

ADAPTATION OF THAI TRADITIONAL PLAYS

IN A CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT

**Submitted by SAWITA DITEEYONT, to the University of Exeter as a thesis for the
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the process of adaptation of a Thai traditional play in a contemporary context. The study is based on two practical projects in which two Thai traditional plays, *Sang Thong* and *Tao San Pom*, are adapted and presented on stage. The approaches used in the practices of adaptation are gathered from a range of research in diverse areas, including studies of traditional Thai theatre and plays, the analysis of adaptations of contemporary Thai artists and adaptation theories. With this exploration, I attempt to create original contemporary plays for the modern Thai theatre which, I believe, are able to communicate with a modern Thai audience better than translated or adapted Western plays.

The thesis consists of six chapters. The first chapter provides background information regarding the history and development of Thai theatre; the characteristics of traditional theatre and literary works are discussed in the second chapter. The third chapter explores the selected adaptations of well-known Thai artists. The fourth chapter then address the significant approaches that will be further explored in my script adaptations. The commentaries on my two practical projects are presented in my fifth and sixth chapters.

This thesis is accompanied by two DVDs, which feature the record of two performances of my practical projects, the script adaptations of Thai traditional plays, *Sang Thong* and *Tao San Pom*.

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List of accompanying materials

The accompanying DVDs are affixed to the inside of the back cover of this thesis.

DVD 1 The record of production of *Sang Thong*, staged at Roborough Studio on 30th January 2009.

DVD 2 The record of the second project, *Tao San Pom*, staged at Roborough Studio on 24th June 2010.