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BY JORDI BALTÀ PORTOLÉS
07 OCT 2014 - 31 DEC 2014

Exhibition: "Caregivers to Culture Keepers: Stories from Women in a Changing Laos"



The

Traditional Arts and Ethnology Centre in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR, an ASEMUS member, and international media arts programme **PhotoForward** launched in 2012 a community project entitled **Stitching Our Stories (SOS)**. The SOS project engages women and girls from Lao PDR's diverse ethnic communities to use photography, digital video, and community research to explore their unique cultural heritage, the vital roles that women play, and the often-seismic impact that modernisation is having on traditional beliefs and practices. SOS trains young women and girls in the art of storytelling and gives them a range of tools to tell their stories from their own perspectives. Over two years, young women from the Hmong and Tai Lue communities in Luang Prabang have documented their communities and built a collection of photographs, video clips, and interviews about women in Lao PDR today. From this amazing collection, the exhibition **"Caregivers to Culture Keepers: Stories from Women in a Changing Laos"**, which opened on 7 October at the Traditional Arts and Ethnology Centre, explores women's lives from the

perspective of young ethnic minority women. The exhibition features photographs, seven short documentary videos, and objects including batik-making tools, divination horns, and traditional baby carriers. The SOS project **provides the tools and support for these young women to investigate and reflect on their culture.** Serving as community researchers for this exhibition, these women actively foster the **revitalisation of ethnic traditions and identity.** The current community of Stitching Our Stories media artists consists of a **diverse group of 28 women and girls** from Hmong, Kmhmu, Phounoy, Tai Dam, Tai Lao, and Tai Lue ethnic groups. **They range in age from 9 to 37** and are students, handicraft makers, mothers daughters, business owners, and market sellers. **Additional information:**

- Information about the conference on TAEC's website:
<http://www.taec Laos.org/exhibitions.html>
- TAEC's Facebook profile: <https://www.facebook.com/taec Laos>
- Exhibition gallery on PhotoForward's website, with artist portfolios:
<http://www.photoforward.org/culture-keepers.html>
- YouTube gallery of the SOS project:
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLtvd6LpZU1f3YFRsDbkDguhQ35ExJKyOp>
- Article on the exhibition in our sister website culture360.org:
<http://culture360.asef.org/event/luang-prabang-stories-from-women-in-a-changing-laos-exhibition/>

Photo credits: TAEC / PhotoForward

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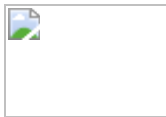


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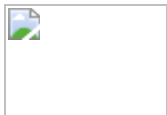
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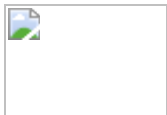
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