A celebration of lifelong education

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Free copy

A small boy displays the wonder of Loy Krathong
Seven Artists in Residence

3rd Space is an artist residency and exhibition exploring internationalism and collaboration within current contemporary cross cultures. The project brought creative professionals from opposite sides of the world onto the campus, letting participants engage with other artists, students and the wider community.

The residency and project were a direct result of the Traidhos partnership with UK Arts organisation Surface Arts. In The spring of 2012 the Surface Arts Artistic Director (Katie Hawker) and Alex Soulsby (Traidhos Arts and Creative Projects Manager) committed themselves to combine forces to create what they envisioned as Northern Thailand’s most dynamic international arts residency and cross-art form exhibition.

Aiming to identify and bring a cross-section of international artists to Chiang Mai, they teamed with H Gallery, one of Thailand’s most important contemporary arts galleries, and set about structuring a programme of work that would not only result in an artistically significant exhibition, but that would also provide rich educational opportunities for the staff and students at Traidhos Three-Generation Community for Learning. Six international artists were selected and spent a month living and working on campus, delivering workshops, engaging in mentoring activities and producing work for a final exhibition.

The group included a number of critically acclaimed artists who worked in medium ranging from film and 'soundscaping' to illustration, painting and performance art: Emma Hammaren (Sweden), Jockel Liess (Germany), Taryn Takahashi (Peru), Ittirawee Chotirawee (Thailand) and Chris and Paul Czainski from the UK.

Celebrated British Artists

Chris and Paul Czainski are celebrated British artists. They have exhibited both widely in the UK and internationally. They have been commissioned by members of Vladimir Putin’s parliament, international rock stars such as Mick Jagger and Ringo Star, as well as by members of the British Royal Family. With their pick of exhibition requests and commission demands, we asked them why they prioritised a residency programme in Chiang Mai.

“The first time we came to visit Thailand we fell in love with the place and nowhere more so than Chiang Mai. Being offered the opportunity to collaborate with so many other interesting artists, to exhibit in a space like H-Gallery and immerse ourselves in an organisation and community such as Traidhos: it would have been hard to refuse. Retrospectively, it has been an incredibly rewarding experience.”
Chris added, “It’s particularly exciting for my own artistic practice, as I have had the opportunity to explore themes that are at the heart of my own artistic practice: looking at the similar spiritual aspects that exist between Buddhist and Christian spirituality.”

**A Community Arts Day**

As well as a plethora of student workshops and master classes throughout the project, Traidhos and Surface Arts organised a family-focused community arts day. The day offered arts workshops facilitated by the participating artists to Chiang Mai’s wider community.

Soulsby stated, “The arts are a vital means for stimulating dialogue and generating new ideas within any society. I think that an organisation such as ours has a responsibility to engage meaningfully with our immediate and wider community and this project has allowed us to do just that.”

Participants at the day-long event took part in everything from mural making and poetry walls to sound-walks and Peruvian food art.

“The very fact that we had groups of people from six or seven different nationalities collaborating in our workshops brilliantly demonstrates the power the arts have to break down cultural barriers and foster a greater sense of shared understanding,” Soulsby said. “Our broader commitment to develop the arts across our organisation and demonstrate the value of creative engagement for all has been clearly demonstrated in this project, and I can’t wait for the next one!”

Traidhos is committed to developing creative education programmes to a level where they serve as examples of international best practice and set the standard for creative education policy in South East Asia. The 3rd Space exhibition runs at H-Gallery until 29 December 2013.

For more information about the programme of work being delivered and developed by Traidhos please email alexs@threegeneration.org
Expecting The Unexpected

Teady rain in the days before the school trip had closed many of the forest trails, forcing many walkers to the drier grassland trail. Eager to be out walking, these forest trekkers had compounded the sandy track and the rain had all but obliterated any hope of our being able to study the animal tracks and scat that usually line the way.

We seized every opportunity to interpret the trail, and were relieved to find a trail of ants to study. They led us to a fragment of reddish fur, long cleaned of the scat that had once encased it. Our last hope of finding evidence of animal visitors was at the salt lick. Surely the salt lick would be untrammelled? My heart sank on entering the muddy hollow. The only obvious visitor had been an elephant and a quick estimate suggested that that visit would have been three to four weeks ago.

I felt the anticipation of twelve eager faces expecting to find all sorts of treasures in the red, mineral rich soil and instantly felt a sense of disappointment that our expedition should yield so little. The walk, the climb and now just a pit filled with decomposing elephant dung.

Elephant dung! That was it! The one process that could possibly turn our disappointment into something memorable, and it lay before us in rough piles on the ground.

A gasp of admiration?

Thinking of a plan and addressing the group simultaneously bought me a solitary minute’s thinking time. We gathered round a pile of elephant dung and predicted what we would find inside. The students guessed that we would find grass, as elephants are herbivores, and leaves and bits of bamboo. To gasps probably of disgust, but possibly of admiration, I bent forward and broke open the dung.

Anyone doubting the potential of decomposing dung to inspire awe and wonder should have heard the intake of breath that united our group, for there, in the centre of the dung ball, exposed for the first time was a perfect toadstool, complete with perfectly formed cap standing tall, liberated to the world on its stipe. Wow! How did that get in there? Closer examination found two other small toadstools, but the elegant grey toadstool was the most amazing.

Suddenly eager students calling swamped me, “Can I open this one?”

The level of engagement was tangible. What do you think we will find? Ugh! It’s maggots! In front of us, four fat white larvae twitched at their unexpected exposure to the world. What other secrets would the elephant dung reveal? We found small beetles in one and the creamy young of immature termites in another and in those balls of decomposing grass, we found that words, sentences and chapters of science books became real. Decomposes became toadstool-shaped, lifecycles were seen wrapped in the mystery of elephant poo. From the “Ugh, its disgusting,” to the, “Can I open this one?” we were captivated.

Rain and hikers may have levelled the trail, but nature was one step ahead. A lesson created by unsuspecting elephants, a lesson almost overlooked, but finally a lesson that for many in that group will not be forgotten long after the dung balls become part of the forest. This was a lesson reminding us to look for the good in everything ... even old elephant dung!

Lynda Rolph is an Environmental Education Facilitator with Traidhos Three-Generation Barge Program, an environmental education program based in Bangkok, part of the Traidhos Three-Generation Community for Learning.
On a magical afternoon in October, students, parents and visitors were treated to a very special event at Prem – a performance by the Siam Sinfonietta under the baton of Maestro Somtow Sucharitkul.

Once referred to by the International Herald Tribune as “the most well-known expatriate Thai in the world” Maestro Somtow has returned to Thailand where almost single-handedly he has been responsible for the revival of classical western music and opera, as well as being a pioneer composing many striking contemporary works. In addition to his music, he is a well-known author whose fifty-three books have sold about two million copies. Somtow has been commissioned by Thai and foreign governments to compose for special occasions, and is the recipient of Thailand’s Distinguished Silpathorn Award.

Somtow Sucharitkul is perhaps best known for his work in the world of opera. He is a renowned conductor of everything from Puccini to Mahler to Wagner to Monteverdi. His operas on Thai themes have been critically acclaimed internationally and The Silent Prince was premiered in 2010 in the USA. His fifth opera, Dan no Ura had its world premier in Thailand during the 2011 – 2012 season. According to London’s Opera magazine, “... in just five years Somtow has made Bangkok the operatic hub of Southeast Asia.”

While it was an honour to have such a distinguished musician at the school, the real stars – at least in the eyes of some of the very youngest members of the audience, were the fifty-five young musicians who comprise the orchestra.

The Siam Sinfonietta is a new kind of youth orchestra designed for young people, up to the age of twenty-five, who have a serious desire for a musical career. It has a programme of Thai and visiting conductors, local and international concert tours, special training camps and regular classes on the history, background and context of classical music.

The young performers played the Suite from Somtow’s own opera Suriyothai, and then were put through their paces trying to maintain the demanding pace set by Khun Trisdee na Patalung, an exciting and vigorous young Thai composer and conductor.
November is a time to celebrate many special occasions in Thailand and at Prem Tinsulanonda International School. Loy Krathong, the Yee Ping Festival, International Day and now Founder’s Day! The Prem school community began celebrating Founder’s Day on its tenth birthday and we have now embedded it as a very special day in our school’s annual calendar. Just like watching a child grow, it is important and significant for us to reflect on the growth and development that has occurred at Prem over the past twelve years.

Of course when we reflect in this way, we cannot ignore the creative vision, amazing determination and generosity of Mom Luang Tridhosyuth Devakul (Mom Tri), together with the Co-Founders Lister W Hannah and Timothy Ellis in founding our school in 2001. Each year we hear stories of our history, we look back at the photos of the past with wonder and we celebrate our successes with pride.

**FuturePrem**

At Prem we have developed a strategic plan with six major goals, and call it FuturePrem. One of the goals is to grow leadership in our students. So when Mom Tri addressed the school community at the Founder’s Day Assembly he inspired our students to be Future Leaders and Future Founders. Students were clearly proud of their school and motivated by the role model that Mom Tri exemplifies.

We believe in student voice so students were invited to address the Founder’s Day Assembly. Julian, who will graduate this year after having studied here since he was five, said, “I’ve had the privilege to see the school grow and blossom into the unparalleled international experience it is today. Part of this experience was that I’ve been able to take all of the three International Baccalaureate components - the Primary Years Programme, the Middle Years Programme, and the IB Diploma Programme. This education seeks to create global citizens. Balanced individuals. Not just knowledgeable, but opinionated and caring. And not only caring for similarly minded ideas and people, but also keeping an open mind and accepting and finding joy in those, who may differ in ways we perhaps can’t even foresee yet.

“In every action, in every decision, we are taught to care for the world we live on, and to be innovative in doing so. This focus on sustainability permeates throughout the student body, faculty and administration. Prem exhibits a community spirit, like no other. We care and support each other and we make everyone else feel comfortable in these beautiful surroundings.”

Sun, Grade 12 boarder, claimed, “At Prem and as a boarder, I could say that there is a strong sense of community. It makes me value the community and value links at home. People here are very warm and welcoming, people value each other. At Prem you can be yourself within a group of different individuals. Prem allows people, individuals with potential and willingness, to grow. At Prem, you can be part of the Traidhos Three Generation Community for Learning but still you can be the individual self that you want to be thus creating a peaceful, balanced coexistence.”

Cristina addressed the school community saying, “At Prem, in an environment that throws together kids from different countries around the world - it is only natural to find a way to get along. So we have to ask them questions, and learn about both our similarities and our crazy differences. Seven years ago before I started school here, I knew what a ‘wai’ looked like, but never truly understood the amount of importance, respect, and sincerity of the simple gesture - and through my new friends at the time, I learnt this, and I became interested in knowing what other interesting things I was not even aware I didn’t know. Now when I meet new people anywhere I realize that asking questions is the key to understanding.”

Founder’s Day at Prem was one where students, parents, teachers, board members, guests and our founders felt very proud to be a part of this amazing community for learning.
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iREAD

In a world where children are constantly confronted by iPads, iPhones and other iThings, it is a refreshing change to learn that at Prem the children are now being challenged to be able to say iRead every day - and they do!

The Junior School Deputy Principal is a passionate man - and father of three young boys - who has been a leader in creating a reading culture at Prem. Mark Bowyer is also the Junior School Physical Education instructor, and sees the importance of maintaining a good balance for children - between getting outdoors, running about and tossing a basketball through a hoop – and sitting quietly with a parent reading a book together.

"Enthusiastic readers," says Bowyer, "enjoy a knock-on effect. Once they are ahead in their reading, studies have shown that they will stay ahead of other children, and this will continue through school and university."

Acknowledging that reading for some is not particularly appealing at first, Bowyer and the Junior School teachers have been working closely with all the children’s parents. "Parents are the first teachers," Mark Bowyer added, "and if they set the example then the children will follow. At Prem we have children from many different backgrounds and from many different language groups. If we can get them reading in any language – but preferably in English – then they will enjoy life-long advantages."

All children have a special folder they take home with them every day – and teacher assistants help the teachers to check other students’ bags to make sure the folder really is going home! The folder contains a reading book at an appropriate level for every child in Early Years 3 through to Grade 5. The parents of younger students are encouraged to sit with their children and to read them stories every night. Books for very young learners might have just a few words and a colourful illustration on every page. "I was running" is all that might challenge a reader at a basic level, with "I was running through the gate" and "I was running through the gate and we saw a giant dragon" indicating growing complexities of sentence structure and story-telling techniques used by more advanced or older readers.

The brave new world of iThings is not forgotten, however. The school has purchased subscriptions to two on-line learning tools which comfortably bridge the traditional world of the cardboard and paper "real" book, and the world of Apps, iPods, PCs and MacBooks.

Raz.kids.com and Reading Eggs offer hundreds of interactive, multi-levelled books spanning almost thirty levels of difficulty, as well as numerous phonics games and activities. Raz Kids allows parents and children to hear a story being read as the on-screen display highlights the words being spoken. It also requires children to read the story themselves – and at the end of each story is a quiz to see how well they have followed the events of the story. Children can earn points that they can then “spend” in the online shops and gain literary rewards for their progress as readers.

Getting hooked by books

Bowyer is the system administrator of the two programs and says that he is able to monitor students’ use, and then able to follow-up with students, their teachers and their parents if any child is having difficulties or not engaging in reading every day. "But it is rare that this happens," he adds, "as the on-line reading really hooks them and they look forward to reading the next book. I occasionally have real trouble in getting my older son to stop reading!" Ironically and perhaps pleasantly surprisingly, his research shows that more students are reading more “real” books every day than the books offered on Raz Kids.

Following on from earlier research and the monitoring of student use, the school assesses children’s reading throughout the year using a variety of tests to measure what progress is being made. For example, the Scholastic Reading Inventory Test is used twice each year and indicates each student’s Lexile level – between 200 and up to 1600+ (see www.lexile.com for further information). The school would normally expect that each student would improve his or her Lexile level by 100 points each year.

The iRead programme at Prem is going in the right direction to help students develop a love of reading – and a greater aptitude for doing so. Whether it is a "real book" or a Raz Kids electronic reader, the key parts of success are the daily reading practices encouraged and the important parental involvement in the nightly story-reading time. The 2014 theme for iRead is Prem students read a "real book" or a Raz Kids electronic reader, every day. As Prem Panthers we are wagging our tails in anticipation. So parents and students devote a few minutes every day – pause – or even paws – and cuddle up and read a book. Future success is just that one little step closer.
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Coming of Age!

This is the twenty-first edition of the Quarterly magazine since it began in December 2008. The magazine has proved to be very popular and its print run has been increased three times. Now 24,000 copies of the magazine are printed annually and read by an estimated 200,000 readers throughout the Kingdom of Thailand. Readers are invited to submit their answers to a brief quiz to help us to improve the content and presentation of the next twenty-one editions. Please use your smartphone to log on to the website by the QR code shown, or log on to http://bit.ly/1aAuUnJ

The survey should take you just a moment or two. And all completed surveys will be entered into a lucky draw for a THB 1000 coupon which can be used to pay for food or drinks at Krapood Restaurant in Mae Rim.

1. Where did you pick up your copy of the magazine?
   a. Rimping Supermarket
   b. Embassy or consulate
   c. Hotel
   d. Airline lounge
   e. Other

2. Have you read other copies of Traidhos Quarterly magazine?
   a. Yes – I read it every time possible
   b. Yes – I read it occasionally
   c. No – I have seen it but have never read it
   d. No

3. What will you do with it when you have finished reading this edition?
   a. Pass it on to a friend
   b. Throw it away
   c. Leave on a coffee table
   d. Place in a recycle bin
   e. Other

4. In this edition, which feature did you enjoy most?
   a. iRead
   b. Academy Graduates
   c. Boarding Conference
   d. Revolutionary Sustainability
   e. Chiang Mai – Simply Sensational Arts
   f. Other

5. In this edition, which feature did you enjoy least?
   a. iRead
   b. Academy Graduates
   c. Boarding Conference
   d. Revolutionary Sustainability
   e. Chiang Mai – Simply Sensational Arts
   f. Other

6. What would you like the magazine to include in a future edition?
   a. More local news or events articles
   b. More educational articles
   c. More articles on students’ work
   d. More sustainability articles
   e. Other

7. Please consider the balance between feature articles and advertisements:
   a. Too many advertisements?
   b. Acceptable level of advertisements?
   c. Did not notice advertisements

8. In this edition, will you respond to any of the advertisements?
   a. No
   b. Yes
   c. Which?

9. What is your age?
   a. 10 – 18 years of age
   b. 19 – 30 years of age
   c. 31 – 50 years of age
   d. 51 – 65 years of age
   e. Older

10. Would you like to receive additional information about the Traidhos Three-Generation Community for Learning, or about Prem Tinsulanonda International School?
    a. Yes please – Traidhos
    b. Yes please – Prem
    c. Yes please – I would like to visit the campus
    d. No thanks
Living and learning in a boarding community

Prem Tinsulanonda International School had the honour to host a recent Boarding Conference with participants from the American Pacific International School Chiang Mai, British International School Phuket, Harrow International School Bangkok, Kolej Tuanku Ja’afar Kuala Lumpur, The Regent’s School Pattaya and Ruamrudee International School in Bangkok.

Each of these boarding schools wants to provide a high quality boarding and learning environment that parents desire and expect for their children. To this end, Prem offered a two-day conference to exchange experiences and ideas, to support each other by discussing common issues and offer solutions that are beneficiary to all boarding communities involved.

Joseph Whittaker, Head of IT at Prem, discussed a topic that is of great concern to all boarding staff: the schools’ points of view on the use of social network sites, and the battle against cyber bullying and cyber crimes. All delegates had the opportunity to share thoughts on their policies about the use of laptops and smartphones as well. This session also underlined the need for a boarding community to help students find a balance in using their electronic devices for learning purposes and social networking, but also teaching and coaching them how to ‘disconnect’.

These are not only challenges for young boarders, but also for senior boarders. In our boarding communities, we want to give senior boarders responsibility and encourage them to become independent leaders. Offering privileges and freedom - to a certain extent - is what we all offer our senior boarders, but the question about where limits lie and how far our responsibility as staff members go, led to an interesting discussion during the session hosted by David Buck, Head of Boys Boarding at Prem.

All delegates agreed on the importance for a boarding community of having a solid and balanced collaboration with the school and academic staff. By building a boarding curriculum that goes hand-in-hand with the school curriculum, students can benefit from both formal and informal learning opportunities. Elke Van dermijnsbrugge, Head of Girls Boarding at Prem, presented details of how the boarding curriculum at her school is linked to the school curriculum.

Boarding is not only about the boarders, but also about having qualified staff with a consistent approach and attitude. Working in a boarding community is a challenge: staff members have to be parent, teacher, friend and supervisor, all at the same time. This requires a solid recruitment procedure where boarding and school need to work closely together. Dean Garrison, school psychologist at Prem, hosted a session on this topic.

Providing a high quality boarding and learning environment is an on-going challenge and learning process for all staff. Therefore, the yearly boarding conference is a unique opportunity to gather with colleagues, learn from each other and provide a safe and inspiring boarding community to future generations.

During these two days, participants attended eight interactive sessions, covering a range of topics. Liz Hammond (Harrow) hosted the session Are old fashioned rules still the order of the day in a successful 21st century boarding community? as politeness and general etiquette are still of great value in each of the boarding communities.

The session A solid and good working drugs policy, hosted by the Juvenile Observation and Protection Centre in Chiang Mai gave all participants a thorough insight into the Thai drugs law and how, as boarding schools, we can work with local police departments.
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Sustainability – a word that has become so popular in our environmentally-minded societies, a word that carries with it so many images of recycling bins and tree planting ceremonies, and a word that is cemented so strongly within the mission of Prem Tinsulanonda International School. Recently, in working with a group of young students visiting Prem’s educational farm, I was challenged to explain succinctly the definition of this word, and found it to be no easy task. How to convey such an expansive concept to one so young? Finally, I settled on a simple definition: something is sustainable when it can last a very, very, very long time.

Thinking “sustainably” involves looking at the impacts of your actions, and eliminating any methods that will fail in the long term. Often, people try to separate a basic definition of sustainability from an environmental definition of sustainability. But, they are one and the same.

Because we need the Earth to live, preserving its long-term health is necessary for the sustainability of any and all endeavours. Regularly educating students of all ages on this concept is a challenge, a pleasure, and an absolute necessity for the long-term sustainability of the human race’s quality of life. Prem is continually pioneering amazing new ways of not only educating students on sustainability, but also structurally implementing sustainability.

Traidhos has gone far beyond the simple techniques of recycling, composting, and reusing. It has begun to transition into rethinking, redesigning, and revolutionising. The school is on track to achieve - one day in the not too distant future - a closed-loop waste system, a system where nothing is ever wasted, and every output becomes another input. For a community that houses an international school, a sizeable resident population, a spa, two restaurants, a farm, and four sports academies, this will be an astounding accomplishment. In such a complex organisation, how is this possible? The answer lies in interdepartmental cooperation.

Like the billions of life forms on Earth that link to create our ecosystem, Prem has used communication and reciprocity to link its departments into an almost perfect web of waste exchange. In the process of feeding 140 boarding students three times a day and providing several hundred staff or VSP lunches, the school cafeteria generates a significant amount of the community’s wastes, or “outputs.” These outputs are divided into food packaging, fruit scraps, vegetable scraps, used cooking oil, and miscellaneous cooked food waste. Each output is then sent to its next destination and its next step on the road to being turned into an input.
At Prem’s educational farm, The Three-Generation Farm, the miscellaneous cooked food waste is fed to the pigs, the vegetable waste is fed to the worms, the used cooking oil is turned into biodiesel to power the tractor, and fruit scraps are composted to become fertiliser. Additionally, large portions of the 300 kilograms a month of pineapple peel are combined with sugar and allowed to sit for three months, brewing into “effective microorganisms.”

Better known as “EM,” the end solution is an amazing concoction containing millions of beneficial microscopic organisms that can be diluted and used as fertiliser, turned into a chemical-free pesticide, or mixed with bubbling agents to create natural floor cleaners, dish and hand soaps, shampoos and laundry detergents. What better way to use such products than by mopping the floor of the building where the pineapple was served, or washing the hands of the students who consumed it?

Delving deeper into the farm, what else is being rethought, redesigned, revolutionised?

The forgotten metal water bottles of overexcited visiting groups of students have been transformed into the pipes of a solar powered water heater. The woody casualties of landscaping wars against wanton tree branches and greedy bamboo clusters are reduced to charcoal for cooking classes and wood vinegar to ward off pests. Goats act as lawn mowers, teaching tools and mobile plant disposal units, while producing rich milk for sale as soap and cheese.

Worms voraciously turn discarded vegetable stalks, old newspapers and shredded corrugated cardboard into rich vermicompost, the most coveted fertiliser of the farming world. Waste from the community enters the systems of the farm, is digested (often quite literally), and is either safely returned to the earth or formed into something new and returned to the school – to enter the cycle again.

And beyond the farm ...

Though I focus on the farm because it is a very tangible example and my department, this beautifully sustainable situation is not unique to this one department.

The maintenance department breaks down, recycles and reuses much of the community’s appliance, furniture and packaging wastes. For classroom posters and student artwork, teachers use re-usable stick-on adhesives instead of roll after roll of masking tape. Grass cuttings from the vast cricket, golf, and football fields are composted or used as mulching. One restaurant grows its own organic produce. The Golf Academy has created an ingenious natural pesticide and fungicide using leaves from the school’s neem trees and special ingredients harvested from pesky termite hills. There is an incredibly affordable bicycle rental establishment on campus. Engineering has plans for building a biogas chamber that will turn food and animal waste into low-pressure cooking gas. And the entire community prints double-sided.

It is all of the small steps combined with the larger systems that make this community revolutionary. For every person who takes the time to flip over a piece of paper and re-insert it into the printer, or sort their recycling into the proper bins, or buy biodegradable garbage bags, humanity is one step closer to sustainability, one step closer to survival.

At Traidhos, the closed-loop waste system has not yet been fully achieved, but we are well on our way because of the mind-set of our inhabitants. We are a community where every single person believes in “taking the time,” and that is revolutionary.
Resilience training for senior students
‘The secret of strong adults’

Prem Tinsulanonda International School provides a safe learning and familial environment that parents desire and expect for their children. The school has an obligation to prepare its students for a continuing high quality of life after they graduate from our school. Adult life is a challenge and Prem wants to support its students and advise them how they can develop resilience, despite the adversities they may face. To this end, a two day seminar was arranged at Payap University for all Grade 12 students. A range of active and interactive workshops was offered, built on seven factors that are important in the life of a resilient individual.

All sessions were hosted by experts who shared their experience and knowledge with the students and who offered opportunities for discussion and exploration of each issue.

Ozzie Crocco, Head of International Campus Life at Payap University, provided a session on living and studying at university or college. He not only gave hands-on advice on how to ‘survive’ a first year in higher education, but also focussed on the importance of social skills, new relationships and being part of a community. Through personal examples, interesting references and a team building exercise, our students got a very realistic view on college life.

Linda Buck, Head of Boarding at Prem, and Nicole Duhig, College and Careers Counsellor, hosted a session on money matters. International students come across a variety of financial matters: college fees, student loans, or earning money through a student job. Purposeful spending was the key factor during these sessions: through questions and answers, students were made aware of the importance of financial security.

Igor Van Bever, psychologist and self-defence expert, hosted a self-defence session and a session on self-knowledge. Students practised self-defence techniques, based on the philosophy of aikido, a Japanese martial art. By using some simple techniques, students learnt how to defend themselves physically, not by attacking, but by using the energy of the attacker to defend and protect their body. During the second session, he focussed on the importance of self-knowledge by introducing the concept of the unconscious mind and how to reflect on ones own actions.

The students also shared their ideas, experiences and had opportunities to ask for advice themselves. These exchanges, not only with speakers, but also with fellow-students, were of great value.

When asked what they thought of the weekend’s training, students said:

Thanks for the great program, really helped me!
So looking forward to starting real life. Felt good to be trusted with advanced and important trains of thinking.
Interactive seminars were great
All sessions were inspiring, informative and high insightful for our future. I highly appreciate this being held for us.
What we learned here should be continually reinforced to retain this amazing new knowledge.

Prem considers this training as an important part of the curriculum and will offer a new version during the next academic year. It was very rewarding to see how students actively participated, were enthusiastic and constructive in their feedback and discussions.
CHILLED OUT SUNDAY
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What are you doing next weekend?
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Since man first daubed the walls of his cave with likenesses of mastodons and other cave dwellers, people have been fascinated by the world of art in all its forms. It has evolved and changed and morphed over the centuries and even today, new art forms are being developed as electronic media and computers become common tools of modern-day artists.

In Chiang Mai, the art scene is sensational. It ranges from the bright acrylic works exhibited by aspiring artists selling their works in markets, to works sold for hundreds of thousands of baht. There are brightly painted fibreglass elephants, there are superb murals in centuries-old temples, there are struggling emerging artists and well-established and highly regarded older artists.

Aristotle said that the aim of art is to represent not the outward appearance of things, but their inward significance, and this is never more true than in the work of Sa-Ngad Pui-Ock who has been painting and sketching since he was a child. Now in his seventies, his philosophy closely resembles the Greek philosopher’s, as he says of the lotus, his favourite flower, “It is a beautiful object – yet it has its roots deep in the mud and can be viewed as a metaphor for humans who are able to develop their souls and elevate themselves from the murk.”

A noted acrylic artist, Pui-Ock has created many intricate floral studies but is now perhaps best-known as Thailand’s master Impressionist for his large landscapes incorporating thousands of multi-layered and multi-dimensioned brush strokes to create the final image.

**Existing together in Harmony**

His daughter, Sudsiri Pui-Ock, is also an artist and one who is earning a growing reputation for her contemporary and perhaps challenging installations and sculptures. She has enjoyed residencies or exhibitions in Japan, Holland, Israel, Thailand, Switzerland and many other countries. Her installations have included carved vegetable and sculptures made from bread, she has created huge frottage of the tatami mats from a Japanese primary school, and of whole cars. She has made photocopies on transparency film, and produced scores of photographic prints showing the passing of time and location.

A recent residency at Chiang Mai’s 137 Pillars House was an important stepping stone for him and he is now working towards a new exhibition as well as a series of works he wishes to present to his favourite temple in his home town of Surin.

Thailand and Chiang Mai are well-known for their elephants and these are the inspiration for artists world-wide. Miguelle La Salle is co-director of the Colour Factory with her business partner Joanna MacLean of Elephant Parade, a social enterprise with a unique combination of art, business and conservation. The Asian Elephant Foundation auctions and sells the painted elephant statues to support various educational and rehabilitation projects.

La Salle reported that the elephant statue that raised the greatest sum for the Foundation was one painted by Scottish artist Jack Vettriano and sold at auction for the equivalent of THB 7.5 million. In Chiang Mai, the elephants are sold at two venues and are hand-copied from originals by international artists. Some 300 artists working at home or in a studio south of the city create the works of art – every one an original copy – which range in size from elephants 150 cm tall to ones which will fit in a collector’s pocket: art is not just something to hang on a wall!

There are scores of artists working and teaching in and around Chiang Mai – those already mentioned as well as the well-known Araya Rasdjarmrearmsook and Thanakorn Chaijinda, the inspiration for two of the artists in this article. There are also those who create the original animal paintings and the craftsmen who faithfully copy them, those who apply gold leaf stencils to temple walls and all those whose work is a colourful addition to the walking streets and markets: these are the artists who make Chiang Mai the truly sensational art scene that it is.

www.watercolourdelanna.com
www.colourfac.com
www.puiock-gallery.com
www.sudsiripuiock.com
The dream of a group of dedicated Chiang Mai music teachers and administrators, the inaugural International Schools of Chiang Mai Concert Band Music Festival, held at the end of November, was a huge success, and as time goes by, the organisers hope that it will grow into an even larger event.

Six schools, over one hundred students and teachers from all corners of the world met at Prem Tinsulanonda International School for two days of fun, hard work, new challenges and new friends. Dr Gina Ryan, music teacher at Prem, said that there were three main reasons why the festival was created. One reason was to enable each of the participating schools to boost their own music programmes by sharing resources, equipment, and staff. Another was to provide students with opportunities to grow musically – “but above all the festival will have given the students fond memories that will stay with them for all their lives,” Dr Ryan said.

In many parts of the world – the USA, Canada, UK, Australia – music camps are very popular events and the Chiang Mai event was loosely modelled on these camps. The students were kept busy with a hectic schedule of rehearsals, workshops, teacher demonstrations, more rehearsals … and time for socialising and mixing and totally ignoring their teachers’ instructions that there was to be no talking after lights out.

All staff and students spent the evening in Prem’s apartments for visiting schools and boarding students, and the chance to have a weekend devoted to music and new friends and singing around a camp fire was warmly welcomed by all participants.

Louis Armstrong’s famous song As Time Goes By may be an appropriate metaphor for the festival, as

- It’s still the same old story
- A fight for love and glory
- A case of do or die
- The world will always welcome (music) lovers
- As time goes by

Students from Bhutan, Japan, Germany, Thailand, Korea, the UK and many other nations joined forces and made a marvelous noise on their flutes, clarinets, French horns, saxophones, violins, trombones, keyboards, trumpets, and percussion. Some students had been given the opportunity to have a brief rehearsal before being thrown into the maelstrom of music – while others enjoyed the challenge of receiving their music on Day One … and then performing it to a packed house at the end of Day Two.

When asked what was the best thing about the festival, one enthusiastic student replied “Playing music I’ve never seen before with kids from all the other schools! It was amazing and I’m going to remember this for the rest of my life.”

Following the final concert performance, an exhausted Dr Ryan added, “Yeats said that the world is full of magic things, patiently waiting for our senses to grow. I hope this experience has somehow sped up the process for our students.”

For the music teachers of Chiang Mai - Gene Fisher (Grace), Chuck Sahagian (CMIS), Kevin Bradley (NIS), Anna Henretty (NIS), Lindsay Stevenson (Lanna), Peter Pagett (APIS), and Gina Ryan (Prem) - and their scores of enthusiastic students, this Concert Band Festival may have been, as Rick said to Louie, “the beginning of a beautiful friendship.”
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International Day

Every year International Day at Traidhos is a special celebration of the many nations represented by the students, staff and parents who live and work and study here. The thirteenth International Day took place at the school on 16 November, and was wonderfully successful. These photographs give a little taste of the excitement of the day when thirty-eight nations were represented in many different and delightful ways, including tasty food and drink, colourful costumes, music, song, dance, fun and laughter!
And on to the World’s Arenas!

The Traidhos Three-Generation Community for Learning is a fascinating place – and a unique place. In addition to an international school, at the Mae Rim site there is a large chemical-free farm, a cooking academy, conference facilities and several restaurants. In Bangkok and other Northern Thailand locations, there are Visiting Schools Programs and a Barge Program, but the heart of the community for athletes and sports lovers are the sporting academies.

Students and adults and lovers of sport of all ages receive specialised professional coaching in cricket, tennis, golf and football at the academies dedicated to these sports. While some participants visit just for a day or two, or a week or two, some enrol at the international school and complete their secondary education there as well as training in their chosen sport – hoping to be tomorrow’s Rafael Nadal or Tiger Woods.

**Cricket**

2010 was a vintage year for the Cricket Academy as three of that year’s graduates – also Prem Tinsulanonda International School graduates – went on to achieve great success in their sport.

Jigme Singye has become the first professional Bhutanese cricketer and has recently completed a very successful season in Scotland. His coach, Darren Milne, said, ”Jigme's impact on the club was massive and I would say he was one of the most popular overseas players we have had. We have a good mix of ages and backgrounds at our club and he was able to relate and be friends with all, which is a difficult thing to do. His coaching with the kids was also very impressive.”

Perhaps it is not surprising to hear of his successes, as Jigme demonstrated some of these qualities when he was studying in Thailand. Speaking of his time at the school, he said, “It opened my eyes, not just to the world of cricket, but also to the challenges I will face in life, and it taught me how to deal with them.”

Tawun Gregory then moved to the United Kingdom where he then studied Environmental Science in Bournemouth. Graduating in June this year, he returned to Thailand, arranged trials with several football clubs, went through the nerve-wracking call-back sessions, and was then signed with Bangkok United – an important team in the Thai premier league.

**Football**

Graduating in 2010 after six years of study at Prem, Tawun visited the Football Academy in October and November before returning to Bangkok for pre-season training at the start of December. During this time he was seen on the local football fields helping coach younger players and inspiring them to dig deep and to hunt for their own dream futures in sport and in other areas. ”I want to make a career out of my football if I can,” he said, “but I know I have my degree to fall back on if this is not possible.”

**Golf**

After viewing his victory earlier this year in Washington DC, where he won the Junior World Qualifier, college scouts flew to Las Vegas to watch current Prem Grade 12 student Chayutpol (Smart) Kittirattanapaiboon play. His six years of hard work with Spike Collier at the Golf Academy, has paid dividends, as the University of Hawaii, a NCAA Division 1 school, awarded him a golf scholarship at nearly 50% to play for their golf team and continue his studies after he graduates in June.

Golf Academy Team Elite member, Tapat (Es) Wittiyakom, graduated Prem last year and received an academic scholarship at one of the top engineering schools in the USA, Rose Hulman Institute of Technology. Due to his high level golf skills he was instantly accepted on their golf team.

Six young men – and their parents – have the same dream. Today schoolboys - tomorrow leading sportsmen. It really is possible to combine the best of both worlds in Chiang Mai – where the essential sporting ground work and the crucial academic work can be combined to lead on to greater opportunities.
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