping brushes over the paper. Oddly enough, she was dressed all in white and by the end of the demonstration she did not have one errant dribble or speck of paint on her.

Pat is prolific. She had an inventory of over 900 abstract and impressionistic urban-scape paintings in her home, local galleries or restaurants. Her smallest paintings sell for \$10, some of her larger paintings, only \$300. She liked her fast turnover at such low art-world prices. She was selling art, keeping her costs low, and cobbling together a living in way that meshed with her personality and energy.

Pat also possessed a generosity of spirit and much of her life has been devoted to cultivating a support system for young people suffering from addiction. When I met her, she was celebrating her 40th year of sobriety, and nearly every day, she opened her home, facilitating support groups, as well as cooking and serving lunch or dinner out of the small kitchen in the rear of her first floor apartment.

I know I have a passion for painting that is probably stronger than any other passion that I've ever had. And sometimes, the people that need you most are pushed aside when you're ambitious and want to accomplish a lot. So I have to be very careful not to do that – too keep myself humble and to keep myself focused on why I'm here in this world, you know, to help others.

Each of my artists occupies a place in York, but in the documentary I also position them temporally throughout the year, in which the story of the Governor's Arts Awards takes place. I placed Pat's chapter immediately after the opening titles and a quick visual exposition of York in the summer time. Pat exuded a buoyant and dogged optimism, which paralleled that of York's arts community. At a time in life when most are reflecting, Pat was flowing headlong into the future with a sense of youth that defied age.

## 2. Carol

After several years of wandering, Carol returned to York and made a conscious decision to be a self-sustaining artist. Since 1990, she has sustained herself with the sale of her paintings, purchased a home and raised her daughter by herself. Like Pat, Carol was optimistic, but she talked much more about the practical dynamics of life as an artist and how she promotes herself and her work.

You have to self-promote. I could sit here and do all the painting I wanted to do, but unless I get out there and do the selling...I don't have an agent. I have (my work in) galleries, but galleries are having a tough time right now. I've had to be, I guess, a little more pushy. You can't hang back and wait for someone else to do it.

Carol also evidenced a dualism in her career. She promoted her work tirelessly, but expressed concern with her role and reputation as a fine artist. She understands how the relationship between business and art may influence what work she chooses to do and promote.

I've noticed that whenever I get an idea and I've thought, 'oh, this is going to make me a lot of money,' those things sit in the studio forever. It starts with an intention and if the intention is to make money, it doesn't work for me. The intention has to be an expression of beauty or love or creativity...otherwise it is not going to sell...Art is a commodity too, but it comes from here. (she lays her hand on her heart).

Although York's creative placemaking star was on the rise, Carol, like many artists, was concerned about how long she could sustain through the ongoing economic downturn, especially with a college-aged daughter. Of course, she responds to this with her customary humor rather than an outward anxiety, perhaps a signal that after 20 years of financial ups and downs, she knows how to live with the uncertainty.

How do you know when the painting is finished? Andy Warhol said 'the painting is finished when the check clears the bank.' I like that...

I first interviewed Carol in the fall, when beautiful, warm and colorful days first give way to longer and colder nights. Carol's optimism was clear, but she exuded the street-smarts that evidenced her understanding of where her art fit into the economy. In the documentary, her chapter comes after the heady days of summer, while York is still intoxicated by the prospect of its "day in the sun," and before the cold harsh reality of economic draconianism suddenly emerges. Although we share in Carol's hopeful story, the impending turn of the seasons foreshadows a dark turn in the tale.

## 3. Gerald

My earliest experience was that of a broken family and living in poverty for the first several years of my life. However, the discovery of sketching, drama at school, dancing with other kids in the neighborhood did something for me. It was more

than therapeutic. I think it was healing. It gave direction and purpose to my life, and enabled me to have this spark, this... I'm not even sure what to call it, but a desire to live and to be someone.

Gerald experienced the debilitating effects of institutional racism and segregation during his youth in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. Over the course of his adult life, he sought something different and lived in London, Cape Town and Trinidad & Tobago, before moving to the U.S. with his wife and son. When I met Gerald in 2009, he had been living in York for about four years, and was seeking an opportunity to rediscover his artistic voice.

A great deal of my adult life had been lived not from an internal motivation, but rather from external motivating factors, like the need to earn a living. And I was kind of frustrated, because I felt like the real me, the creative part of who I am was actually withering and dying.

In 2005, a teaching job brought Gerald and his family to York. However, a short time later, Gerald stumbled upon a freelance job, allowing him to fabricate and restore stained glass windows for a historic church that had recently burned down. He spent six months working with glass, "fell in love with it" and reinvented himself as a glass mosaic artist. I periodically tracked his progress for the next two years, through the opening of his own mosaic gallery near the downtown arts district. When I met him in the fall of 2009, he had only recently made a dramatic change in his life. He quit his teaching job.

*It wasn't easy, leaving a well paying job – a stable income – and just venturing. However, it was also liberating in a sense that I could now do what came naturally. It's just been in the last two years that I've tried to rediscover myself as an artist and not to give primary importance to the earning component or the commercial component but to the creative spark within me.*

Gerald's chapter comes in the midst of metaphorical winter, after the governor's office canceled the awards ceremony and as the story rests in a moment of sobering reflection. He personifies a quiet resilience within the story that all classic protagonists have – that "spark within," as Gerald would say.

#### 4. Lindsey and Pete

Lindsey and Pete purchased and created their own creative live/work space in the summer of 2009 through the city's Artist Homestead Program. I first met with them in winter of 2010, and followed them periodically throughout the development of their living space into an art gallery and collaborative music performance venue.

This place (their homestead) has been so beneficial to us – working and creating together. Having a space and eventually being able to open up the ground floor to the public a couple of days a week to show art and have music. I think that is ultra conducive to the type of people we are – to be able to share with the community is really important.

Prior to purchasing the homestead, Pete and Lindsey played with a wide variety of local musicians, developed new venues and attracted musicians to perform in York, strongly contributing to a critical mass of activity in York's otherwise off the radar music scene. The creation of space around these activities and passions provided the cohesion – only two months into their endeavor, Pete and Lindsey were hosting “First Friday” art crawl activities and after party musical performances, including artists and musicians from all over the East Coast and attracting as many as 150 people to their downtown townhome during such events.

Lindsey is primarily a fine artist, specializing in oil painting, printmaking and art restoration. In the homestead, she created a painting studio and printmaking studio, in addition to exhibition space. Lindsey spoke of her good fortune in being able to stay a full-time artist, even before the homestead venture with Pete:

There's always been something keeping me on the path of being self-employed, even though it's always up and down and barely scraping by. It's what I've always done. And if there is any way I can keep making my living doing completely art all day every day that's more important than being comfortable.

Lindsey and Pete's chapter appropriately appears in the spring. I wanted to harness the contagious quality of their enthusiasm. In addition, I wanted to capture the spirit of homesteading in a new context. The idea of forging out a living with hard work and perseverance in the face of risk will forever be a part of that classic canon of romantic American lore. In the film, Lindsey and Pete's story represents the larger idea of renewal in the city.

### **Digging Deeper Into the Story**

As of 2013, York's transformation was just over 10 years old, and is represented in the hundreds of surveys, pages of reports, myriad arts activities, dozens of artists' residences reclaimed from urban blight, businesses taking advantage of a renewed energy, as well as glamorous new creative spaces developed through public and private investments. The motivations, voiced by the diverse range of these agents of York's change are unified: the arts are important and we want to create a place for them to flourish. However, the documentary's story, especially in the editing phase, continued to challenge my ability to bring cohesion to the overall story of York's placemaking. Frequently, I found that artists had little or no idea of what arts managers, developers or civic leaders were planning. Often, I found the managers, developers and leaders had little familiarity with York's artists. Why was there this chasm between these groups of people acting under the larger cause of the arts?

Richard Florida's *The Rise of the Creative Class* was debated and challenged by scholars, but ultimately brought the “creative economy” to the attention of many policy makers (Glaeser, 2005; Markusen, 2006:1922; Peck 2005:740-741). Despite this debate and scholarly concern, Florida's work was referenced consistently by York's municipal leaders, community leaders and arts managers throughout the documentary's production. In her analysis of other communities' receptions of the

Floridian philosophy, Ann Markusen coincidentally summarizes what was happening in York:

What American Mayors of large and small cities seem to have gleaned from this work is a renewed appreciation of the role of the arts in urban development and of the significance of amenities. Unfortunately, because the 'creative' literature is so anecdotal and lean on analysis, they are often at a loss to know what to do with such intelligence beyond using it as window dressing for tourism marketing and downtown development strategies (Markusen, 2006:1938).

Jamie Peck also examines the public policy craze stemming from the key narrative of Florida's work:

According to this increasingly pervasive urban-development script, the dawn of a 'new kind of capitalism based on human creativity' calls for funky forms of supply-side intervention, since cities find themselves in a high-stakes 'war for talent' that can only be won by developing the kind of people climates valued by creatives... (Peck, 2005:740)

Florida estimates the size of the creative class to be 30% of the workforce, spanning a range of professions in science, business, medicine/health and law, as well as the arts – all of which contain educated, highly trained and, with the likely exception of artists, potentially affluent individuals (Florida, 2002:8). He also establishes the idea that major corporations are no longer interested in conventional civic enticements like tax breaks, but are going to go where the “highly skilled people are” (Florida, 2002:6). These narratives, along with the correlation of Bohemian presence to high-technology and employment growth (Florida, 2005:41-42) has likely influenced the shape of York's creative transformation.

In examining the York's plans and reports from 2006 and 2009, I find parallels between the language that was emerging from these documents and Florida's concept of the creative economy, as well as Markusen's and Peck's observations regarding misunderstandings at the policy-making level.

The 2006 *Arts District Task Force Report* is focused on the geographic boundaries of the identified district or “place;” conflating the arts and economic development; redevelopment efforts and the built environment; broadening the arts to include the creative and community branding. The Community Cultural Plan published by the Cultural Alliance of York County in 2009 appears more balanced between community development concerns and economic development language. For example, it includes action plans on increasing awareness of arts activities throughout the community and increasing involvement of arts in education. However, it also includes action plans focused on expanding the arts to include the creative sector (rebranding), physical urban revitalization and tourism (20-28).

The 2009 report, *Downtown York Strategic Branding, Marketing & Development Plan*, is highly aligned with Florida's language of a “Creative Class,” and consistently ad-



dresses tourism and community branding. The result of the report is “Creativity Unleashed,” a web-based marketing campaign, claiming York as the “Industrial Art and Design Capitol of the Northeast” (United States). The website’s “Profiles” page, features a wallcoverings outlet, a robotic automation corporation, an architectural testing facility, Harley Davidson Motorcycles, a violin maker, a pottery company, a packaging corporation, a metallurgical artist (the only self-professed artist featured), and a company that makes paper converting equipment for folding and packaging products like baby wipes and aluminum foil. This parallels Florida’s discussion of the creative sector and its expansion to include scientists, engineers, and other professionals as well as artists.

The executive director of Downtown, Inc., the non-profit development organization that commissioned the 2009 marketing and branding plan, states that the plan and resulting web-based marketing campaign “was always a business recruitment and workforce development tool.” When asked about its connection to the arts, she characterized the fine arts as “icing on the cake,” but strongly advocated for ways to distinguish York’s downtown from other arts destinations through its unique brand of creativity filtered through York’s illustrious industrial heritage (Huntzinger, 2013).

Finally, the results from the highly publicized Governor’s Awards for the Arts ceremony in 2010 may also reflect the strong alignment between York’s placemaking and the perception of Florida’s analyses among policy makers. On the day of the ceremony, Governor Ed Rendell committed \$2.8 million dollars toward the renovation of the old Fraternal Order of Eagles building within the arts district boundary, transforming it into an arts incubator with a museum, classroom space, artists work space, apartments and an exhibit hall (Schreiber, 2010). The Pennsylvania Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program was leveraged to fund the project, and Marketview Arts – A Place for Creativity was finished in 2012. The York County Industrial Development Authority owns the property and now leases the spaces to York College, The Pennsylvania Arts Experience and individual artists. Moxie, a relatively new downtown marketing firm, manages and rents the exhibition space for artists’ residency programs, events, galas, fund-raisers and weddings. A description of the space can be found at the York County Economic Alliance web page and also reflects the influence of Florida’s key assertions:

The Authority is proud to work with the City of York to attract and retain creative businesses in downtown York, as it recognizes that a robust and creative downtown is crucial to economic development, not only for the City of York but also for the entire County. In addition, it is the Authority’s belief that enhancing the quality of place will also aid in attracting and retaining a young, creative workforce.

Issues associated with the underlying subtext for attracting artists to a locale, developing the arts, and creative activities have been illustrated elsewhere in a variety of disciplines. Laikwan Pang, in her Marxist reading of the “creative class,” argues that creative labor, under the logic of capitalism, has “...a wide array of aptitudes and values. At the same time, it is also under a broader spectrum of

pressure and exploitation.” (2009:71). The logic behind the creation of art is very different than that of other commodities. An artist featured in the documentary, Carol, acknowledges that art is a commodity, but also asserts that it is created through a very different process (it comes from her heart) – one that even contradicts normal economic or entrepreneurial evaluations. Florida, illustrates the importance of “street-level” artistic activity as a lure for the creative class – often yielding opportunities for the consumer to meet the artists while consuming the product (Florida, 2002:182-189). Pang argues that in the rush to commodify the creative, it is not the products that are being commodified but rather the artist themselves being presented as a commodity and are thus at risk for exploitation (Pang, 2009:65).

Doris Eikoff's and Axel Haunschild's in-depth study of theater actors revealed an entangled relationship between arts-driven logics in the *L'art pour l'art*, Bohemian lifestyle and economic logics that govern state-subsidized German theater production. This study found that many characteristics of the Bohemian lifestyle are harnessed to serve the economic logic of a tight arts employment field. Exploitation was as an issue consistently voiced throughout the actors' interviews and the study resulted in the identification of a major paradox in the creative/commercial confluence:

Bringing artistic motivation into market runs the risk of weakening or even destroying it, and thereby endangers the artistic logics of practice invoking *l'art pour l'art*. Therefore we argue that all attempts to manage and market artistic practices invoking economic logics of practice endanger the resources vital to creative production (Eikoff & Haunschild, 2007:536).

A case study of three municipalities in Massachusetts, U.S.A, receiving funds from the Adams Arts Program for the Creative Economy to develop arts and culture in their local economies, did not find exploitation, but rather disconnections. Although the results ranged from clear success to marginal success among the municipalities, observations noted some suspicion among artists toward local government involvement in arts development. Moreover, all three communities evidenced this disconnect among members of the community and the stated goals of the community's economic development plan. “The variety and inconsistency of the goals made it difficult to determine which objectives were being pursued, at what time, by whom.” (Maloney & Wassall, 2013:71-75).

Several artists I encountered felt uncomfortable participating in the documentary, because of frustrations or resentment toward civic and major non-profit leadership throughout York's transformation. Some felt slighted because they lived in the wrong neighborhood – outside the arts district - and had to negotiate a byzantine city permit process to launch events, sell their work or even create off-street parking for customers. Others felt pressured to participate in activities they did not enjoy or agree with, or donate artwork for events, and expressed concern about maintaining their public image in the arts movement. One artist I interviewed struggled to understand the salaries of employees in arts non-profit enti-

ties, while he struggled to pay rent. A preliminary and informal study shows that York offers too many arts activities and events that can be adequately attended by arts and cultural consumers in York County, so new audiences must be attracted in order to sustain the existing arts community (Georg Sheets, 2010). With this in mind, artists voiced skepticism about a creating a critical mass of artists and the increased competition that would bring. One artist, who has been working in York for nearly 50 years, felt completely disenfranchised by the movement:

We've got plenty of damned good artwork in this county that people in this county need to be purchasing with their paychecks. We don't need to be creating more organizations that further drain our tax resources to create jobs for people with these grandiose ideas.

Soho in the 1960s still serves as the paradigm for arts-based, built-environment development, and once that was understood and harnessed by financial communities in the 70's and 80's, the "Artistic Mode of Production," began. This trend linked the built-environment to cultural consumption, masked unemployment or underemployment within the haze of cultural industries and linked the economic with the aesthetic to produce an economy not entirely ascertained by simple productive measures (Zukin, 2001:259-260). By the time Florida published *Rise of the Creative Class*, urban development policy was experiencing a neo-liberal vacuum, and Florida's creative development script, however misunderstood or selectively applied by policy-makers, rapidly propelled urban spaces like York to repackage and heavily market cultural assets in order to attract the creative class in a highly competitive arena. This misunderstanding, as Markusen suggests, combined with the accelerated implementation, may lead municipalities into top-down strategies that promote exploitation and urban gentrification (Peck, 2005:764-767). One arts-immersed non-profit executive in York, when responding to a question I asked about the possibility of gentrification in the city and the "Soho-syndrome," said, "what a wonderful problem to have."

More than 40 years after the phoenix rose from Soho's industrial ashes, Alternative narratives of urban planning, placemaking and social equity are emerging that address these problematic practices. Scholars and practitioners are discovering, experimenting and articulating new planner/artist collaborations in Australia and Canada that place artists at the center of transformations in urban spaces (Sandercock, 2005: 101-102). Debra Webb acknowledges the skepticism now directed toward neo-liberal placemaking initiatives that are focused on urban renewal and the built environment. She cites case studies that exercise alternative forms of development and artists entrepreneurship, which champion collaboration, social equity and cultural stewardship. These greatly challenge the arts-driven urban renewal strategies from the past decades (Webb, 2014:35-38). Strong case studies in Minneapolis cultural development cite the effectiveness of cross sector collaboration and significant community and artists' leadership in creative placemaking efforts (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010:21; Borrup, 2014:108-109).

The 2006 *Arts District Task Force* in York only included two artists within the 17-member committee. Although the interview pool for the 2009 Cultural Plan included 290 artists (12% of the interviewees), only 9 artists were included within the 75-member steering committee, and no artists were included on the Cultural Alliance Planning Team. The 2009 marketing and branding plan, which was most aligned with the creative class rhetoric, was developed entirely by an outside development consulting firm, and they interviewed no artists during the creation of the report. In the long lineage of conventional and neo-liberal development practices, and despite the emergence of responsible and sustainable alternatives, it appears York gravitated toward an artist-exclusionary method for its placemaking, which may have also been the result of a misinterpretation of popular theories or narratives involving the creative economy and class.

### Storytelling and Knowing

There are two modes of cognitive functioning... each providing distinct ways of ordering experience, of constructing reality. The two (though complementary) are irreducible to one another. Efforts to reduce one mode to the other or to ignore one at the expense of the other inevitably fail to capture the rich diversity of thought. (Bruner, 1986:11).

Bruner draws distinction between “paradigmatic” and “narrative” modes of thought in the pursuit of knowledge. Paradigmatic refers to the logical system of description, testing and evaluation: “empirical discovery guided by reasoned hypothesis.” Narrative knowing is concerned with placing particulars in the context of space, time, epiphany and the human condition. It is made from the landscape of action, but also the landscape consciousness – how those within the landscape of action think or feel (Bruner, 1986:13-14).

Andrew Isserman, a revered planning educator and scholar devoted much of his career to the advocacy of storytelling as a key ingredient of self-knowledge, world knowledge and ultimately planning praxis:

The power of storytelling has captured me. Through the movies and the student stories, I meet new people and gain new understanding of lives and life...I know many more human beings in the peculiar way of knowing that relies on images on the screen and made up stories that somehow become real and bring people closer together (Isserman, 2010:314).

Whether teaching economic theory or working data, storytelling is inescapable. The history of economics is conveyed through narrative, complete with central characters, like Marx or Keynes, and plot through the economic concepts of equilibrium, disturbance and a new equilibrium. These dynamics are common in dramatic structure and bring the disciplines of economic study and the “narrative way of knowing” into partnership (Boettke, 2005:447-448).

While notable scholars use literary works, writing exercises and screen studies in interdisciplinary storytelling pedagogies, practitioners have experimented with

the creation of multimedia stories as a learning tool as well. A study of family and intergenerational communication was conducted through digital storytelling. This required students to gather audio, video and still images with their community participants and organize them into a personal, historical narrative. Not only were the connections between scholar and participant deepened by the production of the digital material, the intricate act of organizing, scripting and editing the material thereafter promote discovery and dialogues that are valuable, even if they are not included in the final edit (Flottemesch, 2013).

Penny Gurstein offers yet another application of storytelling – to counteract narratives that misinform public engagement and policy making:

Myths and preconceptions often govern public policy formation, limiting its ability to respond effectively. While it is difficult to counteract dominant beliefs and ideologies, the power of multimedia is in its ability to uncover countervailing stories that challenge the dominant discourses and tap into more intuitive and other forms of knowledge (Gurstein, 2010:210).

There are problems, however, with knowledge creation through storytelling that must be addressed. Bruner admits that stories can violate consistency and logic in order to achieve dramatic effects, like in the works of Kafka or Beckett (Bruner, 1986:12). Economists can be better storytellers than economists. “Some economic stories are science, others are science fiction and the study of economics is vital to making that distinction (Boettke, 2005:449). Michael Rabiger asserts that objectivity is a myth – impossible to achieve despite journalistic balance, the best of intentions and many sleepless nights (Rabiger, 1992:7-8). Noted documentary scholar Bill Nichols extends the discussion much further in an examination of how documentary “voice” has evolved in its relationship with realism and artifice:

...documentaries always were forms of re-presentation, never clear windows onto ‘reality;’ the filmmaker was always a participant-witness and an active fabricator of meaning, a producer of cinematic discourse rather than a neutral or all-knowing reporter of the way things truly are (Nichols, 1983:18).

Noah Isserman and Ann Markusen continue the work of Andrew Isserman in advocating for storytelling and narrative in planning education and practice, but clearly assert that narrative, especially causal in nature, must be “...moving beyond rhetoric to reality,” and tested, through what Bruner would call, the paradigmatic way of knowing (Bruner, 2013:131-132). And although Penny Gurstein lauds multimedia storytelling as a means of countering dominant and flawed narratives, she also warns against the inherent dangers of such explorations by asking important question. Who is creating and controlling the information, how is it being analyzed and interpreted and for what ends? (Gurstein, 2010:210).

### Conclusion

The facts and events associated with York’s placemaking provided the larger narrative thread of the “landscape of action.” My insistence on including individual

artists' stories, despite the difficulty integrating them into the action landscape, provided the "landscape of consciousness." The resulting incongruence between the two did not foreground itself in the documentary. Instead, I used allegory, metaphor and literary digression to tenuously, but conceptually connect the artists to the larger story. York's landscape of action served as a functional milieu, out of which the particulars of the human condition emerge and engage an audience.

My work started with the simple and naïve intention to explore the reasons artists are attracted to live and work in York, and why a struggling city would want to attract a group of professionals who themselves often struggle financially. After three years of working within the community's story, gathering story materials and organizing a coherent narrative of events, my knowledge of the community's collective experience has deepened considerably. And it was the use of those storytelling tools that led me to the deeper understanding that cannot be represented in the film, but instead rises from the hours of unused video and audio out of which the film was ultimately sculpted. Countless hours spent reviewing audiovisual material, transcribing interviews, and editing scenes, brought me much closer to the subject matter than I had anticipated. The documentary is therefore superficial – the story itself is based on the myths and preconceptions of an outmoded and misinformed arts-harnessing economic development practice. However, it is during the process of encountering the story, and especially reflecting on the process itself when true discovery or way of knowing something started to emerge.

## References

- Boettke, Paul. "Teaching Economics Through Ayn Rand: How the Economy is Like a Novel and How the Novel Can Teach us About Economics." *The Journal of Ayn Rand Studies*, 6 (2005): 445-465.
- Borup, Tom. "Artists and Creativity in Urban Placemaking: Reflections on a Downtown Minneapolis Cultural District." *Journal of Urban Culture Research* 7 (2013), 96-111. (<http://cujucr.com/downloads/JUCR%20Vol7%202013-F.pdf>).
- Bruner, Jerome. *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986.
- City of York, Pennsylvania. *Arts District Task Force Report*. York, PA: City of York, Office of the Mayor, 2006.
- Cultural Alliance of York County. *Imagine York County: Cultural Alliance of York County Community Cultural Plan, 2009-2014*. York, PA: Cultural Alliance of York County, 2009. <http://culturalalliance-york.org/user-files/file/YorkCulturalPlan.pdf>.
- Davidson, Gerald. Interviews by author. Audiovisual recordings. York, PA, October 11, 2009; August 29, 2010; September 15, 2010.
- Destination Development International. *Downtown York Strategic Branding: Development and Marketing Plan*. Seattle, WA. Destination Development, Inc., 2010. [www.rogerbrooksinternational.com/portfolio-items/york-pennsylvania/](http://www.rogerbrooksinternational.com/portfolio-items/york-pennsylvania/).
- Downtown, Inc. "Creativity Unleashed." <http://creativityunleashed.com/> (accessed August 13, 2013).

- Eikhof, Doris & Axel Haunshield. "For Arts Sake! Artistic and Economics Logics in Creative Production." *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 28 (2007), 523-538.
- Florida, Richard. *The Rise of the Creative Class*. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2002.
- Florida, Richard. *Cities and the Creative Class*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2005.
- Flottemesch, Kim. "Learning through narratives: the impact of digital storytelling on intergenerational relationships." *Academy of Educational Leadership Journal* 17 (2013), 53-60.
- Glaeser, Evan. "The Rise of the Creative Class" [Review of *The Rise of the Creative Class* by R. Florida]. *Regional Science and Urban Economics* 35 (2005), 593-600.
- Gurstein, Penny. "Seeing and Being Seen: The Potential of Multimedia as a Reflexive Planning Methodology." In *Multimedia in Urban Policy and Planning: Beyond the Flatlands*, edited by L. Sandercock and G. Attili, 287-315. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer, 2010.
- Hershour, Jenny. "Citizens for the Arts in Pennsylvania." Interview by author. Audiovisual recording. Harrisburg, PA, January 30, 2010.
- Huntzinger, Sonia. Interview by author. Personal interview, York, PA, August 13, 2013.
- Isserman, Andrew., A. Dasgupta, S. Hemphill, & M. Rahe. "Stinging Real! Four Essays on the Transformative Power of Films and Storytelling in Planning Education." In *Multimedia in Urban Policy and Planning: Beyond the Flatlands*, edited by L. Sandercock and G. Attili, 287-315. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer, 2010.
- Isserman, Noah. & Ann Markusen. "Shaping the Future Through Narrative: The Third Sector, Arts and Culture." *International Regional Science Review* 36 (2013), 115-136.
- Maloney, G. & G. H. Wassall. "Case Study: the Adams Arts Program in Massachusetts." In *Creative Communities*, edited by Michael Rushton, 60-79. Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2013.
- Markusen, Ann. "Urban Development and the Politics of a Creative Class: Evidence from a Study of Artists." *Environment and Planning A* 38 (2006), 1921-1940. DOI: 10.1068/a38179 (accessed March 24, 2013).
- Markusen, Ann. & Anne Gadwa. *Creative Placemaking*. Washington DC: Mayors' Institute on City Design, National Endowment for the Arts, United States Conference of Mayors and American Architectural Foundation, 2010. <http://arts.gov/pub/pubDesign.php> (accessed July 20, 2013).
- Moxie Design and Marketing, LLC. "Marketview Arts: A Studio for Creativity." <http://marketviewarts.com/> (Accessed: February 17, 2014).
- Nichols, Bill. "The Voice of Documentary." *Film Quarterly* 36 (1983), 17-30. [www.jstor.org/stable/3697347](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3697347) (accessed October 1, 2013).

- Oldenburg, Carol. Interview by author. Audiovisual recording. York, PA, September 20, 2009.
- Pang, Laikwan. "The Labor Factor in the Creative Economy: A Marxist Reading." *Social Text* 99 27 (2009), 55-76.
- Peck, Jamie. "Struggling with the Creative Class." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 29 (2005), 740-770. [http://journals.ohiolink.edu.proxy.library.ohiou.edu/ejc/pdf.cgi/PECK\\_JAMIE.pdf?issn=03091317&issue=v29i0004&article=740\\_swtcc](http://journals.ohiolink.edu.proxy.library.ohiou.edu/ejc/pdf.cgi/PECK_JAMIE.pdf?issn=03091317&issue=v29i0004&article=740_swtcc) (accessed November 14, 2014).
- Plow, Brian. *A Day in the Sun: The Artists' Homestead in York, Pennsylvania*. Online. Directed by Brian Plow. 2012. <https://vimeo.com/51697337>. (accessed October 1, 2013).
- Pullo, Robert. "Pennsylvania Budget Crisis and Pennsylvania Councils on the Arts." Interview by author. Video recording. York, PA, October 14, 2009.
- Rabiger, Michael. *Directing the Documentary*. 2nd ed. Boston, MA: Focal Press, 1992.
- Richardson, Peter. Interview by author. Audiovisual recording. York, PA, February 14, 2010.
- Riley, Joanne. "Cultural Alliance of York County." Interview by author. Audiovisual recording. York, PA, September 20, 2009.
- Sandercock, Leonie. "A New Spin on the Creative City: Artist/Planner Collaborations." *Planning Theory & Practice* 6 (2005), 101-103.
- Schreiber, Kevin. "York's Economic Development Director." Interview by author. Audiovisual recording. York, PA, September 22, 2010.
- Sheets, Georg. "York's History and Connection to the Arts." Interview by author. Audiovisual recording. York, PA, August 13, 2010.
- Thomas, Pat. Interviews by author. Audiovisual recordings. York, PA, August 26, 2009; February 21, 2010; August 29, 2010.
- Webb, Debra. "Placemaking and Social Equity: Expanding the Framework of Creative Placemaking." *Artivate: A Journal of Entrepreneurship in the Arts* 3 (2014), 35-48. [www.artivate.org/?p=661](http://www.artivate.org/?p=661) (accessed March 13, 2014).
- York County Economic Alliance. "Marketview Arts: A Place for Creativity." [www.ycea-pa.org/about-us/marketview-arts-a-studio-for-creativity/](http://www.ycea-pa.org/about-us/marketview-arts-a-studio-for-creativity/) (accessed February 20, 2014).
- Zukin, Sharon. "How to Create a Cultural Capital: Reflections on urban markets and places." In *Century City: Art and Culture in the Modern Metropolis*, edited by I. Blazwick, 258-264. London: Tate Publishing, 2001.



# Accessing Shared Culture for Conflict Transformation

## *The Arts of Pattani*

Hilde Kvam\* (Norway)

### Abstract

Since 2004 antagonism between the Malay-Muslim population in the South of Thailand and ethnic Thai-Buddhist groups has escalated. The effect has been increasing acts of violence, rebellions and state of emergency. The antagonism between the two ethnic groups has been most pronounced in the Pattani region where Islam is identified as a non-Thai culture. Throughout centuries this region has been populated with peoples holding diverse religions, customs and cultural traditions who until modern times have coexisted relatively peacefully, inspired and enriched each other. In this area, arts and culture among Malays and Thais have shared roots with artistic forms and expressions that are very much alike. The author will focus upon the cultural similarities of the two ethnic groups on the border of Malaysia and Thailand. Will mobilizing the common local culture act as a vehicle for increased understanding and reconciliation between the two ethnic groups?

**Keywords:** *Southeast Asian Theatre, Culture and Ethnicity, Performative Art, Theatre and Religion*

\* Dr. Hilde Kvam, Associate Professor, Norwegian University Of Science and Technology, Norway. voice: +47 9300-9794  
fax: +47 7359-1830 email: hilde.kvam@ntnu.no.

## Introduction

The Pattani region is a term used to describe the southern provinces of Thailand: Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat and parts of Songkhla. The Pattani region also includes the North Malaysian states of Kedah, Kelantan as well as parts of Terengganu.

Throughout time, different cultures and religions have made their impact on the region, and this is reflected in the arts and performative expressions of today. A characteristic feature of the region is the rich cultural diversity on both sides of the border. Despite the local, regional and linguistic differences, we find similar artistic and cultural forms in Northern Malaysia and Southern Thailand. Common among these performative expressions on both sides of the border is that they draw from a common dramatic repertoire that seem to serve similar purposes and religious and worldly views. The performative cultural expressions are also incredibly similar with respect to the structure of the performances and acting style.<sup>1</sup>

Most people in the region claim to be Muslims. On the Thai side of the border, the Muslim population consists of both ethnic Malay and ethnic Thai groups. The media's portrayal leaves the impression that most of the Muslim population in Thailand reside in Pattani region. However the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs reports that only 18% of Thai Muslims live in the border provinces. The rest are scattered throughout Thailand with the largest concentration in Bangkok and the southern peninsula. Here the Thai Muslim population consists of various ethnic groups and are well assimilated in the Thai Buddhist society.

The antagonism that has arisen between the Malay Muslim South and Thai Buddhist groups in the Pattani region is as well known abroad as it is domestically. Since 2004, the surge of violence in the region had extensive media coverage both nationally and internationally. The publicity has induced fear for the conditions in the south in addition to signaling an increasing state of resentment between the two ethnic groups. In this paper, I focus on the cultural similarities of two ethnic groups on the border of Malaysia and Thailand. My analytic point of view understands culture as a way of thinking – a derivative of individual thoughts and experiences. This understanding of culture is not primarily connected to race, ethnicity or religious affiliation, but comes into being inside the individual in relation to other individuals and group dynamics.<sup>2</sup> The discussion will be based on the tradition of shadow play in the region: the Malaysian shadow play *Wayang Siam* and the Thai shadow play *Nang Thalung*. My paper shows the close relationship between these forms and leads to the question: Will mobilizing the common local culture act as a vehicle for increased understanding and reconciliation between the two ethnic groups?

### The Arts of the Pattani Region<sup>3</sup>

The Malaysian states of Kelantan and Kedah are especially well known due to their splendid handicraft and extensive musical traditions. The court orchestra tradition called *Nobat* is still played in this area. The *Gendang Nobat* (court orchestra) is reminiscent of pre-colonial societies organized into a feudal system in which the king's sovereignty is legitimized through the Hindu concept of *derhaka*

and the divine king.<sup>4</sup> The king's divine and magical power highly affected his regalia which also included his royal orchestra (Khartomi 1997). The king's orchestra was imbued with the same magical and supernatural power as the king and was believed to cure people. In these societies, all subjects were identified by their loyalty to the king. To this day the Nobat is considered holy. Also in Malaysia today are four distinctive types of shadow plays: *Wayang Purwa*, *Wayang Melaju*, *Wayang Siam* and *Wayang Gedek* (Ghulam-Sarwar, 1992; Matusky, 1980; Sweeny, 1972). Until recently, the ancient and traditional *Mak Yong* dance theater together with the therapeutic dance theater *Main Puetri* served important social and ritual functions in this region (Laderman, 1992; Kvam, 2005; Ghulam- Sarwar, 1976).

In the southern Thai provinces, two forms of entertainment are foremost in popularity: the shadow play *Nang Thalung* and the *Manora* dance drama or *Manora Chatri*. The *Manora (nora)* tradition is based on a story found in the *Jataka Tales* collection. In this story *Manora* is a heavenly bird maiden who comes to marry a human prince. Throughout generations, the *Manora* tradition has been performed in a rich variety of ways. Due to the increased interest from academia during the 1970s, *Manora* became part of the southern Thai universities' curriculum by which the highly stylized dance vocabulary which forms the basic steps of the performances has been preserved. Besides *Nang Thalung*, the most well known shadow play in the region is *Nang Yai*. *Nang Yai* uses large shadow puppets which are carried by dancers in front of a screen. Undoubtedly, the *Nang Thalung* tradition is the most popular and approved theater tradition today.

### **The Shadow Play in Pattani Region: Wayang Siam and Nang Thalung**

The origin and precise distribution and development of the shadow play remain unclear. In ancient times written records were exclusively connected with the courts. Thus, the first written sources describe shadow theater as part of a court entertainment in Java around the year 1000 (Brandon, 1970). Other theories claim that the shadow play originated as a folk theater tradition (Hazeu, 1897; Rasser, 1959). They underline that the shadow play must have existed many hundreds of years before it was presented as a sophisticated court art form. Shadow plays grew out of a native ancestor's worship in which the souls of the ancestors were brought to life as shadows in order to protect the people and give them advice and magical assistance. Conflicting theories postulate Chinese, Javanese, Central Asian and Indian origins for the shadow play.

Even though the shadow play is a complex theater form, almost all performances are performed by a single puppeteer and his musicians. The puppeteer (*dalang* in Malaysia, *nai nang* in Thailand) manipulates puppets behind a white cloth screen. A light source is positioned above the puppeteer's head. The puppets are thin, plain and colored, and cast shadows varying in both obscurity and size, depending on the distance between the light source and the screen. The audience sits on the ground in front of the screen, often chatting and calling to each other while watching the performance. The puppeteer is a craftsman and an artist with exceptional skill; he is often a magician well known for his supernatural power which also determines his popularity.



Figure 1. Dalang Nik Mat – Malaysia.

The shadow play has served several important functions in the societies. Throughout time, kings and sultans have used the shadow play as a vehicle for propaganda and self-glorification (Hall, 1970; Sears, 1996; Brandon, 1970). At the same time, the theater has been intimately connected to rural and agricultural society. Besides entertaining, it has served important ritual functions as well as being an important vehicle for exercising social criticism, to make fun of rulers and social conditions in the villages. Shadow play has also held an important place in public education and social learning. The interaction on screen between laymen and scholars, clowns and kings, servants, demons and gods has produced models for important social values and norms.

In more recent times, the shadow theater in Thailand and Malaysia has also been used as a platform for authorities to communicate their interests to the people. This was especially visible during the 1970s when shadow theater was used on both sides of the border to suppress Marxism. *Dalangs* were sponsored by the national government, supplied with complete scripts and sent out to spread anti-Marxist propaganda (Wright, 1983; Dowsey-Magog, 2002, 2005). Somewhat later, the shadow theater was met with renewed interest from national governments, scholars and cultural workers. The regions and its cultural traditions came again into focus in the building of national culture and national identity. This resulted in a certain standardization of the theater that can still be traced to this day. The external interest in regional theater led to the form becoming well-known also outside the rural areas.

Together with general modernization processes such as industrialization, electrification, agricultural reforms and increased pressure from the media, involve-

ment from both global and national authorities have contributed to a series of innovations in the theater forms. During the last 20 years, the shadow theater in Malaysia and Thailand developed in different directions. *Nang Thalung* integrated modern technology and instruments, pop music and modernized repertoires. Today the continuum between the ancient and modern *Nang* can easily be observed through its extremes, *Nang Booraan* (Ancient *nang*) and *Nang Samai* (modern *nang*) respectively. Interest for *Nang Thalung* has been increasing, involving larger and larger audiences (Dowsey-Magog, 2002, 2005).

During the last 20 years, the puppeteers in Malaysia have been forced to adapt their performances due to increased pressure and criticism from Muslim fundamentalists. In some states performing shadow theater has become illegal except for performances held for tourists or research purposes. It is especially the elements regarded as non-Islamist that are purged from the performances (Kvam, 2011). Through this banning process it may seem like the theater is being forced to withdraw from both tradition and modern society.

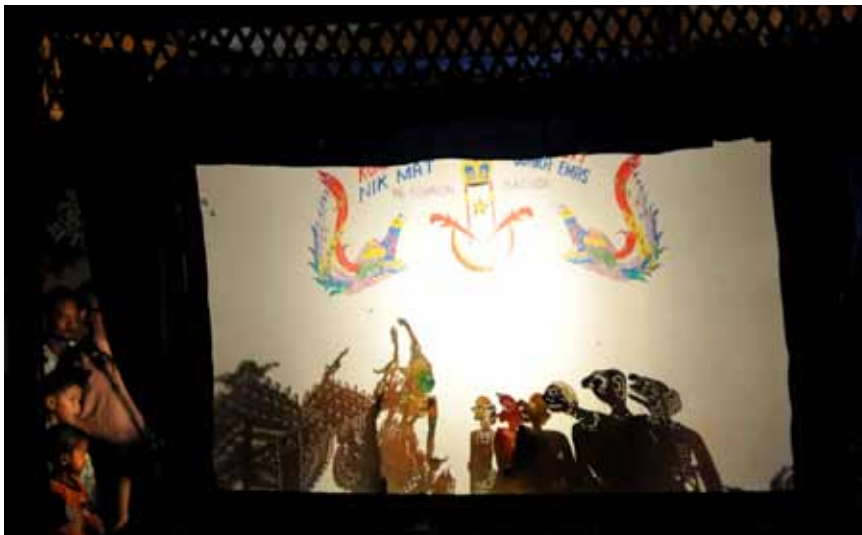


Figure 2. Frontal - audience view.

### Dramatic Content and Dramatic Personae

The dramatic characters involved in the shadow theater comprise of kings and queens, bandits, supernatural beings, farmers and clowns, Hindu deities and Brahman hermits. The puppets' shapes in *Wayang Siam* and *Nang Thalung* are also quite similar as seen in figure 3 and 4. The mythical foundation for the two forms of the shadow theater has traditionally been the *Ramayana* in Malaysia, or *Ramakien* in Thailand. It can be seen in the earliest records that the *dalangs* have been creative innovators and developed new dramatic material and stories. The *Ramayana* stories in Malaysia have been mixed with local legends and *Ramayana* branch stories. The will to develop and renew the repertoire is more observable within *Nang Thalung*. Contemporary *Nang Thalung* stories revolve around court intrigue, heroic escapes, romance and comedy within a web of good versus evil. The theme in the dramatic material is mixed. It can be centered around family feuds, wise men giving lessons in magic, romantic stories or astounding fairy tales that wandering heroes often experience on their quests.



Figure 3. King Rama and the old hermit.

### The Clowns

The purpose of the clown in shadow theater has been a trigger for both fascination and interest from researchers since its first appearance. Lind discusses the *dalangs*' socially critical function in the Indonesian shadow theater. The criticism appears, according to Lind, because of the different linguistic codes in shadow theater. The clowns speak an everyday language in stark contrast to the noble and archaic language that dominates the performance overall. Through this the clown mediates between the superior noblemen and the common people (Lind, 1983).<sup>5</sup>

Also Johnson underlines how the clowns in *Nang Thalung* work as a “social mouth-piece.” “They laugh at the follies of the noble (including religious elite) and poke fun at the audiences and at the issues of the day – poverty, religion, the economy and so forth” (Johnson, 2006). The clowns are crude and plump, and their humor often revolves around sexuality and bodily functions. In every way the clowns belong to an entirely different social standing compared to the rest of the cast. At the same time, their crude behavior and downtrodden appearance is a charade. *Pak Dogol*, one of the most important clowns in *Wayang Siam*, is actually the deity *Sang Tang Tunggal* descended from heaven. So he is in fact a god and a clown, as well as a farmer who in addition is quite familiar with magic (Wright, 1983). In *Nang Thalung* the clowns are believed by many Southern Thai to be invested with sacred power unmatched by even the most powerful of the Hindu-Buddhist deities

(Johnson, 2006). Unlike the Malay shadow play tradition where the clown's association with the divine is clearly spelled out in the narrative tradition, the origin of the *Nang Thalung* clown's magical potency remains a mystery. The clowns are associated with luck and fortune and can give advice in lotteries and love. The importance of the clowns is further emphasized by the fact that they are kept in separate special cases and are even worshiped. In Thailand, we also find images of clowns on Buddhist altar to be worshiped and covered with gold leaves.

### **Nang Thalung and its Connection to Spirituality and Religion**

The Thai shadow theater, *Nang Thalung*, can be found all across the southern part of Thailand, most widespread in Nakon Sri Thammart, Phattalung, Trang, Surat Thani, Chumpon and Songkla. In these areas, the theater form is still significantly popular and manages to compete with other entertainment media such as television and cinema. *Nang Thalung* still maintains its intimate relationship with the Buddhist part of the population in the southern parts of Thailand constituting "a major cultural symbol of southern Thai identity." (Dowsey-Magog, 2002:185).

*Nang Thalung* has primarily been a folk theater form, played for and by rural villagers. Within the rural population, the form has had a ritual and entertainment function. In recent times, the *Nang Thalung* has increasingly been integrated into more urban areas as a form of entertainment for the working class. *Nang Thalung* is an important part of all village celebrations. It is played in local homes, on small outdoor stages, on temple grounds and in connection with markets and exhibitions. *Nang Thalung* is also presented on television outside the southern areas (Johnson, 2006; Dowsey-Magog, 2002, 2005).

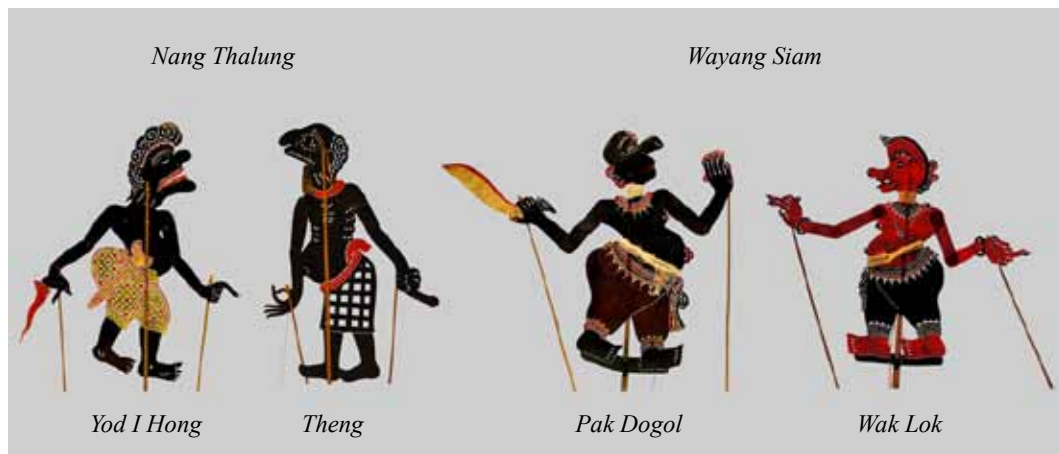


Figure 4. The clowns.

Already the opening of the *Nang Thalung* performance ties the theater to a spiritual and religious sphere. The opening contains a series of religious ritual episodes combining Buddhist prayers and local varieties of "Folk Brahmanism" (Dowsey-Magog, 2002). The first and last puppet to appear on screen is *Rusi*, an old man often dressed in tiger skins. Dowsey-Magog describes the *Rusi* in this way: He "... combines the talents of forest dwelling animist shaman, learned Brahmanism scholar and teacher and more recently, Buddhist forest monk" (Dowsey-Magog,

2002:188). He chants Buddhist prayers and incantations, presenting his secret magic wisdom to invoke the good spirits in the surrounding environment. He is a protector of the audience, puppeteers, orchestra, surroundings and the theater. Other puppets with magical power also appear during the beginning of the performance invoking powers in the surroundings. In this way the theater is tied to a magical and unseen world already from the beginning.

Contact with the religious and unseen is maintained throughout the performance. Dowsey-Magog describes how, “The efficacy of moral Buddhist behavior is frequently promoted, but allusions to the spirit world and unorthodox supernatural powers are included as well.” (Dowsey-Magog, 2002:189). He continues to underline how the theme in the stories gives associations to *Karma* and how the underlying reward and punishment appear as allegory to Buddhist morality and philosophy.

### **Wayang Siam and its Connection to Spirituality and Religion**

In contrast to its Thai sister form, the interest in and popularity of the Malaysian shadow theater *Wayang Siam* has been declining the last 20 years. On the Malaysian side of the border areas, there is considerable external influence from fundamentalist Muslim movements. These political movements have, to a large degree, scared people away from dance and theater. In Kelantan, PAS (Parti Islam Se Malaysia), the most fundamental Muslim party, won state elections over several years. The result has been an illegalization of the traditional dance and theater forms over extended periods of time. In spite of all the prohibitions and suspicion of the traditional culture, Kelantan is still considered the cradle of Malay culture and deemed the theater state *par excellence*. During the 30 years that I have been following the development of the form, there has been an apparent decline. During the 1970s there were more than 200 active *dalangs* in Kelantan only, while in 2012 I could only find five. There is also a considerable effort being made by the national government to preserve the local culture in Kelantan which the regional leaders oppose and forbid. The national government is attempting to intervene in the destruction of local culture by building cultural centers and teaching adults local culture and tradition.

Also in *Wayang Siam*, the connection to the spiritual world is established already in the opening scenes. The first puppet that appears on the screen is *pokok beringin*, (the tree of life or breath of life) which symbolizes the contact with the spiritual world. The succeeding puppet is *Maharisi*, the wise old hermit with direct ties to *Nang Thalung's Rusi*. He is clothed similarly to *Rusi*, using a walking stick and chanting holy incantations and prayers. In contrast, however, on the Malaysian side of the border Islamic prayers are recited in addition to other and local spirits and gods being involved. *Maharisi* also uses Thai phrases and a magical language. The next puppets to appear on screen are the two Hindu *Dewas* (gods) who perform a ritual battle. Parts of the Islamic creed are mixed with incantations of Hindu and Buddhist deities. Behind it all lies an animistic understanding of how the world is populated with spirits, powers and magical creatures (Wright, 1983). In that way, the theater reflects a unique and syncretic world view before the main story commences.



## Discussion

On both sides of the border, the shadow theater presents a unique and syncretic world view composed of animistic, Buddhist, Hindu and Islamic elements. In Malaysia, this view is interpreted by scholars and actors themselves as an Islamic expression. In Thailand, however, it is interpreted as an expression of Buddhist culture and religious views.

To determine this it can be beneficial to distinguish between religion and *dogma*. As early as 1926, the philosopher Alfred Whitehead described dogma as an attempt to explain in precise terms, “the truth” that lies behind the religious experience of mankind (Whitehead, 1996). Dogma is what the institutions and organizations preach and convey. Individuals weave dogma into their religious life where they are mixed with individual attempts to find meaning and explanations. In this way, many different variations of the same belief system arise. Due to this view it is the active and acting individual that creates the religion. There will therefore be an element of syncretism and religious diversity in most folk religions. That means we cannot talk about either Islam or Buddhism as one religion, but we can talk about different “Islams” and “Buddhisms.” Both Islam and Buddhism allow a variety of approaches and interpretations. Actually we can speak about different schools, branches or sects in both Islam and Buddhism, e.g. Shari, Sufism and Theravada.

The culture of the Pattani region reflects the inhabitants’ common history. Throughout time, Pattani has been part of several great and powerful kingdoms that have been important centers in Asia. Thanks to increased trade with India, the region came in contact with Hindu and Buddhist culture and religion. As early as year 300 AD, Langkasuka kingdom was an important Hindu-Buddhist kingdom.<sup>6</sup> Much points to the idea that Hinduism and Buddhism have lived side by side and probably interwoven. Between the years 700 and 1300 AD, Pattani was part of the great kingdom Sriviaya which became a center for Mahayana-Buddhism. Following this era, Pattani became part of the Islamic kingdom of Melaka, a Malay Sultanate. During this period the region became increasingly influenced by Islamic philosophy and values (Andaya & Andaya, 2001).

Before the emergence of prominent empires and kingdoms, the religion in the area was based on animism and ancestor cults. The period where Indian influence becomes dominant is marked by the emergence of great empires and kingdoms with strong feudal structure. In the religious area, Hindu and Buddhist gods became part of an already existing pantheon of supernatural creatures and forces. Epic stories from India (*Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*) became an integrated part of the culture. With the Melaka kingdom, Islam made such an impact that the concept of Malay became intimately associated with Islam. Melaka and the later Islamic sultanates were well-known for their ability to attract famous Muslim priests and scholars to their court. But the religion in the region still maintained its syncretism and was not characterized by any orthodox or dogmatic interpretation of Islam. This has directly influenced the religious practice which can be seen even today.

The old feudal societies did not emphasize religion or ethnicity. The royalty exerted full control of the kingdom. The subjects were identified through their loyalty to the divine king, where *derhaka* was considered the greatest sin.

Questions tied to religion and ethnicity took a new turn after the second world with the establishment of the nation states. Ethnic groups and religions were forced to fight over more dominant positions. Also the cultural life was influenced by the nation state's need to develop a national culture and identity. According to a theoretician on nationalism, Ernest Gellner, the nation state demands cultural homogeneity (Gellner, 1998). This is a direct step towards a highly canonized culture of high status. These tendencies are highly observable in Thailand as well as in Malaysia when ethnic groups and religions are put against each other and treated as either minorities or groups demanding special rights. An increase in globalization further complicates the conflicts when external influences take root in the regions. This becomes clear through the growth of the Islamic fundamentalist movement present in Thailand as well as Malaysia.

### Conclusion and the Final Question

The need for recognizing “pure” identities or classifying people based on their ethnicity or religious belonging is a relatively modern phenomenon that many would deem as simplified and outdated. In the area of culture, globalization processes have resulted in human commonalities manifesting themselves through cultural activities. These are not bound to ethnicity, geographic boundaries or national identities. In this way it has become easier to identify oneself with other groups across national boundaries.

Like all other performative expressions, the theater builds upon the individual's ability to envision or imagine a phenomenon. Active, creative individuals and artists manifest this unseen reality through the theater. As explained above, the Shadow Theater's imaginative reality consists of a mixture of animistic, Hindu and Buddhist as well as Islamic elements. This is not a theater that reflects reality, as it is, but rather a theater manifesting an alternate reality. This liminality where the artist moves betwixt and between reflects a common imagination on both sides of the border.<sup>7</sup> Thus it makes sense to think that this shared cultural imagination and practices could be of vital importance if put into use and made known in the conflicting areas. That might just be a contribution to a beginning to an end of the long lasting conflict in South Thailand?



Figure 5. Pokok Beringin – It is used to begin and end the shadow theater performance.

## Endnotes

- 1 This paper is based on interviews, notes, video recordings and my own experiences during several periods of field work in Thailand and Malaysia from 1984 until 2012. Over the course of my fieldwork I became more and more aware of the similarities between cultural expressions in the region. Comparing early research done in Thailand and Malaysia these similarities also came apparent. See e.g. Johnson 2006, Dowsey-Magog 2002 and 2005, Ghulam-Sarwar 1976 and 1992 among others. I have not interviewed *dalang* in the region with respect of the conflict in South Thailand. The conflict itself is well documented both by press as well as internet e.g. You Tube.
- 2 See also Kevin Avruch: *Culture and Conflict Resolution*. Us Institute of Peace Press, 2004.
- 3 The literature dealing with the folk theater in Malaysia and Thailand is limited. Academic interest in studying theater in the region reached a peak in the 1970s. In addition to being limited regarding amount, most of the literature was produced between 1980 and 2000.
- 4 *Derhaka* refers to how betrayal and treason against the king was perceived as the greatest sin.
- 5 See also Pausacker 2004.
- 6 Researchers claim that the Hindu/Buddhist relationship has not been demarcated. (Andaya and Andaya 2001, Mohd. Taid Osman 1967).
- 7 Victor Turner describes liminality as the state and process of mid-transition in a rite of passage. "During the liminal period, the characteristics of the liminars (the ritual subjects in the phase) are ambiguous, for they pass through a cultural realm that has few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state. Liminars are often betwixt and between." Turner and Turner 1978.

## References

- Andaya, Barbara Watson and Leonard Y. Andaya. *A History of Malaysia*. Palgrave, 2001.
- Brandon, James R. *On Thrones of Gold: Three Javanese Shadow Plays*. Harvard University Press, 1970.
- Dowsey-Magog, Paul. "Popular Worker's Shadow Theatre in Thailand." *Asian Theatre Journal* Vol 19, No.1. Spring. (2002).
- Dowsey-Magog, Paul. "Popular Culture and Traditional Performance: Conflicts and Challenges in Contemporary Nang Talung." In *Dynamic Diversity in Southern Thailand*. Edited by Wattana Sugunnasil. Bangkok: Silkworm, 2005.
- Gellner, Erenst. *Nasjonalisme*. Spartacus Forlag, 1998.
- Ghulam- Sarwar, Yousuf. *Panggung Semar. Aspects of Traditional Malay Theatre*. Tempo Publishing, 1992.
- Ghulam-Sarwar, Yousuf. *The Kelantan "Mak Yong" Dance Theatre: A study of Performance Structure*. Ann Arbor, 1976.
- Hall, D. G. E. *A history of South-East Asia, 3rd ed.* London: Macmillan/New York: St. Martin's Press, 1970.

- Johnson, Irving. "Little Bear Sells CDs and Ai Theng Drinks Coke: Sacred Clowning and the Politics of Regionalism in South Thailand." *Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia* Vol 21 No 2 (2006).
- Kartomi, Margaret J. "The Royal Nobat Ensemble of Indragiri in Riau, Sumatra, in Colonial and Post-Colonial Times." *The Galpin Society Journal* Vol 50. (1997).
- Kvam, Hilde. "City Culture at the Crossroads." *Journal of Urban Culture Research* Vol 3. (2011).
- Kvam, Hilde. Den tapte ritus. Malyasisk Mak Yong – teater i transformasjon fra ruralt til nasjonalt teater. NTNU, 2005.
- Laderman, Carol. *Taming the Wind of Desire: Psychology, Medicine, and Aesthetics in Malay Shamanistic Performance*. University of California Press, 1991.
- Lind, Elisabeth. "The Rhetoric of Sukarno." In *Indonesia and Malaysia. Scandinavian Studies in Contemporary Society*. Edited by Svensson & Sørensen, Scandinavian Institute of Asian Studies. Curzon Press, 1983.
- Matusky, Patricia. *Music in the Malay Shadow Puppet Theater*. Ann Arbor, 1980.
- Mohd. Taib Osman. *Indigenous, Hindu and Islamic Elements in Malay Folk Beliefs*. Indiana University, 1967
- Pausacker, Helen. "Presidents as Punakawan: Portrayal of National leaders as Clown-Servants in Central Javanese Wayang." *Journal of Southeast Asia Studies* 35 (2) (2004).
- Sears, Laura J. *Shadows of Empire. Colonial Discourse and Javanes Tales*. Duke University Press. 1996.
- Sweeny, Amin. *Malay Shadow Puppets*. The Trustees of British Museum, 1972.
- Turner, Edith and Victor Turner. *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1978.
- Whitehead, Alfred N. *Religion in the Making*. Fordham University Press, 1996.
- Wright, B.. "Wayang Siam: An Ethnographic Study of the Malay Shadow Play of Kelantan." Ph.D diss., Yale University, 1983.

# Thai Classical Music Composition

## *Pleng Ruang Puja Nakhon Nan*

Pattara Komkhum<sup>+</sup> & Kumkom Pornprasit<sup>++</sup> (Thailand)

### Abstract

*Pleng Ruang Puja Nakhon Nan* is a new composition for *Piphat* ensemble that is based upon the sacred *Puja* drumming of the northern province of Nan. It was composed as the results of an ethnographic research project with fieldwork conducted during fifteen months in Nan province. The study aims to understand Nan musicians, beliefs, rituals, and performance practices of *Puja* drums. Master Yan Songmuangkean served as a key informant as well as nine monks who were highly respected in Nan for their *Puja* drumming. According to interviews with *Puja* drummers, the Buddhist teaching was transferred to drumming patterns as a teaching strategy to Buddhist laymen to be reminded of mankind's illusion (sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch). Thus, the *Pleng Ruang Puja Nakhon Nan* composition, which combines traditional Nan music with Central Thai musical practice was inspired by the Buddhist concept of reality that is encoded in *Puja* drumming patterns found in Nan province.

**Keywords:** *Pleng Ruang, Puja Drum, Thai Classical Music Composition, Pleng Cha.*

<sup>+</sup> Pattara Komkhum, Grad Student, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand. email: peenai2004@hotmail.com.

<sup>++</sup> Kumkom Pornprasit, Associate Professor, Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand. voice: +66 089-142-7033 email: pkumkom@yahoo.com.

## Introduction

*Pleng Ruang Puja Nakhon Nan* is a Thai Classical instrumental composition.<sup>1</sup> Its title can be translated to mean worshipping traditions of Nakhon Nan. It was composed on the basis of observations made during 15 months of qualitative research in Nan Province. This ethnographic fieldwork included collecting data relating to religious and cultural beliefs, rituals, and the making and playing rules of the *Puja* drum. To understand the views of Nan's people, especially monks and laymen who played *Puja* drums, field data was collected through participation in local activities. This included intensive study of *Puja* drum playing with an important Nan native Kru (master) Yan Songmuengkan, and from nine monks who specialize in this music.<sup>2</sup> The melodies played by *Puja* drums were composed for the purpose of bringing people to the Buddhist realization that the nature of form, taste, odor, and sound are superficial. Following the standard practices of composing *Puja* drum melodies, the researcher has then developed *Puja* drum melodies and variation according to the Thai traditional rules of *Pleng Ruang* compositional methods. The prime consideration was that listeners to the new musical composition be able to identify this music as having origins in Nan.

*Pleng Ruang Puja Nakhon Nan* is composed by following the structure of the central Thai musical form known as *Pleng Ruang*. Its melodic, rhythmic and narrative elements have been adapted to the compositional and performing principles of the *Piphat Mai Kaeng* ensemble which comprises fixed-pitch percussion instruments (*Ranat* and *Khongwong Yai*) and the *Pi* which is a Thai oboe as well as finger cymbals (*Ching*) and drum (*Tapone*). *Piphat Mai Kaeng* is the variant of *Piphat* ensemble that mostly plays sacred and ritual music. Thai music is based on the realization and elaboration of a structural melody which is called *Neya Phleng*, which means the meat of the song (Sumrongthong, 2000:68). Each musician plays a variation of this melody that is specific to their instrument. Thus, each instrument is simultaneously performing an idiomatically specific variation of a core melody. This texture, which has been described by Morton as 'polyphonic stratification' (1970:3), is regarded by Thai musicians as heterophony (Garzoli, 2014: 95). The adaptation of *Puja* drumming melodies to the *Piphat* ensemble involved the translation of the drumming patterns into the style of the *Khong Wong Yai*, called *Thang Khong*, from where it is translated to the other instruments.<sup>3</sup> Thai musical performance is primarily based on reinterpreting existing melodies and compositions that form a canon. Composers nowadays do create new music but it is unusual for new music to be composed in *Pleng Ruang* form due to the complexity of the form.

Because *Puja* drumming is not based on precisely tuned melodies, there is not a direct correspondence between drumming patterns and the part played by *Piphat* musicians. It is important to point out that the essence of the new composition is the transformed Nan elements which have been retained through the stylistic transformation. During the performance of *Puja* drumming the drummer recites the lyrics, therefore *Puja* drumming does not use onomatopoeic terms that are used to indicate intervals on the *Khong Wong Yai*. An important part of the translation of Nan melodies into the central Thai style was retaining the speech pattern associated with drumming in its adaptation to *Khong Wong Yai*.



Figure 1. Piphat ensemble performing *Pleng Ruang Puja Nakhon Nan*.

This composition used the four forms that comprise *Pleng Ruang*, *Pleng Cha*, *Plengsaung Mai*, *Plengrew*, and *Plenglaa* (Miller, 1998:278).<sup>4</sup> *Pleng Ruang* is a fixed structure in Thai classical music.<sup>5</sup> Within the context of the principles of *Pleng Ruang*, this new composition uses numerous compositional techniques that are standard practice in Thai classical. This includes techniques of modulation called *Oad* and *Phan*, techniques for shortening phrases (*Tat Thom*), and a technique called *Look Thao* which is used for emphasizing certain melodic pitches. The use of varying degrees of melodic dissonance is also used which emphasizes *Koo Kradang* (dissonant intervals), *Koo Sanoh* (consonance intervals), and *Koo Gueng Kradang* (less dissonance intervals). *Pleng Cha* is played at auspicious ceremonies and in rituals where monks attended to give feelings of deference and sacredness. *Pleng Ruang Puja Nakhon Nan* is characterized by the newly composed *Pleng Cha* and the newly composed *Naathab* (rhythmic cycle). These were prepared under the supervision and guidance of recognized masters of Nan music including *Kru Yan* and have met their approval (Yan, Interview January 15, 2014).

Eastern Lanna is the area in the upper north of Thailand that was formerly part of the old Lanna Kingdom that came under the influence of Bangkok in the 1870's (Thongchai, 1997:102). Travelling to the area is difficult due to its mountainous landscape and because it is not a passage way to any other provinces, therefore, Eastern Lanna has remained isolated and maintains its richness of art and culture. These have been carried down from generation to generation and the cultural heritage undergoes continual refinement and enhancement in rituals, religious faith, and languages by its surroundings and people's way of life. Nan culture is rich in art and culture. The area still contains ancient remains, temples, antique treasures, local tribes, and their wisdom, while in other areas, details of the musical customs and rituals of Eastern Lanna are preserved. Although

attempts have been made at preserving the northern Thai culture, it is still perceived to be under threat (Miller, 1998:310-15).

### Glong Puja

The *Glong Puja* is the sacred drum set that is found in most temples in northern Thailand where it is used for worship. A set of *Glong Puja* consists of four drums of different sizes. The four drums must be made from the same tree. The largest is called *Glong Mae*, which means mother drum. The three smaller drums are called *Look toob*, which means sound of the offspring drums. The diameter of *Glong Mae* can be as wide as 1 meter. When it is struck, it produces a sound that can be heard over long distances. *Glong Puja* sets that can be seen today are more than 100 years old. Less old sets are believed to be at least several decades. (Yan, Interview, January 15, 2014). The *Glong Puja* is played with gongs and cymbals that mark the pulse.<sup>6</sup>



Figure 2. Image of a Glong Puja at Wat Nam Lad in Nan province.

A set of *Glong Puja* is considered a sacred treasure. According to Master Yan, sacred texts and prayers have been inscribed on the inside of the drum's head and body. The age of the drums indicate that it is a long standing tradition to consider the *Glong Puja* as highly sacred. These texts were also written to charm listeners, and provide instructions that women and children are forbidden from striking the drum. Extreme care should be taken when transporting the drums and they should not pass in front of the abbot's residence or the temple's primary Buddha image (Yan, Interview, February 22, 2011). The drums are placed on a stand and positioned in a special structure called a *Hor Glong Puja* (*Puja Drum Tower*). The orientation of the drums must be on the east-west axis. While there are similar drums in other parts of northern Thailand, Nan is unique because the drums are placed in this special way and the drums are positioned from largest to smallest in a row whereas in other regions they are positioned in two pairs.



*Glong Puja* must be played with reverence. It is forbidden to strike the drums frivolously, and, as with other Thai instruments, the player must demonstrate respect to the teacher. This is done through the *Wai Kru* ritual before playing commences as well as whilst performing.<sup>7</sup> The *Glong Puja* is played on various occasions. It is performed on the occasion of the full moon days, which are important in the Buddhist calendar, to inform Buddhist villagers when they should purify their bodies, words, and minds, to prepare offerings for monks, to attend temples to hear sermons, and to observe religious precepts. The *Glong Puja* is also played to celebrate merit making done by of community members and community celebrations.

The melodies of Nan's *Glong Puja* are called *Rabam*. These *Glong Puja* compositions are transmitted orally from generation to generation. This repertoire is unique to Nan and differs from drumming patterns of other areas. The *Rabams* that are unique to Nan include *Rabam Sik Tu Pi Sik*, *Rabam Saonoy Gebphak*, *Rabam Suer Khob Chang*, and *Rabam Long Nan Cha* and *Rabam Long Nan Rew* and *Rabam Toob Tang*, (or *Ma Tueb Khok*) (Yan, Interview, February 22, 2011).



Figure 3. On the left the author interviewing Master Yan Songmuangkean and right the author practicing on the *Glong Puja*.

*Rabam Sik Tu Pi Sik*, *Rabam Saonoy Geb Phak*, *Rabam Suer Khob Chang*, and *Rabam Long Nan* originated in Nan and are well-known in the region. They are essentially the same melodic-rhythmic pattern but are known by different names by different groups in the Nan region. When this melody is played fast it is called *Faad Sae*, or *Rabam Ma Yeab Fai*. It is a louder drum pattern in the style known as *Sabad Chai*. This pattern was originally used to call for courage in war. Buddhism plays an important role in composition of melodies for the *Puja* drum and creators of music draw on their creativity and faith in Buddhism. Their music is played as offerings to the Lord Buddha in Nan's religious ceremonies in which local adherents express their religious faith and to show their reverence to the Enlightened Master.

*Glong Puja* has a number of playing styles. These differ according to the occasion in which they are performed. At normal ceremonies, the *Sabad Chai*-style patterns such as *Faad Sae* or *Toob Tang* are played to rejoice in auspiciousness, success, and merit makings. Only the *Glong Mae* is played to announce more serious occasions, like the death of the abbot or unrest in the area. Specific compositions are played

on the *Glong Puja* as offerings to the Lord Buddha and to call villagers to the temple for Buddhist ceremonies that occur on holy days in the religious calendar.

*Pleng Ruang Puja Nakhon Nan* is in the tradition of Thai sacred music and was composed to accompany rituals.<sup>8</sup> It is composed in the traditional Thai classical structure of *Pleng Ruang Pleng*. The study of historical evidence on the way of life of Nan's people reveals that preserving their cultural heritage is important. *Glong Puja* is an important part of their cultural identity of the local area. The researcher is thus inspired to compose *Pleng Ruang Puja Nakhon Nan* to perpetuate the unique cultural heritage of Nan in the context of Thai classical music.

As stated above, this research has resulted in a composition that combines elements of traditional Nan drumming music with compositional principles from central Thai classical music. This intercultural musical fusion aims to preserve the essence of the Nan musical tradition while presenting it in form of Thai classical music. Intercultural musical fusion is a creative act that sets in train musical and cultural processes that have become features of Thai music. Numerous composers have sought to interpret other musical styles and traditions in the context of Thai music. This is formalized in the *Awk Samnieng Phasa* practice of imitating the music of other nations.<sup>9</sup> The fusion process involves addressing potential obstacles to musical fusion at a number of levels. I will briefly address the three possible levels of incompatibility that Garzoli has described as possible barriers: Intonation, idiomatic style, and cultural context. (See Garzoli, 2014 for a discussion of the issues associated with intercultural musical fusion).

While the gongs of the *Puja* set are tuned, they are not tuned to precise pitches and therefore do not correspond with the pitches of the *Khong Wong Yai*. This is not a significant obstacle because the rhythm and the vocal texts were the important musical elements that formed the basis of the *Khong Wong Yai* melody rather than the pitches of the drums. The stylistic idiom of *Puja* drumming is part of the larger Thai musical tradition and the patterns used are translatable to other Thai musical forms because they share common fundamentals of rhythmic organization, including the role of the cymbals in making the pulse. The geographical and cultural context of the Nan musical elements has clearly shifted as it has been adapted from a rural temple tradition into the complex formal structures that underpin Thai classical music. However, the two musical traditions have similarities in regard to their attitude towards Buddhism, the treatment of instruments as sacred and the ontological interpretation of music as sacred.

The *Pleng Ruang* form that is the structural framework for the composition is an ancient form of instrumental music that is believed to have been developed in the fourteenth century (Panya, 1999:75). The 'Pleng Ruang' repertoire can be classified into four subtypes: *Plengcha*, *Sawng Mai*, *Plengching* and *Plengrew* (The Royal Institute, 1977). The *Plengruangplengcha* compositional form is underpinned by specific principles and patterns, including meter and *Naathab* (drum rhythms) that must be strictly followed. Its structure must comprise the four following sections:

1. *Pleng Cha Probkai*
2. *Pleng Sawng Mai*
3. *Pleng Rew Sawng Mai*
4. *Pleng La* (Farewell song)

It has become a standard practice in Thai music to adapt the European Solfeggio notation system to Thai music. In the Thai system, the sounds are represented with letters from the Thai alphabet and are written in Thai script.



Figure 5. The notes of the Khong Wong Yai in Thai script.

Thai alphabetic characters and their correspondence with the Solfeggio system.

ด	ร	ม	ฟ	ช	ล	ท
Do	Re	Mi	Fa	So	La	Ti

Structure of *Pleng Ruang Puja Nakhon Nan*

The following section shows the structural framework of the new composition. To illustrate the relationship between the original *Glong Puja* melodies and the new *Khong Wong Yai* melodies used in *Pleng Ruang Puja Nakhon Nan*, I have included tables that show the *Puja* drum pattern, vocal text, and new *Khong Wong Yai* melody in the *Pleng Cha* section (see below).

*Pleng Cha*:

The first melody = *Sik Tu Pi Sik* section 1 and 2 (example 1)

The second melody = *Suer Khob Chang* section 1 and 2 (example 2)

*Pleng Sawng Mai*:

The first melody = *Sao Noy Geb Phak*

The second melody = *Long Nan Cha*

*Pleng Rew*:

The first melody = *Saonoy Geb Phak* (Shortened from *Pleng Saung Mai*)

The second melody = *Long Nan Rew*

*Pleng La*: The traditional moderato tempo *Pleng La* melody is. The Thai alphabet is used in notating Thai music. The pitches of the *Khong Wong Yai* are indicated below.

The lyrics of *Rabam Sik Tu Pi Sik* reflect the central Buddhist ethos of mindfulness. They encourage monks who have thoughts of negativity, silliness, and anger, all of which represent desire, to remain content and mindful.

Translation of the lyrics

1. Sik Tu Pi Sik                Monk, Leave the monkhood!
2. Sik Tu Pi Sik                Monk, Leave the monkhood!
3. Tu Pi Mai Sik                Unless you don't,
4. Tu Pi Nun Pai                How silly you are!

Example 1: *Glong Puja* Composition: *Rabam Sik Tu Pi Sik*, compared to first *Pleng Cha* passage.

*Rabam Sik Tu Pi Sik*: 1st and 2nd phrases

Lyrics	---	--- Sik	--- Tu	- Pi - Sik	---	--- Sik	--- Tu	- Pi-Sik
	-				-			
<i>GlongRabam (SikTu Pi Sik)</i>								
Hand	---	--- left	---	- left - left	---	--- left	--- right	- left -left
	-		right		-			
<i>GlongPuja</i>	---	--- 1	--- 3	- 2 - 1	---	--- 1	--- 3	- 2 - 1
	-				-			
<i>Khong Wong Yai( PlengCha)</i>								
<i>Right hand</i>	---	---๑	---๓	-๒-๑	---	---๑	---๓	- ๒-๑
	-				-			
<i>Left hand</i>	---	---๑	---๓	-๒-๑	---	---๑	---๓	- ๒-๑
	-				-			

*Rabam Sik Tu Pi Sik*: 3rd and 4th phrases

Lyrics	----	-- Tu Pi	--- Mai	--- Sik	--- Tu	--- Pi	--- Nun	--- Pai
<i>Glong Rabam (Sik Tu Pi Sik)</i>								
Hand	----	--- left	---	- left- left	----	--- left	--- right	- left-left
			right					
<i>Glong Puja</i>	----	--- 1	--- 3	-2-1	----	--- 1	--- 3	- 2 - 4
<i>Khong Wong Yai (Pleng Cha)</i>								
<i>Right hand</i>	---	- ๑ --	----	--- ๑	----	---	๑ ๓ --	--- ๑
	-							
<i>Left hand</i>	---	-- ๓ ๑	--- ๓	--- ๑	--- ๓	--- ๑	---	--- ๑
	-							

The lyrics of Rabam Suer Khob Chang discusses the uncertainty of life from the perspective of the Dharma teachings. This stanza describes how a creature as large as an elephant, can be attacked by a tiger, a story that implies the uncertainty of wealth, power and health.

Translation of the lyrics

- 1. Suer Khob Chang                      A tiger bites an elephant.
- 2. Puen Khao Kham Khau              They are under a tamarind tree.
- 3. Khob Lau Lau                         It bites over and over again.
- 4. Puen Khao Khamoom                They are under a Malacca Tree.

The second Pleng Cha passage is based on the *Glong Puja* composition *Rabam Suer Khob Chang* and is adapted to following *Khong Wong Yai* melody.

Example 2: *Glong Puja* pattern *Rabam Suer Khob Chang* compared with second *Pleng Cha* passage.

*Rabum Suer Khob Chang*: 1st and 2nd phrases

Lyrics	----	--- Suer	--- Khob	--- Chang	----	-- Puen Kao	--- Kham	--- Khau
Hand Position	----	----	--- left	---right	----	--left right	--- left	---right
<i>Glong Puja</i>	----	--- C	--- 1	---4	----	-- 13	--- 2	---4
<i>Khong Wong Yai (Pleng Cha)</i>								
<i>Right hand</i>	---	--- ล	--- ช	--- ร	- ด -	--- ู๋	--- ม	---
<i>Left hand</i>	---	--- ล	--- ช	--- ล	-- ุ่ล	- ุ่ - ล	----	--- ุ่

*Rabum Suer Khob Chang*: 3rd and 4th phrases

Lyrics	----	--- Khob	--- Lau	--- Lau	----	-- Puen Kao	--- Kham	--- Pom
Hand	----	--- left	--- right	---right	----	--left right	--- left	---right
<i>Glong Puja</i> sequence	----	--- 1	--- 2	---2	----	--13	--- 2	---4
<i>Khong Wong Yai (Pleng Cha)</i>								
<i>Right hand</i>	----	----	--- ม	---ม	- ด -	--- ู๋	----	ม - ช
<i>Left hand</i>	----	--- ุ่	----	----	-- ุ่ล	- ุ่ - ล	- ุ่ - ด	----

The *Rabam Saonoy Geb Phak* and *Rabam Long Nan* in the *Sawng Mai* section have delicate cadences that are characterized by greater emphasis on the upbeats. These melodies are adapted to the *Pleng Sawng Mai* section. These two melodies have retained their original rhythmic contours but they have been modified according to Thai classical music theory into *Pleng Saung Mai* form of Thai classical music.

*Pleng Rew* melodies in each of the subtypes of *Pleng Ruang* are shortened version of the *Pleng Look Tok* and *Pleng Saung Mai* forms, in keeping with this standard musical practice. The researcher thus shortened the two melodies into *Pleng Rew* in this passage. The piece concludes with a *Pleng La* passage that functions as a standard coda in Thai classical music. It is performed at a moderate tempo and accordance with traditional performance practice, the *La* section follows the specific melodic pattern known to Thai classical musicians.

### Conclusion

The objective of composing *Pleng Ruang Puja Nakhon Nan* was to create a new *Pleng Ruang* which combined elements of sacred drumming music from Nan with traditional Thai music principle. The methodological basis of the work was observations made during the fieldwork that explored musical archetypes that define the Nan musical style. The composition is comprised of four important sections that are associated with the structure of *Pleng Ruang*; *Pleng Cha*, *Sawng Mai*, *Pleng Rew* and *Pleng La*. The translation of Nan drumming to *Piphat* ensemble involved reinterpreting the melodic-rhythmic-narrative elements of *Puja* drumming from the perspective of *Khong Wong Yai* technique and according to *Pleng Ruang* compositional principles. Because the new composition is in *Pleng Ruang* form, the musical composition retains defining sacred Buddhist qualities of the original *Puja* material. This would be lost if the music were interpreted through composition principles associated with other Thai repertoire. This composition is a new addition to the repertoire of Nan music that will ensure the ongoing vitality of the art and culture of Eastern Lanna. The composition is a blend of the richness of central and northern Thai musical cultures. It is especially reflective of the traditional Nan practice of performing the *Rabam Glong Puja* as a means of demonstrating reverence to Buddhist doctrine.

### Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Chulalongkorn University for awarding me the ‘H.M. King Bhumibhol Adulyadej’s 72nd Birthday Anniversary Scholarship.’ I would also like to thank Professor Bussakorn Binson (Sumrongthong), Associate Professor Kumkorn Pornprasit, Associate Professor Pornprapit Phoasavadi, Associate Professor Pakorn Rodchangpheun, Yan Songmuangkean, Professor Suppakorn Disatapundhu, and Professor Kamol Phoasavadi. I would also like to thank Dr. John Garzoli for additional advice and editorial assistance.

## Endnotes

- 1 The term *pleng* is the Thai term for composition or song.
- 2 *Kru* is the Thai version of the Sanskrit term 'guru'. It is a special term given to teachers.
- 3 *Thang* means path or way in Thai. It has multiple meanings in Thai music. In this context it means the particular way a melody is adapted to the playing style of the different Thai instruments.
- 4 *Rueng* is a musical form, *cha* means slow, *suang mai* is a rhythmic structure, *rew* means fast, *laa* is a concluding section, sometimes called the farewell section.
- 5 For a complete explanation of Thai Classical music see Morton 1976, Myers-Moro 1993, Panya 1999, and Miller 2008.
- 6 The cymbals play a similar role as the finger cymbals (*ching*) in Thai classical music.
- 7 Wai Kru ritual, is a teacher honouring ritual that is performed throughout Thailand.
- 8 This composition is also called *Puja Nakhon Nan*.
- 9 *Phasa* means language.

## References

- Garzoli, John. "Intonational, Idiomatic, and Historical Factors That Shape Contemporary Thai Fusion Music." PhD diss., Monash University, 2014.
- Miller, Terry E. "Thailand." In *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music: Southeast Asia*. Edited by Terry E Miller. New York: Routledge, 1998.
- Miller, Terry E. and Sean Williams eds. "Thailand." In *Garland Handbook of Southeast Asian Music*. New York: Routledge, 2008.
- Montri Tramote. Sapsangkiit. *Music Terminology*. Bangkok: Department of Fine Arts, 1988.
- Morton, David. "Thai Traditional Music: Hot-House Plant or Sturdy Stock." *Journal of the Siam Society* 58 no. 2 (1970).
- Morton, David. *The Traditional Music of Thailand*. London: University of California Press. Ltd, 1976.
- Myers-Moro, Pamela A. *Thai Music and Musicians in Contemporary Bangkok*. Monograph/Center for Southeast Asia Studies. Berkeley: Center for South and Southeast Asia Studies, University of California at Berkeley, 1993.
- Panya Roongruang. *Thai Classical Music and Its Movement from Oral to Written Transmission, 1930-1942: Historical Context, Method, and Legacy of the Thai Music Manuscript Project*. Kent State University, 1999.

Sumrongthong, Bussakorn, and Neil Sorrell. “Melodic Paradoxes in the Music of the Thai Pi-Phat and Javanese Gamelan.” *Yearbook for traditional Music* 32 (2000): 67-80.

The Royal Institute. “Pleng Ruang.” In *Encyclopedia of Thai Music: Vocal Music, Musical Instruments and Performance*, 1st ed., Bangkok: The Royal Institute, 1997.

Thongchai Winichakul. *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation*. Bangkok: University of Hawaii Press, 1997.

Yan Songmuangkean, Interviews. January 15, 2014, February 22, 2011, August 3, 2011.



# Evaluating Problem-based Learning in a Musical Drama Training Program

*in Cilincing Sub-district, North Jakarta*

Melina Surya Dewi Widjaja<sup>+</sup> (Indonesia)

## Abstract

This evaluative research assesses the implementation of a problem-based learning program involving musical drama titled “Senandung Bakti Anak Negeri: Tribute to Ibu Soed” (Chanting of the People’s Devotion: Tribute to Ibu Soed) in Cilincing District, North Jakarta. This research uses the CIPP model in its evaluation which was coined by Daniel L. Stufflebeam, who proposes four components of evaluation: *Context, Input, Process, and Product*. Data collecting uses interview technique, which includes interviewing the training program organizer, distributing questionnaires to the training participants, observing training program implementation and analyzing documents relevant to the training program. After completing the evaluation, the conclusion is that, comprehensively, this problem-based learning musical drama program receives a good score because it is beneficial for the participants in developing interest in arts, the ability to solve problems, self-actualization, cooperation and self-discipline.

**Keywords:** *Program Evaluation, Training Program, Musical Drama, Problem-based Learning*

<sup>+</sup> Melina Surya Dewi Widjaja, Lecturer/Grad student, Jakarta Institute of the Arts -IKJ, Sekolah Duta IV/9. Pondok Indah, Jakarta, 12310 Indonesia. voice: +62 8-1681-0838 fax: +62 21-7590-1417. email: inadewi5108@gmail.com website: www.exploreikj.ac.id.

## Introduction

Jakarta, the capital city of Indonesia, is not just one of the biggest cities in the world that now gears to develop the city to improve services for its people. Now the population of Jakarta is approximately 10 million people ([http://jakarta.bps.go.id/publikasi2015\\_02\\_05\\_15\\_13\\_21.pdf](http://jakarta.bps.go.id/publikasi2015_02_05_15_13_21.pdf)). Such a huge population has indeed its social impact on the city life. Poverty, high rate of crime, sanitation, needs for housing, food and clothing, are some of the issues the city is facing. Children and adolescents are the age groups that are vulnerable and sensitive affected by social problems such as under age workers, street children, harassment of school drop out-children, slums, which are not conducive for children to grow and many other problems. Child and juvenile delinquency portrays the social and cultural life in big cities like Jakarta. That is the reason why children and adolescents need a vehicle to help them develop their creative potentials and self expression through arts.

In schools that have participated in the training which are the samples of this research, most of the students come from underprivileged families. This means that the parents are still striving so hard just to send their children to school. One of the reasons is that the children need to work to help their parents. On the other side, the performing arts learning activities that are usually done in extracurricular time slot and the performance to mark the end of the academic year does not exist in these schools. There are a variety of reasons for it: the schools have no budget to hire an art teacher to teach arts-related extracurricular activities, lack of facilities to support the arts related activities in school and the assumption that the cost of performances is high for schools. For those reasons it would not be possible for those students to be able to have such opportunities to express themselves through art, both in performing art practices and on stage performances as a positive experience in their learning process.

Performing arts are one of the media to express oneself by means of arts and the expectation is that this art experience can make a positive contribution to students' self development. For example, performing arts nurture empathy through role playing involving particular role models and develop cooperation between students and trainers so that they will have the requirements to perform optimally.

The benefit of learning performing arts was supported by Yayasan Putra Bahagia Jaya (YPBJ). This foundation is a social institution with the objective to help underprivileged and malnourished people living in the city of Jakarta.. Today this foundation has expanded its target to help the students of junior high school develop their identity and self-confidence through diverse sport and arts programs. These junior high students for this program come from underprivileged families. Those students are invited to take part in training involving three fields: theatre, singing and dancing.

The output of the training was shown in a stage performance titled Pagelaran Seni Anak Jakarta 2013 (2013 Jakarta Children's Art Performance) organized by Yayasan

Putra Bahagia cooperating with the Jakarta Institute of the Arts (IKJ), which was performed at Mahaka Sport Mall Kelapa Gading, Jakarta, on June 26, 2013. These junior high school students were trained for 3 months to prepare them to join the musical drama titled *Senandung Bhakti Anak Negeri "Tribute to Ibu Soed" "Chanting of the People's Devotion: Tribute to Ibu Soed"*. Both the alumni and lecturers of IKJ and also a number of students of the Graduate Program of IKJ trained these children. This program was well received by the students and the schools who showed great enthusiasm. In terms of public services, this is a positive program carried out by members of the Jakarta Institute of the Arts, especially in their effort to improve students' appreciation for arts by means of providing the students with a learning through experience program with performing arts performed on stage as the result of their learning process.

The training program for this musical which was devoted to Ibu Soed, one of Indonesia's prominent women who dedicated her life to writing children songs, aims to: 1) increase students' interest in, and appreciation of Indonesia's arts and culture through musical drama training; 2) develop student's ability and creativity through musical drama training. This 60 minute-long-performance involved drama, dance movements, vocal and musical orchestra of IKJ. The performance involved as many as 60 students coming from five junior high schools in Cilincing, North Jakarta: 1) SMP Babburidho, 2) SMP Darul Sa'adah, 3) SMP Terpadu located in Kali Baru, Cilincing Sub-district, and 4) At Taufic and 5) Darul Ma'arif junior high school located in Semper Timur Sub-district in Cilincing Sub-district. For this musical drama "*Senandung Bhakti Anak Negeri Tribute to Ibu Soed*", the training used problem-based learning method. Using this approach the participants were challenged and directed to be able to join the training and produce good musical drama performance and be able to solve problems by finding shared solutions during the training process and the performance. The problem and solution in the training is discussed among the students and with the trainer in the training and at the end of every training session. Students are also challenged to train optimally by developing self-discipline, developing good cooperation among their peers and with the trainers. The final goal was to actualize themselves on stage, showing the results of their training and cooperation built during the training process for the audience.

The Jakarta Institute of Arts has often worked for this kind of program, but there has yet be any evaluation to get a clear picture about what this program has actually achieved. Referring to such assumptions, this research makes a program evaluation of the musical drama training for *Senandung "Bhakti Anak Negeri: Tribute to Ibu Soed"*. This research aims to assess the achievement of the musical drama-training program in terms of context, input, process and product. From the evaluation results it is expected improvements can be used as reference to further develop public service programs, both for IKJ, Yayasan Putra Bahagia Jaya and Provincial Jakarta, which have implications for the decision on the direction and policy of other arts training program.

### Evaluation of Training Program

Evaluation has been using diverse approaches so that it has affected the evaluation dimension as stated by Stufflebeam and Shinkfield (2007:7) below:

“[...] mainly because there have been different approaches to evaluation over the years, definitions of the term evaluation have themselves differed. In earlier times, for example, evaluation was commonly closely associated with assessing achievement against behavioural objectives or conducting norm-referenced testing. Then, particularly during the 1970s, emphasis was given to professional judgment. Since that time, an increasing number believe that evaluation is to the collection and analysis of quality information for decision makers.”

The Joint Committee defines evaluation as a systematic assessment on worth or merit of an object (Stufflebeam and Shinkfield, 2007:9).

According to Cross (1973, in Sukardi, 2009:1), evaluation is a process to determine the condition of which an objective has been achieved. More extensively, evaluation is an identification, clarification, and application of the criteria that can be maintained to determine the score of the evaluated object (in terms of worth and merit) in this case the criteria are the quality ones (very necessary) for the decision makers.

This research assesses the training program in terms of its planning, process and training results in order to provide feedback for the improvement of future performing arts training program quality. There are a number of evaluation models applicable to program evaluation, among others are Goal Oriented Model, CIPP Model, Discrepancy Evaluation Model, Goal Free Model and so forth (Sukardi 2009:34). Evaluation model used in this research is that of the CIPP evaluation developed by Daniel L. Stufflebeam et al, 1976. This evaluation model comprises various components of evaluation such as:

1. Evaluation of context
2. Evaluation of input
3. Evaluation of process
4. Evaluation of product

### Musical Drama Training Program

A training program is one of the methods and vehicles to improve the capacity of participants. The training program uses different strategies from regular learning. In regular performing arts learning, such as singing and dancing, in general the teacher usually teaches his students classically. In this case, the students follow the instructions of the teacher or imitate what the teacher has conveyed. The teacher gives less chances to the students to show their personal expressions in experiencing the training materials.

Training program puts the emphasis on particular skill acquirement through practices so that in the learning process in general, training methods are used. This

musical drama training program titled Senandung “Bhakti Anak Negeri: Tribute to Ibu Soed” is based on problem-based learning in Cilincing District, North Jakarta and covers theatre, singing and dancing elements that create a whole musical drama. In this musical drama program, at the beginning, the teacher divides students in groups based on their initial capability. Then, the teacher trains them based on the groups so that several teachers are needed for this. Next, the teacher chooses the roles needed based on the ability of the students after they undergo several trainings. Within this training, students are given opportunities to implement explorations and self-expressions. In general, an evaluation will be made by both the students and the teacher as a facilitator. The students will further discuss the problems they have faced and come up with the efforts to overcome those problems as a corrective action for the upcoming training.

Drama is a composition of verses or prose that portrays life and characters through staged acting or dialogue (Departemen Pendidikan Nasional 2008:342). In learning or practicing musical drama, students learn to develop their self-expressing abilities through singing, acting and dancing. These abilities use voice and movements accompanied by music and supported by stage settings and visual arrangements in order to create a certain atmosphere for the performance. Musical drama is a kind of performing arts known as opera, which is a play presented in the form of voice, movement and music. Musical drama has become popular in Jakarta in 2008 when the musical film titled *Laskar Pelangi* was brought on stage in the form of a musical drama.

The Drama story is written by Carolus Gatot Rahmadi (alumni of IKJ’s Theater Studies Program), is about children who live in deficiency in the area of North Jakarta. They live in a dormitory and are taken care of by a husband and wife who replace their parents and therefore they call the latter “father and mother.” The father and mother take care the needs of these children with great patience, teach them good values, that is to pay respect to other people, help each other, be happy and do not give up easily as well as pay attention to the environment. Similarly, it happens with the figure of the lady teacher. The songs sung are those created by the late Ibu (madam) Soed, a composer of educational songs who paid attention to the love to the nature, provided motivations to children to live cheerfully and full of optimism, study hard, help each other and pay respect to other people. Several figures shown within this musical drama are:

Father	Kind-hearted, possesses authority and firm.
Mother	Kind-hearted, wise and full of attention so that it seems that she is a little bit fussy.
Teacher	Kind-hearted, wise and patient.
Tono	Good-natured, diligent, helpful and possesses leadership.
Sri	Good-natured, but has sharp tongue.
Andi	Humorous, loves reading has critical thinking, and is willing to ask questions.
Rifky	Good-natured, but is often lazy to study.
Boni	Arrogant, but he finally realizes his mistakes and becomes a good boy.

### Problem Based Learning

Problem Based Learning (PBL) is one of the learning models that focuses on students. This kind of learning model starts with presenting actual problems to the students as the onset of the learning process and the problem solving approach. Silver explains the definition of problem-based learning as follows: “Similarly, problem based learning has been defined as an instructional method in which students learn through facilitated problem solving that center on a complex problem that does not have a single correct answer” (2004) in English, 2013:130). Woods explains that PBL is more than an effective environment to learn particular knowledge. Hence, PBL model is expected to help students to develop the skill in solving problems in everyday life. In PBL the learning process is the ultimate. This learning model is created in an open classroom environment where ideas exchanges occur (Amir, 2009:13).

Furthermore, Dutch stated that PBL is an instructional model that challenge students to learn and learn more, cooperating in groups to find solution for actual problems. This problem is used to relate the level of curiosity, ability and initiative of the students with the learning materials. PBL prepares students to think critically and analytically, and to look for and use appropriate source of learning (1994 in Amir, 2009:21).

Based on the discussions about PBL, there are aspects in PBL involving real problems, student-centred learning, problem-solving approaches, and learning as a group. In this musical drama training, teachers raise various problems and bring them to the training. For example, students are assigned a floor pattern formation on stage so that participants will appear in alignment by the audience. Another example is how students solve problems relating to time management in order to arrange a training schedule when preparing a performance, and at the same time, taking into consideration the fact that the students involved have other important responsibilities in school such as having exams and helping their parents. In this case, students should go through a focused training program in order to achieve the end result of the training program, in the form of a performance on stage as a final product, and it is accessible by a wider audience as a form of accountability of the training program.

### Methodology

This is an evaluative research that uses a survey approach. Respondents or informants are chosen purposively based on the objectives and goals of the research and they are: a) Teachers of junior high schools; b) junior high school students in Cilincing subdistrict, North Jakarta, the participants of the training for musical drama titled “Tribute to Ibu Soed: Senandung Bhakti Anak Negeri.” The students who joined this training come from: 1) At-Taufiq Junior High School, 2) Baburridho Junior High School, 3) Darul Ma’arif Junior High School, 4) Darussa’adah Junior High School, 5) Terpadu Junior High School.

This research was divided into two data collection periods:

- Pre-research or initial period was during March to June 2013
- Final period or program evaluation was during October to December 2013

Data collecting in this research uses a number of research instruments such as analysis of documentation (video, field notes), interviews, observation and en-quête. Three evaluators were used:

1. 85 – 100 very good
2. 70 – 84 good
3. 55 – 69 fair
4. less than 55 poor

### Evaluation Results

#### 1. Evaluation on the Context of the Objective of the Musical Drama Training Program

The aspects to focus on this context evaluation are a) the objective of the musical drama training program, and b) the implementation of the musical drama training program using the documentation studies.

a. Evaluation on the Context of the Musical Drama Training Program – The aspects to be assessed in the objective of the musical drama training program are: i) the level of conformity of the objective of musical drama training program with the policies of the institution; (ii) level of conformity of the objective of the training program with the concept of the training program; iii) the objective of the musical drama training program with the needs of the participants (needs analysis of the participants)

No.	Evaluation/Statement Aspect	Score			Percentage of maximum score
		A	B	C	
1	Level of conformity of YPBJ and IKJ policies Kesesuaian kebijakan YPBJ dan IKJ	80	90	90	86.66%
2	Level of conformity of the Training Program	75	80	85	80.00%
3	Needs analysis	80	80	85	81.66%
<b>Average of the total score</b>					<b>82.77%</b>

Figure 1. Evaluation of Context of the Musical Drama Program.

The total average of the score obtained for the assessment element is 82.77% of the maximum score. It can be concluded that the evaluation components in this context phase are good and in line with the basic of this learning program. The evaluation results are described in figure 2.

b. Evaluation of the Context of the Execution of the Musical Drama Training Program – The aspects to be assessed in terms of the context of the implementation of the musical drama training program are: (i) assessment on the planning of the musical drama training program; (ii) assessment on the level of planning with the implementation of the musical drama training program.

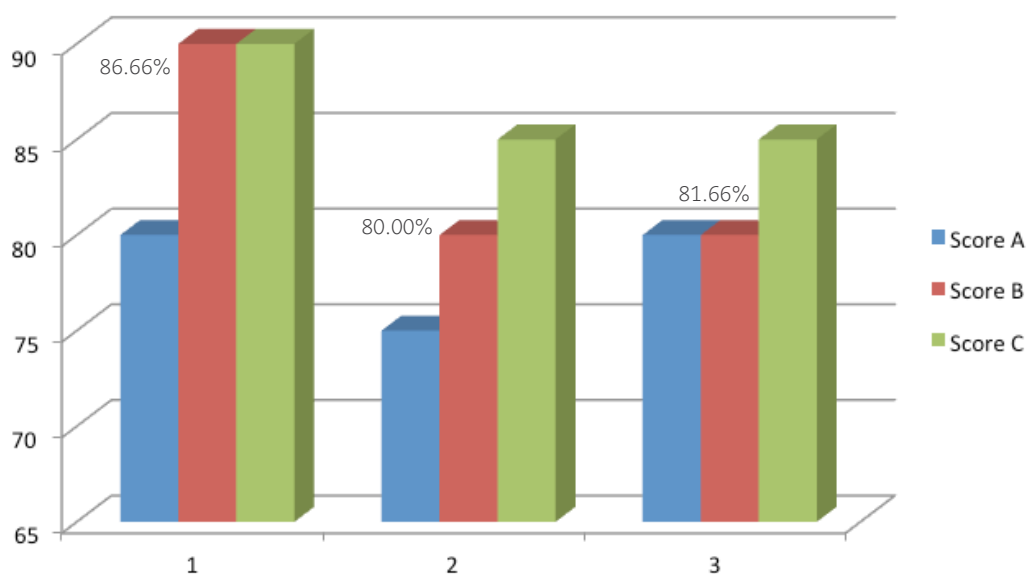


Figure 2. Evaluation of the Context of the Musical Drama Training Program.

*i. Assessment on the quality of the planning of the musical drama training program*

The quality of the planning is assessed based on the objective, implementation steps, achievement strategies, design execution, practice results achievement and costing.

No	Evaluation/Statement Aspect	Score			Percentage of the maximum score
		A	B	C	
1	Objective of musical drama training program	80	85	80	81.66%
2	Preparation of the steps of the program execution	80	85	85	83.33%
3	Preparation of the strategies for program achievement	75	80	80	78.33%
4	Designing program execution	85	85	80	83.33%
5	Achievement of practice results of the musical drama training program	80	85	85	83.33%
6	Level of correspondence of the program costing	90	85	80	85.00%
<b>Average of evaluation score total</b>					<b>82.50%</b>

Figure 3. Evaluation on the Planning Quality of the Musical Drama Program.

Of the assessment results we can, in general, conclude that all the components found in the assessment stage of the quality of the program planning were all well arranged. This is shown by the total average score, which reaches 82.50% of the maximum score. This result is described in figure 4.

*ii. Level of conformity of the planning with the execution of the musical training program*

The aspect to be assessed here is the level of correspondence of the training program execution with the number of students, level of correspondence of the instructor staff, time and materials, and with the students needs in performing arts learning.



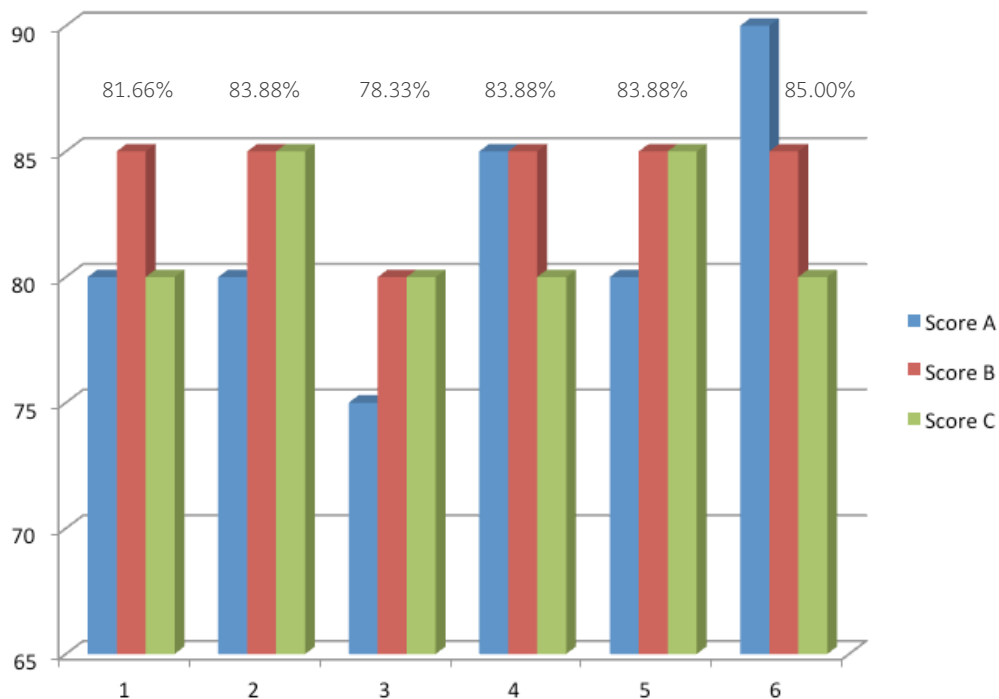


Figure 4. Diagram on the assessment of the context of musical drama training program.

No	Evaluation/Statement Aspect	Evaluation Score			Percentage of maximum score
		A	B	C	
1	Level of conformity of the number of students to the ability of program execution	75	75	75	75.00%
2	Level of conformity of the number of instructure staff to the program needs	90	85	90	88.33%
3	Level of conformity of the time arrangement to the program materials of the drama musical training	85	85	90	86.66%
4	Level of conformity of the training materials to the students' needs	90	90	90	90.00%
<b>Average of the assessment total score</b>					<b>87.04%</b>

Figure 5. Assessment on the level of conformity of the planning and the execution of the musical drama program.

From the evaluation results on the whole we can say that all components in the level of conformity between musical drama training program planning to the objective of the musical drama training program to the execution of the musical drama training program receive a very good score. This is shown by the average of the total score given by the assessor, which is very good or 85.00% of the maximum score. This assessment is described in figure 6.

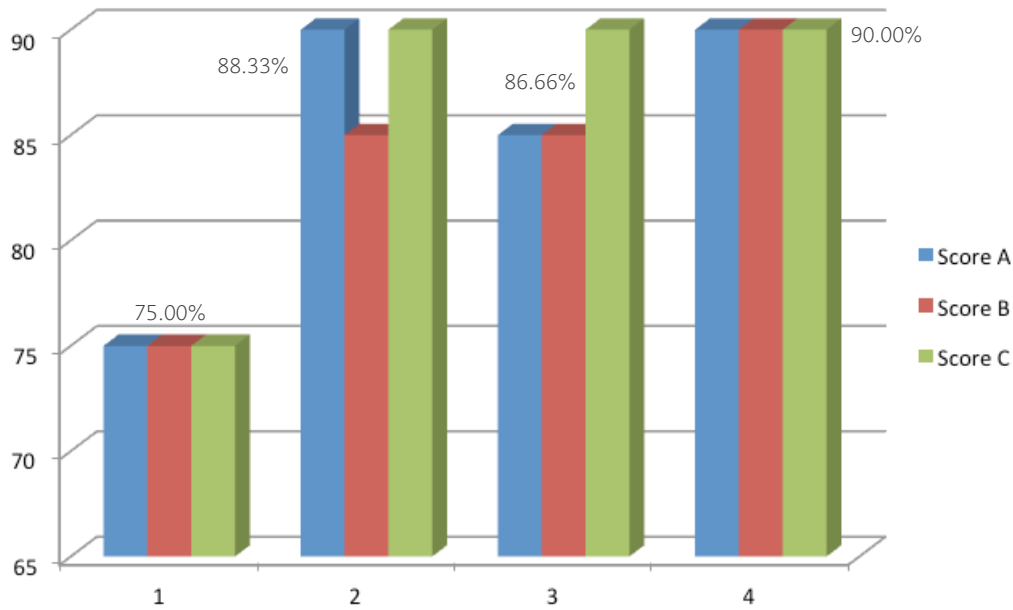


Figure 6. Assessment on the level of conformity of the planning to the musical drama program execution.

## 2. Evaluation on the Input of the Musical Drama Training Program

The aspect as the research object in this input evaluation is the quality of the resources of the input of the musical drama program. The indicator used to assess the quality of the input resources of this musical-drama training program is the quality of the instructure. This input of instructure component is assessed based on the availability of documents on the musical-drama training program relating to the instructure. This assessment is intended to unfold the quality of the instructures who will be prepared to meet the requirements to teach in the program. The following table shows in detail the quality of the instructure.

No.	Aspect of Evaluation/ Statement	Evaluation Score			Percentage of the maximum score
		A	B	C	
1	Choosing instructure	80	85	80	81.66%
2	Instructure's experience	80	80	80	80.00%
3	Instructure's educational background	80	85	85	83.33%
4	Skill background	80	85	80	81.66%
5	Ability to prepare materials/teaching materials	80	85	80	81.66%
<b>Average of the assessment total score</b>					<b>81.66%</b>

Figure 7. Assessment of the quality of the Input Resources (Instructure).

From on the total evaluation results it can be concluded that the quality of the input resource (instructure) in the musical training program is good. This is shown by the average of the total score given by the assessors to the quality of the instructure, which is 81.66% of the maximum score. The results are shown in figure 8 on the next page.

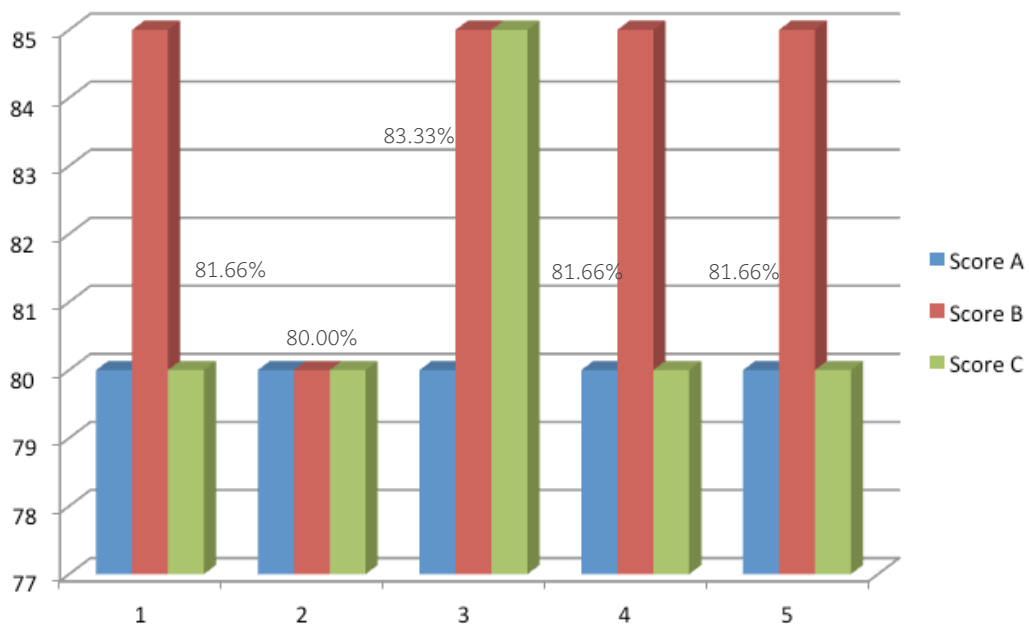


Figure 8. Diagram on the Assessment of Input Resources Quality (Instructure).

### 3. Evaluation on the Process of the Musical Drama Training Program

The evaluation of this phase is intended to reveal the effectiveness of the training process during the learning program, the components to be assessed in this phase are: a) assessment on the students figures 9 & 10 and b) assessment on the instructure figures 11 & 12.

#### Evaluation of the Students

The evaluation on the students during the process of musical drama training was conducted with the help of three observers. This evaluation is intended to unfold the students' activities during and after the training process where each statement item has score 1 to 5. The explanation of the scores is as follows:

- 1 = very poor
- 2 = poor
- 3 = fair
- 4 = good
- 5 = very good

The scores of the assessment on the students are shown in the following table:

No	Aspect of Evaluation/ Statement	Assessment Score			Average score	Percentage from maximum score
		A	B	C		
1	Collaboration among students	4	4	3	3.70	73.30%
2	Mutual Appreciation	3	4	3	3.30	66.70%
3	Actively asking questions	3	4	4	3.70	73.30%
4	Dare to communicate opinions	4	3	3	3.30	66.70%
5	Students' ability to finish their task	4	4	4	4.00	80.00%
6	Helping each other	3	4	4	3.70	73.30%
7	Being discipline to practice on time	3	3	2	2.70	53.30%
8	Using spare time effectively	3	3	2	2.70	53.30%

9	Actively participating in group discussion	3	3	3	3.00	60.00%
10	Students' presence	3	4	3	3.30	66.70%
11	Interaction in a democratic way	4	4	4	4.00	80.00%
12	Discussion activities	4	3	3	3.30	66.70%
13	Friendly atmosphere created among the students during the learning process	4	3	4	3.70	73.30%
14	Students' concentration when practicing	4	5	4	4.30	86.70%
15	Field introduction before training	4	4	4	4.00	80.00%
<b>Average of the evaluation total score</b>					<b>3.40</b>	<b>68.60%</b>

Figure 9. Assessment on the students in the musical drama training process.

From the average of the evaluation total score on the training process of the musical drama musical it shows that the total average score is 3.50 or 70.22%. Hence, it can be concluded that the activity of the participants during the training received good score. The assessment scores are described through this graph below:

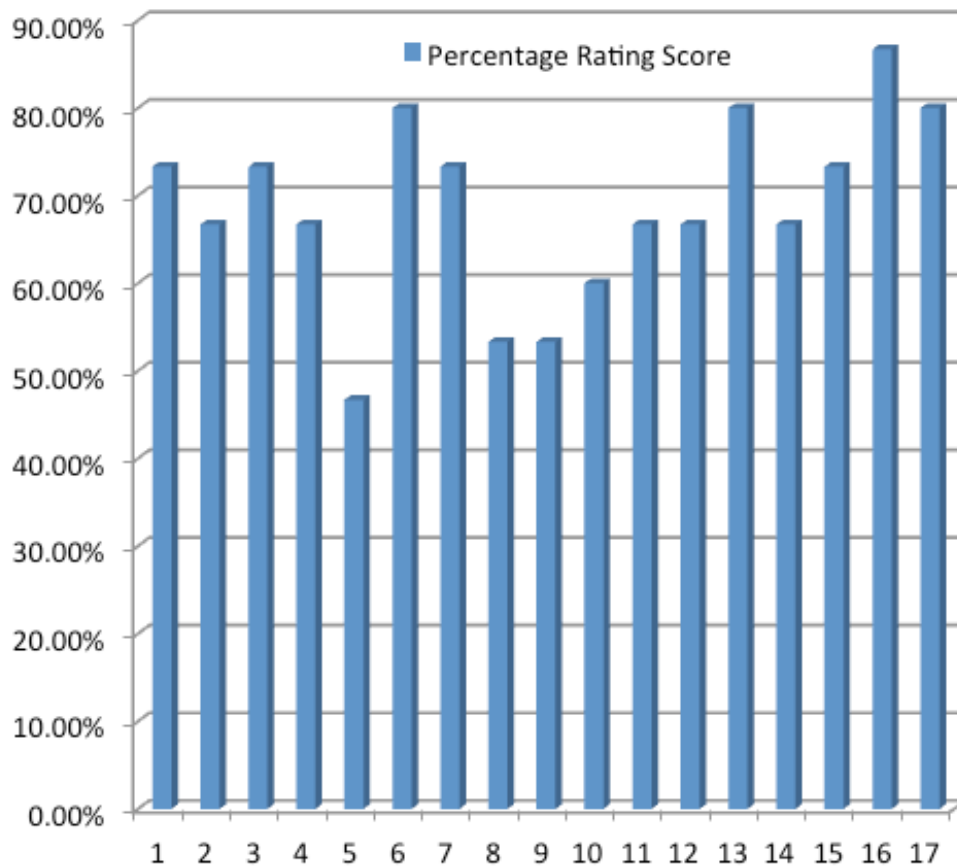


Figure 10. Chart covering the students in the musical drama training process.

**Assessment on the Instructure**

In this stage the evaluation is intended to reveal to what extent the instructure is able to communicate his/her materials in the training as required by the objective stated in the training syllabus. In addition, it is also meant as a feedback for the instructure in order to improve the quality of the training in terms of communi-

cating materials in the future. The following table describes the results based on the observations using a questionnaire:

No.	Aspect of Assessment/ Statement	Score			Average score	Percentage of maximum score
		A	B	C		
1	Training materials acquisition	3	4	3	3.30	66.70 %
2	Communicating apperception	4	3	3	3.30	66.70 %
3	Providing motivation	3	4	4	3.70	73.30 %
4	Conveying training materials	3	3	3	3.00	60.00 %
5	Providing empowerment	4	3	3	3.30	66.70 %
6	Ability to ask questions	4	3	4	3.70	73.30 %
7	Achievement of training objective	4	4	3	3.70	73.30 %
8	Sympathy level towards the participants	4	3	3	3.30	66.70%
9	Class management	3	3	3	3.00	60.00%
10	Example/illustration presentation	4	3	4	3.70	73.30%
11	Doing evaluation	3	4	4	3.70	73.30%
12	Doing follow up planning	3	3	3	3.007	60.00%
<b>Average score</b>					<b>3.40</b>	<b>68.00 %</b>

Figure 11. Assessment on the Instructures for the musical drama program.

From the results of the whole assessment on the instructure the conclusion is that in general the ability of the instructures who teach in the musical drama training program receive fair assessment because the score is only 3.40 or 68.00% of the total maximum score. The results of the assessment scoring are shown in the chart below.

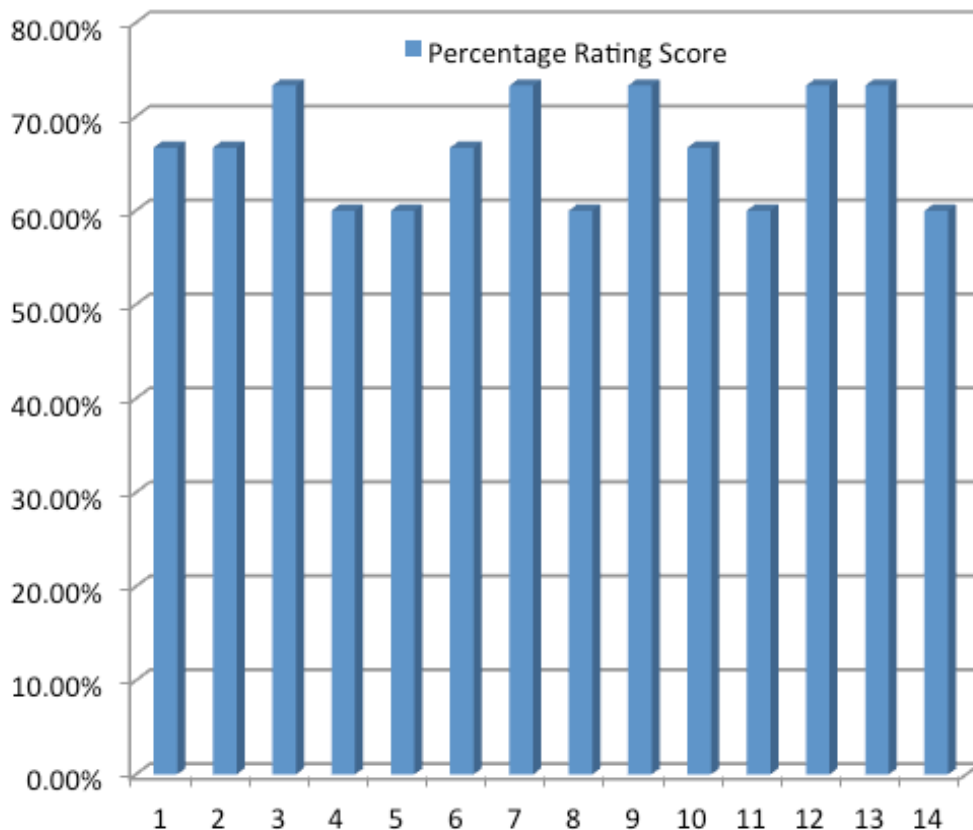


Figure 12. Chart of the Assessment on the Instructure in the musical training program.

#### 4. Evaluation on the Product of the Musical Drama Training

The product of this musical drama training program is the musical titled “Senandung Bhakti anak Negeri: Tribute to Ibu Soed” which comes in the form of the end result of a training process. Some of the scenes taken from the musical performance are presented below:



Figure 13. The setting of this musical drama is the North Jakarta area where there is a beach and harbor. The setting also shows, the untidiness of the area. The teacher (left) advises Andi not to be discouraged when he faces difficulties in his studies, and asks Tono, one of the clever students in class, to help him do his homework.



Figure 14. The children are happy welcoming the morning when they go to school. They sing the song “In the Morning” and later they also sing “Sunshine.” The messages to be conveyed to the students through these two songs is the spirit of learning in welcoming the future with optimism that it will be better, if we are prepared beforehand.



Figure 15. The children are happy welcoming the morning when they go to school. They sing the song “In the Morning” and later they also sing “Sunshine.” The messages to be conveyed to the students through these two songs is the spirit of learning in welcoming the future with optimism that it will be better, if they are prepared beforehand.

Evaluation of the production is done based on the observations of three (3) observers and interviews with the teachers who participated and through questionnaires filled out by the training participants. This product evaluation covers that of the interest of the participants in performing arts; self-actualization is about the ability of self-expression on stage and the acquisition of the materials; the collaboration among the participants in creating a performance worth seeing; the last one is that of the self discipline to arrange time and being discipline to attend to the training. The results of the assessment are shown in the following table:

Indicators	Before	After
Interest	60%	95%
Creativity (Ability to solve problem)	40%	80%
Self Actualization	50%	90%
Collaboration	50%	85%
Self-discipline	50%	90%

Figure 16. Indicators of the musical drama achievement.

### Conclusion

Given the results of the evaluation and discussion above, the evaluation of the problem based learning musical training program titled “Senandung Bhakti Anak

Negeri: Tribute to Ibu Soed” in Cilincing District, North Jakarta conducted by Jakarta Institute of the Arts in collaboration with Yayasan Putra Bahagia Jaya (YPBJ) achieves a very good assessment score. Problem-based learning has benefited the participants of the training so that after joining the training they are able to have more appreciation for arts than before attending the training sessions.

In terms of the evaluation of the context, this musical drama training program was conducted in line with the objectives of the program; all the components covered in the context of the training program execution are considered very appropriate, both in terms of quality and the level of conformity of its execution. Therefore, the evaluation components included in this context level receive good assessment as required by the principle of the training program execution. Regarding the evaluation on the input, the quality of the input resources (instructure) that provide training for this training program receive a good score. Concerning the evaluation on the process, the participants’ activities during the training receive good assessment. The whole assessment on the instructure is generally about the ability of the instructures who teach in the training program receive fair score from the assessors.

Meanwhile in terms of the evaluation of the product, it is conducted from the beginning of the training as an initial observation and the final observation at the end of the performance of “Senandung Bhakti Anak Negeri.” This evaluation also covers the preparations of the performance. This assessment of the product or the result of the training process shows that there is a significant improvement in the participants in terms of developing their interest and creativity (in problem solving), self actualization (ability of self expression on stage and materials acquisition), collaboration and self discipline.

Referring to the role of the instructure as the training leaders, in order to improve performing arts training program in the framework of the public services of the Jakarta Institute of the Arts, the recommendations are to improve the ability of the instructures in class management and to do follow up planning together with the instructure team to allow them to deal with the dynamics of the training class.

## References

- Amir, M. Taufiq. *Inovasi Pendidikan Melalui Problem Based Learning* (Educational Innovation Through Problem Based Learning). Jakarta: Kencana. 2009.
- BPS DKI Jakarta. “INFOSTAT (Informasi Statistik) Data Strategis DKI Jakarta (Date strategic of DKI Jakarta-INFOSTAT (statistic information).” [http://jakarta.bps.go.id/publikasi/2015\\_02\\_05\\_15\\_13\\_21.pdf](http://jakarta.bps.go.id/publikasi/2015_02_05_15_13_21.pdf) (accessed February 5, 2015).
- BPS Kota Administrasi Jakarta Utara. *Cilincing Dalam Angka* (Cilincing in Figures). Jakarta: BPS Jakarta Utara. 2012.
- Brinkerhoff, Roberto et al. *Program Evaluation: A Practitioner’s Guide for Trainers and Education*. Boston: Kluwer-Nijhoff Publishing. 2000.



- Chatterji, Madhabi. "Evidence on What Works: An Argument For Extended-Term Mixed Method Evaluation Designs." *Educational Research* 33 no. 9 (2004). [www.aera.net/journal](http://www.aera.net/journal). (accessed November, 2004).
- Departemen Pendidikan Nasional. *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia, Edisi Keempat* (Indonesian dictionary, Fourth Edition). Jakarta: Gramedia. 2008.
- Djaali and Farouk Muhammad. *Metodologi Penelitian Sosial* (Social Research Methodology). Jakarta: Restu Agung. 2003.
- Djaali. *Penilaian dan Pengukuran* (Assessment and Measurement). Jakarta: Gramedia. 2003.
- English, Mary C. (2013) "Supporting Student Self-Regulated Learning in Problem- and Project- Based Learning." *Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-Based Learning* 7 no. 2 (2015): <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1339&context=ijpbl> (accessed January 2, 2015).
- Fitzpatrick, Jody L., et al. *Program Evaluation: Alternative Approaches and Practical Guidelines*. Boston: Pearson, 2004.
- Lamer, John. *Project Based Learning Toolkit Series: PBL Starter Kit*. California: Buck Institute for Education, 2009.
- Monks, F. J., A.M.P Knoers and Siti Rahayu Haditono. *Psikologi Perkembangan* (Developmental Psychology). Yogyakarta: Gajah Mada University Press. 1999.
- Soekartawi. *Monitoring dan Evaluasi Proyek Pendidikan* (Monitoring and Evaluation of Education Projects). Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya. 1995.
- Stufflebeam, Daniel L., and Anthony J. Shinkfield. *Evaluation Theory, Models, and Applications*. San Francisco: John Willey and Sons, inc. 2007.
- Sudjana, Nana. *Penilaian Hasil Proses Belajar Mengajar* (Teaching and Learning Outcomes Assessment). Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya. 1999.
- Sukardi. *Evaluasi Pendidikan: Prinsip & Operasional* (Educational evaluation: Principles & Operational). Jakarta: Bumi Aksara. 2009.
- Tayibnapis, Farida. *Evaluasi Program* (Program Evaluation). Jakarta: Rineka Cipta. 2010.





# Case Study

- Composing a Thai Symphony -  
An Emblem of Victory  
Woraket Tagosa (Thailand)

# Composing a Thai Symphony – An Emblem of Victory

Woraket Tagosar<sup>+</sup> (Thailand)

## Abstract

The symphonic masterpiece “Sanyalak Haeng Chaichana” (สัญลักษณ์แห่งชัยชนะ – The Emblem of Victory) was composed to honor His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. It was written as a program symphony for standard symphony orchestra, spanning 35 minutes and is split into four movements: each movement representing each symbol of the Chaipattana Foundation’s Emblem and His Majesty’s graciousness to the Thai populace. The music also reflects the variety of urban cultures in Thailand, drawing characteristics from various genres of music namely classical, marching band, jazz, and traditional Thai music.

The first movement starts off with a fast tempo, representing “Phra Saeng Khan Chaisi” (Chaisi Royal Sword) which is interpreted as “The Power of Land.” The second movement is also fast in tempo, representing “Thong Krabi Thut” (Krabi Thut Flag) which refers to “The Cherished Possession of the People.” The tempo slows down to a moderately slow pace in the third movement, representing “Dok Bua” (Lotus Blossom) which symbolizes “The Philosophy of the Sufficiency Economy.” The tempo picks up to a moderately fast pace in the last movement, representing “Sang” (Royal Conch) which is interpreted as “The Ambrosia – Rain, Salvation for the Earth.”

**Keywords:** *Music, Music Composition, Thai Music, Symphony, Emblem, Sufficiency Economy*

<sup>+</sup> Woraket Tagosa, Grad Student, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand.

## Introduction

His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej granted the establishment of the “Chaipattana Foundation,” for which he acts as the Honorary President. He also appointed Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn to be the Executive Chairperson. Due to regulatory requirements and budget constraints faced by the government agencies, His Majesty envisaged a foundation that would serve to provide prompt, timely and necessary response to problems affecting the Thai populace through various development projects.

“Through the Chaipattana Foundation we hope to attain peace, which is the victory of this nation ... (Thailand will be) a progressive country, which will be called Chaipattana (victory of development), attaining the goals of peace, prosperity and national well-being.” *His Majesty the King’s Statement given on December 4th, 1994*

“Sanyalak Haeng Chaichana” (The Emblem of Victory) gave birth to the composer’s appreciation of His Majesty’s benevolence, the impression of the Sufficiency Economy, the national idea of supporting and promoting Thai traditional music and the composer’s participation in “The Royal Thai Air Force Concert to Benefit the Chaipattana Foundation.” As a result, the composer wishes to have this composition performed as a contribution to future research on musical compositions as well as music appreciation.

“The Emblem of Victory” was composed as a program symphony for a standard symphony orchestra. Its contents illustrate the meaning of Chaipattana Foundation’s Emblem, and His Majesty’s graciousness and dedication in developing the country.



Figure 1. Chaipattana Foundation’s Emblem which is compared to the emblem of victory, the title of this composition. The Emblem consists of four different symbols, (1) Chaisi Royal Sword, (2) Krabi Thut Flag, (3) Lotus Blossom, and (4) Royal Conch. The symbols are named for the four movements of this orchestral work.

### Composition Context

“The Emblem of Victory” was inspired by various compositional ideas, which reflect the diversity of urban cultures. It draws ideas from the genres of classical, marching band, jazz and traditional Thai music. The classical music ideas include instrumentation, form, harmony and program- The idea of marching band music is presented through the marching rhythm and the use of percussion instruments. The idea of jazz appears with the feeling of swing rhythm. The idea of traditional Thai music is showcased through traditional Thai music accent and mood. In addition, the composer was also inspired by the concept of His Majesty’s honorable songs, the Sufficiency Economy’s philosophy, the Chaipattana Foundation’s Emblem and its meanings, which were interpreted musically for the first time.

### Composition Ideas

#### First Movement - “Phra Saeng Khan Chaisi – The Power of Land”

The meaning of “Phra Saeng Khan Chaisi”

Symbolizes the augustness of royal authority and the nation’s strength to overcome difficulties in the implementation of projects, which results in the security of the kingdom.

The composer was inspired by the interpretation of “Phra Saeng Khan Chaisi – The Power of Land,” and how it relates to His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, whose name means “The Strength of the Land, Incomparable Power” as the King has always successfully supported and looked after the country and people throughout his reign. Therefore, he is the strength and power of the country. The first movement based on Sonata Allegro form in the key of Bb major lasts for nine minutes. It is the most complex movement of the whole work with different moods and rhythmic feels within the of classical music framework. The excitement, arrogance, and power of the music mirrors the power of the land. The calm and melodious melody conveys the sense of peaceful country while the complex and intense music depicts the obstacles in Thai society.



Figure 2. Theme 1.

Theme 1 is the first theme of this movement. It is a 4-bar melodic phrase composed by using mainly the tonic and dominant notes of the Bb major key with some embellished ornaments. The use of tonic (1) and dominant (5) is a reference to the shape of the Chaisi Royal Sword, the symbol for this movement in which its body is 115 cm long and 5.5 cm wide. The theme is first introduced by the second violin choir playing an octave doubling with the violas. The solid sounds of the dominant and tonic suggests the idea of the power of land.

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: Violoncello (Vc.) and Contrabasso (Cb.). The tempo is marked 'Allegro'. The score consists of five measures. The first measure starts with a dynamic marking of *mf*. The second measure has a dynamic marking of *f*. The third measure has a dynamic marking of *ff*. The fourth measure has a dynamic marking of *mf*. The fifth measure has a dynamic marking of *f*. The music is written in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The notes are: M1: Bb2, Gb2, Fb2, Eb2; M2: Eb2, D2, C2, Bb1; M3: Bb1, Ab1, Gb1, Fb1; M4: Fb1, Eb1, D1, C1; M5: Bb1, Ab1, Gb1, Fb1.

Figure 3. Theme 2.

Theme 2 is the second theme of the first movement, is presented by low string instruments, cellos and contrabasses. It is composed as a 5-bar melodic phrase playing with strong accents from moderately loud to very loud. This also depicts His Majesty's power, comparable to the power of land. The theme is based on octatonic scales, an 8-note scale constructed by alternating semi-tone and whole-tone intervals. The scale provides some dissonant sounds which imply the obstacles as mentioned earlier.

### Second Movement - "Thong Krabi Thut" - "The Cherished Possession of the People"

#### Meaning of "Thong Krabi Thut"

"Leading to the achievement of victory in the struggle to protect the kingdom and the people from every danger and misfortune."

The composer compared the meaning of "Thong Krabi Thut," a symbol use as the title for this movement, with the people's love for His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej for his tireless hard work and selfless devotion to his people since he became the King of Thailand. His Majesty King Bhumibol holds a cherished place in the hearts and minds of Thais.

The second movement was written in compound ternary form in the key of Eb major and lasts 5 minutes. There are two contrasting time signatures of 4/4 and 3/4 alternately used in the movement. The music showcases gracefulness, excitement, and lively feelings reminiscent of the King's many visits to help to his people. The musical elements of this movement are a mixture of classical, marching band, jazz, and the idea of using the word "FLAG" as a main compositional material of the first theme (theme A). By setting F = fa, A = la, and G = sol, these are matched with the 1st, 3rd, and 2nd scale degrees of a tonic scale in the key of F major. By transposing the scale to the Eb major key makes the melody notes become Eb, G, and F sequentially. Triplet rhythms are applied to the melody notes in connection with the three jagged edges of the "Thong Krabi Thut," the symbol uses for the title of this movement.

Figure 4. Theme 1, the first theme of the second movement was composed as a 2-bar melodic phrase with triplet rhythms. It is first introduced by the second violin and viola choirs along with accompaniments by cello and contrabass choirs playing accented manners and rhythmic ideas of the marching band which emphasis strong beats and some syncopations. The music is aimed to make connection with the many journeys of His Majesty the King to take care of people in remote areas of the country.





Figure 4. Theme 1.



Figure 5. Theme 2.

Figure 5. Theme 2, the second theme of this movement, was set as an 8-bar melodic phrase in the key of C minor first presented by string choirs with an exclusion of the contrabass. This sweet melody refers to the graciousness of the king and is used in contrast to the marching band concepts in the first theme.

### Third Movement - “Dok Bua”- “The Philosophy of the Sufficiency Economy”

#### Meaning of “Dok Bua”

“Represents dignity, beauty, coolness, and prosperity that will lead to the well-being, peace, and happiness of all Thais.”

The composer was inspired by the meaning of “Dok Bua” which represents dignity, beauty, coolness and prosperity, and compares it to King Bhumibol’s philosophy of the Sufficiency Economy which leads to well-being, sustainable growth, peace and happiness of all the Thais. The third movement was written in theme and variation form in the key of G major and set at a moderately slow tempo with some tempo changes, in order to sound delicate, peaceful and less intense. The whole movement would take approximately 9 minutes to perform. The composer mixed the ideas of classical, jazz, and traditional Thai music into this movement in order to reflect various cultures in Thai society with many nationalities living tighter in harmony. He sought to depict the concept of the Sufficiency Economy’s philosophy through the sense of peacefulness, happiness and sufficient living.

Figure 6. The theme is a 4-bar melodic phrase in the key of G major first presented by the oboes and flutes respectively. It was composed by utilizing the ideas of traditional Thai music based on pentatonic scales in which these musical elements represent the sufficient life styles in ancient Thai culture. The theme was

developed into five variations throughout the movement with some different musical elements for each variation, such as melodic embellishments, harmonies, instrument combinations, tempos, meters, tonalities, and musical styles. The use of theme and variations form is making connection with traditional Thai music which is traditionally composed in this musical form. Beside, European musical instruments that play Thai sound, distinguish this movement from the others and provides a unique sound.



Figure 6. Theme of the third movement.

#### Fourth Movement – “Sang” – “Ambrosia – Rain, Salvation for the Earth”

##### Meaning of “Sang”

“Symbolizes water that refreshes the land and bestows upon it fertility, peace and abundance in agricultural production and natural resources.”



Figure 7. Theme 1.

This movement was inspired by the meaning of “Sang” and the artificial rain making project. The music mainly depicts natural phenomenon such as the atmosphere of dryness, rain storms, joyfulness, abundance, and peacefulness. Like the

first movement, the last movement was also written in Sonata form, tonality of D major, and a 4/4 time signature. It is approximately 9 minutes long with a moderately fast tempo and employs musical elements such as dissonant harmonies, imitating natural sounds by using musical instruments, chromatic scales, and a number of tremolos and glissandi. The fourth movement begins in a quiet and depressive mood which depicts atmosphere of drought, winds, and rain cloud that gradually form a thunder storm before the coming rain storm.

Theme 1, the first theme of this movement, is a 3-bar melodic phrase which is derived from the word “RAIN”- R = re (D), RA = ra (Db or C#), and A = la (A). The melodic line is set in sequence of D, C#, and A respectively, therefore its motion is downward by minor second and major third intervals. It is first introduced by string choirs followed by woodwinds and brass respectively. The theme is aimed at making connection with atmosphere of rain and narrating the waiting for rain, particularly the king’s artificial rain making project, in the drought affecting Thai farmers.

Figure 8. Theme 2.

Theme 2 as the second theme of this movement is initially presented by first and second violin choirs playing in octave. It is an 8-bar melodic phrase which is made up of upward skips and leaps, followed by stepwise downward motion, both whole-tone and semi-tone intervals. This downward direction in the melody is once again depicts the falling movement of raindrops which is similar in nature to the first theme.

### Discussion

Being a Thai composer who has lived in Thailand for a long time and seen various events in Thai society, such as poverty, natural disasters, drug abuse, different political opinions, and so on, the author believes that the great power that makes Thai people to be able to survive until today is His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej’s dedications including the use of his property in establishing various foundations and the Royal Initiative Projects for helping those who have been suffering from difficulties over a long period. Among these organizations is the Chaipattana Foundation with which the author has cooperated for many years through the “The Royal Thai Air Force Concert to Benefit the Chaipattana Foundation” given by the Royal Thai Air Force Symphony Orchestra. With sense of divine grace a song was composed to honor His Majesty the King and performed in this concert, becoming the origin of the symphonic composition, Symphony “The Emblem of Victory.”

His Majesty the King is an accomplished jazz musician and composer. As a school boy in Switzerland, he read books about music and received private lessons in reading and writing classical music. When he was ten, he began studying the clarinet, graduated to the saxophone, and later the piano. At the age of 32, he was awarded honorary membership of the Vienna Institute of Music and Arts. He used to play jazz music on air on the Aw Saw Radio Station earlier in his reign. His songs can often be heard at social gatherings and are performed in concerts. His first work in 1946, entitled 'Saeng Tien' or Candlelight Blues, sparked his love for composing music and to date, has written a total of 78 songs over a period of five decades. The Emblem of Victory Symphony is making connection with the music legacy of His Majesty the King, as a testimony to his musical talents.

As evident in the composition plans, this orchestral work is not art for art's sake, it connects to not just the cultures, but also to the social progress and cultural continuity. It is an expressive cultural idiom, because it tells stories, expresses ideas and emotions, offers opinions and share life's experiences. Thus it can be compared to the Big Band Era and its grand sound and patriotic lyrics in which it reflects the American Culture of patriotism and the era of World War Two. Jazz and Blues, born in America, captures the flavors of New Orleans, of the down-trodden as a result of hard economic times. Slave songs reflect America's history of slavery, the toil it took on African American families, the pain, hardship and strong faith in God. The Emblem of Victory Symphony also did the same thing as the American music did. In other word, the music ties cultures and generations together.

There are few symphonies composed in Thailand especially program symphonies which pay tribute to His Majesty the King. For example, "Phra Mahajanaka" Symphony, a five-movement symphony, composed by Simon Wallace in 1986 commissioned by the Bangkok Symphony Orchestra to celebrate the King's 60th birthday. A further commission Fanfare and Rhapsody was performed in 2006 as part of the celebrations for His Majesty the King's 86th Jubilee. The Emblem of Victory Symphony is making connection the way that Wallace and composers in Europe did, such as the program music of Franz Liszt, Richard Strauss, Hector Berlioz, and Gustav Mahler. Moreover, this will encourage and give inspiration for other composers, and will also contribute to orchestras in Thailand needing new compositions to perform.

Some difficulties were encountered during the compositional process. For example, applying musical forms with descriptive stories to traditional sonata form, a musical structure consisting of three sections, the exposition, development, and recapitulation, which are characteristic of the first movement in a symphony. This is really unusual because sonata form is frequently associated with absolute music, music for music's sake, because it is about the form only - the development of motives or key relationships, not a poem or something outside of the music. To solve this problem, the composer had to adjust both the form and stories to fit into each other. For instance, he loosely applied the form by moving away from a Theme 1 and Theme 2 to a group of themes for Theme 1 and a group of themes for Theme

2 while also attempting to present only atmosphere not specific events. Instrumental music, since there are no words, requires the listener to have patience and concentrate in order to follow the form and conceive the implied stories.

The Symphony “The Emblem of Victory” is a music that describes diverse stories. The first movement evokes the atmosphere of political tension arising from social conflicts. The second movement brings out the atmosphere of His Majesty’s proceeding to work for solving difficulties of the people. The third movement depicts the social life of Thailand and the philosophy of the Sufficiency Economy. The last movement recreates the atmosphere of rainstorm resulting from the Royal Rain Project. To commemorate His Majesty the King’s music intelligence, various genres of music and composition materials are used coherent with the content of the stories. Jazz music conveys His Majesty’s Jazz music intelligence. Thai music expresses living in harmony with the philosophy of the Sufficiency Economy according to Thai’s traditional lifestyle. Marching music conveys the spirit of a royal procession whereas Classical music forms the basis of the composition as a whole.

Drawing together various musical genres in a composition may affect the unity of the song. In order to create unity, the author tied each movement together by composing the musical themes for each movement harmoniously. It is tied together by some common characteristic of melodic fragments such as using of three-note groups, triplet rhythms, and direction of melodic motion in the similar manners. The musical themes develop in line with standard techniques including repetitions, sequences, inversions, augmentations, diminutions and transformations.

The researcher aims to explore concepts of several musical genres applied together in the compositional process so that the music is harmoniously combined, unified, and consistent with the literature. This is a great challenge since each musical genre has a different musical style. Classical and Jazz music are obviously different in rhythms expression. While Jazz music uses the basis of swing rhythm consistently Classical music mostly evolves in a contrary way, while Thai music has a unique accent of its own. When musical genres are mixed within the same composition, the uniqueness of each genre stands out quite clearly.

However, Thai music and Jazz music appears only in the third movement; while the first, the second, and the fourth movement still follow the fundamental concepts of Classical music. The author would like to use these musical concepts to reflect the cultural diversity of society in Thailand where people of different races, religions and cultures live together despite the somewhat different ways of thinking, though they can live together peacefully under Royal protection of His Majesty the King who is ‘The Soul of all Thai People.’

### Conclusion

The findings are based on the defined scope of research. The result of this research is a new composition - a program symphony for a standard symphony orchestra. The composition is divided into 4 movements including the first movement

- Chaisri Royal Sword - “The Power of the Land” in Sonata form, the second movement – Krabi Thut Flag - “The Cherished Possession of the People” in Ternary form, the third movement - a Lotus Blossom - “The Philosophy of the Sufficiency Economy” in Theme and Variations form, and the last movement - a Royal Conch - “The Ambrosia – Rain, Salvation for the Earth” in Sonata form. The whole composition’s spanning time is approximately 32 minutes. It could be classified as music of the late Romantic style with the characteristics of romantic music including concept of program music, ethnic music, chromaticism, dissonant harmonies, use of 9, 11, 13 chords, octatonic scales, sweet and intense cantilena, as well as rhythmic vitality. This symphony especially the second movement is also influenced by twentieth century music represented by Jazz ideas, significant in twentieth century music.

The remarkable identity of The Emblem of Victory Symphony is that it is a classical music composition in a program symphony form with the content associated with the Chaipattana Foundation’s Emblem for the first time. In addition, it reflects the benevolence of His Majesty the King, promoting the love of the monarchy and sustainable living in Thailand, as well as the composer’s own musical identity. Therefore it is a new Thai creation and the true individual style of the author’s work. Furthermore, it is also a guideline for studying music composition and an alternative for listeners who want to experience the pleasure of advanced music, especially a rare new work written by a Thai composer composers that will also support the development of music in general.

### Public Concert Performances

The first movement was first performed in Auksara King Power Theater, Bangkok, Thailand on June 18 and 19, 2012 by 60 members of the Royal Thai Air Force Symphony Orchestra on “The Royal Thai Air Force Concert to Benefit the Chaipattana Foundation” conducted by Flg. Off. Pirun Jewong. See: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysS0q6cGKnE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysS0q6cGKnE).

The complete work was performed in the Music Hall, of the Art and Culture building of, Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand on January 31, 2013 by 40 members of the Royal Thai Air Force Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sqn. Ldr. Likhit Boonya. Both performances received admiration from and astonished the audience of over a thousand people. See: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=9HYgpW6AoEY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9HYgpW6AoEY), [www.youtube.com/watch?v=r8\\_ZTAhEKbM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r8_ZTAhEKbM), [www.youtube.com/watch?v=fVvSIViXlpg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fVvSIViXlpg), and [www.youtube.com/watch?v=dvWA6Udmy2U](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dvWA6Udmy2U)

### Acknowledgements

This research has been supported by many parties. The composer would like to thank the Chaipattana Foundation for permission to use the Emblem as a major focus of the composition. Thanks to the National Research Council of Thailand for providing the research grant, and thanks to the Royal Thai Air Force Music Division and the Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Chulalongkorn University for assistance during the implementation of this research project.



Figure 9. A permission letter from the Chaipattana Foundation allowing the composer to compose music based on the meaning and symbolism of the foundation’s emblem.

References

Adler, Samuel. *The Study of Orchestration* 3rd ed. New York: W.W. Norton, 2002.

Bhukhautong, Sangud. *Traditional Thai Music and a Way of Approaching Thai Music*. Bangkok: Ruankaw, 1989.

Boras, Tom. *Jazz Composition and Arranging*. Belmont, CA: Thomson/Schirmer, 2005.

Dhamabutra, Narongrit. *Contemporary Music Composition*. Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 2009.

Ford, Andrew. *Composer to Composer: Conversations About Contemporary Music*. St Leonards, NSW, Australia: Allen & Unwin, 1993.

Green, Douglass M.. *Form in Tonal Music: An Introduction to Analysis*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1965.

Kostka, Stefan M.. *Tonal Harmony: With an Introduction to Twentieth-century Music* 7th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2012.

Massey, Lance. *The Changing of Knowledge in Composition – Contemporary Perspectives*. Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 2011.

Pancharoen, Natchar. *Musical Forms and Analysis* 3rd ed. Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 2008.

Pancharoen, Natchar. *Encyclopedia of Musical Terminology* 3rd ed. Bangkok: Keskarat Press, 2009.

P.R. Publishing. *84 years Memorialized in a Country*. Bangkok: Kiddee, 2010.

Steinberg, Michael. *The Symphony: A Listener's Guide*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Tagosa, Woraket. "Composing a Thai Symphony - An Emblem of Victory (Musical Score)." Thesis, Chulalongkorn University, 2012. <http://thesis.grad.chula.ac.th/current.php?mode=show&id=5386803535> (accessed June 9, 2012).

The Chaipattana Foundation. *Background, Objectives, Implementation, Emblem*. [www.chaipat.or.th/chaipat\\_old/noframe/eng/](http://www.chaipat.or.th/chaipat_old/noframe/eng/) (accessed June 9, 2012).

The National Research Council of Thailand. *Policies and Strategies of National Research*. [www.nrct.go.th/th/#.UTwl4TdmySo](http://www.nrct.go.th/th/#.UTwl4TdmySo) (accessed September 9, 2012).





# Conference Reports

- Partnership for Change – Oslo May 2015

Kjell Skyllstad Editor in Chief

# Partnership for Change

*Oslo May 2015*

Kjell Skyllstad<sup>+</sup> Editor in Chief

## Turning the Tide

We need a new model for social change. This was the message from former Norwegian Prime Minister and Board member of PFC Kjell Magne Bondevik at the opening plenary session Turning the Tide of this years Partnership for Change conference, bringing together political and business leaders, social and cultural activists and NGO's from many countries. The space allows me to give only a short overview of main issues discussed during some of the conference plenary sessions with special connections to urban culture.

First of all, pointing to the decision by EU to adopt tools measuring social progress Michael Green, Executive of the Social Progress Imperative ([www.socialimperative.org](http://www.socialimperative.org)) agreed in the opinion shared by many conference participants that no longer could world affairs solely be governed by GDP measures of economic success or failure alone if we are going to prepare a sustainable future for our children.

But will a social progress imperative like the one we attempt to explore and promote at the Urban Research Plaza then be enough to save us from looming crises? Dr. Ernst U. Von Weizsäcker, Co-President of the Club of Rome, responding to the conference theme of sustainability, contended that international capital does not allow states (and with them local authorities) to follow social and environmental goals. As an alarming example he pointed out that half of African nations in fact live by selling nature to foreign companies.

He could of course have included Asian nations allowing land grabbers of urban and rural areas for short time profit to freely operate. After his presentation Dr. Weizsäcker repeated to me the reason for presenting this bleak picture of our future: Nations are becoming hostages to international capital. Turning the Tide becomes an overreaching imperative.

<sup>+</sup> Dr. Kjell Skyllstad, Professor Emeritus, University of Oslo, Department of Musicology, Norway.

### The City as a Changemaker

After the participation by a PFC board member at the 13th Urban Research Forum in Bangkok (March 2-3, 2015) the recent challenges facing urban development were given a special place in the PFC conference program aiming at encouraging cooperative action world wide. The aim of this plenary session was to explore new models of action locally and globally: How can we meet the challenges of urbanization while still ensuring safe and sustainable living conditions,

Thore Vestby, Vice President of the Mayors for Peace, pointed out the role mayors play in promoting urban peace, exploring non violent solutions to conflicts that causes suffering for millions of citizens throughout the world.

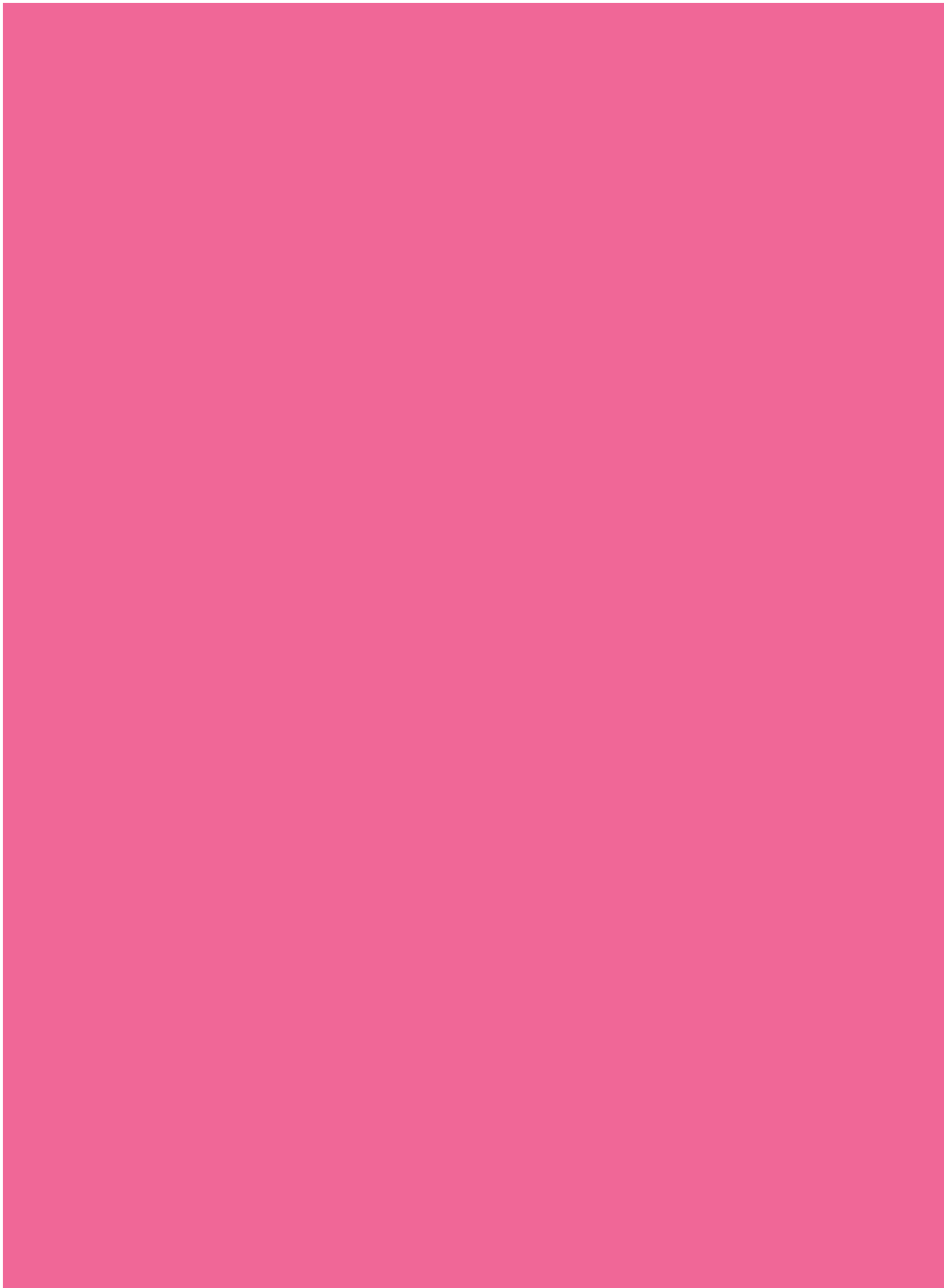
On the local plane finding a way forward will involve giving people of all groups a voice to participate in suggesting and finding solutions to urban problems and challenges. This was the background for the Novoville urban project ([www.novoville.com](http://www.novoville.com)) founded by Kyriakos Pierrakakis, Greek politician and Director of Innovation at Athens Tech College. He is likewise a Senior Analyst at “Dianeosis” a new think-tank focusing on creating a plan for sustainable growth and exploring as member of the team negotiating with the European Union a new way forward for the national economy.

Novoville is an online system which allows direct communication with city authorities about urban issues and conflicts, allowing for a new level of democratic involvement, a daring innovation promoting a new dimension in day to day democratic citizen interaction.

### Battle for Humanity - The Role of Youth in Countering Violent Extremism and Promoting Peace

This final plenary session has as somber background the alarming rise in religious extremist groups threatening security world wide. The Program explains the conference aims: »This session will focus on how States and civil society can manage and support young people as they negotiate multiple sets of complex identities and prevent violent extremism from taking root in societies near and far. One former radical Islamist who recently started an organization *Just Unity* in the Norwegian capital with the aim of de-radicalizing urban youth and helping their families was invited to present his experiences, while the keynote speaker Laila Bokhari serving as State Secretary at the Office of the Norwegian Prime Minister gave a report on the role of the Norwegian government in counteracting the recruitment of urban youth by jihadist agencies. Norway like other nations who have themselves been victim of extremist terror affecting their cities is ready to renew and strengthen nationwide efforts through all channels available to counter violent extremism and promote peace.

Joining new partnerships and exploring new ways forward in this concerted effort will be a central part of our social imperative for a sustainable future.



# Reviews

- **The Living Local Cultural Sites of Bangkok**

Kjell Skyllstad Editor in Chief

# *Book Review*

# The Living Local Cultural Sites of Bangkok

Kjell Skylstad<sup>+</sup> Editor in Chief

It is here – the most comprehensive mapping of urban cultural resources ever undertaken by any metropolitan authority, and a model for what can be achieved when administrators join forces with researchers in a spirit of close partnership. As the oldest and leading academic institution in Thailand Chulalongkorn University has through nearly a century of dedicated service upheld its mission as the Pillar of the Nation. Situated in the very center of the Nation's capital it can also be credited with functioning in an equally dedicated role as an urban cultural engine.

Our JUCR readers will have observed an express wish of our editorial committee to attempt to bring living examples of the cultural and social interaction between city and university into focus, not least in times of crises that put alliances and commitments to the test, like the recent Bangkok flooding. As part and parcel of this interaction one will find a program of research in the cultural and social sciences, more often than not transcending disciplinary boundaries. It is with special pleasure we acknowledge the research commission from the Bangkok administrative authorities that made this volume possible.

As is known by our readers the Urban Research Plaza of Chulalongkorn University and Osaka City Universities has been leading out in promoting the kind of research needed to give direction to city planning in times of rapid urbanization causing radical cultural change. Recognizing the challenges and risks of a global trend toward unimpeded unsustainable urban development the URP and the Thai

<sup>+</sup> Dr. Kjell Skylstad, Professor Emeritus, University of Oslo, Department of Musicology, Norway.

Music Research Center of Excellence under the leadership of Professor Bussakorn Binson accepted the call to engage in a project of mapping the cultural resources of all of Bangkok's 50 urban districts.

In a direct way this project also is a fulfillment of the strategic developmental aims announced by UNESCO for the Asia Pacific region centering on six strategic pillars.

- Protection of endangered and minority cultures
- Empowerment of the culture profession
- Grass-roots management of cultural resources
- Culture conflict resolution
- Sustainable cultural tourism and ecotourism
- Cultural industries and creative enterprises

Overall, cultural mapping has been recognized by UNESCO as an indispensable tool in elucidating natural and cultural landscapes. The present publication can be seen as fulfilling in a very unique way the UNESCO objectives on all areas considered crucial in a program to secure cultural continuity. Building on information from individual culture bearers and institutional caretakers the book presents an inclusive and comprehensive map of the cultural life of all 50 Bangkok districts in five categories based on a holistic view of culture as ingrained in the daily life of a city.

1. Performing Arts
2. Traditions
3. Sports and Recreation
4. Craftsmanship
5. Domestic Arts

An unique research project such as the one underlying this exceptional volume deserves recognition far beyond the confines of a city and a nation.

The Living Local Cultural Sites of Bangkok, 405 pp.  
Culture, Sports and Tourism Department, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration,  
Bangkok 2011.  
ISBN 078-616-272-009-3



## Journal Policy

### About JUCR

The Journal of Urban Culture Research is an international, online, peer-reviewed journal published biannually in June & December by the Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts of Thailand's Chulalongkorn University in conjunction with the Urban Research Plaza of Osaka City University, Japan. JUCR offers its readers two categories of content. One is a window into the latest international conferences and reviews of related sources – books etc. along with guest articles, special features and case studies. Secondly, its main core is a range of peer-reviewed articles from researchers in the international community.

### The Aims of JUCR

This journal on urban culture aims at establishing a broad interdisciplinary platform for studies of cultural creativity and the arts that brings together researchers and cultural practitioners to identify and share innovative and creative experiences in establishing sustainable and vibrant, livable communities while fostering cultural continuity. The journal embraces broad cultural discussions regarding communities of any size as it recognizes the urban community's rural roots. JUCR encourages researchers and the full range of artists in visual arts, creative arts, music, dance, theater together with those in urban studies and planning to seek cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural practices.

JUCR has the objective of stimulating research on both the theory and practice of fine and applied arts in response to social challenges and environmental issues as well as calling for solutions across the creative realms. Moreover, JUCR supports advocacy processes, improvements in practices, and encourages supportive public policy-making related to cultural resources. JUCR intends to offer readers relevant theoretical discussions and act as a catalyst for expanding the knowledge-base of creative expression related to urban culture.

### Review Process

1. JUCR promotes and encourages the exchange of knowledge in the field of fine and applied arts among scholars worldwide. Contributions may be research articles, reports of empirical studies, reviews of films, concerts, dances, and art exhibitions. Academic papers and book reviews are also acceptable. Articles are typically only considered for publication in JUCR with the mutual understanding that they have not been published in English elsewhere and are not currently under consideration by any other English language journal(s). Occasionally, noteworthy articles worthy of a broader audience that JUCR provides, will be reprinted. Main articles are assessed and peer reviewed by specialists in their relevant fields. Furthermore to be accepted for publication, they must also receive the approval of the editorial board.

2. To further encourage and be supportive of the large diverse pool of authors whose English is their second language, JUCR employs a 3-stage review process. The first is a double-blind review comprised of 2-3 international reviewers experi-

enced with non-native English writers. This is then followed by a non-blind review. Thirdly, a participative peer review will, if needed, be conducted to support the selection process.

3. All articles published in the journal will have been fully peer-reviewed by two, and in some cases, three reviewers. Submissions that are out of the scope of the journal or are of an unacceptably low standard of presentation will not be reviewed. Submitted articles will generally be reviewed by two experts with the aim of reaching an initial decision within a two-month time frame.

4. The reviewers are identified by their solid record of publication as recommended by members of the editorial board. This is to assure the contributors of fair treatment. Nominations of potential reviewers will also be considered. Reviewers determine the quality, coherence, and relevancy of the submissions for the Editorial Board who makes a decision based on its merits. High relevancy submissions may be given greater prominence in the journal. The submissions will be categorized as follows:

- Accepted for publication as is.
- Accepted for publication with minor changes, no additional reviews necessary.
- Potentially acceptable for publication after substantial revision and additional reviews.
- Article is rejected.
- A notice of acceptance will be sent to submitting authors in a timely manner.

5. In cases where there is disagreement between the authors and reviewers, advice will be sought from the Editorial Board. It is the policy of the JUCR to allow a maximum of three revisions of any one manuscript. In all cases, the ultimate decision lies with the Editor-in-Chief after a full board consultation.

6. JUCR's referee policy treats the contents of articles under review as privileged information and will not be disclosed to others before publication. It is expected that no one with access to articles under review will make any inappropriate use of its contents.

7. The comments of the anonymous reviewers will be forwarded to authors upon request and automatically for articles needing revision so that it can serve as a guide. Note that revisions must be completed and resubmitted within the time frame specified. Late revised works may be rejected.

8. In general, material, which has been previously copyrighted, published, or accepted for publication elsewhere will not be considered for publication in the main section of JUCR.

9. The review process shall ensure that all authors have an equal opportunity for publication. The acceptance and scheduling of submissions for publication in the journal shall not be impeded by additional criteria or amendments to the procedures beyond those listed above.

10. The views expressed in articles published are the sole responsibility of the authors and not necessarily shared by the JUCR editors or Chulalongkorn University.

### Submission Requirements

- Worthy contributions in the urban culture arena are welcome from researchers and practitioners at all stages in their careers. A suggested theme is announced prior to each issue.
- Manuscripts should generally not exceed 7,000 words including the abstract and references. Tables, figures, and illustrative material are accepted only when necessary for support.
- Manuscripts need to use our template for submission. Please download from our website's submission guidelines page. Details are described in the top half of the first page with sample text following. Documents not using the template will be returned for reformatting.
- All manuscripts are required to include a title, abstract, keywords, author's byline information, an introduction and conclusion section along with a Chicago formatted reference list. Manuscripts with existing footnotes and in-text references may retain them as a resource for readers, but are not required. Footnotes are to be relocated as non-standardized endnotes listed before references.
- Manuscripts should have all images, figures, and tables numbered consecutively. Reference lists need to conform to The Chicago Manual of Style ([www.chicagomanualofstyle.org](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org)) as detailed in our template. We recommend the free online formatter for standardizing ones references. See [www.bibme.org](http://www.bibme.org).
- Each author should send with their manuscript an abstract of 150 words or less together with a submission form providing their biographical data along with a maximum of six keywords.
- All manuscripts submitted for consideration need to be accompanied by a completed and signed Manuscript Submission form found on our website.
- Authors authorize the JUCR to publish their materials both in print and online while retaining their full individual copyright. The copyright of JUCR volumes is retained by Chulalongkorn University.
- Authors should strive for maximum clarity of expression. This point cannot be overstated. Additionally, authors need to bear in mind that the purpose of publication is the disclosure and discussion of artistic knowledge and innovations that expands the realm of human creativity and experience.

### Contact Information

Journal of Urban Culture Research (JUCR)

c/o Managing Editor

Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts

Chulalongkorn University

Phayathai Road, Pathumwan

Bangkok, Thailand 10330

Voice/Fax: 662-218-4582

Email: [jucr.chula@yahoo.com](mailto:jucr.chula@yahoo.com)

Website: [www.cujucr.com](http://www.cujucr.com)

## Criteria and Responsibilities for Editorial Board Membership

### Overview

The Editorial Board is comprised of members who have significant expertise and experience in their respective fields. Editorial Board Members are appointed by the Executive Director with the approval of at least 60% of the Editors and Editorial Board.

### Eligibility Criteria

The eligibility criteria for appointment shall include:

- Demonstrated scholarly expertise and ethical leadership in an area not over represented on the existing Editorial Board.
- Published three or more papers in scholarly publications.
- Demonstrated excellence in the review process, based on independent evaluations of the Editors and Associates.
- Stated commitment to contribute to issues affecting the management of JUCR.

### Responsibilities

Members of the Editorial Board are directly accountable to the Managing Editor.

Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Provide input on editorial needs and review manuscripts as requested.
- Complete assigned reviews in a timely fashion. Offer mutually respectful and constructive review of manuscripts to assist in providing the highest quality of papers.
- Maintain confidentiality and objectivity with regard to manuscripts and the JUCR review process.
- Participate in the evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of JUCR so as to help sustain the highest level of excellence.
- Once appointed to the Editorial Board, members are encouraged to submit at least one paper during their tenure.

### Nomination Process

Nominations are submitted in writing (via email or post) and addressed to the Editor in Chief or any member of the Editorial staff. Candidates/applicants must submit a CV including a statement addressing her/his interests and suitability for Board membership. JUCR assumes the general readership would be able to identify the candidate by her/his reputation for scholarship in an established line of inquiry.

When a candidate is approved by majority vote of the current JUCR board members, she/he will be invited to serve by the Editor in Chief for a specified term of three years. The Dean of Chulalongkorn University's Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts in turn will finalize the appointment. Continued membership of the Editorial Board will be reviewed every three years by a member of the Editorial Board with a decision about candidates submitted annually. The number of Editorial Board members will not exceed 20 unless otherwise agreed upon.





Journal of Urban Culture Research

**The Journal of Urban Culture Research (JUCR)** is an international, online, peer-reviewed journal published biannually by the Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts of Thailand's Chulalongkorn University in conjunction with the Urban Research Plaza of Osaka City University, Osaka, Japan.

JUCR aims at establishing a broad interdisciplinary platform for studies of cultural creativity and the arts that brings together researchers and cultural practitioners to identify and share innovative and creative experiences in establishing sustainable and vibrant, livable communities while fostering cultural continuity. The journal embraces broad cultural discussions regarding communities of any size as it recognizes the urban community's rural roots.

JUCR encourages researchers and the full range of artists in visual arts, creative arts, music, dance, theater together with those in urban studies and planning to seek cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural practices.

**Journal of Urban Culture Research (JUCR)**

Email: [jucr.chula@yahoo.com](mailto:jucr.chula@yahoo.com)  
Voice/Fax: 662 - 218 - 4582  
Website: [www.cujucr.com](http://www.cujucr.com)

