



## The Creative Choreography for Nang Yai (Thai traditional shadow puppet theatre) Ramakien, Wat Ban Don, Rayong Province

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### Abstract

This paper aims at studying Nang Yai performances and how to create modernized choreography techniques for Nang Yai by using Wat Ban Don dance troupes. As Nang Yai always depicts Ramakien stories from the Indian Ramayana epic, this piece will also be about a Ramayana story, performed with innovative techniques—choreography, narrative, manipulation, and dance movement. The creation of this show also emphasizes on exploring and finding methods of broader techniques, styles, and materials that can be used in the production of Nang Yai for its development and survival in modern times.

**Keywords:** NangYai, Thai traditional shadow puppet theatre, Choreography, Performing arts

### Introduction

*Nang Yai* or Thai traditional shadow puppet theatre, the oldest theatrical art in Thailand, is an ancient form of storytelling and entertainment using opaque, often articulated figures in front of an illuminated backdrop to create the illusion of moving images. Such performance is a combination of dance and puppetry, including songs and chants, reflections, poems about local events or current interest, and hundreds of different distinctive silhouette characters.

Nang Yai is a form of shadow puppet performance that originated in Thailand. *Nang* is a Thai word for animal hide, and *Yai* means large—added to the name to suggest the size of the pieces of animal hide used in the shows in order to distinguish this particular type of show from other Thai shadow puppet performances.[1]

Nang Yai is viewed as one of Thailand's most elevated forms of entertainment, since the show involves many kinds of arts, including the arts of handicraft in the making of the perforated puppets, literary art in the creation of the show's

narration and dialogues, dance and performing art in the maneuver of the puppets along with musical art—the live music accompanying the shows.

Shadow performance with puppets made from animal hide is a form of world entertainment that can be traced back to ancient times, and is believed to be approximately 2,000 years old, having been evolved through much adjustment and change over time. Many countries, such as India, China, and Egypt, have had shadow puppet shows for over a thousand years. Nang Yai is believed by most academics to have originated in Thailand at the time when Hinduism and Buddhism from India—along with the country's performances and music—began to proliferate in Southeast Asia. One of the historical evidences showing an ancient Indian shadow puppet performance is entitled "Thereethaka" (Song of the Nuns), and can be found in Pali *Buddhist scriptures*.[2]

There are many other episodes of the shadow puppet show ---for instance--- called "Chayanata"—which can be found in *Mahabharata*

*scriptures*. The most popular stories used in the shows come from a number of episodes from Mahabharata and Ramayana (in Thai *Ramakien*). This cultural transfer from India to Thailand through the Malayu peninsula and Java (the present Indonesia) began in 6 to 7 B.E., and continued until the Sri Wichai era in 13 to 18 B.E. However, as Thai Nang Yai is also very similar to Cambodia's "Sabak" (literally, hide) shows[3], some academics believe that the Nang Yai tradition has been passed down from Cambodia as well, even though the origin of this transfer from Cambodia is not clearly cited.

The Nang Yai shows have, since then, evolved and incorporated aspects that are uniquely Thai. Nang Yai is believed to have thrived for over 500 years in Thailand[4], with a trace of its existence found during the Sukhothai era. A reference to the show was seen on paper in the Palace Law during the reign of King Barom Trai Lokka Nat in 2001 B.E. (1458 A.D.), as mentioned in Samutkot Kamchan during the reign of King Narai Maharaj (1656–1688). The Nang Yai tradition has survived until the Rattanakosin era --the present era--. The existing evidence of the ancient Nang Yai, nevertheless, is only in written forms; there are no puppets left to be found. The only puppets present are those 150 to 200 years old, all created during the Rattanakosin era. There are currently only three Nang Yai troupes in Thailand: Nang Yai Wat Khanon of Ratcha Buri Province, Nang Yai Wat Sawang Arom of Singha Buri Province, and Nang Yai Wat Chom Udom--now operating at Wat Ban Don, or Ban Don Temple, in Rayong Province.

The history of Nang Yai Wat Ban Don can be found in documents and research studies, as well as in interviews with people related to Nang Yai, including Phra Khru Burakhet Wutthikorn--the abbot of Ban Don Temple--and the descendants of Nang Yai masters. The 200 or so shadow puppets used in the Nang Yai Wat

Ban Don shows were approximately 200 years old when Phraya Sri Samutpokchaichitsongkram, then mayor of Rayong Province, purchased them while they were used in the shows in Patthalung, a southern province of Thailand. The puppets are believed to have been created by master craftsmen of the royal court during the Ayutthaya era. A master puppeteer, *Khru* or *Nai Rong*, was hired to teach the local people about the art forms, who have inherited the puppets until the present day.[5]

In the late 1880's, most of the puppeteers in Rayong Province, led by Khru Pradit, the master puppeteer, and musicians, were from Sak Yai Village near Ban Don Temple. As the temple was the center of the community, the puppeteers offered the troupe to the temple, so that it was convenient for the staff to rehearse and offer shows in the surrounding areas. The puppets became the Ban Don Temple's heritage and thrived until changes in the people's values regarding entertainment forms, wars, political situations, and the deaths of master puppeteers drove Nang Yai out of popularity. In 1980, however, the shadow puppet shows were revived by the province's poet Mr. Amnat Maneesang and the townspeople. Nang Yai was seen once again when an Outstanding Village Award project was created and when the Chueng Nuen Sub-district local people in Rayong began to host the shows on various occasions, ranging from village festivals to the Thai New Year Songkran festival and the 200-Year Anniversary of Rattanakosin Celebration. The Nang Yai shows became more widely recognized with the use of television broadcasts, and the Nang Yai Wat Ban Don Conservation Committee was established in 1981.[6]

### Aims

The present research entitled *Creative Choreography for Nang Yai (Thai shadow puppet theatre) Ramakien, Wat Ban Don, Rayong Province*, was initially aimed at creating a new

Nang Yai–Thai shadow puppet–show to represent Thailand’s traditional puppet theatre arts at the 2008 International Puppet Theatre Festival in Lund, Sweden, and at the University of Athens in Greece. The project was inspired by the creators’ hope to conserve and help the existing Nang Yai tradition to survive and thrive in the contemporary period. The show was choreographed by researcher Sun Tawalwongsri.

This newly–created show is experimental and iconoclastic. The episodes and characters provide the audience with an opportunity to see themselves through the mirror of mythic history: to view their current situation through timeless perspectives. Studies show that at the beginning of Thai shadow puppetry and dance performance, a ceremony called *Wai Khru* was held to pay respect to teachers and to worship deities in accordance with Brahman tradition. The ceremony was also meant to boost the morale of the Nang Yai artists and craftsmen.

The show itself consists of the following parts:

1. With ritual background music by the ensemble, the ceremony called Boek Na Phra is performed to pay respect to teachers and deities.

2. The ceremony is followed by a prologue, a popular one being the *Chab Ling Hua Kham* story, a tale of two monkeys—one black, the other white. The black monkey always gets into mischief, causing constant problems and fights. Despite the white monkey’s attempts to teach him to behave, he never listens; and in desperation, the white monkey ties the black one up and takes him to the hermit. The hermit teaches him to turn over a new leaf and unties him. The two monkeys then become good friends.

3. The main performance is a *Ramakien* story with four episodes: Rama, the hero of the epic and Sita, the epitome of female purity and virtue; the kidnapping of Sita by the demon Ravana (Thotsakan); the powerful and devoted

allies, Hanuman and the monkey armies; and Rama’s chariot.

Recent studies have discovered that Nang Yai is a dying art form that needs to be restored. Therefore, this research examines the revival and conservation of the Thai shadow puppet theatre. In order to do so, the researcher integrates new choreography technique into the show so that Nang Yai can be communicated to the present–day audience more suitably.

## Results

Nang Yai Wat Ban Don is comprised of the following major elements:

1. The screen. The older–generation Nang Yai puppets were maneuvered between a piece of white cloth and a bonfire, the audience watching the shadows of the puppets on the screen. As time passed, lanterns in front of the screen and, afterwards, light bulbs and spotlights, were used for the shows. Lamps and modern bulbs create hard, stiff light, unlike the light from a real fire, which moves as it is blown by the wind—making the shadows move and the characters depicted on the screen appear livelier. The modernization of lighting, nonetheless, has enabled development of the performance such as allowing puppeteers to, at times, appear on stage in front of the screen and perform behind the screen at other times. This new technique has changed the form of Nang Yai—from showing the shadows only to offer the audience the beauty of the combination of the performing art and dance of the puppeteers and the art of the original puppet shows—creating a perfect, new art form.

2. The puppets. The large carefully–perforated animal hide puppets represent a wonderful aesthetic form of handicraft. There are from 100 to 400 puppets used in one troupe, so the shows can tell a great number of stories. The large number of puppets lead to the categorization of the puppets, as follows *Nang Khru*–god

puppets or master puppets, *Nang Mueng*—setting puppets, *Nang Wai*— paying puppets, *Nang Khanejon*—walking puppets, *Nang Nga*— flying or charging the enemy puppets, *Nang Chap*—fighting puppet and miscellaneous puppets.[7]

The puppets can also be categorized according the time of the shows: day puppets and night puppets. The day puppets are colorful, while the night puppets are monochrome, and sometimes painted all black. As the day puppets are used in shows involving performance in front of the screen, they usually are colored so that they can be seen clearly. These puppets' colors can sometimes be seen on their shadows when they are placed behind the screen as well.[8]

3. Costumes. The first generations of the Nang Yai Wat Ban Don troupe wore traditional local clothes, the puppeteers in white shirts and the *jong kraben* (traditional pants) of various colors as available, and a piece of pink cloth around their heads and waists. The current costumes are comprised of black turtleneck, long-sleeve shirts and black *jong kraben*, elegantly decorated with golden threads. This style of costumes is created by the researcher for the purpose of ascribing the main focus of the show to the puppets, as inspired by other puppetry performances that employed black clothes for puppeteers so that the audience's interest is on the puppets, with the idea that colorful clothing would not help to create the unity of the show; in terms



Figure 1: The prologue called Chap Ling Hua Kham

of visual arts, the puppeteers' varied color clothing might be reflected on the screen, thus taking the focus away from the puppets.

4. The musical ensemble used for Nang Yai is called *Wong Pi Phat*,[9] usually an orchestra of traditional Thai musical instruments with five leading instruments: *Pi Nok* (a small Thai flute), *Klong Tat* (tympani), *Tapon* (a two-sided drum horizontally laid on the floor and drummed by hand), *Ranad Aek* and *Ranad Thum* (Thai xylophones), and *Khong Wong* (bass gongs), with *Ching* as a time keeper. The music used in the shows is unique, and helps to portray the actions and feelings of the characters. There are different kinds of music for different actions, such as walking, running, flying, fighting, casting miracles, weeping, and gladness. The puppeteers are to dance in accordance with the music, and the musicians are to observe the movements of the puppeteers before they play a different song or stop. It is crucial that the narrators, the puppeteers, and the musicians, coordinate well, which will in turn display the unity and the beauty of the show.

5. Narrator and scripts. There was only one narrator in the research of Nang Yai Wat Ban Don. The narrator was a male, with a unique voice, and could be able to adjust his voice and the character's voice based on the characters and situations he was narrating. The script was adjusted from its original *Khon* (masked dance dramas) script so that it had a variety of poetic flavors. The show was divided into four episodes: *Rama-Sita*, *Tam Kwang*, *Khunpon Wanon*, and *Chom Ratcharot*.

6. Puppeteers. The selection of puppeteers can be done by either recruiting the people available in the Nang Yai show area, or those that have had experience performing *Khon* and *Lakhon* (dance dramas). There are eight male youth puppeteers in the present Nang Yai Wat Ban Don show, who have previously had some dancing and

puppet maneuvering skills. Most of the puppeteers live near the Ban Don Temple. It is unfortunate that performing for the Nang Yai shows cannot be made as a career because there are only a few occasions on which the shows can be performed, and the puppeteers, for this reason, are required to be very dedicated and patient to succeed.

The eight apprentices were trained to maneuver all characters, which were divided into four major groups: heroes, heroines, demons, and monkey warriors. The initial stage of training involved warming up and stretching the muscles by using *Ten Sao* (post dance): each person facing a post or a handle, bending his knees, opening his knees outward, and lifting each foot off the ground and alternating the left and right feet rhythmically and continuously until they completely perspired. This practice would help the performers to have strong legs and to dance for a lengthy period of time without feeling exhausted. The puppeteers were also trained to practice making *Liem* or angles of the outward direction of the knees. The angles of the knees are a very important element of the dance, as each angle of the knees and legs, as well as the positions of the feet, would represent a different character in the show.

After the apprentices became skilled in the *Ten Sao* and *Liem* practice, they were then trained to do other dance techniques; for instance, the *Kep Thao* or *Soi Thao*—standing on the tip of their feet, slightly lifting their heels, stepping down, and quickly alternating left and right feet in the same place or as one is moving either to the side or around in a circle. The apprentices were trained to follow the rhythms of constant as well as faster and slower music, and to step to the left, to the right, forward, and backward correctly. The next step was to practice holding the puppets by, initially, holding inverted U-shape bamboo sticks so that the apprentices' arms and shoulders were strong enough to handle the real puppets' weight for an extended amount of time.

They learned techniques for their wrists and for moving, shaking, and swaying different kinds of puppets. Additionally, they learned to form an acrobatic pyramid (standing on top of each other), to somersault, and to use many other techniques for the show. When the apprentices were familiar with the basic techniques, they were subsequently allowed to maneuver the real shadow puppets, beginning from such easy-to-handle puppets as the clown and other puppets that did not require many special dancing techniques, to the puppets of the prologue, such as the white monkey and the black monkey, and the puppets of the main stories from Ramayana.

The apprentices were to both combine and distinguish their senses for the training, including where to put their feet, knees, legs, shoulders, body, and even spine. They had to use different techniques for their wrists in maneuvering the puppets according to the puppet categories, and position their bodies correctly no matter in what directions they were moving. When the apprentices were able to improvise their movements in accordance with the music and narration, they would then be deemed true puppeteers.

The conventional Nang Yai show can be divided into three parts, as follows:

1. *Boek Na Phra or the Wai Khru Nang ceremony*

Nang Yai is considered a high entertainment form and, therefore, one of its traditional beliefs is respect for the god masters. Prior to any Nang Yai show when a new screen is put up, a ceremony to pay homage to the god masters and to set up the theater is carried out. In the ceremony called *Boek Na Phra*, every person related to the show, including the puppeteers and musicians gather to pay homage to the Nang Yai god masters and the music god masters. The hermit puppet and the Shiva and Vishnu puppets are placed against the screen, along with the oblation and other devices, and the narrator begins

praying to the gods and goddesses and masters. After each verse, puppets are maneuvered and the scripts are narrated. There are three verses. When the narration is over, the puppeteers maneuver the Shiva and Vishnu puppets off stage, and the hermit puppet is then maneuvered as if the puppet were preaching or blessing the attendants before leaving. This *Wai Khru* part of the Nang Yai Wat Ban Don show employs an abridged version of the three original verses for the purpose of conciseness, the entire part lasting approximately 10 minutes. Only the hermit puppet is used. The ceremony is led by the abbot of Ban Don Temple—Phra Khru Burakhet Wutthikorn.

## 2. The prologue called *Chap Ling Hua Kham*

The *Chap Ling Hua Kham* story is the only existing prologue story that has been popular until the present day. The prologue is a part of the Nang Yai show used to indicate to the audience that the Nang Yai show is coming up. During the prologue, the *Pi Phat* ensemble plays exciting music, and one of the most fascinating performances is the *Pi* (Thai flute) Solo. When the ensemble plays the *Chuet Nok* song, two puppets appear, fighting on the side of the screen, one being a white monkey and the other a black monkey. Each of the monkeys takes turns moving forward to the other in front of the screen and, when the two monkeys approach, they disappear into the back while the first *Nang Chap* or *Chap*—the fighting scene puppet—appears displaying a fight between the white and the black monkeys in one puppet. The puppet is then maneuvered from the back, moving on past the front of the screen before disappearing into the back again. The individual monkey puppets appear again, fighting, before the second *Chap* appears, followed by the individual monkey puppets and the third *Chap*.

The choreography of this part of the show was designed based on the puppeteers; i.e. the six

puppeteers maneuvering individual puppets were paired so that they are different in age and size, beginning from the smallest and youngest to the largest puppeteers. The puppeteers for the *Nang Chap* were more skilled, each person maneuvering each puppet. The three fighting dances differ, from the easiest to more difficult dances. The age division is designed to show that the fight takes a long period of time, and each *Chap* dance is more fun and exciting in their use of rhythms, speed, an acrobatic pyramid, and the puppeteers' dancing improvisation.

At the end of the third *Chap*, the white monkey ties the black monkey up and takes him to the hermit for a sentence. The white monkey's wish is for the hermit to execute the black monkey for his mischief, but the hermit preaches to the black monkey, leading to his repentance, and he finally becomes a good monkey. The hermit does not punish the black monkey—implying to the audience the moral lessons of compassion and forgiveness. The story of the prologue conveys the Buddhist belief in the victory of goodness over wrongfulness. At the end of the prologue, it is a custom for the narrator to introduce the Nang Yai main story to the audience.

## 3. The Nang Yai main story

The most popular stories used in the Nang Yai shows are episodes from *Ramayan*, as the stories conform with the Thai belief in respecting teachers and honoring the royal institution. Nang Yai is a master performance and has been used on the country's major occasions and in royal ceremonies. The narrations in Nang Yai are also used for the *Khon* performances. The script for the Nang Yai Wat Ban Don show was compiled and created by Mr. Amnat Maneesang, who revived the Nang Yai traditions, and he did so by learning about old scripts from living Nang Yai masters.

There were originally many scripts for Nang Yai Wat Ban Don shows that were

inherited from the past. Many of the *Nang Rong Yai* scripts, however, were destroyed in a flood, and the remaining scripts did not constitute a complete show. The remaining scripts were then used in the restoration of the Nang Yai shows, and were initially made into four episodes: the Origin of the Princes (Lava and Kusha, Rama's sons), the Ashvamedha Yagya, the Fight Between the Two Sons and Lakshmana (Rama's brother), and the Reunion of the Father and Sons. The scripts were created by studying the existing puppets at the temple, and were believed to be well-liked before Nang Yai lost its popularity.

The present research study can be viewed as a new beginning and a new creation. The new script for the Nang Yai show was created with the consideration of the basic Ramayana stories in mind, stories that were universal and whose origins were easy to understand. Scenes of different moods and flavors were combined in order to create a concise script suitable for the audience of the new generations, and the stories are comprised of actions suitable for international viewers.

The Nang Yai Wat Ban Don show can be divided into four episodes, as follows.

### 3.1 *Rama-Sita*

After the prologue about an exciting fight between the white monkey and the black monkey, the narrator introduces the main story, beginning with the scene about the love between Rama and Sita. The two main characters court, with the heroine showing her coyness, while the audience enjoys the beautiful music and the gentle and graceful puppet maneuvers and choreography. The screen is sometimes used as a cover when the characters become bashful and elusive. The movements and dances are delicate. The puppets are maneuvered by three of the puppeteers' hands, while the other hand of the male puppeteer for Rama is around Sita's puppeteer's waist, as if the puppeteers as well were acting as the characters.

The positions of the puppets are mainly drawn toward each other, with Sita stepping away shyly and Rama approaching, teasing, wooing, and the characters finally make love.

### 3.2 *Tam Kwang*

In this episode, Ravana tells Maricha to disguise himself as a golden deer to lure Rama out of his pavilion so that he can kidnap Sita in order to create a reason for war. The major highlight of this episode is the switching of the puppets by turning them around in and out of the scene, for example, when Maricha recites a magic spell to turn himself into a deer. When the narration is over, the ensemble plays the Rua music, and Maricha's puppeteer turns around and goes off stage while the golden deer turns himself into the scene; the actions represent the magic transformation. Another scene using a similar technique is when Rama is following the deer. The puppet of walking Rama turns around and goes off stage while the puppet of Rama with an arrow ready to shoot comes in, followed by the puppet of Rama having shot an arrow. These scenes were originally depicted by puppeteers walking and leaving the scenes while a new puppeteer walked in. Furthermore, instead of using only one puppet for Rama's pavilion while the golden deer attempts to lure him, the three walking puppets of Rama, Lakshmana, and Sita are maneuvered in front of the screen in order to show the emotions of the characters engaged in a conversation.

In the chasing scene, the rhythm and music of the scene change. The puppets of Rama and the golden deer are designed to also change from the former walking in order to follow the latter, to run away and toward each other, and to escape the continued chase. The dimensions of the screen are used as obstacles in the chase. The puppeteers jump when the deer leaps up high. When the deer's jump is the highest, the puppeteers perform an acrobatic pyramid and stay still, waiting for

Rama to approach. As Rama shoots his arrow—which originally was shown by an arrow puppet being moved past the screen to stop at the deer—the puppeteers form a pyramid with a puppet showing the shadow of Narayana on Garuda carrying the arrow, demonstrating the power of the arrow of Narayana reincarnated as Rama in order to defeat the demon Ravana. The excitement of the scene is boosted by the change in the narration and music during the death of Maricha.

### 3.3 *Khunpon Wanon*

This episode shows the supernatural power of *Khunpon Wanon*, Rama's major monkey warriors—in fact angels from heaven coming down to assist Rama in the war. The highlights of this episode include the monkey *Khon* walking out to interact with the audience, and the *Khon* dances by the puppeteers behind the screen as they maneuver the monkey warriors to show their power. The *Khon* dances represent the appropriation of the Nang Yai by the *Khon* shows. The puppeteers are designed to dance behind the screen in order to retain the audience's utmost interest in the puppets. Previously when the *Khon* shows became popular with the performers dancing in front of the screen, the popularity of Nang Yai—whose puppets and puppeteers were behind the screen—was reduced to accompanying the *Khon* shows, along with other dances, before disappearing all together. At the end of the episode, the monkey warriors, ranked appropriately according to the status and predominance, make an acrobatic pyramid and form the ending posture.

### 3.4 *Chom Ratcharot* (Rama's chariot)

The last episode depicts the beauty of the war chariot, and the elegance and harmony of the army. Another highlight is the maneuver of the *Khen Ling* (monkey soldier) puppets in unison in front of the screen, with the monkeys being ranked in a manner similar to the way in which minor *Khon* monkey soldiers are traditionally

ranked. Meanwhile, the puppet of the war chariot ridden by Rama and Lakshmana is maneuvered behind the screen. The narration and the sounds of the *Klong Tat* (tympani) and the *Tapon* drum solo convey a daunting atmosphere and a pert emotion for fighting, the audience experiencing the feelings of the army getting ready for war.

## Conclusions and Discussion

Stakeholders today attempt to preserve the Nang Yai Wat Ban Don puppets in many ways. At the temple, there is a special building where the puppets are stored and maintained. The Nang Yai Wat Ban Don Conservation Committee was established to help research the shows, and to revive and promote the Nang Yai shows to a broader audience. Nang Yai exhibitions are held in order to introduce Nang Yai to more people, to support the shows, and to raise people's awareness of the importance of conserving this precious art form. The shows are broadcast on television on national holidays. The building where the puppets are kept, moreover, has been made into a museum for interested parties and passers-by to visit and learn more about Nang Yai and watch the shows on tape.

The current abbot of the Ban Don Temple has designated an annual Nang Yai Wai Khru day so that the shows can be sustained and continue to exist in Thai society. The abbot lends support by taking the Nang Yai shows to important occasions. The troupe also cooperates with the government to hold exhibits and shows on different occasions. The temple, in collaboration with the Rayong Province Cultural Council, has published a book about Nang Yai Wat Ban Don. Finally, cassettes and CDs were made to be used for narration in the museum, and flyers attached to children's external readings and Rayong Province's literature book.

As for educating people about Nang Yai, more youths have now been trained to maneuver



the puppets. When all of the older-generation master puppeteers, narrators, and puppeteers were deceased in 2002, and the other puppeteers took on other jobs, Mr. Amnat Maneesang foresaw that Nang Yai would become extinct if it were not soon revived, so he recreated a Nang Yai Youth Puppeteers project. He held a committee meeting chaired by the abbot of Ban Don Temple, Phra Khru Burakhet Wutthikorn, and 12 youth puppeteers were trained.[10] The number of puppeteers was reduced to eight—and these eight young puppeteers for the new Nang Yai Wat Ban Don show recently performed in Sweden and Greece. At the Swedish puppet theatre festival—which featured troupes from Sweden, China, Taiwan, Burma and Thailand—the troupe received a good response from the audience, and was presented the 2008 “Prix Michael Meschke” award by Mr. Michael Meschke, Sweden’s national puppetry artist. After the news about Nang Yai Wat Ban Don troupe’s trips abroad was publicized, there have been up to approximately 30 more youths interested in learning to be Nang Yai puppeteers. The temple is also pushing the conservation of Nang Yai forward by offering a

Nang Yai course in the curriculum of the Wat Ban Don Elementary School as a part of the endeavor to support local intelligence. Today, the abbot has built a theater for rehearsals and Nang Yai shows in order to preserve Nang Yai, as well as to develop the temple into an interesting tourist attraction for the future.

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