



# Pha Tad Ke Botanical Garden

Newsletter Nr. 2 - October 2010

## PHA TAD KE - THE CLIFF TO UNTIE AND RESOLVE

We would like to thank you all for the reactions we got to our first newsletter and also our new friends who have become members of the Friends of Pha Tad Ke. We would especially like to thank two wonderful persons from Australia who wish to remain anonymous but have given us a very generous donation that will enable us to do many many things that are on our wish list and start beginning of next year with our ambitious program of monthly fieldtrips. We would also like to say a special thanks to our 3 honorary members for their wonderful help: Professor Jules Vidal, Dr. Greg Blake and Eve Czernechi. Finally our new head gardener from France has arrived, Albin Duzer, and in our next newsletters he will write a regular contribution on plants of special interest. I hope you will enjoy this newsletter. Rik Gadella, General Director Pha Tad Ke Botanical Garden

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*The Pha Tad Ke Newsletter is distributed 3 times a year via e-mail.*

*Big thanks to our volunteer collaborators, and if anyone is interested to write articles or help us with occasional translations please let us know.*

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## Friends of Pha Tad Ke Botanical Garden

Launched in January 2010, the Association of Friends of Pha Tad Ke (a French non profit organization) was founded to support the creation of the Pha Tad Ke Botanical Garden. The garden is currently in the creation phase and will open its doors in five years. In order to support us during this phase we would like to invite you to become a Friend of the Garden.

We have set up a sponsoring system so that Friends can contribute to specific projects that are close to their hearts.

Sponsoring Pha Tad Ke will allow you to follow the day-to-day evolution of the garden, look behind the scenes of its operations and participate in the Pha Tad Ke adventure.

*Hugues de Saint Simon, President*

*Albane de Chatellus, Treasurer*

*Rik Gadella, Secretary*

**For further information: [contact@amis-pha-tad-ke.com](mailto:contact@amis-pha-tad-ke.com)**

**To become a Friend of Pha Tad Ke, send your subscription via our website [www.amis-pha-tad-ke.com](http://www.amis-pha-tad-ke.com):**

Using Paypal online payment or a bankcard.

By bank transfer: HSBC-France Code BIC: CCFRFRPP

Payable to 'Amis de Pha Tad Ke'

Account N°: FR76 3005 6009 4909 4900 0885 363

By French check, payable to 'Amis de Pha Tad Ke' and sent to

**Amis de Pha Tad Ke Botanical Garden**

(Association Loi 1901)

Office: 108, rue JP Timbaud 75011 Paris, France

**When you become a member for the creation phase, your 5-year (2010-2014) membership will entitle you to:**

**Member - € 100:**

- Our newsletter (3 times a year, english/french) contains news about the garden, on-going work and actions, and articles about the flora, arts and culture of Laos.

**Friend Member - € 300:**

- Private visit to PTK, including boat trip and picnic (for 2 pax, booking required)
- A 30% reduction on the garden's publications and products (except Folies)
- Access to our favored travel agent in Laos, reductions on hotels and restaurants etc. (see list of the partners of the Friends)
- Mention of your name on our website
- An invitation for two people to the official opening.

**Support Member - Institutions & Companies - € 2,000:**

- Mention of your name on our website with your logo
- Discount of 10% on one of our editions « Folies »
- A private reception at the pre-opening for a group from your institution/company.

**Donor Member - € 5,000 €, or more:**

- Discount of 10% on two of our editions « Folies »
- Inclusion of your name on the donor plaque at the entrance to the garden.

**Members can increase their involvement in the creation of Pha Tad Ke by supporting one or more of our individual projects:**

• **Adopt a tree: from € 50 to € 2,000**

Buying and planting a tree is only a beginning. It must then be fed, cared for and pruned. This takes time, money and care. Love your tree and adopt a seedling or a mature tree.

• **Sponsor a Bookparty: € 400**

Guided visits to the gardens for groups of children or students, who will spend a day learning about Pha Tad Ke's work and plants. The package includes transport to the garden and lunch. At the end of the day, every participant will receive a copy of our specially published books.

• **Sponsor a student: € 4,400 for 4 years**

In conjunction with three institutions, PTK has set up a grant for the best first-year student. At the end of the first year of study, the winning student will be offered a scholarship that will allow him or her to continue his or her studies. In exchange, the recipient will be required to do a two-month work placement at the garden during summer recesses and to work at the garden for one year at the end of his/her studies.

• **Sponsor a research post: € 1,800 for one year**

Given the heavy workload at the university and the very low salaries in Laos, there is little time left for building research projects. With this grant PTK will enable a post doc to do a year's research on a topic chosen in consultation with PTK.

• **Sponsor a field trip: € 10,000**

In conjunction with the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, we have set up a three-year partnership to train our horticultural team and to carry out an ambitious program of monthly field trips to gather specimens for a collection of living plants that will be unique in Laos. At the same time we will collect specimens for a herbarium. Each trip will require a substantial investment in time and money but this work is imperative as it will form the very foundations of our garden and its collections.

• **Sponsor a building: from € 15,000**

Several buildings will be required to house our collections and staff, and provide facilities for visitors. These buildings will include: Nurseries (€ 15,000), Orchid House (€ 27,000), Butterfly Farm (€ 32,000), Reception area (€95,000), Restaurant (€ 95,000), offices for research staff (€ 130,000), Traditional Medicines House (€ 135,000) and Library and Herbarium (€ 190,000).



Prof. Dr. Kongkanda  
Director QSBG



Dr. Suyanee  
Vice-Director QSBG

SEABG 23/34 September 2010  
South East Asian Botanical Garden's meeting at  
Queen Sirikit Botanical Garden in Chiang Mai.  
Main topic of discussion was the Global  
Strategy on Plant Conservation.  
But we also had fun with a great show  
from Mr. Methee.

Also check out this link:  
<http://dokmaidogma.wordpress.com/2010/09/26/southeast-asian-botanical-gardens-seabg-in-collaboration>





Trainings in Pha Tad Ke by Pi Daeng from Chiang Mai. One of the best commercial nurseries in the Khamtien plantmarket, Pi Daeng has another way of looking at things. September 2010.





The first Pha Tad Ke Scholarships are given to 6 students at the NAFC, Northern Agricultural & Forestry College. Two of the scholarships were sponsored by a member of the Amis de Pha Tad Ke: Jean-Marc Decrop, merci. October 8th, 2010



Khamphuoi Phonexay, Director NAFC



Jury: Jean-Pierre Dovat, Rik Gadella, Andrea Schroeter



Five of our Staff spend 3 weeks in Chiang Mai at Queen Sirikit Botanical Garden for trainings by Dr. Santi Watthana, Dr. Piyakaset Suksathan & Methee Wongnak. With a big thanks to QSBG !  
September/October 2010.



ศูนย์หม่อนไหมเฉลิมพระเกียรติฯ เชียงใหม่  
Queen Sirikit Sericulture Center (Chiangmai)  
กรมหม่อนไหม





Albin Duzer our new head gardener has arrived from France. Diplomated from the CFPPA in Besancon, he has taking up his new position in PTK since September 2010.

In october our first graduates from the National University of Laos arrived. After 3 days of interviews and tests we where so enthusiastic with them, we offered a job to all four



Visit of Prof. Dr. Benito Tan, a fern and moss expert from SIngapore, October 2010.



Lay Hua Fai Festival is the end of Buddhist lent in Laos and is celebrated with offerings and ofcourse lots of sticky rice and beer.  
October 23rd.



*“If I could transform myself into a climbing plant and you could be a palm tree, we would be joined forever.”*

The use of ‘recreational substances’, especially those in chewable form, is one of the oldest of human habits and each region has its specialty. The Americas have coca leaf, in the Middle East it’s khat, and betel is used in Asia. These psychotropic substances are everywhere emblematic of sociability and even in the cultures where their consumption is fading, they remain a powerful symbol of the relationships among people and their bond with supernatural creatures.

*The words to say it*

The practice of chewing betel is of Indian origin. It varies in strength from region to region but goes back more than 2000 years. In French, it is specifically betel which defines this substance, although it contains many other ingredients. This name, which originated in Malabar, appears in records of a voyage in 1515, but with a large degree of imprecision, as much about the plant as about its use and its effects:

“The Indians are strong in their use of betel and chew this leaf almost constantly, mixing it with a bit of quicklime and a fruit which they call Areque to diminish the bitterness.” explains a chronicler in 1611 which shows clearly that the two plants have been in use together for a long time.

In all the cultures of South East Asia where this habit has taken hold, it is sometimes betel, sometimes the nut of the arec, which has come to define the different uses and mean-

**THE WEDDED PLANTS: BETEL AND ARECA**

ings. Thus, in Laos, when one says kiao maak, which refers both to the chewing of the palm nut and to the set of rituals that surround its use, it mentions the palm nut, rather than the betel nut which is called phou, but in Vietnam, the word Trau can mean either the leaf of the betel plant or the chew itself, and the action of chewing is expressed as eating the betel, (an trau). And as far as the English language goes, it is called Arequier or betel palm or betel nut.

*Botany*

Betel is a pepper, piper betle, and belongs to the *Piperaceae* family. This climbing plant grows wild in the dense Indo-malayan forests. It is grown in the shade of trees, which give shelter and support,--- palm trees, where possible. It is recognizable by its simple heart-shaped leaves with well-defined veins, in a beautiful dark green.

The Palm tree, (*Areca catechu*) is originally from Malaysia, its scientific name having been given to it by Linneus based on the language of the region, which added the name catechu, or the tree that gives cachou (a medicinal paste that is made with the seed pods and the wood of the *mimosa catechu*), an Indian tree with which it is often confused. It’s a palm of between 15 and 30 metres in height, grown all over tropical Asia. The 3 to 4 centimetre fruits are ovoid in shape, reddish- orange in colour when mature, with a single seed, and they form in clusters at the base of the palms. A palm tree fruits after five or six years. Those of us who are not familiar with this tree will perhaps be enlightened by a Lao riddle translated by Raquez at



Top: Betel.

Below: The Arequier with its beautiful crown of leaves is seen in many gardens.



The small betel nuts are formed after the flowers.

the beginning of the century in this way; “Its long body holds itself majestically erect and, on its head, it wears a hat like the tail of a phoenix. It hatches its young during winter and feeds them through the summer.” Indeed, the cluster of fruit is surmounted by long strands which evoke the plumage of a bird. There are at least two species of Arequier in Laos; *Areca laosensis* and *Areca triandria* which are used in the same way.

#### *The Chew*

The basic ingredients of the chew are the betel leaf which serves as an envelope, the quicklime which is spread on top and then a layer of palm nut; but depending on the region, other plants, rich in tannin, are added to the basic mix. In Laos



Betel leaves are packed differently in the various regions of Laos, here they are offered in bunches of ten .

it's often the bark of the Sisiet, (*Pentace burmanica*): in Vietnam one scrapes a bit of the roots of the Chay (*Artocarpus tonkinensis*). Tobacco is nearly everywhere an ingredient in the chew, especially in Laos and Thailand; it's said that the colder it is, the more tobacco one adds. Spice plants are also often added to the mix, like cardamom, ginger or cloves. The list of these plants is quite long and depends on the area, their availability and local tastes. Even the basic ingredients can be modified; for example, the betel leaves can be fermented, the palm nut can be fresh or dried, sometimes cooked with sugar as in Cambodia, and, finally, the quicklime can be either colored or white. Once the ingredients have been chosen, the chew is masticated slowly, the red saliva that results (because of the tannin in the



Strings of Betel nuts ready for the spirit ceremonies.

bark) is spat out or partly swallowed. In the course of mastication the different ingredients can be adjusted; for example a bit more arec to modify the bitterness of the betel. This relatively complicated procedure means that there are utensils for the preparation of the chew which range from quite sophisticated to disarmingly simple. These tools and ingredients are kept in round boxes (saa maak) made of silver, lacquer-ware, or basketwork with different compartments for coupe nuts, boxes for quicklime, spices (nuts tobacco, cloves) and betel leaves. But it can also just be simply plastic bags. In ethnic groups in northern Laos, a length of bamboo or even women's hair ornaments are used to hold the ingredients. It is interesting to note that, in India, the traditional chew has



Preparing the chew in the Vientiane market.



In Laos the Betel set is present in all ceremonies



In the Hanoi market.



Betel set of an old woman in Laos.

undergone some modernisation and one can buy preparations of the ingredients in dried and powdered form which are consumed like tea or coffee.

Hundreds of years ago in Laos, men and especially women chewed daily, during all religious or secular occasions (while playing cards, for example) and even children joined in with material that had been pre-chewed by the mother to make it less strong.

This chewing was done for the sensation of well-being, for hunger or tiredness or for good health. It was thought as well that the chewing was good for the teeth and in places where rotten teeth were usually pulled, this was a way to retain them. So one chewed for oneself, but also for social reasons.

### *The Marriage*

The deeper significance of this practice is the marriage of the ingredients both in their growth pattern (the betel vine climbs the arec) and in the culture. The chew could be at the same time hot or cold, sweet and bitter, symbolizing all relationships; the union of humans in love, friendship, conviviality, or in connection with supernatural beings, gods and spirits.

Since the 16th century, historians have related how, in the Far East, the betel chew built and consolidated social ties; one went out in the morning with one's bag of chews made up at home in order to offer them to people one met, who also had their own supplies. The exchange of the little packages was part of the simple meeting between friends, but also the

conclusion of contracts, after a departure or a return from a voyage and for weddings, the supreme alliance.

Raquez tells how, in the 1900's, in Laos, one showed one's trust in a friend by putting the little packet he'd prepared in one's mouth, unopened.

Betel and Arec are still today involved in all the ceremonies. The proposal of marriage, called a betel procession, is done by offering chews. At the time of the wedding, these two plants are important elements of the plate of offerings (the romantic symbolism is reinforced by the fact that the betel leaves are heart-shaped) as well as of courtship, with popular songs echoing the metaphor. "If I could becoming a vine and you were a palm tree we could be together for all time", says



Betel chews and offerings of flowers for the temple in a lovely arrangement of coconut leaves, in Bali.

one of them. In Vietnam, there is an essential and direct relationship between love and betel chewing, when it comes to popular songs. In Cambodia, beside the chews, the flowers of the palm tree are obligatory for the celebration of a marriage. They are a symbol of the future happiness of the couple.

### *The Symbol*

Although people chew in many regions of India, Vietnam and elsewhere in Asia, it is not done much in Laos anymore, at least in the cities. In fact, betel stains the teeth which is quite incompatible with western ideas of beauty, regular spitting of jets of red saliva is not considered hygienic and, while the ingredients of the chew might be beneficial in small doses, they are dangerous to health in the long run, and have been



In Vietnam, the betel leaf is cut and half a nut is placed on a rose petal for this chew in the shape of a phoenix wing.

classified as carcinogens by the CIRC (International Cancer Research Centre).

And, while markets have long since given up selling betel, arec and other ingredients, and the practice of betel chewing is slowly disappearing, the powerful significance that these plants have engendered continues to figure in social life.

Betel chewing equipment and tools are symbolically presented in ceremonies in which a vow is made, like marriage, but also at the ordination of novice monks. The chews on the altar are given in exchange for the protection of the ancestors. A prepared chew is placed in the mouth of a chewer who has died. Bad spirits are kept away by the nourishment put into the ritual baskets well away from the hathong, small chews in tens are placed among the fruit, cigarettes and rice



In Tamil Nadu, a young bride holds two betel leaves in her hand.

because the spirits also like to chew betel.

In the text, d'Archaibaut describes a cult devoted to mythical ancestors in Luang Prabang. The two plants appear throughout their rituals - khammaak, or bowls of chews, for the spirits who also chew them, a houa maak, (string of arec seeds) is seen as a sort of invitation to the spirits, pat maak is a bunch of seeds hung up to alert the spirits of a ceremony about to take place and ho pat maak is an altar for a buffalo sacrifice.

In Bali, the chews represent the Hindu trinity; the colour of Brahma is red, that of one variety of nuts, that of Vishnu, black or green, the colour of the betel leaf and the colour of Shiva is the white of the lime.

In Vietnam, the chews do not only have a symbolic significance; they are also quite decorative. The betel leaves are



Top: Modern looking Betel set, seen on the Vientiane market.

Below: In a kathong with 9 compartments are the different foods destined for the spirits whom we don't want to return amongst the living, amongst them is Betel chew.

cut into lovely patterns, the most popular being the ‘wings of the phoenix’.

Many Asian languages play with metaphors related to the two plants; in Laos one says *tao houa maak* ‘turn your head towards the arec tree’ which is an expression to describe when a sister and brother marry a brother and sister from another family.

In Java, the time that one chews a packet (between a half hour and an hour) is used as a unit of time in domestic life.

#### *Other Uses*

It should be noted that each of these plants has uses of its own. Betel is a pepper and can also be used in cooking. In traditional medicine, if a birth is late, the practitioner will roll up a betel leaf and blow through it into the mouth of the mother-to-be. Once the baby is born, he will stroke the baby’s eyebrows with the petioles of the same leaf.

The arec, like all tannic plants, has a number of medicinal uses. The nut is a sedative and causes a slight intoxication and so is taken for depression. As elsewhere, the leaves are prescribed in a decoction for bronchitis; crushed in a mortar, they are used as a poultice for lumbago. Petelot, a botanist and chemist who worked in Indochina during the 40’s, suggested a treatment for dysentery which might be quite effective but would not be acceptable today. “...take a green palm nut and a ball of opium---the size depending on the seriousness of the illness, generally the size of a grain of corn, ...make incisions in the nut and rub in the opium, heat this over a fire and make a decoction from it...”

Among other traditional uses, the bark of the tree gives a reddish-brown dye and the heartwood of the trunk makes a delicious dish.

The example of betel and arec is emblematic of the way in which a vegetable process becomes imbued with a cultural significance, in practice, as a symbol and in the language. Even in regions where one does not chew, this aspect has a profound effect on cultural life. A Vietnamese author (Nguyen Xuan Hien) goes so far as to say that betel is “one of the most powerful elements of the Vietnamese identity...It’s a cultural trait that binds the Vietnamese to the Austro-Asian world, and even the civilization of South Asia and Oceania.”

*Translation by Suzy Young*

Note: Ethno-biology is too often seen as exclusively the study of medicinal plants, but we have chosen, in our contribution to the *Pha Tad Ke* newsletter, to speak of plants which have a symbolic significance.



## THE YOUNG LAO PHOTOGRAPHER'S GALLERY @ MY LIBRARY

### Portfolio by: Sengsong



#### What I like in the morning

My name is Sengsong and I was born in a small village in Oudoumxai Province. I have studied and lived at the Luang Prabang Orphanage School since 2002 when I was 12 years old and started in grade one at the Primary School. Now I am 20 and study in the second year of High School.

I am an artist and in my free time I like painting, reading English books and taking photos. In the future I want to go abroad to study Art and English.

I became interested in photography when I was 16 years old. At first I didn't have any idea how to take photos and how to make people interested in my work. I had

to learn how to take photos from many photographers and learn from their different styles and then try a variety of styles myself.

Recently I took a lot of pictures of "dew" so I have named this collection "what I like in the morning." When the sun shines and makes the dew bright and sparkling it's so beautiful. That was what made me interested in taking these photos; to show people that if they "open their eyes" after they wake up in the morning, they will see beauty all around and feel cooled by its touch.











**@ My library** is the brain and heartchild of Carol Kresge and some of our staff used to hang out here a lot when they were studying. We are very happy that Carol has accepted to curate our portfolio series with young talent from the Young Lao Photographer's Gallery **@ My library**.

**@ My library** is a community based resource center for the youth of Luang Prabang. It is an ongoing experiment in what happens when you give motivated users the materials and encouragement they need to study anything. The numbers tell some of the story, with an average of 100+ students a day, 1,000+ books checked-out each month, and 25,000 computer hours logged last year. But the story is really about the users.

They come to read, study languages and computer, watch science, math, culture and history videos, play word games, do puzzles, thinking and problem solving activities, listen to audio books and music, enter contests, use the internet, learn photography and Photoshop and borrow cameras.

Photography is one of the most popular activities **@ My Library**. When people started asking to buy the photos on our walls we created the Young Lao Photographer's Gallery. While Laos has been photographed by many world class photographers, our angle is unique... this is our life, our families and friends, our inspirations and aspirations... this is "Laos Through Our Own Eyes."

If you are in Luang Prabang, visit our gallery **@ My Library** opposite Wat Nong between L'Elephant and Tamarind Restaurants. If not you can view selected photos in our online gallery at <http://laophotographers.zenfolio.com/>

**@ My Library** and the Young Lao Photographer's Gallery are part of The Language Project, an American 501(c)3 charity. [www.thelanguageproject.org](http://www.thelanguageproject.org)

## SOME BOOKS AND OTHER AFFAIRS WE LOVE

### Food from Northern Laos

The Boat Landing Cookbook

Dorothy Culloty, photographs by Kees Sprengers 29,95\$

[www.foodfromnorthernlaos.com](http://www.foodfromnorthernlaos.com)

Lao food is delicious! We love the richness and diversity of Lao ingredients, food and cultures and want to share them with the world. The industrialized world has a lot to learn from Laos about food. The recent term “slow food” is what Lao food is all about – food locally and sustainably produced, fresh, with preparation not being a resented chore of tin opening, thawing and premixes, but a daily part of the rhythm of life, to be enjoyed and shared.

In Laos, the local fresh markets and forest provide an abundance of local produce, harvested or gathered the same day. No huge but tasteless vegetables in plastic packs here – everything is picked small – a stunning variety of natural “micro greens” and eaten or sold the same day. What’s a refrigerator for? If you are lucky enough to have one, it is used to cool drinks, of course, not to store food or ingredients – Lao want fresh! Really, really fresh! The various ethnic groups of Lao have never had to discover ‘slow food’ or ‘micro-greens’ because they have always had it, and many don’t realize how truly rich they are with such a vibrant food tradition.

Unfortunately, few outsiders have the opportunity to explore the foods of northern Laos in depth. Much of it is only available in people’s homes and villages or from the cooking



pots of local stalls and markets. Restaurants generally present ‘pan Asian’ dishes to meet tourist’s expectations and the locals’ need for different tastes than a home cooked meal. We hope that this blog and the cookbook sold from the site, on Amazon.com and via the distributor for mainland Southeast Asia, White Lotus Books, will bring the Lao world of food to your table and to your taste buds.



### Food from Northern Laos The Boat Landing Cookbook

ອາຫານຈາກພາກເໜືອລາວ: ປຶ້ມສູດອາຫານຂອງເຜີ້ອນພັກຮ່າເຜີ້ອ

Dorothy Culloty  
Photographs by Kees Sprengers



## RAWFULLY GOOD

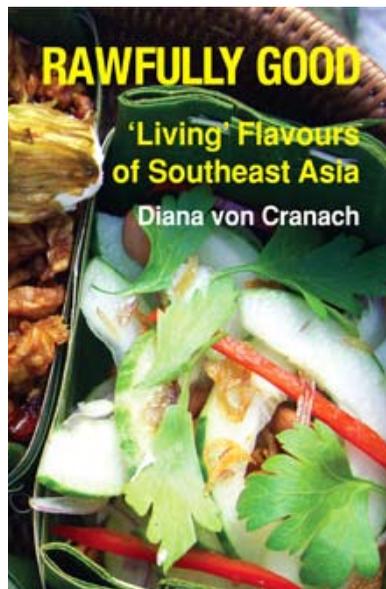
'Living' Flavours of Southeast Asia

*Diana von Cranach*

River Books, Bangkok, 2010, 284 pp, 25\$

ISBN 978 190 4562 12 2

Based in Bali, Diana von Cranach has long been a well-known local food explorer and creator of incredible food. A few years ago, she took her dedication to good food a step further by beginning a journey into the world of raw food using only locally sourced ingredients. Her idyllic and very personal resort Puri Ganesha Villas in North Bali, is one of only a few hotels worldwide to offer an alternative, purely 'living' food menu to the surprise and delight of her guests. The idea for this book comes from the author's desire to work with chefs at famous restaurants and resorts throughout Southeast Asia, and to prepare healthier and lighter vegan food using their own recipes as a basis. At the same time, she aims to revive the use of more unusual traditional herbs and ingredients, used for generations. Covering destinations from Bali in Indonesia, Langkawi in Malaysia, Nha Trang in Vietnam, Siem Reap in Cambodia, Luang Prabang in Laos, Chiang Mai and Loei Provinces in Thailand and the cities of Bangkok, Singapore and Yangon, Rawfully Good reinvents over 99 well-known regional recipes with excitingly different and invigorating 'living' flavours.



## COOK BOOK

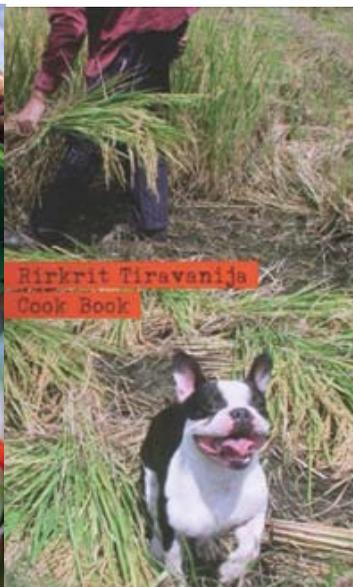
Just Smile and Don't Talk

*Rirkrit Tiravanija*

River Books, Bangkok, 2010, 192 pp, 40\$

ISBN 978 616 7339 06 1

Born in Buenos Aires in 1961, contemporary artist Rirkrit Tiravanija resides in New York, Berlin and Chiang Mai, Thailand. His installations often take the form of stages or rooms for sharing meals, cooking, reading or playing music; architecture or structures for living and socializing are a core element in his work.



Tiravanija's work has been presented widely at museums and galleries throughout the world. He was the co-curator with Hans Ulrich Obrist and Molly Nesbit of the Station Utopia Project at the 50th Venice Biennale (2003), while most recently he has exhibited at Tang Contemporary Beijing (2010) and Kunsthalle Bielefeld (2010). He is also a co-founder of The Land Foundation, a collaborative project in Chiang Mai, which combines contemporary art interventions and traditional agricultural values. In 2004 he was awarded the Hugo Boss Prize by the Guggenheim Museum, "in recognition of his profound contribution to contemporary art" and is a Professor at the School of the Arts at Columbia University. "It is not what you see that is important but what takes place between people." (RT)

Cook Book contains 23 recipes, previously performed in museums and galleries throughout the world. All were cooked once more in his Chiang Mai kitchen and documented in the photographs by Antoinette Aurell. In addition, an essay by Thomas Kellein of the Kunsthalle Bielefeld and an extended interview between him and the artist shed additional light on Rirkrit's work. Through this book the reader will understand more of what moves the artist as well as being able to cook such Thai staples from Pad Thai to Flaming Morning Glory, as well as new interpretations of Swedish, German and Spanish classics such as meatballs, Flädlesoup and Paella. "Letting things burn and cook and boil, that's great". (RT)



## CHINA

### Through The Lens of John Thomson 1868-1872

River Books, Bangkok, 2010, 168 pp, 50\$

ISBN 978 616 7339 00 9

Scottish photographer John Thomson (1837-1921) was one of the most influential photographers of the 19th century and a pioneer of photojournalism.

Born two years before the invention of daguerreotype and the birth of photography, Thomson first travelled to Asia in 1862 where he set up a professional photographic studio. He became fascinated by local culture and the people of Asia and in 1868 he made his second trip, this time settling in Hong Kong. Between 1868 and 1872, Thomson made extensive trips to Guangdong, Fujian, Beijing, China's north-east and down the Yangtze river, covering nearly 5,000 miles. This exhibition catalogue is drawn from his time in these regions. These were the early days of photography when negatives were made on glass plates that had to be coated with emulsion before the exposure was made. A huge amount of cumbersome equipment had to be carried from place to place and with perseverance, great energy and stamina, Thomson managed to take a wide variety of images and themes, including landscapes, people, architecture, domestic and street scenes. As a foreigner, his ability to gain access to photograph women is also remarkable. In China, Thomson excelled as a photographer in quality, depth and breadth, and in artistic sensibility. John Thomson's photographs appear courtesy of the Wellcome Library, London.

## DASHES TO DRAGONS

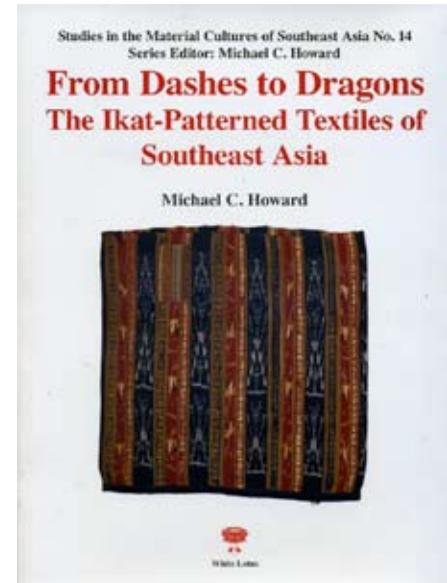
### The Ikat Patterned Textiles of South East Asia

Howard Michael

White Lotus Press, Bangkok, 2010, 280 pp, 55\$

ISBN 9789744801661

This work provides a comprehensive survey of Southeast Asia's ikat-patterned textiles. These include some of the most dramatic textiles from the region such as the famous warp ikat patterned textiles of Sumba along with many textiles that are of great importance to the cultural heritage of the region, such as the Tai tubeskirt cloths with weft ikat gray heron motifs and the double ikat cloths from Tenganan, Bali. The book includes a discussion of ikat techniques and the origin and diffusion of ikat in Southeast Asia. This is followed by surveys of the ikat-patterned textiles of peoples speaking Tai, Austronesian, Mon-Khmer and Tibeto-Burman languages.



## LUANG PRABANG ETHNIC CULTURAL FESTIVAL 2010



Luang Prabang's inaugural Ethnic Cultural Festival will be held on 29 – 31 October, 2010. The landmark community event will be a colourful celebration of ethnic diversity in Luang Prabang, featuring song, dance, games, activities, food and handicrafts for sale.

Seven different ethnic minority communities from ten districts in the province will travel to the festival to share their traditional culture, including Hmong, Tai Dam, Kassak, Yao Mien and Kmhmu. The emphasis of this festival will be on community building and cultural pride, and is free for all.

*There will be three main parts to the festival:*

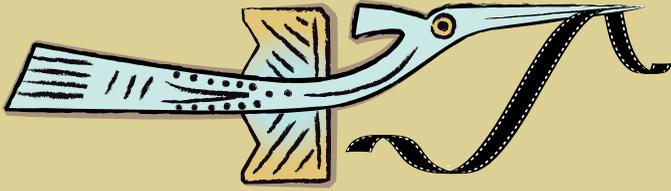
*cultural performances*

*learning activities*

*handicraft and food stalls.*

The Luang Prabang Ethnic Cultural Festival is being co-organized by the Traditional Arts and Ethnology Centre and the Luang Prabang Provincial Department of Information and Culture. The event has been made possible by our major sponsor, the U.S. Embassy to Lao PDR, and with support from the Lao National Tourism Administration, Joma Bakery Café, and other local businesses.

For more information about the Luang Prabang Cultural Festival, please contact Lola Ellis at the Traditional Arts and Ethnology Centre: [lauren@taeclaos.org](mailto:lauren@taeclaos.org) or +856.71.253.364.



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# LUANG PRABANG FILM FESTIVAL

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CELEBRATING SOUTHEAST  
ASIAN CINEMA

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DECEMBER 4-11, 2010

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WWW.LPFIILMFEST.ORG

The inaugural Luang Prabang Film Festival will present more than 30 films from Southeast Asia over eight nights in December, marking the 35th anniversary of the Lao PDR, and Luang Prabang's 15th year on the UNESCO World Heritage Site list. The screenings are free, and will take place in 2 outdoor venues in the old royal capital of Laos. After the festival, 4 films will tour select other provinces in Laos, with screenings held over 2-night stops in each town.

Throughout the year, the Luang Prabang Film Festival organizes screenings, as well as educational and creative projects and activities. In doing so, we work to stimulate a domestic film industry, and raise awareness about film and media literacy in Laos and throughout Southeast Asia.

We are very interested in forming more relationships with media organizations and professionals from throughout the region and around the world, and look forward to working together to promote Southeast Asian cinema.

We hope to see you at our festival at the end of the year.

For more information about the festival, collaboration, or sponsorship, please visit our website, or contact project Founder & Director, Gabriel Kuperman, at [director@lpfilmfest.org](mailto:director@lpfilmfest.org).