Bangsaen Plearn: Making Bangsaen City Lively Through Its Community Art

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Abstract

"Bangsaen Plearn" is a festival that celebrates music, performing arts, exhibitions, and creative activities, all inspired by this vibrant tourist city's unique local wisdom and knowledge. The festival showcases the research findings from the project "Creative Bangsaen: Making the City Lively Through Its Community Art." The project's objectives are as follows: 1) To explore how Creative Placemaking and Cultural Ecology frameworks can guide participatory processes that foster community well-being and inclusive cultural spaces in Bangsaen. 2)To examine how collaborative learning in music and performing arts promotes social cohesion, intergenerational dialogue, and sustainable urban development in Bangsaen. This creative research employs qualitative and practice-based methods, focusing on three coastal communities in Bangsaen: Wonnapha, Bangsaen Beach, and Khao Sam uk. The data collection includes an analysis of academic documents, interviews, and field studies conducted with key community stakeholders. From February 14 to March 2, 2025, the research findings were presented through performances in community spaces in Bangsaen and at the Eastern Center of Art and Culture at Burapha University. This research produces four key creative outcomes: 1) Performances by researchers; 2) Performances by resident artists; 3) Aesthetic community activities for elementary school students; 4) Creative initiatives that connect various community spaces based on local data collection. These outcomes include a site-specific theater walk at Wonnapa, the Wandee@Bangsaen concert at Bangsaen Beach, and exhibitions featuring performances in Khao Sammuk, which showcase contemporary dance, shadow puppetry, and traditional Thai Nang Yai performances.

Keywords: Artistic Research, Creative Placemaking, Community Art, Performing Arts Festival

Introduction

Burapha University, a prominent institution in Eastern Thailand, enrolls around 23,000 students. Many of these students move to Bangsaen and the surrounding areas upon admission. After graduation, a significant number choose to stay, starting small businesses and pursuing sustainable livelihoods. As a result, the influx of university students has noticeably increased the youth population in Bangsaen.

According to Saensuk Municipality data, as of 30 September 2020, Bangsaen's According to data from Saensuk Municipality, as of September 30, 2020, Bangsaen had a registered population of 46,628, comprised of 21,830 males and 24,798 females. This population resides in 12,123 households and 37,308 housing units across approximately 20.27 square kilometers. The municipality consists of 25 communities, which contribute to Bangsaen's character as a small city with considerable potential for development. Driven by creative entrepreneurs and the consumption demands of students and young professionals, areas surrounding Burapha University have become thriving hubs for small-scale businesses, including cafés, restaurants, dormitories, hotels, and entertainment venues. Additionally, the coexistence of students, local residents, and tourists has fostered diverse lifestyles and interests, leading to the emergence of creative urban activities such as visual arts, photography, music, and performance.

This research project is a collaborative initiative between the Faculty of Arts at Chulalongkorn University and the Faculty of Music and Performing Arts at Burapha University. It commenced with data collection and in-depth interviews with community leaders in and around Bangsaen. This process was supplemented by joint field surveys conducted in neighborhoods within the Saensuk Subdistrict. The research team also interviewed Mr. Narongchai Khunpluem, the Mayor of Saensuk Municipality, to examine local administrative policies that have influenced Bangsaen's development and its potential future directions. On May 29, 2022, an academic symposium titled "Creative Bangsaen: Enlivening the City through Art" was held. Thai and international experts were invited to share their insights on fostering "creative places" within urban environments. The program included a keynote lecture, "Creative Placemaking: Community Involvement and Responses," delivered by Associate Professor Dr. Chang Tou Chuang from the National University of Singapore.

An academic panel presented three case studies of innovative urban initiatives led by arts administrators: Ms. Nawarat Waewploryngam, a community leader from Nang Loeng; Ms. Piangdao Chariyaphan, the arts manager of the Sam Yan Lar-Lan-Jai Festival; and Ms. Atchima Na Phatthalung, the Director of the Bangkok International Theatre Festival for Children and Youth. During the symposium, participants engaged in breakout sessions with local community networks to explore strategies for transforming the university-adjacent district into a lifelong learning hub.

The research problem addressed in this study arose from an investigation into the local living conditions and cultural ecology of Bangsaen, conducted in collaboration with community stakeholders. This preliminary fieldwork revealed key cultural and social tensions in the area, including conflicts between long-term residents and recent migrants, clashes between traditional cultural practices and new influences from both local changes and urban centers like Bangkok, and generational divides as interests and values increasingly diverge due to rapid societal transformation. While Bangsaen is a well-known tourist destination that attracts a large number of visitors each year for its coastal recreation and cultural festivals, the city faces spatial limitations that restrict further urban expansion. In response to these challenges, current development policies prioritize balanced and sustainable growth, emphasizing the need to improve the living conditions of local residents rather than focusing solely on tourism-driven development.

This study is based on the theoretical frameworks of Cultural Ecology and Creative Placemaking, both of which highlight the significance of community participation. These frameworks serve as the foundation for transforming residential neighborhoods or urban districts into "places" that promote well-being and foster collaborative engagement. Such engagement brings together individuals from diverse social classes, age groups, and cultural backgrounds to co-create environments that are enjoyable, comfortable, meaningful, and sources of collective pride. The process emphasizes dialogue and mutual listening, guided by the principle of equality, to create spaces for expression, co-creation, and shared understanding. Through these participatory processes, a platform emerges for dynamic thinking, critical reflection, and analytical exchange-positioning arts and culture as living, evolving phenomena shaped by collective experience.

Consequently, this study involves immersive engagement with the Bangsaen community, enabling researchers from Burapha University and local residents to participate in collaborative learning through music and performing arts. The ultimate goal is to enhance the quality of life in alignment with evolving social and cultural contexts and to contribute to the sustainable development of Bangsaen.

Research Objectives

1. To explore how Creative Placemaking and Cultural Ecology frameworks can guide participatory processes that foster community well-being and inclusive cultural spaces in Bangsaen.

2. To examine how collaborative learning in music and performing arts promotes social cohesion, intergenerational dialogue, and sustainable urban development in Bangsaen.

Research Design and Methods

This research adopts the conceptual framework of **Creative Placemaking** to create environments that are both grounded in local context and reflective of a broader cultural ecology. Within this framework, community members are actively engaged throughout the planning, design, and implementation processes. Arts and culture serve as central instruments in fostering participatory and inclusive development. The approach emphasizes the interrelationship of three fundamental components: **1) Human activities within spatial contexts**: This includes lifestyle patterns, business models, and the dynamics of mobility and exchange among local populations. **2) The physical environment**: This encompasses built structures, landscapes, streetscapes, and pedestrian pathways that shape everyday spatial practices. And **3) Collective perceptions and emotional associations with place**: These range from feelings of insecurity to experiences of comfort and belonging.

Markusen and Gadwa (2010, pp. 1-6) argue that creative placemaking significantly advances goals related to livability, diversity, and economic development. Such initiatives promote public safety, strengthen community identity, improve environmental quality, provide affordable housing and workspace for creative professionals, and enhance transportation options. They also foster collaboration across civic, non-profit, and private sectors. Furthermore, creative placemaking stimulates employment, supports local creative economies, and attracts new businesses. Successful initiatives typically involve entrepreneurial leadership, a commitment to place-based identity, mobilization of public support, engagement from the private sector, participation of arts and cultural leaders, and cross-sector partnerships across multiple governance levels.

Complementing this perspective, the Global Leaders Institute (2025) describes creative placemaking as an integrative, collaborative approach to community revitalization that emphasizes inclusive participation and the co-creation of solutions reflecting local needs and identities. Key principles include community engagement, cultural expression, adaptive reuse of space, stimulation of local economies, enhancement of social cohesion, capacity building, cross-sector collaboration, and continuous evaluation.

This conceptual framework positions arts and culture as essential resources for community development and highlights the need for institutional investment and support. It contrasts with market-driven approaches that view culture as mere commodified products, instead recognizing cultural assets as foundational to sustainable transformation and social cohesion within communities.

Research and Creative Inquiry

The main research question of this study is: **What artistic processes can be used to engage communities in co-creating creative spaces in Bangsaen? The aim is to foster shared ideas, collaboration, and collective action, ultimately allowing participants to experience joy, a sense of belonging, and pride in their unique local identity as expressed through contemporary art practices**.

The study employs qualitative research methodologies alongside practice-based research in performance. Fieldwork was conducted in the Bangsaen area, focusing on three specific communities: Wonnapa, Bangsaen Beach, and Khao Sammuk. These locations were

chosen to gather data from a diverse range of stakeholders, including community leaders, residents, local entrepreneurs, educational institutions, and student and staff volunteers from Burapha University. The aim was to collaboratively develop creative activities and artistic works that promote participatory engagement and foster community involvement. Several qualitative methods were utilized in the research, including purposive interviews, focus group discussions, community field surveys, participant observation, performance workshops, and the co-design of a community-based arts festival presented to the public. Research participants and sample groups were categorized as follows:

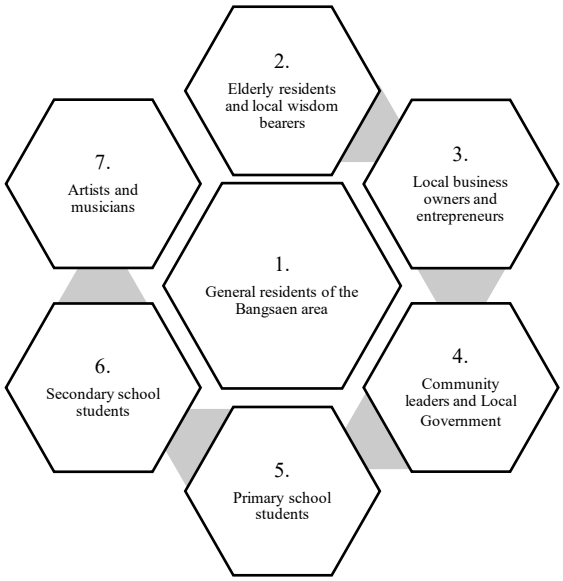


Figure 1: Research participants and sample groups
Source: Nadhanant Uaesilapa

This comprehensive study includes seven distinct participant groups that represent various demographics and stakeholder categories within the Bangsaen community. The sample design ensures a broad representation across different age groups, professional backgrounds, and community roles, allowing for diverse perspectives and experiences to be captured. The research design was structured into four main phases, outlined as follows:

Table 1: Summary of Research Design and Implementation Phases

Phase	Title	Description	Key Activities / Focus Areas
Phase 1	Literature Review and Project Planning	Conducted a thorough literature review and gathered local insights to guide the project's direction.	- Reviewed academic and local texts on creative placemaking, cultural ecology, and sustainable development. - Conducted interviews with community members to understand their history, heritage, and quality of life. - Developed a project plan based on the findings.
Phase 2	Field Surveys, Data Collection, and Community Network Building	Designed and implemented field surveys while establishing networks for community collaboration.	- Conducted surveys and field visits. - Identified local challenges and cultural assets. - Established a creative community network.

			- Initiated a co-design process with local residents.
Phase 3	Designing the Arts Project and Creating Multiform Artistic Outputs	Developed arts-based activities in line with research themes to enhance the quality of life.	- Focused on four key themes: 1) Maritime knowledge and identity 2) Bridging generational gaps 3) Promoting cultural assets 4) Building stronger networks - Collaborated with local artists and elders.
Phase 4	Project Implementation and Public Presentation	Executed co-created arts initiatives and showcased outcomes in a public forum.	- Designed site-specific artworks and performances. - Engaged community participants in the co-creation process. - Presented results at the "Bangsaen Plearn Festival." - Strengthened community identity through public arts initiatives.

Source: Nadhanant Uaesilapa

Findings

Culture and Way of Life in Bangsaen Communities

This research focuses on three key communities in the Bangsaen area: the Wonnapa Community, Bangsaen Beach Community, and Khao Sammuk Community. Before conducting creative development work based on the cultural capital of these communities, the research team carried out a historical and contextual study.

The administrative authority for this area is the Saensuk Municipality, which was renamed from Saensuk Sub-district Municipality on November 26, 1988, under the leadership of Somchai Kunpluem. The municipal area expanded from 2.5 to 20.268 square kilometers. Its strategic vision is to create a livable city with well-preserved natural resources and internationally recognized tourist attractions to drive local economic prosperity. Saensuk Municipality is now widely recognized for its effective urban and community development, particularly in transforming impoverished areas into thriving tourism-oriented communities that generate year-round income for local residents.

Historically, Bangsaen has been a popular beach destination for both Thai and international tourists. In the early 20th century, during the reign of King Rama V, the area was relatively unknown, with only a few households situated near Khao Sammuk. This community, once resembling an island with lush forests and abundant wildlife, began to develop when Field Marshal P. Pibulsongkram constructed a weekend residence there between 1943 and 1945. Infrastructure and government guesthouses were established, linking Bangsaen and Khao Sammuk. Later, Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat built more government facilities at Laem Taen in the 1960s. These developments contributed to the region's transformation into a leisure and administrative zone.

In this research, the term "Bangsaen Community" refers to the communities located along the continuous coastal stretch under the jurisdiction of Saensuk Municipality. Bangsaen Beach lies centrally between the southern Wonnapa Community and the northern Khao Sammuk Community. Historically, the Wonnapa area was known as Ban Phoeng Lang, while the Bangsaen side was known as Ban Phoeng Bon. These were traditional fishing communities, with a local Chinese heritage reflected in the presence of Chinese shrines and folk beliefs. Livelihoods centered on coastal fisheries, including small-scale fishing and seafood processing. During Field Marshal P. Pibulsongkram's era, significant land

development promoted Bangsaen as a seaside resort area, initiating a shift in land use and community structure, particularly in Wonnapa.

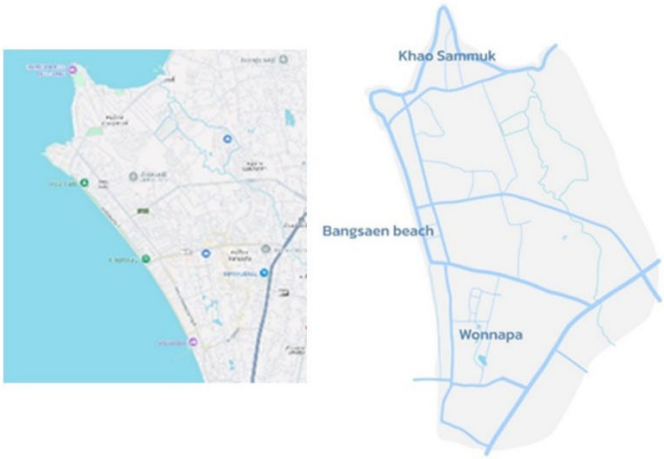


Figure 2: Bangsaen Community Area
Source: Suthasinee Boonkor

A major turning point occurred in 1947 when a wealthy resident of Bangkok, Khun Nai Won Napasap, purchased a large tract of land in Ban Phoeng Lang with the intention of building a vacation retreat. This external influence sparked significant changes in local land use and community life. The once-cherished belief that "the sea in front of our home is our source of life" began to fade as coastal development transformed the physical landscape. Declining marine resources and a reduction in nearshore fishing led to the gradual disappearance of traditional fisheries.



Photo 1: Suwannaloylong Shrine in Wonnapa
Source: Mayuree Wisutthacharn



Photo 2: Performance in the community
Source: Namol Kritsanakarn

However, as noted in research by Paiboon Sophonsuwaphap (2016), Wonnapa continued to retain elements of its traditional coastal lifestyle. Residents remained active in fishing, seafood-related occupations, and rituals associated with the sea, boats, and coastal deities. Traditional knowledge regarding seafood preparation and fishing practices persisted, along with the presence of community markets offering marine products and local produce.

The Khao Sammuk community, located at the northern end of Bangsaen, is situated along a small mountain that overlooks the coast. Known for its scenic views, the area is significant both culturally and ecologically due to the unique convergence of mountain and sea. Khao Sammuk features prominently in local lore and spirituality, with various legends and shrines associated with the mountain.

While Bangsaen is part of a vibrant tourism and fisheries economy, research shows that it also has rich tangible and intangible cultural assets. These elements highlight Bangsaen's potential as a culturally rich community. The residents possess experience in collaborating with various sectors, including public, private, and academic institutions. However, there is a noticeable lack of continuity in cultural initiatives and sustainability of networks.

Much of the community's cultural capital has primarily been utilized for tourism and economic purposes, with limited impact on advancing Bangsaen toward becoming a "creative community." Despite the internal diversity — which ranges from long-established families to new residents of different age groups — locals share a common aspiration for Bangsaen to thrive. Community dialogues reveal a collective vision of a small, welcoming seaside town that embraces creativity, fosters diverse artistic expression, and builds inclusive networks. The spontaneous emergence of grassroots cultural activities serves as a promising foundation for the future.

Table 2: Bangsaen Community Study Data

Community Overview	**Wonnapa**	**Bangsaen Beach**	**Kao Sam Muk**
Geographical Characteristics	The Wonnapa Beach Community is located in the southern part of Saensuk Municipality. To the east, it borders Sukhumvit Road and Nong Mon Market, while to the west, it is adjacent to the seashore. The northern boundary extends to the fishing pier near Bangsaen Beach and the area behind Burapha University. Wonnapa Beach stretches approximately 1.5 kilometers in length.	The Bangsaen Community encompasses the Bangsaen Beach area, serving as both an economic hub and a major tourist destination that generates income for the local community. The beach stretches continuously for about 4.5 kilometers.	The Khao Sammuk Coastal Area features a low hill approximately 45 meters high, situated between Ang Sila and Bangsaen Beach in Mueang Chonburi District, Chonburi Province. At the base of this hill lies the sacred Chao Mae Khao Sammuk Shrine, which is also depicted in the provincial seal of Chonburi. The hill is well-known for its large population of monkeys.

Community Overview	Wonnapa	Bangsaen Beach	Kao Sam Muk
Ways of Life and Livelihoods	Local fishermen engage in the trade of fresh and processed seafood, including shrimp paste, fish sauce, dried fish, and dried shrimp. They also produce traditional local confections used in community rituals and ceremonies.	The Bangsaen Community is involved in various forms of commerce, particularly through small-scale businesses and local entrepreneurship, which play a vital role in supporting the local economy and sustaining livelihoods.	In Kao Sam Muk, the community comprises local fishers who primarily engage in oyster farming and trade. Additionally, numerous seafood restaurants are located along the coastal area behind Khao Sammuk, serving both residents and visitors fresh local catches.
Cultural Capital of the Community	The Suwan Loy Long Shrine serves as a sacred site for local rituals and community gatherings. Nearby, traditional fishing boats are visible, symbolizing the community's deep connection to the sea and dependence on marine livelihoods.	The Bangsaen Wan Lai Festival is another cultural highlight.	The Thai Sammuk Shrine and the Chinese Sam Muk Shrine represent two distinct cultural heritages coexisting in the Sammuk area, reflecting the syncretism of local Thai and Chinese religious traditions.
Community Identity	The fishing community sells fresh seafood and processed seafood products. Many fishermen have established home-based restaurants to increase their income and attract tourism.	The coastal area is a popular tourist destination, and community residents operate businesses selling food and goods along the beachfront. The surrounding areas mainly consist of accommodations, food vendors, and beverage outlets.	The fishing community also engages in oyster farming and the sale of oysters as a key aspect of their livelihood.

Source: Nadhanant Uaesilapa

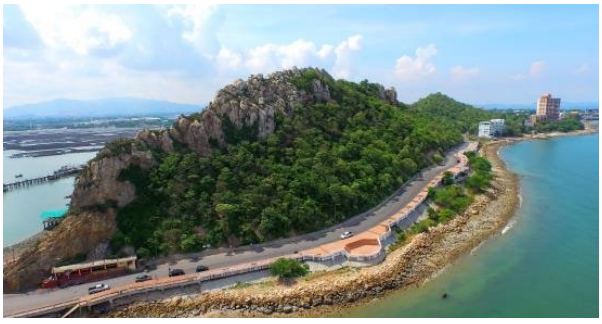


Photo 3: Khao Sammuk
Source: https://www.tripadvisor.com



Photo 4: Jao Mae Khao Sammuk
Source: Visaka Sae-Ui

Bangsaen is an emerging urban area that is increasingly popular among younger generations as both a place to live and a hub for entrepreneurship. Strong economic growth is expected, supported by favorable policies and business interests. However, important questions about the city's future direction remain. In light of these ongoing changes, this research highlights the importance of qualitative development and the nurturing of a cultural ecosystem, rather than merely focusing on economic or infrastructural growth. The study suggests that Bangsaen has significant potential to evolve into a creative community, characterized by a strong cultural identity and active involvement from its diverse population.

Concept and Design of the Artistic Process for Creative Placemaking

After studying and documenting the cultural capital of the Bangsaen community, the research team adopted a Practice-Led Research methodology. Before entering the artistic creation phase, the team was divided into two groups:

1. Curatorial Research Group
2. Performance Practice Research Group

The Performance Practice Research Group was tasked with conducting fieldwork, engaging with local residents, and creating community-based art in three specific communities within the Bangsaen area:

- The Wonnapha Community
- The Bangsaen Beach Community
- The Khao Sammuk Community

Each subgroup was responsible for site-specific investigations, which included field observations, interviews, and data collection. The goal was to analyze the local context and use the findings to guide artistic creation in accordance with the project's conceptual framework. The overall design of the research process is outlined below:

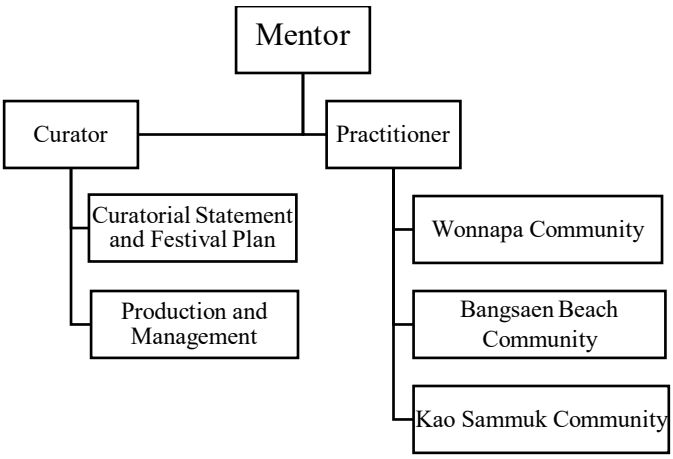


Figure 3: Researcher plan for the study
Source: Nadhanant Uaesilapa

This research established an activity model aimed at addressing the research questions by using a Performing Arts Festival as a platform to collaboratively engage with the community in creating a creative space. The festival showcased contemporary art that reflects the culture and way of life of the Bangsaen communities, with the goal of promoting both the existence and continuity of their cultural capital and community life. This approach served as the foundation for the creation of contemporary artworks directly inspired by the communities, with each community presenting a main performance. The Curatorial Research Group directed the overall management of the festival according to a conceptual framework for festival organization, with specific creative concepts developed for each community as detailed below:

1. Life, Identity, and Spirit of Wonnapa

The researchers aimed to utilize data gathered from a community study to create narratives about Wonnapa through community learning, theatrical performances, and exhibitions. One of the key activities was a Photo Voice project, which showcased the area's potential, explored the roots of the community's spirit, identified its core values, and examined the feelings of local residents toward Wonnapa. This integrated learning process-combining community studies, transformative learning theatre, and art-fostered a strong sense of attachment and pride among community members and volunteer student participants from the Faculty of Music and Performing Arts at Burapha University. It encouraged them to perceive Wonnapa holistically and instilled confidence in both the community's way of life and their individual lifestyles. The creation of the exhibition "One Hundred Faces, One Hundred Stories: The Spirit of Wonnapa" served to investigate the community's past and revealed that Wonnapa is a vibrant coastal community with livelihoods closely tied to the sea. The community maintains kinship networks and places great importance on rituals associated with the Suwannaloylong Shrine. These cultural activities function as family reunions, where residents collectively pray for prosperity in their livelihoods, commerce, and to honor their ancestors. The performance titled "Life, Identity, and Spirit of Wonnapa" was designed to reunite community members and draw the attention of locals back to their neighborhood. Furthermore, this artistic representation served as a tool for preserving the community's fishing grounds. During the research, three significant spaces for the people of Wonnapa were identified: the fish-drying yard, the shrimp paste-drying yard, and a communal area. These spaces serve as gathering points, sources of livelihood, and shared environments for the coastal community of Wonnapa.

2. Wandee@Bangsaen Concert

Data gathered from field surveys and focused group interviews with local musicians revealed a deep connection between the residents of Bangsaen and the tourists who visit. Bangsaen Beach, the closest large sandy beach to Bangkok, has been a popular coastal resort destination since 1943 (B.E. 2486). It has earned the nickname "Bangsaen, the Land of Happiness." This rich history and cultural significance inspired the organization of the concert titled **Wandee@Bangsaen**. This event was not just a typical music concert; it was a collaboratively designed activity that involved the Bangsaen community, using music as a medium for communication. The concert showcased musical expressions from the local community as well as guest artists who inspire the area. This included the creation of original compositions that reflect Bangsaen's identity. The program featured a diverse range of musical ensembles, such as youth string orchestras, veteran local musicians from Bangsaen, brass bands, big bands, and choral groups. These ensembles symbolized both diversity and unity, consisting of musicians across a broad age spectrum-from young amateurs to seasoned professionals. The gathering of community members not only highlighted musical talent but also demonstrated the collective spirit and cooperation inherent in Bangsaen's community ethos. Together with the people of Bangsaen, the researchers helped produce the original composition *"Wandee Dee Tee Bangsaen"* ("A Wonderful Day at Bangsaen"), which reflects the beauty and significance of the area, emphasizing a profound connection to nature, culture, and the collective memory of the community. The lyrics and music resonate with Bangsaen's identity, expressing emotions, sentiments, and valuable imagery that embody the pride of its residents. The concert involved participation from Bangsaen youth and musicians from Chonburi, including the Wat Jaeng Charoen Don School Brass Band, the Chonburi Youth Wind Orchestra, veteran musicians from Bangsaen, The Begin Band, and the choral group from the Maha Thai Pattaya School for the Blind. This event served as both an inspiration and encouragement for the people of Bangsaen, fostering cultural pride and community cohesion through music.

3. Journey Through Time @ Sammuk

The study gathered information from community leaders and local event organizers through individual and group interviews, aiming to encourage participation among community members while immersing them in the daily life of the community. Fieldwork included exploratory walks, conversations, and shared meals within the community. This immersive approach revealed that local residents are acutely aware of the value of their community's assets, recognizing the importance of their cultural and historical heritage. There is a strong desire to preserve and sustain these legacies for future generations. Community activities invited locals to collaboratively explore and trace the significance of their relationship with their environment-particularly the sea, fishing livelihoods, traditional ways of life, and beliefs-from the past to the present. This exploration culminated in an interactive exhibition titled **"Stories Across Time: From Past to Future,"** held at the Sammuk Viewpoint and accompanied by a community theater performance. Before the play, community members were invited to participate in karaoke sessions to foster collective engagement. Reflecting on the creative approaches employed by researchers across different communities, it is evident that there was a profound interest in the everyday lives of local people. The research aimed to connect and reinforce the value of existing cultural heritage, fostering community pride and awareness of its intrinsic worth. This approach was intended to equip the community with the ability to navigate and respond effectively to ongoing changes, ensuring that future transformations do not diminish or undermine their valuable cultural traditions.The creative methodologies and presentations developed in each area served as both rationale and inspiration for the implementation of a performing arts festival. This festival was designed to

actively engage the Bangsaen communities, promoting a sense of belonging and pride in their distinctive local identity as expressed through contemporary art practices.

The collective data and related documentation from the study were synthesized during a curator workshop, which aimed to develop the festival's conceptual framework. This process ultimately led to the creation of the Bangsaen Plearn Festival.

Table 3: Conceptual Framework for Creating the Bangsaen Plearn Festival from the Curator Workshop

Item	Description
Curatorial Statement (Festival Statement)	The Bangsaen Plearn Festival is a performing arts festival designed to encourage community members to engage in learning and connection. It bridges traditional and contemporary cultures through creative works that reflect local ways of life. The festival is shaped by collaborative processes of co-thinking, co-creation, and joint implementation, expressing the unique identity of the area through contemporary art.
Characteristics of the Festival	The Bangsaen Plearn Festival is an event and performance initiative that fosters joy and strengthens connections among people and places in Bangsaen through the medium of art.
Festival Concept	Connect - Creative - Encourage
Purpose	To serve as a coordinating hub that connects people, communities, and spaces in Bangsaen, aiming to foster participation through creative activities.
Vision	To promote community development through the arts, creating a "Creative Bangsaen."
Mission	To establish artistic spaces that promote well-being within the Bangsaen community; to foster community networks in the Bangsaen area through creative activities; and to cultivate local activists and creative performance-makers from within the community.
Tone of Voice	Determined, humorous, grounded, and accessible.
Activity	Panel Discussions and Dialogues, Performances in the Form of New Creations, Collaborative Creative Performances, Workshops, Competitions or Contests, Exhibitions, Cultural Tours, and Study Visits.
Festival Story	The festival aims to foster a sense of love and joy within the community by utilizing Bangsaen beach as a connective space for shared happiness.

Source: Nadhanant Uaesilapa

The management and organization of activities at the Bangsaen Plearn Festival involved presentations by practice-based researchers, professional artists, and community artists, alongside various activities that aligned with the festival's conceptual framework. The festival took place within the Eastern Center of Arts and Culture at Burapha University, Bangsaen Beach, and various community locations, fostering a connection between the university and the Bangsaen community through its momentum. The activities at the Bangsaen Plearn Festival included the following:

1. Performances by practice-based researchers from three communities, featuring:
- "WONNAPA WAN NA BE?"
- "Journey Through Time @ Sam Muk" exhibition
- "Wandee@Bangsaen" concert.

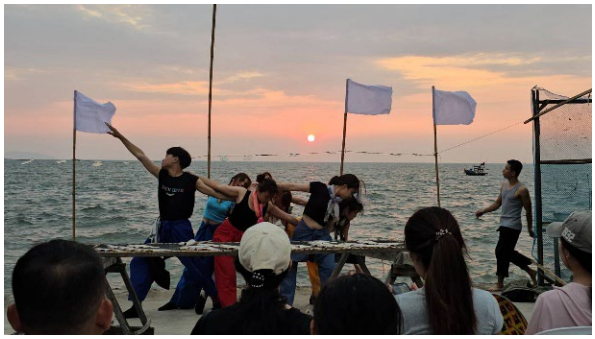


Photo 6: Journey Through Time @ Sam Muk exhibition
Source: Namol Kritsanakarn



Photo 5: The Learning Theatre from the study
Source: Nadhananant Uaesilapa

2. Performances by resident artists at the festival, including:
- "A Tale from the Blue Island"
- "LOOP" by Sutarath Sinnong.



Photo 7: The Shadow puppet setting on Bangsaen beach
Source: Nadhanant Uaesilapa



Photo 8: Loop production and young audiences
Source: Nadhanant Uaesilapa

3. Performances by invited guest artists, including:
- "San Rak" by Pichet Klunchun Dance Company
- "Nang Yai – Sudsakorn Catches Ma Nil Mankgorn" by Wat Ban Don Troupe.



Photo 9: Nang Yai wat Bandon
Source: Nadhanant Uaesilapa



Photo 10: Saen Rak, comtemporary dance
Source: Nadhanant Uaesilapa

4. Performances to create atmosphere at Bangsaen Beach, including:
- Music concerts on the beach
- Korean cover dance performances.



Photo 11: Korean Cover Dance on Beach
Source: Nadhanant Uaesilapa



Photo 12: Bangsaen audiences
Source: Nadhanant Uaesilapa

5. Activities designed to connect spaces and performances during the festival, including:

- An exhibition on the history of Bangsaen through photos
- An audio-visual exhibition on Eastern History
- Guided tours featuring stories from the three communities, titled "Bangsaen Gossip," conducted in a local red songthaew (shared taxi).



Photo 13: Students attend the Eastern History Exhibition
Source: Nadhanant Uaesilapa



Photo 14: History of Bangsaen photos exhibition
Source: Nadhanant Uaesilapa

Conclusion

This study is based on the theoretical frameworks of Cultural Ecology and Creative Placemaking, both of which highlight the significance of community participation. It employs qualitative research methodologies alongside practice-based research, focusing specifically on three communities: Wonnapa, Bangsaen Beach, and Khao Sammuk. The structure of this research is divided into four main phases: (1) literature review and project planning, (2) field surveys, data collection, and community network building, (3) designing the arts project and creating diverse artistic outputs, and (4) project implementation and public presentation.

Bangsaen is an urban area that attracts younger residents, functioning as both a living space and a hub for entrepreneurship. This dynamic contributes to the local economy, even amid uncertainties about the city's future direction. This research highlights the importance of cultural development over purely economic or infrastructural growth.

The design of the festival emphasized Bangsaen's unique cultural heritage, incorporating elements of local folklore, coastal lifestyles, and contemporary artistic practices. By engaging local artists and residents in the creation and presentation of site-specific performances and exhibitions, the festival fostered a sense of belonging and pride among both participants and audiences. These artistic expressions not only celebrated the community but

also served as a form of cultural storytelling, strengthening intergenerational and cross-community ties.

Ultimately, the Bangsaen Plearn Festival exemplifies how creative placemaking can redefine public spaces, enhance urban livability, and build resilient communities. This research involves collaboration between university arts lecturers and the local community to highlight Thai artistic practices that blend tradition with contemporary knowledge. During practice-based performances, researchers carefully framed their thinking, collecting data through interviews and observations while maintaining awareness of personal biases. It is crucial not to impose one's worldview, as this can lead to bias. Instead, researchers should engage in active, nonjudgmental listening to gather meaningful data and critically reflect on their processes. The Bangsaen Plearn Festival serves as a bridge between the university and the local community, fostering trust and encouraging participation. It promotes friendship, collaboration, and lifelong learning while strengthening connections with local institutions and enhancing appreciation for contemporary art. Although the festival has significant potential to elevate Saensuk City's cultural profile, its long-term success relies on the establishment of sustainable, multi-stakeholder collaborative frameworks that ensure meaningful and consistent contributions.

To achieve this goal, there must be strategic alignment across key areas, including cultural policy development, engagement with academic institutions, and community-driven initiatives. This alignment should be backed by solid funding mechanisms and systematic resource allocation strategies. Equally important is the creation of a shared long-term vision among government agencies, educational institutions, private sector partners, and community representatives. By doing so, the festival can evolve into a sustainable cultural platform that consistently supports the city's integrated development agenda across cultural, social, and economic dimensions.

Acknowledgements

This research project was funded by the Research and Innovation Administration Division at Burapha University, in collaboration with the Office of Research Affairs at Chulalongkorn University, and received support from Saensuk Municipality.

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