

A woman is performing on a dark stage, wearing a large, shaggy, brown costume that resembles a giant animal or a mythical creature. She is in a crouching pose, with her hands on the floor and her head tilted back. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of the costume. In the background, the legs of another person are visible.

woman giant

Matthias Engelke and
Moradokmai Theatre Community

woman giant

1. Elephant song (chang, chang, chang)

Music & lyrics: Khun Ying Chinn Silapabanleng; adaptation & flute:
Matthias Engelke; vocals & Thai flute: Janaprakal Chandruang

2. Mindful

Music: Matthias Engelke, Janaprakal Chandruang; lyrics & vocals:
Janaprakal Chandruang

3. Chasing demon

Music: Matthias Engelke; lyrics: excerpt from Thai literature
"Praapaimanee" by Suntorn Pooh; vocals: Sureeporn Boonyalaeka

4. Misbehaving moon

Music: anonymous / Thai traditional music (Lao Damneun
Kwian); lyrics: Prince Benbadhanbongse, Son of King Rama the 5th;
adaptation & piano: Matthias Engelke; vocals: Punnipa Meejun

5. Rice and work

Music: Matthias Engelke; lyrics: anonymous / traditional;
vocals: Punnipa Meejun; voice: Matthias Engelke

6. To be treated is to be tricked

Music: Matthias Engelke; lyrics: excerpt from Thai literature
"Praapaimanee" by Suntorn Pooh; vocals: Punnipa Meejun

7. Sacred repetition

Music & lyrics: Khun Ying Chinn Silapabanleng;
adaptation: Matthias Engelke; vocals: Janaprakal Chandruang

8. Hell is prior to enlightenment

Music: Matthias Engelke; lyrics: excerpt from Thai literature
"Praapaimanee" by Suntorn Pooh; vocals: Punnipa Meejun

9. Giant walk

Music: Matthias Engelke; flute: Janaprakal Chandruang

10. Iridescent mallets

Music: Matthias Engelke; vocals: Moradokmai community

11. Culture shock

Music: Matthias Engelke; lyrics: anonymous / traditional;
vocals: Punnipa Meejun

12. Abyss

Music: Matthias Engelke

13. River Kwai

Music, piano & voice: Matthias Engelke

14. DiDu

Music & voice: Matthias Engelke

15. Greeting to hardship

Music & lyrics: Thai folk song, Sermon on 10 lives prior to Buddha;
adaptation: Matthias Engelke; vocals: Punnipa Meejun

16. Woman giant

Music: Matthias Engelke; lyrics & vocals: Janaprakal Chandruang

Music inspired by the dance performance

„Moradokmai – New Heritage“ by Irina Pauls.



About the origin of the Thai songs and literature

by Janaprakal Chandruang

Elephant song (Chang Chang Chang)

The Elephant Song (Chang Chang Chang) is a modern adaptation of the popular Thai Elephant Song by the famous Thai National Artist, Lady Chin Silpabanleng. Different vocal tunes and school nursery rhymes were playfully integrated in a very unprecedented way and bound by the sound of a modern rhythm.

Mindful

The Moradokmai community has six guiding philosophies deriving from Buddhist doctrines. This dignified tune describes community behaviors. The lyrics encourage the listener to be mindful when dealing with other people and their unpredictabilities.

The chasing demon

Chasing after one's own future is inevitable! This story from Thailand's greatest literature was written by Sunton Pooh. It tells the tale of an ugly female demon who chased after her family as it was running away from her. She is forced to decide between her own needs and the needs of her dearest boy. The necessity of letting go is the message of this drama. Sunton Pooh (1786–1855) was a great Thai poet, as important for Thai literature as Shakespeare is for English literature. He was posthumously honored by UNESCO as a world poet.

Misbehaving moon

This very famous traditional song describes a beautiful girl who is like a full moon. In Thai culture the moon is a symbol for many significant living feelings, but especially love. The song's touch of loneliness was the inspiration for the title "Misbehaving moon".

Rice and work

Vocal tunes were traditionally used to make harvesting work in the rice fields more pleasant. Additional rituals were also applied throughout the harvesting season. The composition encompasses the sound of footsteps in the muddy field, where reptiles and mosquitoes also reside.

To be treated is to be tricked

The lyrics for the song were partially excerpted from a classical story written by the Thai poet Sunton Pooh. The message is to be aware of the unpredictability of human nature. No matter how good things may appear or sound, dangers are to be expected.

Sacred repetition

The song presents another interpretation of the Elephant song.

Hell is prior to enlightenment

When you are down and out, nothing is better than finding comfort. The comfort of the divine is most effective at restoring the will and the body. The lyrics by world-famous Sunton Pooh describe the precious wisdom of knowing how to achieve self sufficiency and become enlightened.

Culture shock

The lyrics of this song have been improvised by countless folklore singers of the Thai kingdom for many generations. The tune has been handed down to us since the golden era of Ayutthaya (16th century). The lyrics were used for different occasions and were adjusted accordingly. This lyric was widely taught in schools, especially in the central region of Thailand. The song eventually reached our community by a friend of the singer and, as times have gone by, the lyrics shifted accordingly. The song describes how new generations have deserted their roots. The message urges the adults to at least keep reciting the tune for their children, but even the adults no longer know the tune.

Greeting to hardship

The story told by this song is about Buddha's previous life, when he was referred to as Prince Wetsandon. He had sacrificed all of his royal belongings to those who appeared in need, including his luxurious castle. With no belongings left, Wetsandon took his wife Matsi and his two children to the forest, hoping that the forest would provide for his wife and his children. This song describes how Matsi comforts herself while entering the forest, while the beautiful call of the mythical jungle bird Sarika is a greeting to the new life of hardship.

Woman giant

This story about a woman giant was written about two thousand years ago by a Buddhist priest. The story can only be found in the scriptures of Deravaj Buddhism.

Music was originally composed for:

Dance performance „Moradokmai – New Heritage“ by Irina Pauls and Moradokmai Theatre Company (Thailand, Loei)

Premiere: Lindenfels Westflügel Leipzig, 13. August 2015

Picture credits: All pictures were taken from the production „Moroadokmai – New Heritage“.

Photography: Thilo Neubauer

Vocals, recitations: Janaprakal Chandruang, Sureeporn Boonyalaeka, Punnipa Meejun

Flute, mallets: Janaprakal Chandruang

Piano, voice and all other instruments: Matthias Engelke

Produced by Matthias Engelke

Recorded, mixed and mastered by Matthias Engelke

Graphic design by Matthias Engelke

Photography: Thilo Neubacher

© Matthias Engelke, 2022

Contact: engelkem@gmx.de, www.matthiasengelke.de

Sound Art Series by Gruenrekorder

Germany / 2022

Gruen 210 / LC 09488 / GEMA