

**Project suggestions: Environmental Design at Film Archive (Public Organization) under conceptual study of wisdom of the Large Shadow Play at Wat Khanon in Ratchaburi province.**

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**Abstract**

The purpose of this research is to study in Large Shadow Play at Wat Khanon in Ratchaburi province, and the concept of the proposed design guidelines this time was aimed to advance knowledge, wisdom applied to the design improvement suggestions. Environmental design at Film Archive (Public Organization), a study the wisdom of Large Shadow Play at Wat Khanon applied in project design improvement suggestions and environment in the Film Archive (Public Organization).

Method of research study related to documents that were divided into two parts: the Physical Analysis of the Large Shadow Play. And the operation management of the Film Archive (Public Organization) to blend the two parts of the analysis applied in the design process by introducing the concept of Large Shadow Play wisdom for project suggestions, environmental design at the Film Archive (Public Organization).

The results of this research study showed that concept has been applied to the environment design project of the Film Archive (Public Organization) by creating a new context with the area from defining the space inside the building to the furniture style. The objectives consisted with patterns of shadow. And how to create spaces, lights, shades, and how to use the right material and color.

**Introduction**

**History and the Significant of Problems**

In the past, Nang Yai or the Large Shadow Play (literally means big-size skin or hide sheet) is a high performance art which exclusive entertain in the royal court. It comprised of varying kind of arts such as craftsmanship, art of dancing, art of music, art of musical performance, and art of literature which is different from Khon (a classical court dance), and puppets. Previously Nang Yai was used to perform for the royal ceremonies only because of its' grand scale of preparation; it needs time to practice the puppeteers, a number of craftsmen, and a high cost. Therefore, nowadays it is very rare to watch the traditional Nang Yai performance same as the previous theatrical court.

The magnificence and the graciousness of Nang Yai is the harmony of the puppeteers who manipulate the large hide puppets behind the white backlit screen, along with the musical ensemble and narrative accompaniment in front of the audiences who would experience a new sense of entertainment.

Throughout the time, Nang Yai not only has to confront with the scarce of successors, craftsmen, and the high cost of the large hides. But it also has to up against the influx of westernization which affected to the culture of traditional spectacle until its name of '*Nang Yai*' almost vanished from Thai history. Fortunately, there have a specific group of people who consistently perform Nang Yai in the present. There are only three troupes exists in Thailand which is all of them were supported by the temple (or we called '*Wat*' in Thai); Wat Khanon in Ratchaburi province, Wat Sawang Arom in Sing Buri province and Wat Baan Don in Rayong province.

The remarkable of the Nang Yai at Wat Khanon is they have its own troupe and nowadays this temple is still fully supporting the troupe. The legend of Nang Yai began since the King Rama V's reign where the temple is well located at the Mae Klong river bank whereupon the temple ground was used as a customs outpost to collect the taxes from the cargo ships, therefore they regularly collaborated with Ratchaburi governors and capital officials. Consequently, Phra Kru Satthasunthorn (Klom Chantachoto) or Luang Pu Klom who is the abbot of the temple at that time was received 20 large hide puppets. While the villagers also usually donated the large sheet of hide to make drums' skin for using in the temple rituals. And in addition, Kru Ung who is the Khon master of Ratchaburi ruler also invited Luang Pu Klom to making of Nang Talung (Small Shadow Play) but Luang Pu Klom is more interested in making of Nang Yai, so he instead asking a favor from many craftsmen to produce the large hides puppets<sup>1</sup>.

As time goes by, the new form of entertainment was brought to the way of Thai livings inevitably<sup>2</sup>. After the King Rama V period, the popularity of traditional entertainments e.g. Khon, puppet shows, and Nang Yai were much declined. Due to pattern of the performance needs very long time to practice and a high cost. However it is still part of the traditional way of local Thai people in the religious rituals but they applied the story line to be more fast and fun, and also added the narrative insertion at some acts in accordance to the

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<sup>1</sup> Apiwan Adulyaphichate, Nang Yai: date, time and the life behind the backlit screen [online], 26 August 2009. <http://www.sarakadee.com/web/modules.php?name=Sections&op=viewarticle&artid=631>

<sup>2</sup> Same story

western trend of the period<sup>3</sup>. But finally it soon gradually deteriorated too. In the present, Nang Yai performance remains as the demonstration and knowledge source of Thai traditional shadow puppets to a young generation.

The well-studying and understanding of folk wisdom of local people would leading to a good conscious to sustain and succeeded to Thai traditional entertainment. And the result of study was also used as a conceptual of environmental design to express the graciousness and the identity of Nang Yai to assimilate with the present socio-cultural context.

### 1. Process of Research Study

The research study of Nang Yai wisdom that leads to design and improvement of the environments at the Film Archive (Public Organization) is the process of thoughts, creativity and the graciousness of the foretime Thai entertainment by researching the historical background and traditional performance pattern through the process of study, analysis, and develop to the concept of design by specifying the direction of study and analysis as the following flow chart,

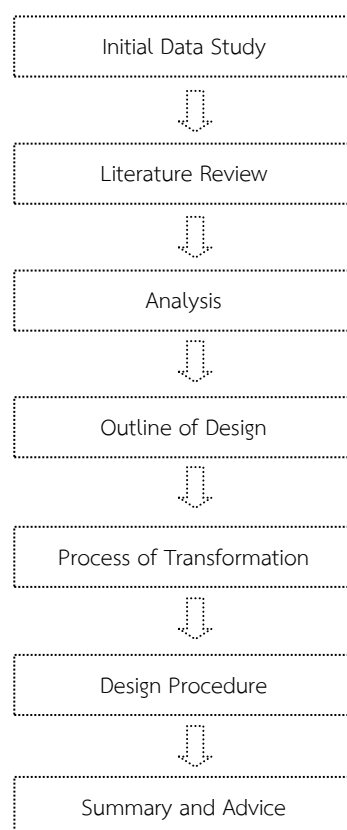


Chart number 1: Process of research study

<sup>3</sup> Pakorn Kongsawasdi, local museum club: the flowing interpretation of Nang Yai Wat Khanon [online], 26 August 2009. From <http://www.lek-prapai.org/web%20lek-prapai/news/newsletter78.4.htm>

## 2. Criterion of the Research Study Framework

In researching the study of Nang Yai wisdom was founded that it has vary of arts and remarkable features of both concrete and abstract that could be summarized as below chart.

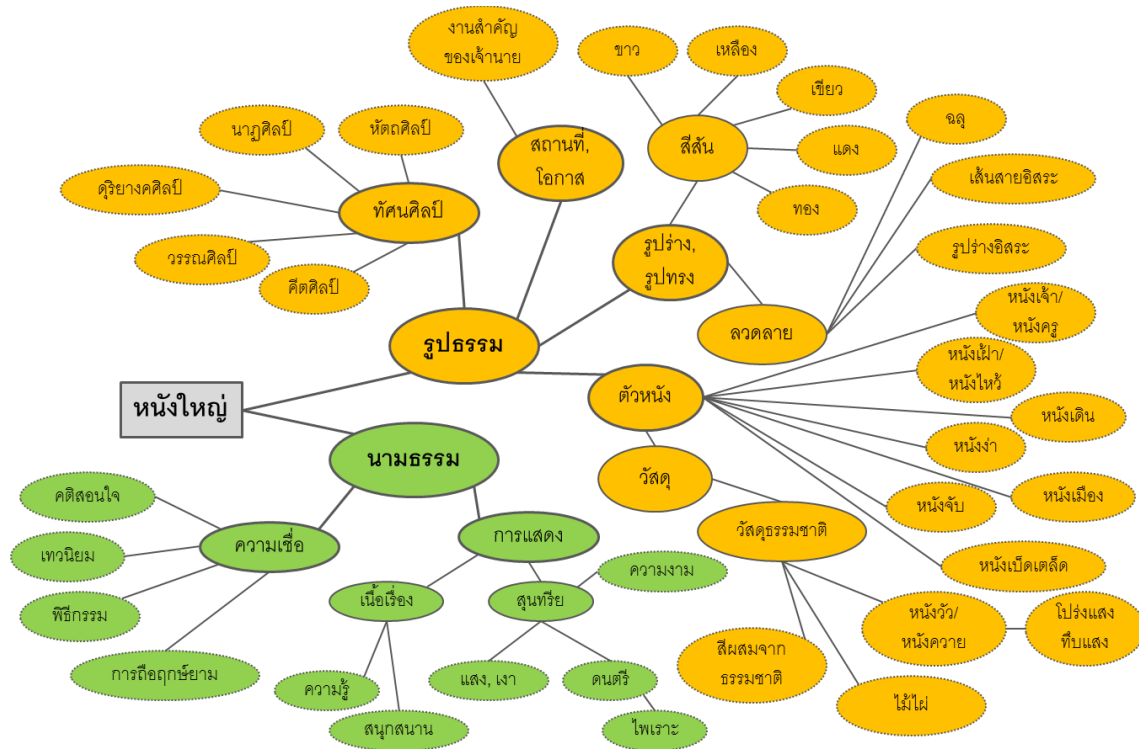


Chart number 2: Criterion of the research study framework

## 3. Method of Research Study

The performance of Nang Yai research study and the advice about environmental design project of Film Archive (Public Organization) could divided into the below subjects,

3.1 Studying of historical background and performance procedure to review the literature of Nang Yai performance at Wat Khanon in Ratchaburi province.

3.2 Studying of organization structure of the Film Archive (Public Organization) to acquire the fundamental requirement prior to design the environmental facilities.

3.3 Studying of the example projects for guidance to contemporary design and compatible with the modern era which could be summarized as the following chart,

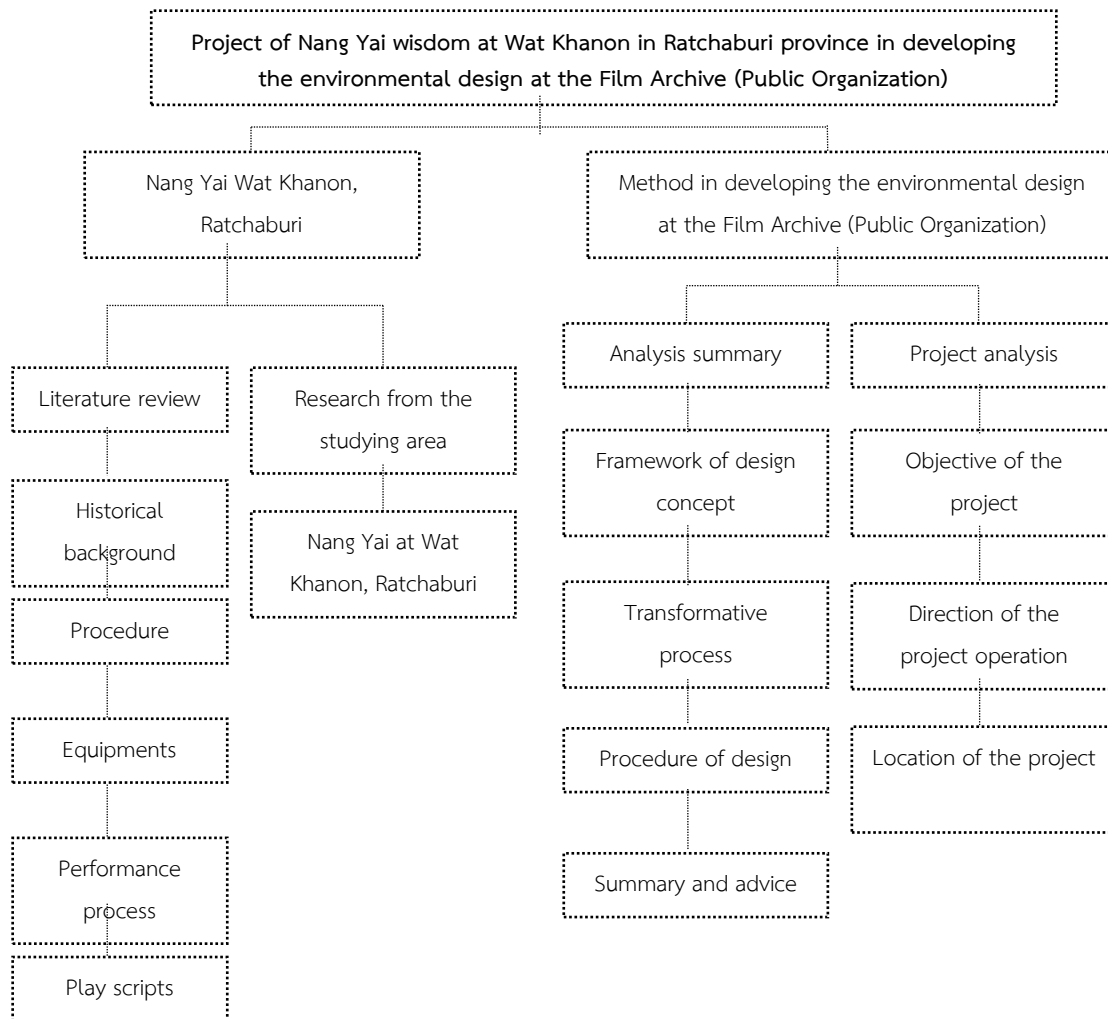


Chart number 3: How to research the data and environmental design

The concept of literature review is benefit to organize the research method that could divided to the procedure of research study as following,

### 1. The Procedure of Research Study

- 1.1 Literature review and related research study
- 1.2 Study the example cases and similar projects
- 1.3 Create the research equipments
- 1.4 Data acquisition
- 1.5 Data analysis
- 1.6 Study and analyze location of the project
- 1.7 Set the location of the project
- 1.8 Summarize the data analysis
- 1.9 Direction of the design

- 1.10 Complete the design
- 1.11 Advice from the research study

#### **4. Data Source of the Research Study**

4.1 Primary data: Acquiring the explicit and solid data from fieldwork for up-to-date and various kind of informations by interview the specialists, have a conversation with locals, and also take pictures of the location where related to Nang Yai wisdom at Wat Khanon in Ratchaburi province.

4.2 Secondary data: Analyze the data from related documents and reports to determine the framework and the subject of this research study.

#### **5. Scope of the Research Study**

5.1 Study the historical background of the Nang Yai at Wat Khanon in Ratchaburi province.

5.2 Study the organization of Film Archive (Public Organization), direction of the operation and the management.

5.3 Using the acquired data to analyze and apply to the project design and interior design of the Film Archive (Public Organization)

#### **6. Equipment of the Research Study**

Equipment of this research study is the questionnaire which was applied from the related documents and reports. It was divided to four parts.

**Part 1:** General information of the target group (general people, working officers) consist of six questions about gender, marital status, age, level of education, average monthly income.

**Part 2:** Question about the art of Nang Yai performance according to Likert rating scale.

**Part 3:** Question of the Film Archive (Public Organization) about service requirement in the Film Archive (Public Organization) and the suggestion events to be held.

**Part 4:** Questionnaire about service facilities at Film Archive (Public Organization) consist of five questions about frequency of service usage, reason to visit, how to get here, budget, and reason to use the service.

#### **7. Method of Equipment Creation**

##### **7.1 The Procedure**

7.1.1 Research study from related documents, books, and reports.

7.1.2 Design the questionnaire to acquire the data by survey the target group such as high school students, university students and general working officials total 30 people.

## 8. Data acquisition

In this research study, the data was acquired and separated as following,

8.1 Study the initial data from various sources of information e.g. documents, journals, books, websites, related articles including the folk wisdom that was hidden in the performance, traditions, and way of livings.

8.2 Study the fieldwork data

8.2.1 To set the location for this project and to study the surroundings, climate, and how to access to the location of the project by take notes and take pictures.

8.2.2 To observe the Nang Yai performance at Wat Khanon in Ratchaburi province for a solid data about historical background, the performance, and behind-the-scene of the spectacle.

8.2.3 The interview of Phra Kru Pitak Silpakom, the present abbot of Wat Khanon who is now trying his best to conserve and sustain the performance of Nang Yai as Thai heritage for descendants.

## Materials

Besides the hides is major material to the performance, the translucence or opaque of the hides, and the meticulous perforated hides are also affected to the perception of the audiences which would represented by the translucent synthetic material blend with the natural material both interior and exterior of the building.

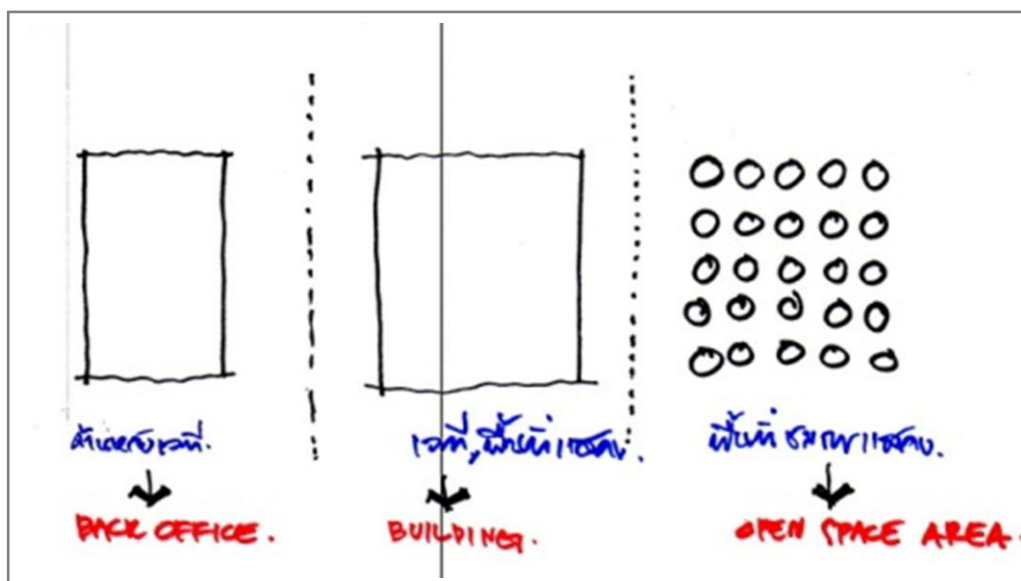
## Results

According to the analysis of the art of Nang Yai performance, it would identified that Nang Yai is an art that reflects to the intricate identities that combines with the art of meticulous perforated large-hide sheet of puppets, the puppeteers holding the puppets perform Ramakien story (the adaptation of Indian epic ‘Ramayana’), the choreography of puppeteers, and the most important is the unification between the veteran skill of the puppeteers to perform the puppets through the huge backlit screen. And as a result, the exquisite shadow of the puppets were laid over the white screen is magnificence. Since ancient time, the performance would exclusively be on stage for the royal rituals. Since then until now the limit of the performance depend on the variation of the era that leads to the main key words “solder light, transform shadow”. The analysis result was summarized from the moving theory and the switchover that would performed in movement conform to the switching over centuries that contribute to the following project design.



KEY WORD Solder light, transform shadow

Design of the Project Master Plan

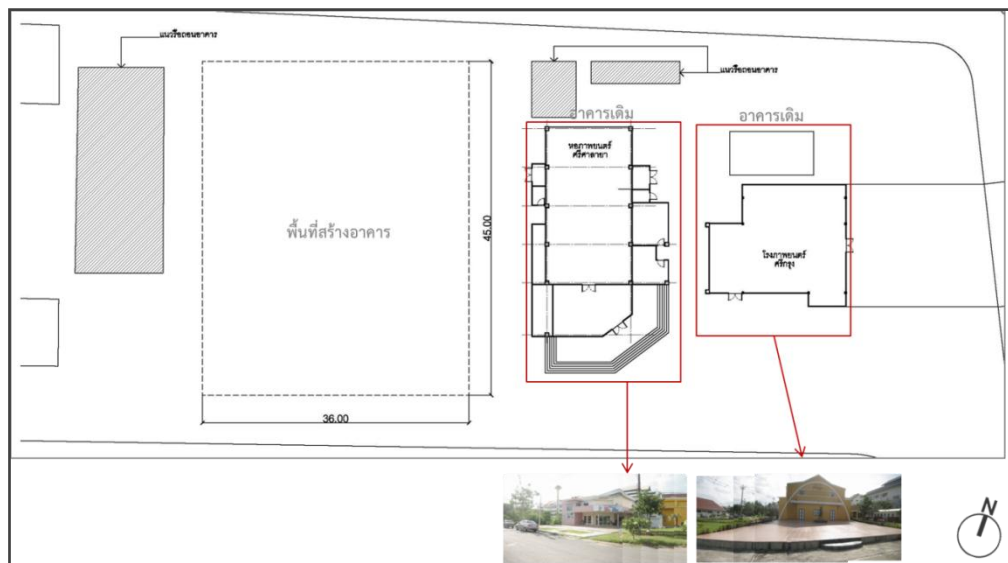


The arrangement of the project master plan has the concept from the management of area in the performance which was divided into 3 zones,

- The Audience Zone : it was arranged as an open space in front of the building for the entrance to the project and the outdoor activities.
- Stage Zone : located in the building
- Backstage Zone : the area of the puppeteers and staffs to prepare the show and would be substituted as the project office.

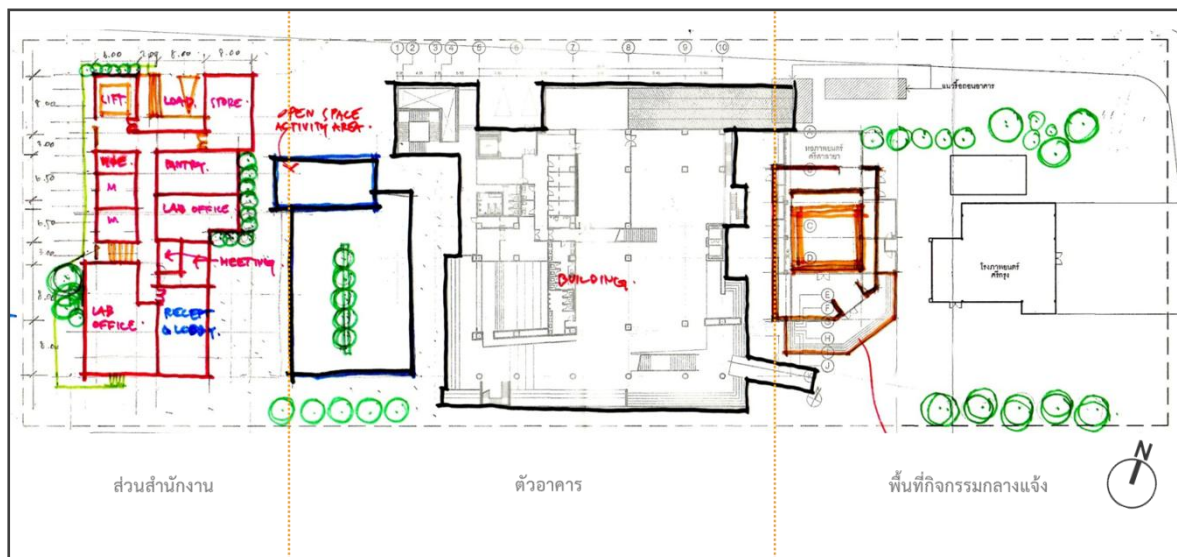


## Conceptual Design of Building Layout



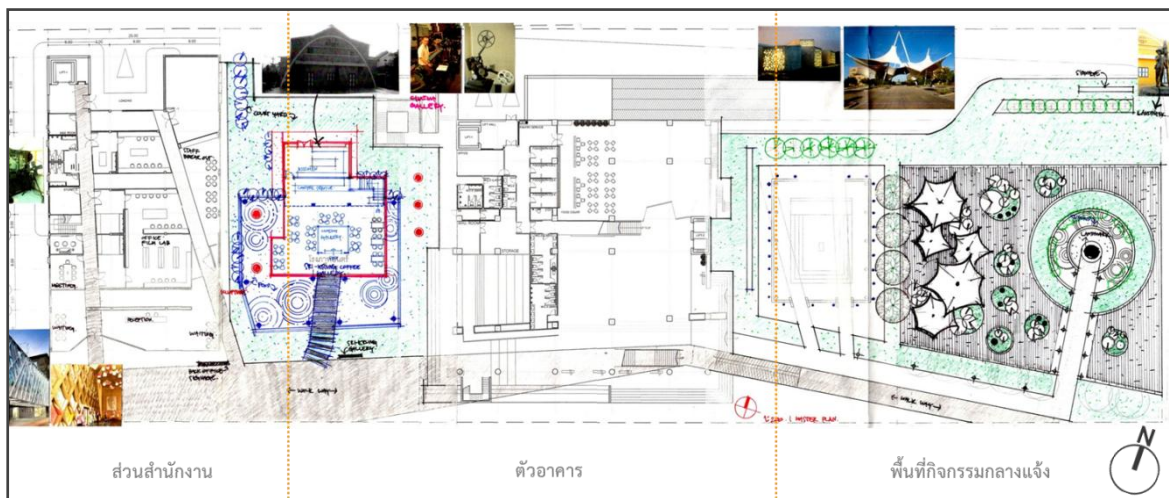
Project Layout

The former area of this project is rectangle shape which perfect match with the project layout master plan. The old building would be used as a project office and museum. While the spacious are would the construction of the project.



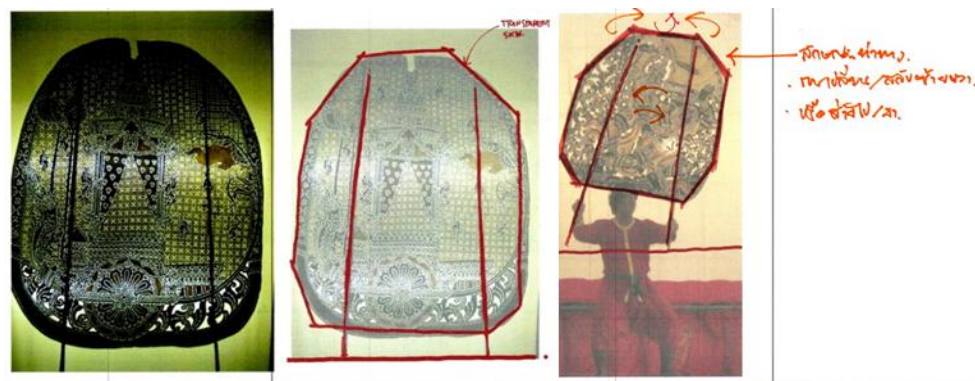
First Layout: Building and Area Arrangement

According to the above layout, the concept was inspired from the performance area that would divide into 3 zones which was the audience zone, designed to an open space for outdoor activities. Stage zone, designed to use the building area. And the backstage zone, designed to project office.

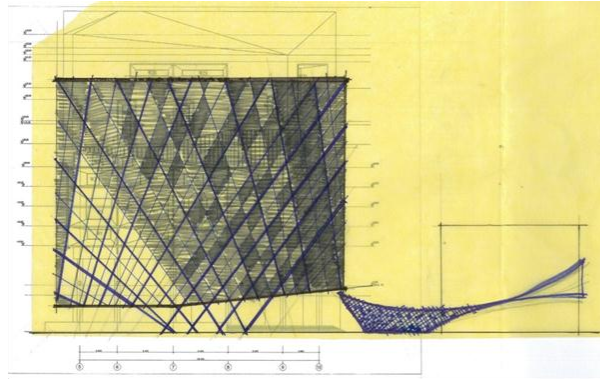


### Second Layout: Building and Area Arrangement

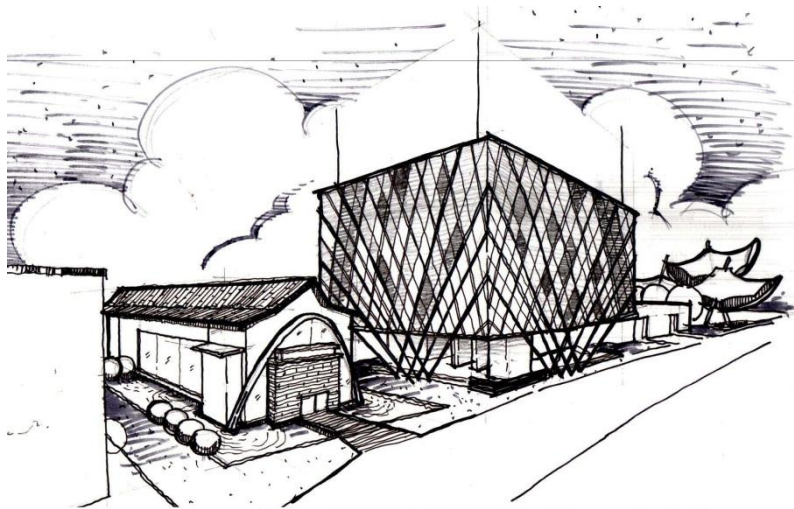
Regarding the first layout, the former building, Sri Salaya building, has moved to locate between the office building and the original area because that area was re-designed to be an entrance to the project and would facing with the main street where it would improve the perspective of building to looks more outstanding and it yet could maintain the office building at the same. The new Sri Salaya building would aim to use as the lobby for the project visitors and the museum café for the general ones. And the pond excavation would create a cool and pleasant surrounding and also accentuate the building.



Building Design Draft



24<sup>th</sup> Sketch: Building Design Draft

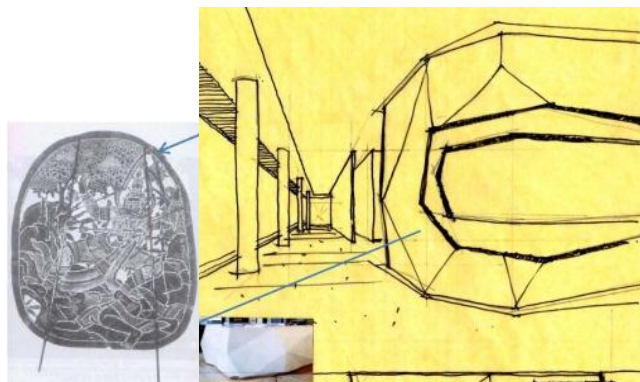


EXTERIOR VIEW

Building Design Concept



image style



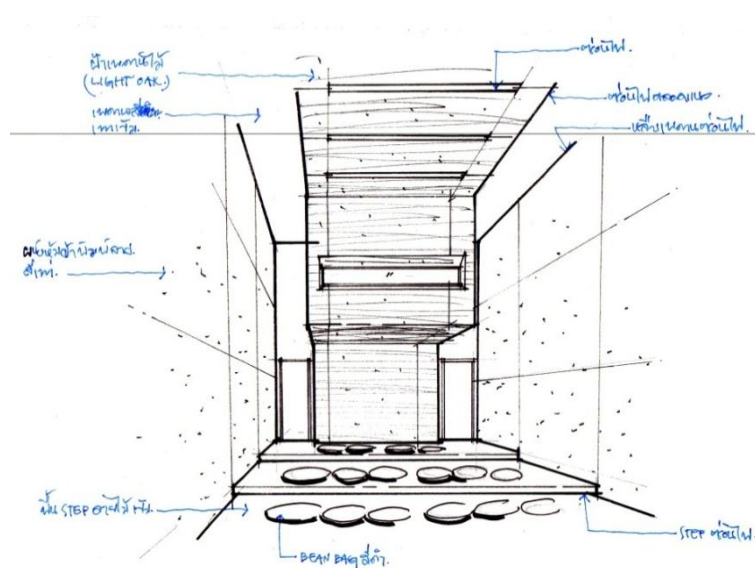




1<sup>st</sup> Floor Lobby area



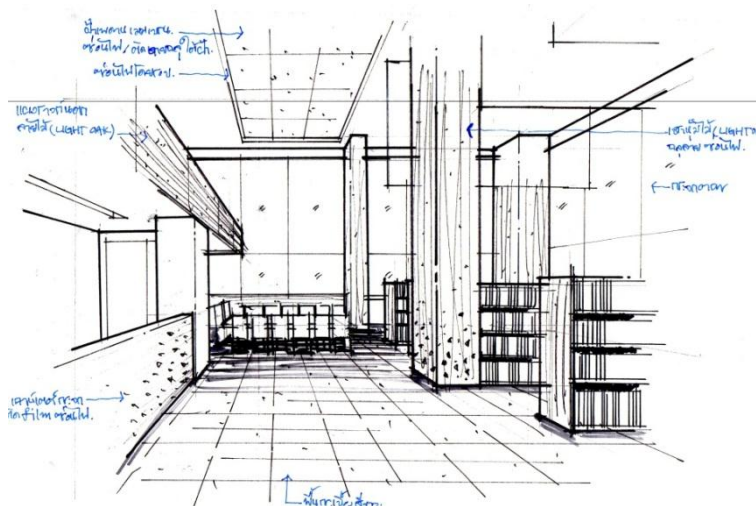
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor M-Thaetre



Sketch of 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Group Theatre



3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Group Theatre



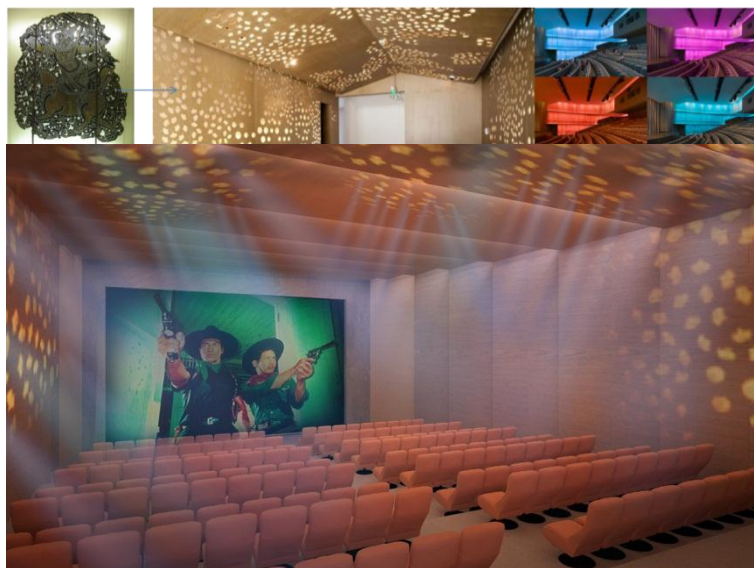
Sketch of 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Library



4<sup>th</sup> Floor Library



5<sup>th</sup> Floor Lobby



6<sup>th</sup> Floor Theatre

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