

JITTAMETT KINDERGARTEN, BANGKOK

TARI KIPAS

Jittamett Kindergarten is a school in Bangkok, Thailand, for children 20 months old to 6 years old. We now have 200 children total at the school.

The school aims towards organizing an education that is meaningful for the life of every individual child in each and every aspect. Our mission is to see the children living happily in this world despite all the drastic changes. We also hope to see them grow and become constructive towards their own self-esteem, towards others, towards nature and the environment. Additionally, the school expects to see changes in Thai education as well as Thai parents on how they value education; as not being simply a pass for promoting one's social status or earnings, nor aiming towards a single goal—that is, competitive exams and high test scores.

The school has incorporated different approaches into our learning, such as Reggio Emilia, Whole Language, Montessori, and Buddhist ideas and philosophy. The Orff-Schulwerk approach also plays a major role as one of the most important educational innovations that blends in perfectly with Thai society and which can bring out so much power in children's learning.

All the teachers at the school have been closely acquainted with the Orff-Schulwerk approach and have been strongly advocated to take part in the Orff trainings regularly. In consequence, we commonly integrate Orff-Schulwerk into regular classroom learnings in order to promote the four domains of development (physical, emotional, social, and intellectual).

To further illustrate, coming to term with Orff-Schulwerk enables our teachers to adjust their attitudes and perspective towards children as well as how we respond to them. The Orff ideas have also been so crucial to our thinking. With Orff-Schulwerk, we manage to create—with endless possibilities—a delightful and interesting learning environment that nurtures the joy and the natural curiosity in every child.

In this presentation, we would like to demonstrate the performance from the children's end-of-school-year concert. The children taking part in this project are 25 four-and-a-half to five-and-a-half-year-olds. The title of the show is "TARI KIPAS" and is the traditional fan dance originated from the Southern part of Thailand.

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Starting from simple body percussions (clapping and tapping), children become familiarized with the music before moving on to rhythm sticks and creative postures. They then take on with their sticks and create their own movements that go along with music, and finally, the children get to play the drums with their sticks.

The following week, children have been introduced to the folk dance through a short video clip. Being inspired by the dance, they now have the actual experience of dancing and creating free movements with paper fans. Also, they have had the opportunity to rehearse drum-playing and take turn playing the drums and doing the fan dance.

Their next encounter with TARI KIPAS features the art aspects. Providing the TARI KIPAS music, children have transported their creative expressions from moving their bodies in a shared space to creating a body of work using the movements of brush strokes, lines, and colors, each on a giant sheet of paper.

During which time, each unique individuality has been clearly expressed through the choice of colors and the course of how their brushes would take them. All of this has been the result of each child's concentrative response to the TARI KIPAS music.

Children also have the opportunity to make use of their paintings by choosing their own patterns and turning their artwork into beautiful fans they become so proud of.

The pre-performance rehearsal involves going over the show sequences and providing children with the experience and the confidence they would need to take care of themselves and to work in cooperation with friends while on stage. The performance begins with painting, and is followed by fan-dancing and drum-playing alternately.

On the concert day, what goes on on the stage is clearly the reflection of children's remarkable potentiality. Moreover, it also serves as a revelation that creates understanding for the parents of how valuable the experience derived from the Orff-Schulwerk learning approach is.

Teachers/Collaborators:

Sataporn Laithong (Music teacher)
Wishchuwan Srimas (Music teacher)
Warangkana Siripachote (Art Teacher)
Krongtong Boonprakong (Music & Art teacher)

Niracha Winichayakl/Team (musician)
Pannipa Gantasang (Classroom teacher/Costume)
Grisna Plaipan (Classroom teacher/Ccostume)
Jittamett Teacher (Costume/Stage)