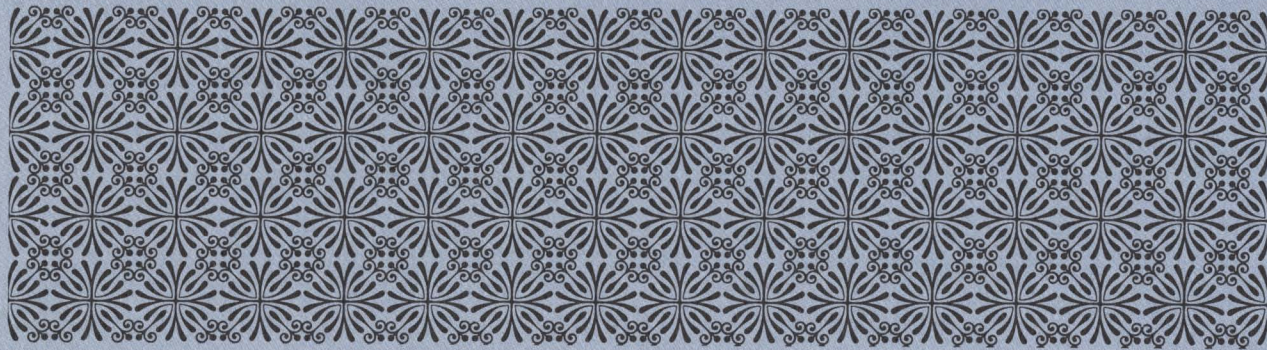
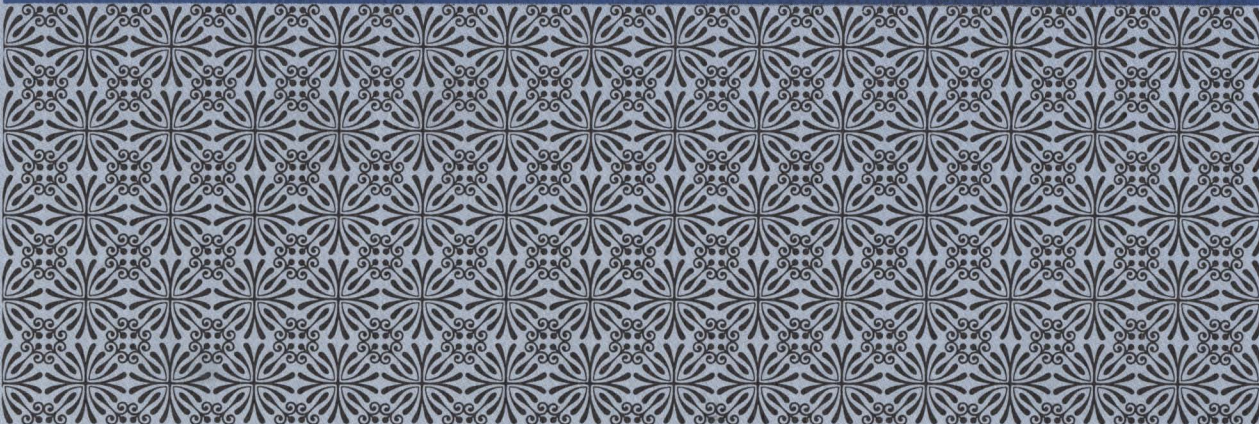


ETHNIC FOLKWAYS RECORDS FE 4215



DRUMS OF THAILAND

COMPILED BY PRINCESS CHUMBHOT OF NAGOR SVARGA



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SIDE 1

1. Tapone Thai
"Pleng Tao Haey" (2-sided drum)
2. Glawng Yao
"Pleng Forn Ngiew" (Long drum)
3. Glawng Chartri (Glawng Took)
"Pleng Nohra" (Drum for southern dance)
4. Tapone Mon
"Pleng Mon" (Mon drum)
5. Perng Marng Khawk
"Pleng Pama" (Burmese scale drum)

SIDE 2

1. Tapone Mon and Perng Marng Khawk
"Pleng Forn Mahrn" (Mon & Thai drums)
2. Glawng Kaek and Glawng Malayu
"Pleng Farung Ram Tao"
"Pleng Sarama" (Malayan drums)
3. Glawng Jeen
"Pleng Jeen" (Chinese drum & cymbal)
4. Tone Mahori and Rammana Mahori
"Pleng Samrap Mahori" (Small drums)
5. Rammana Lamtat
"Pleng Lamtat" (Rammana drum for group singing)

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DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

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DRUMS OF THAILAND

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Music and theater were part of the culture of the Thai people before they migrated south from China into the northern part of what is now known as Thailand. The music was not written down, but was handed from generation to generation by the musicians who performed in the courts of the Thai kings and princes, as the seat of the Thai kingdom moved from Sukothai (1238-1438) south to Ayudhya (1350-1767), and from Ayudhya south again to Bangkok (1767-present). Along the way, instruments and melodies of Thai origin met and mixed with those of Indian, Burmese, Khmer, Malay, Javanese, to form the distinctive art of classical Thai music as it is performed today.

Only in recent years has an effort been made to preserve the music in notation -- a difficult task, as the Thai musical system does not conform to the Western scales, so that Western notation is inadequate for transcribing it. Recording is the obvious solution, and it was with the purpose of preserving the art of Nai Yanyong Prongnamchai that Princess Chumbhot of Nagor Svarga arranged for the present recordings to be made.

Nai Yanyong is the senior remaining member of the percussion ensemble ("Wong piphat") which played in the court of His Royal Highness Prince Paribatra, late father-in-law of Princess Chumbhot. The fear that his art might be lost to posterity as old age approached prompted Princess Chumbhot to record his performance on a number of the different drums that feature Thai music of different styles. Princess Chumbhot's wish that the music might enjoy a wider audience led to this disc.

Nai Yanyong has arranged the music for a percussion ensemble which consists of old family retainers of H.R.H. Prince Paribatra. The performers and their instruments are:

Nai Yanyong Prongnamchai
Tapone Thai, Glawng Yao,
Glawng Chartri, Tapone Mon,
Perng Marng Khawk, Glawng Kaek,
Glawng Malayu, Glawng Jeen,
Tone Mahori, Rammana Lamtat

Nai Jerm Kertchaitrong
Krab, Ching

Nai Sanan Petchnien
Charb

Nang Paitoon Kittivan
Ching

Nai Boonyong Ketdong
Ranart Eyk

Nai Boonrawd Thongvanit
Glawng Thad, Khawng, Tapone Mon,
Taew, Rammana Lamtat

Following is a description of each of the instruments and the music in which they are heard.

Tapone Thai

1. "Pleng Tao Haey"

Tradition dictates that prior to performances, the players must pay tribute of flowers and joss sticks to the Tapone Thai which is venerated as the symbol of a teacher, because with its rhythmic beat it is considered to be the conductor of the ensemble.

The "Pleng Tao Haey" is divided into three sections demonstrating different rhythms -- 'pleng cha' or slow rhythm, 'pleng reow' or fast rhythm, 'pleng laa' or ending piece. The selection centers around the Tapone Thai, a kind of hand Timpani with barrel-shaped body and drum heads covering both ends. It is utilized in classical dance compositions as its rhythmic beat controls the holding of positions or signals the changing of postures, and sets the mood of the musical piece -- restful or agitated, composed or joyful.

The melody is carried by the Ranart Eyk, a bamboo keyboard instrument strung on a boat-shaped stand with playing sticks made of thick rigid pieces of untanned hide cut in circles into which a wooden handle is inserted. The Glawng Thad, a large two headed drum similar to the Timpani augments the sound of the composition while the Ching (small cymbals) keeps the tempo as well as enhancing the musical score.

Glawng Yao

2. "Pleng Forn Ngiew"

The various kinds of Glawng in Thai music differ in shapes and sizes, from squat to barrel-shaped or to long cylindrical bodies made of wood or clay, with single or double head. The method of playing also differs and may employ the fingers and palms, parts of the body (elbows and heels), or sticks with plain or padded heads.

Though the Glawng is not tuned to a definite pitch, prior to performances, a pastry mixture of cooked rice and ashes is applied to the center of one head or a double head drum to give it the proper tone -- the amount of mixture depending upon the desired sound. The mixture or by tightening the leather band around the body or the leather thongs which anchor down the drumhead.

"Pleng Forn Ngiew" is a piece from the northern provinces, utilizing the Glawng Yao or the Long Drum, heard traditionally in Thai ceremonial processions, such as ordination processions for buddhist monks or Kathin processions to present Lenten robes.

Burmese in origin, the Glawng Yao formerly was used alone, as pleasure was derived solely from its resonant beat; but here the Krab (wooden, clappers), the Charb (cymbals larger than the Ching) and the Khawng (gong) are heard with it.

The Glawng Yao, with its single head and long narrow cylindrical body, has a sash attached so that the drum can be slung from the shoulders for ease in beating while walking in processions. The drum is played mainly with the hands but skilled drummers often show great dexterity. They often hit the head of the drum with their fists, elbows, heads, knees, and even their heels, which testifies to the exuberant spirit of the music.

Glawng Chartri (Glawng Took)

3. "Pleng Nohra"

The Manohra and Lakorn Chartri are traditional dances and folk plays indigenous to the southern provinces, which employ the Glawng Chartri (Glawng Took) in their musical accompaniment. Because the theatrical performances are of the itinerant variety, the double headed, barrel-shaped Glawng Chartri is quite small, to facilitate moving it from place to place. The Khawng Khu, a pair of gongs suspended in a small rectangular wooden box, usually complements the Glawng Chartri but has intentionally been left out of this selection in order that the Glawng Chartri's distinctive beat could be fully appreciated with the Ching and the Krab.

Tapone Mon

4. "Pleng Mon"

The Mon (Pegu) compositions are always played with the double headed Tapone Mon whose heavy mournful sound makes it suitable for music of ponderous character. It is used in this selection in association with the Ranart Eyk, the Ching, the Charb and the Krab.

The Tapone Mon is larger than the barrel-shaped two headed Tapone Thai. It has a bulge near the larger head and its body tapers towards the smaller head. Like the Tapone Thai, it rests on a stand and is played the palms and fingers of both hands.

Perng Marng Khawk

5. "Pleng Pama"

The same tune as the "Pleng Mon" is now performed in Burmese style in order to demonstrate the Perng Marng Khawk, which consists of a group of seven drums of graded sizes hung vertically on a semi-circular wooden frame. The drums are arranged in order of pitch and are played here in association with the Ranart Eyk, the Ching, the Charb, and the Krab. The Pama variation is more lively and rousing than the sedate Mon version.

Tapone Mon and Perng Marng Khawk

6. "Pleng Forn Mahrn"

"Pleng Forn Mahrn" is arranged to combine the Tapone Mon and the Perng Marng Khawk, with the former furnishing the rhythm while the latter provides the melody. The Ranart Eyk, Ching and Krab are also employed in this selection, which is believed to have been composed by Thai musicians held as war hostages in Burma during the 15th century.

Glawng Kaek and Glawng Malayu

7. "Pleng Farung Ram Tao" and "Pleng Sarama"

The Glawng Kaek and its close cousin the Glawng Malayu are employed in these two musical pieces to show the different sounds which may be produced from double headed drums which differ only in that the Glawng Malayu is shorter and fatter with slightly larger drumheads.

The "Pleng Farang Ram Tao" is usually reserved for classical dances such as the Kris Dance, while the "Pleng Sarama" is played during Krabi-Krabong (Sword and Pole) fighting bouts or Muay Thai (Thai boxing bouts). The Ranart Eyk, Ching and Krab are also heard in this arrangement, which omits the traditional Pi (oboe) so that the beat of the drums can be better perceived.

Glawng Jeen

8. "Pleng Jeen"

For music in the Jeen (Chinese) style, Thai musicians employ the Glawng Jeen (a small double headed drum) and the Taew (a small bronze gong-type instrument). The Ranart Eyk, the Ching and the Charb are also used in this selection which is a typical tune during appearances by Chinese characters in Thai dance dramas.

Tone Mahori and Rammana Mahori

9. "Pleng Samrap Mahori"

This arrangement for the Mahori -- Thai musical ensembles with string instruments -- employs the Tone Mahori, a single head drum with a hollow vase-like ceramic body, along with the Rammana Mahori, a single head drum stretched over a circular frame. The Tone Mahori is the mellow sounding lead instrument, while the Rammana Mahori produces a high and melodious tone which would blend well with the softer sounds of the string instruments. The Ranart Eyk, Ching, Charb and Krab are also employed.

Rammana Lamtat

10. "Pleng Lamtat"

The single head Rammana Lamtat, which is larger than the Rammana Mahori, used to accompany the Lamtat (antiphonal folksong) or the Ligay Lamtat, a burlesque theatrical performance in which the singers sing or speak extemporaneously. It is joined by the Ranart Eyk, Ching and Krab.

The earthy Lamtat which ends this recording may be translated as follows:

Chorus: To listen is pleasing,
It is indeed pleasing to the heart.

Male : Each time I see her
She looks about fourteen.
Although I call her older sister,
One worthy of being admired.
--- Is it not true my friends?
--- Yes it is.
--- Is she not beautiful?
--- Yes she is.
--- Can you describe her figure?
--- Very tiny and slender.

I glance at this seemingly
Fourteen-year old
Whom I call older sister,
One worthy of being admired.
Her name is Paitoon

And always has she been kind to me.

To sing Lamtat in rhyme

To please Khun Wing,

How do we find an ending?

Dear Sister,

A good Lamtat must this be.

(Chorus)

Female: Hearing Lamtat

From Nai Worn's mouth,

I can't find anything

At all interesting.

(Chorus)

Just because I'm a woman

Doesn't mean I'm sweet.

I'm not made of sugar

But made rather of peppery spice.

PHOTOGRAPHS

A. From left: Nai Yanyong Prongnamchai, tapone Thai
Nai Jerm Kertchaitrong, ching
Nai Sanan Petchnien
Nai Boonyong Ketdong, ranart eyk
Nang Paitoon Kittivan
Nai Boonrawd Thongvanit, glawng thad

B. From left: Nai Boonrawd Thongvanit, tapone mon
Nai Sanan Petchnien, charb
Nai Boonyong Ketdong, ranark eyk
Nai Jerm Kertchaitrong, krab
Nang Paitoon Kittivan, ching
Nai Yanyong Prongnamchai, perng marng khawk

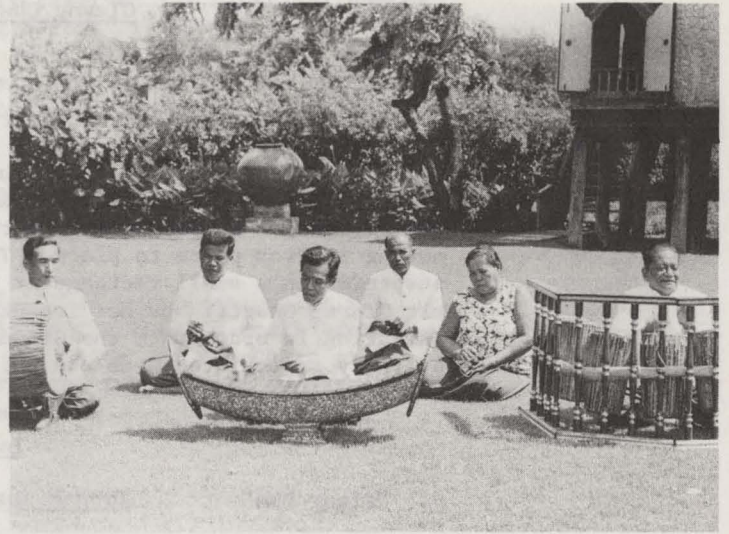
C. From left: Nai Yanyong Prongnamchai, tone chartri
Nai Jerm Kertchaitrong, charb
Nang Paitoon Kittivan, ching
Nai Boonyong Ketdong, glawng chartri
Nai Sanan Petchnien, krab
Nai Boonrawd Thongvanit, tone chartri

D. From left: Nai Yanyong Prongnamchai, glawng kaek
Nai Boonyong Ketdong, ranart eyk
Nang Paitoon Kittivan, ching
Nai Boonrawd Thongvanit, glawng malayu

E. Far left: Nai Yanyong Prongnamchai, rammana lamtat



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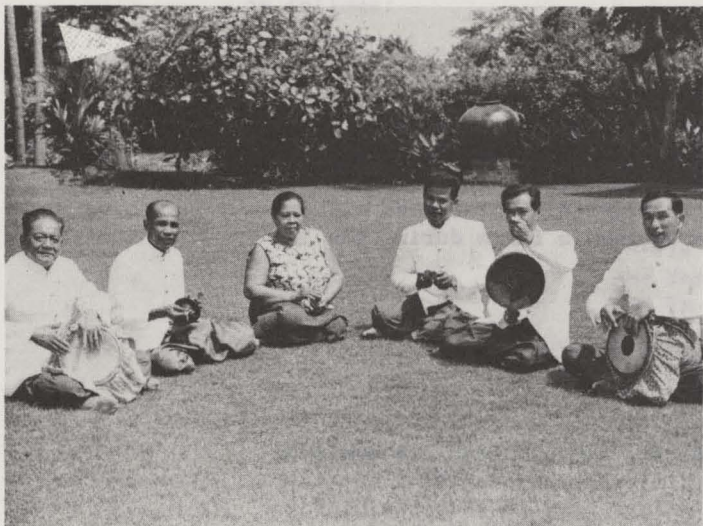
B



C



D



E



F