

## Ratanakosin Art ( Bangkok Art )



The Chakris were inaugurated on April 6, 1782 together with the coronation of Rama I or King Buddha Yot Fa Chulalok. He moved the capital across the Chao Phaya River from Thonburi to a small village known as "Bangkok" and raised up new laws to rule the country. Under his reign, Thailand covered all areas of present day Laos and parts of Burma, Cambodia and Kedah province in Malaysia.

In 1809, Rama II or King Buddha Loet Lad, son of Rama I took the throne until 1824. He devoted himself to preserve the Thai literature that had remained from Ayutthaya period and produced a new version of Ramakien or Thai Ramayana, the classical literature.

In 1824-1851, Rama III or King Nang Klao was successful in re-establishing relation and making trades with China which was necessary to meet the increasing domestic agricultural production.

Rama IV or King Mongkut (Phra Chom Klao), who reigned from 1851 to 1868 lived as a Buddhist monk for 27 years. During his monastic period, he could speak many languages such as Latin, English, and five other languages. He also studied western sciences and adopted the discipline of local Mon monk. Under his reign, he created new laws to improve the women's and children's right, opened new waterways and roads, and created the first printing press.

Rama V or King Chulalongkorn, Rama IV's son, continued the throne from 1868 to 1910. He started to reform the tradition, legal and administrative realm by allowing officials to sit on chairs during royal audiences. Under the reign of Rama V, Thailand developed relations with European nations and the USA. He introduced schools, roads, railways, and Thailand's first post office. He even established civil service system. In 1892, Rama V overhauled the administration of Siam to a form of cabinet government with 12 ministers.

In 1886, Siam lost some territory to French, Laos and British Burma accorded the foreign powers intercede. After that King Chulalongkorn declared Thailand as an independent kingdom on the 23rd of October, making this day as a national holiday. Every year this national holiday is celebrated in commemoration of this event and people lay wreaths in memory of king they called "Phra Piya Maharaj"

Rama VI or King Vajiravudh, took the throne from 1910 to 1925. During his short reign, he introduced the westernization to Thailand. He introduced the primary school education, Thai women were encouraged to grow their hair at a certain length. Surnames were introduced, and football was introduced in Thailand.

1925-1935 was the period of Rama VII or King Prachadhipok, Rama VI's brother. He changed Siam's form of government from absolute monarchy to democracy. This revolution developed the constitutional monarchy along British lines, with mixed military and civilian group in power. At that time, Phibul Songkhram was a key military leader in the 1932 coup. He maintained his position and power from 1938 until the end of World War II.

Rama VIII or King Ananda Mahidol, a nephew of Rama VII, took the throne in 1935 but was assassinated under mysterious circumstances in 1946. His brother King Bhumipol Aduldej succeeded as Rama IX.

Under Rama IX's government, the country's name was officially changed from "Siam" to "Thailand" in 1946 which was defined in Thai as "Prathet Thai", the word "Prathet" means "country" and the word "Thai" means "free" referring to the Thai races.

For the Buddha images of Rattanakosin (Bangkok) Style, a small number of Buddha images were cast during the first three reigns of the Chakri Dynasty. A large number of bronze statues of Sukhothai, U-Thong and Ayutthaya periods were moved from several parts of the country and were given to temples in Bangkok. Regarding images created in the Rattanakosin Style, they more or less followed the trend of Ayutthaya art.





In these pictures, they are the attitude of subduing Mara and Buddha in meditation of Ratanakosin period that made of bronze, brass and marble. For the attitude of subduing Mara, it is the most common attitude of a seated Buddha image. In this attitude the Buddha is seated with the legs crossed, the right hand is on the right knee with the four fingers pointing to the ground, while the left hand rests in the lap. This is also known as the attitude of calling the Goddess of the Earth to witness. This is related to the time when the Lord Buddha was about to attain his enlightenment. He was attacked by Mara and his army. The Lord Buddha summoned the Goddess of the Earth to witness the attack and to save him by pointing the four fingers of the right hand to the ground.

The Goddess of the Earth emerged and saved him by wringing the water of merit from her hair to drown Mara and his army. In this way Mara was subdued. Thus this attitude is known as subduing Mara.

For the Buddha in meditation, it shows the Lord Buddha in meditation when he attains enlightenment. This attitude shows the Lord Buddha seated with his legs crossed. The two hands are folded in the lap with the palm of the right hand facing upward.

Except the Buddha images, there are many instruments of Ratanakosin period in this room.



They are the bronze kettle drums, the musical instruments that are not originally created to entertain but rather to produce signals for communication and some are employed in performing important sacred rites. It has been claimed that these are musical instruments which have been passed down to the present generation since prehistoric times.



These are the bells of Bangkok style in 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century A.D. with gold painted on depict of Ramayana.



Reclining Buddha inside the model of Vihara.

Wooden panle contained Buddhist votive tablets.

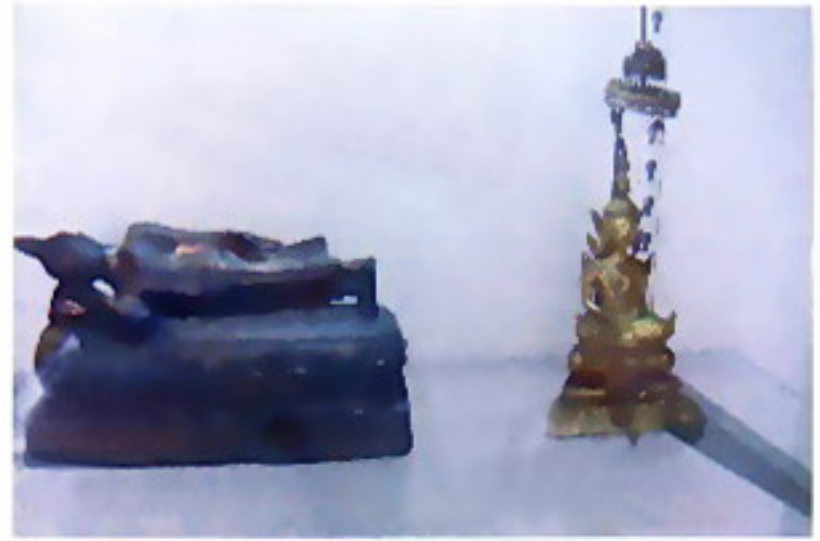




Reclining Buddha and Standing Buddha made of bronze



Seated and standing Buddha which made of colored glass and stone.



Buddha subduing mara, reclining Buddha, crowned Buddha in meditation and crowned standing Buddha.



Buddha image and a disciple which made of bronze. They are the religious statues found at Wat Choeng Tha, Nonthaburi in 1963.



The important bronze religious statues found at the crypt of Wat Pra Kaew Wang Nha in 1964-1965.



“Phra Malai” is Buddha’s disciple who take the people from the hell. He popularly was created in the form of figure with monk’s fan and alms-bowl.

Phra Sangajaiyana

Phra Patjake Buddha

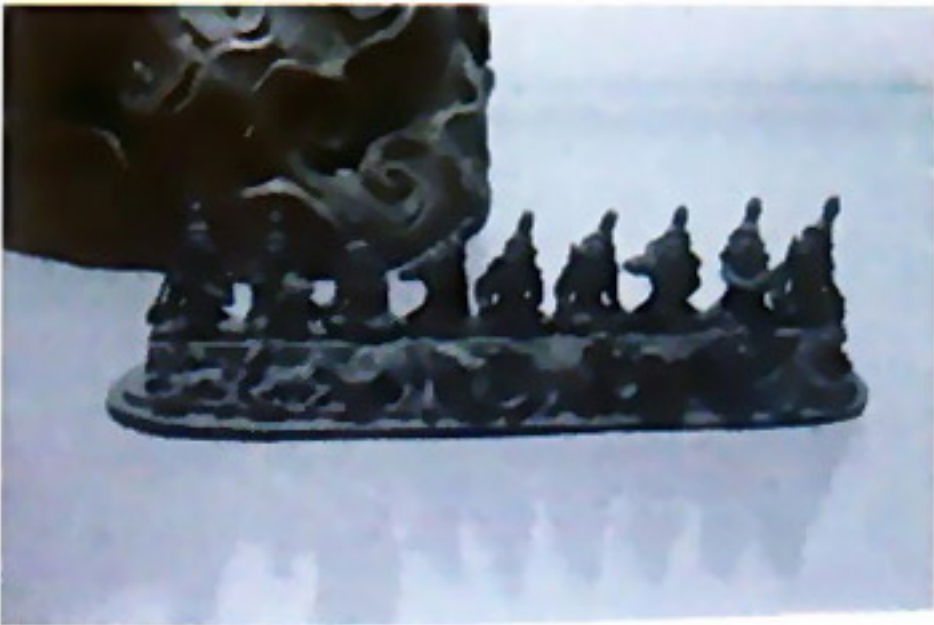
Buddha’s disciple



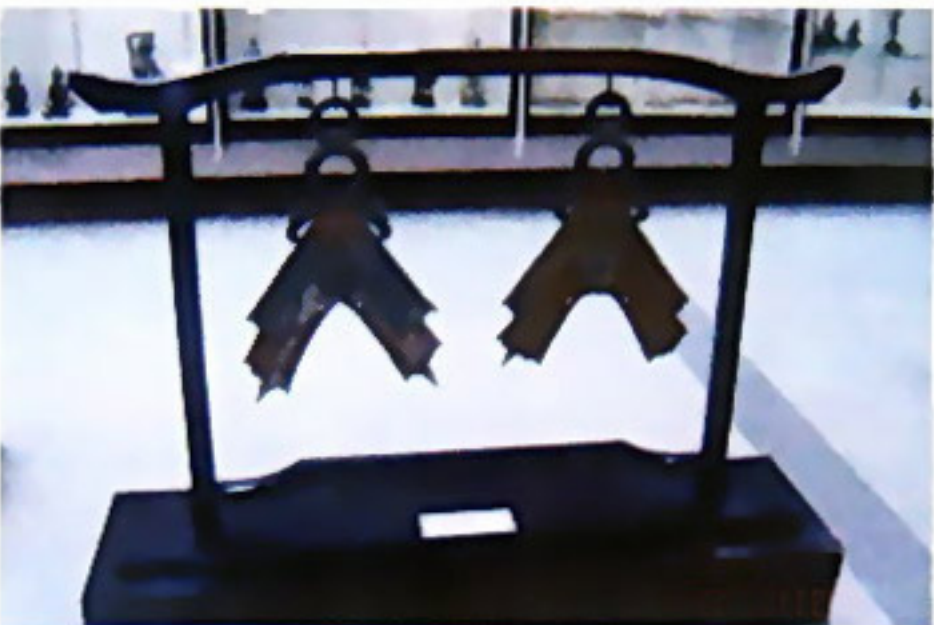
The amulets of different periods



The brass sculpture in 20<sup>th</sup> century.  
The sitting female gods.  
The earth goddess.



The gods of nine planets.



The bell in pleat cloth shape.





The Buddha image in the attitude of calling down the rain. It imitated from the Indian gandhara in 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The bell in Bangkok style.



The musician god.

## Decorative Arts

In this room, there are many decorative furnitures and paintings in Ratanakosin period.



This is the cloth painting depicting scenes of Jataka Tosachat, the great ten previous lives of the Buddha in 19<sup>th</sup> century A.D.



These are the royal king walking sticks and the umbrellas of the king.



Bencharong and Lai Nam Thong wares, Sino – thai ceramics.



Scene with shadow – play figure. It represent Rama, the hero of the Ramayana.

The bookcase, inlaid with mother of pearl and composite circles of glass.





The bookcase, an episode in the Ramayana with Kra-nok decoration.

The bookcase, carved in Chinese key design and falling flowers. It removed from the Buddhasanasangaha Library.



Cloth painting depicting the life of Lord Buddha.

Upper The Buddha visited to Tavatimsa heaven during rainy season.

Center The Buddha descended from Tavatimsa heaven near the town of Sankassa.

Lower When the people of Sankassa learned about the Buddha's descent, they all went to hear him preach.

Ps. If you want to see the larger pictures, you can see them from my CD-Rom (power point).

## Ratanakosin Art ( Bangkok Art )

The reign of King Rama I of Chakri dynasty began in the year 2325 BE, with the town of Bangkok as capital. Although there were some wars with outward enemy, he often managed to find time to encourage the study and practice of Buddhism. Numerous temples, both inside and outside the capital, were repaired. Of these temples, the Jetavana Vihara (or Wat Pho, in the vernacular), which ranks among one of the most important, had undergone seven years of repair and the well-known Wat-Phra-Keo (Temple of the Emerald Buddha), which is regarded as the most important one in Thailand, was also built during his reign. From the Northern provinces such as from Sukhothai, a number of Buddha images (about two thousand in all) were brought in order to be enshrined in the Uposatha of various temples in Bangkok.

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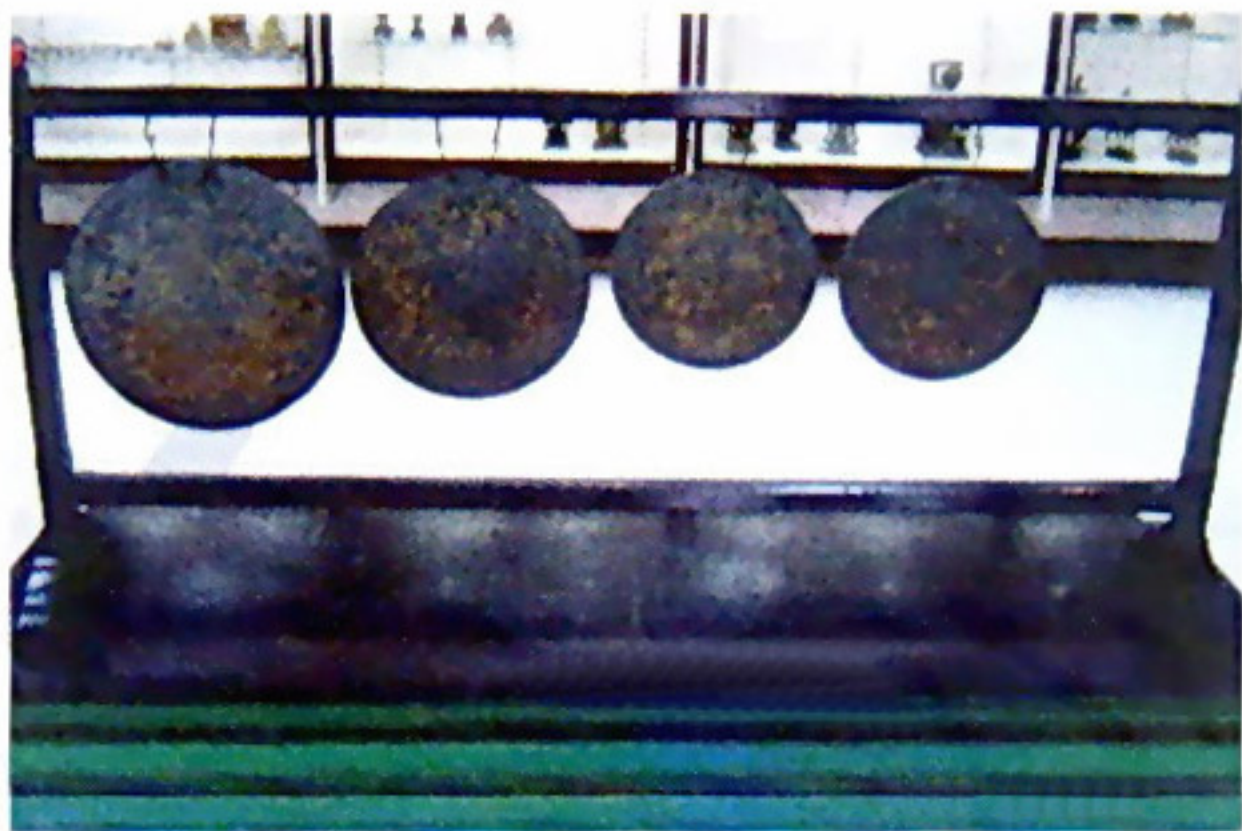
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