The Buddhist Bug Project by Anida Yoeu Ali



The Buddhist Bug Project by Anida Yoeu Ali

March 1 - May 20, 2013 Java Café + Gallery
Phnom Penh, Cambodia

The Buddhist Bug Project is a project of Studio Revolt with production assistance from JavaArts

Artist Statement Anida Yoeu Ali

The Buddhist Bug Project is an most ambitious body of work that continues my exploration of diasporic identities. The Bug is a creation inspired by two reasons (1) a personal inability to reconcile my fascination with Buddhism alongside my upbringing as a Khmer Muslim woman and (2) an attempt to capture a quickly changing Cambodian urban and rural landscape. The project is a culmination of thematic interests in hybridity, transcendence, and otherness. Through an interdisciplinary approach, my work maps new political and spiritual landscapes. Meters and meters of textile act as skin, as a way for the surface of my body to extend into public spaces, and as a metaphoric device for stories to spread across an expanse.

For me, the Bug is created from a sense of play and curiosity. S/he is a displaced creature destined to travel and wander amidst the "in-between". This space, which exists between who s/he is and where s/he is, is in fact a powerful place for encounter, habitation and reinvention. The Bug is created as an assertion of paradoxes, a result of a hybrid refugee experience, embodying the fluctuating inside/outside perspective of the transnational being. S/he longs for stillness while on a constant journey. S/he is a source for refuge while on a perpetual search for home. S/he is both a bridge and obstacle. S/he is a creature belonging in this world yet appearing to be from another universe.

At the heart of my work is an interest in developing stories, usually narratives that exist outside of conventions. The Buddhist Bug Project continues a methodology in which personal narratives shape my art. I believe performing narratives is an act of social engagement that contributes to collective healing. For me, performance and storytelling become ways of bridging the interior and exterior space of self as well as initiate critical dialogues between communities and institutions. My interdisciplinary works attempt to find crucial intersections between performing narratives and audience engagement.

Live Performance / Exhibition

Java Café + Gallery
Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Exhibition
March 1 - April 7, 2013

Live Performance
March 1, 2013
6-9pm



Installation View / 2013





Exhibition View / 2013



Exhibition View / 2013



Exhibition View / 2013



Exhibition View / 2013



Live Performance / 2013



Live Performance / 2013



Performance / Photographs / Videos



Spiral Alley / ផ្លូវពត់ពេន / 2012 / Digital C-print



Streetside Salon / កន្លែងកាត់សក់តាមផ្លូវ / 2012 / Digital C-print



Around Town 2 / ជុំវិញទីក្រុង លេខទី ២ / 2012 / Digital C-print



Around Town 1 / ជុំវិញទីក្រុង លេខទី ១ / 2012 / Digital C-print



Off the Golden Ship / ចេញពីសំពៅពណ៌មាស /2013 / Digital C-print



River Landing / ច្រាំង ទន្លេ / 2013 / Digital C-print



On The River / នៅលើ ទន្លេ / 2013 / Digital C-print



Reflection #1 / រូបឆ្លុះ ទី១ / 2013 / Digital C-print



Campus Dining / ពិសាបាយនៅអាហារដ្ឋាន / 2012 / Digital C-print







Campus Meal#1
ញ៉ាំម្ហូបនៅអាហារ ដ្ឋាន ទី១
HD Video (1:44min) loop
2012

Stills from the video







Spiral Cyclo
ស៊ីក្លូពត់ពេន
HD Video (3:16min) loop
2012

Stills from the video

List of Works*

Photographs released in limited editions of 5, in 4 varying sizes. Also for Institutional print sizes, please inquire further. All prints for sale are digital chromogenic color prints on satin photographic paper with Vivera Inks.

*For prices and inquiries contact
Dana Langlois, Java Arts Director
Contact: dana@javaarts.org
Tel +855 12 894 180

p. 4 & 5

The BBug (2nd Generation)
អាដង្កូវ ១ជំនាន់ទី២ប
Installation
2013
0.5m diameter x 40m length
Orange lycra, wire, tube, thread, glue,
not for sale

p. 10 & 11

The BBug (2nd Generation)
អាដង្កូវ ១ជំនាន់ទី២ប
Live Performance
2013
0.5m diameter x 40m length
Orange lycra, wire, tube, thread, glue,
and 2 live bodies
not for sale

p. 12

Campus Dining
ញ៉ាំម្ហូបនៅអាហារ ដ្ឋាន ទី១
Mural Print on Plastic, steel frame
2013
Print Sizes: 330cm X 310m

p. 14

Spiral Alley
ផ្លូវពត់ពេន
Digital C-Print
2012
Print Sizes: 37.5cm X 25cm, 74.5cm X 50cm,
112.5cm X 75cm, 150cm X 100 cm

p. 15

Streetside Salon
កន្លែងកាត់សក់តាមផ្លូវ
Digital C-Print
2012
Print Sizes: 37.5cm X 25cm, 74.5cm X 50cm,
112.5cm X 75cm, 150cm X 100 cm

p.16

Around Town 2
ជុំវិញទីក្រុង លេខទី ២
Digital C-Print
2012
Print Sizes: 37.5cm X 25cm, 74.5cm X 50cm,
112.5cm X 75cm, 150cm X 100 cm

p. 17

Around Town 1
ជុំវិញទីក្រុង លេខទី ១
Digital C-Print
2012
Print Sizes: 37.5cm X 25cm, 74.5cm X 50cm,
112.5cm X 75cm, 150cm X 100 cm

p. 18 & 19

Off the Golden Ship
ចេញពីសំពៅពណមាស
Digital C-Print
2013
Print Sizes: 61cm X 25cm, 121cm X 50cm,
182cm X 75cm, 242cm X 100cm

p. 20

River Landing
ច្រាំង ទន្លេ
Digital C-Print
2013
Print Sizes: 37.5cm X 25cm, 74.5cm X 50cm,
112.5cm X 75cm, 150cm X 100 cm

p. 21

On the River
នៅលើ ទន្លេ
Digital C-Print
2013
Print Sizes: 37.5cm X 25cm, 74.5cm X 50cm,
112.5cm X 75cm, 150cm X 100 cm

p. 22

Reflection #1
រូបឆ្លុះ ទី១
Digital C-Print
2013
Print Sizes: 37.5cm X 25cm, 74.5cm X 50cm,
112.5cm X 75cm, 150cm X 100 cm

p. 23

Campus Dining
ពិសាបាយនៅអាហារដ្ឋាន
2012
Digital C-print
Print Sizes: 37.5cm X 25cm, 74.5cm X 50cm,
112.5cm X 75cm, 150cm X 100 cm

p. 24

Campus Meal #1
ញ៉ាំម្ហូបនៅអាហារ ដ្ឋាន ទី១
2012
HD Video (1:44min) loop
not for sale

p. 25

Spiral Cyclo
ស៊ីក្លូពត់ពេន
2012
HD Video (3:16min) loop
not for sale



Text and Context / Responses to The Bug

Poet Kosal Khiev
Curator Patricia Lavasseur de lat Motte
Journalist Colin Meyn
Scholar Vipash Purichanont

The Bug is created as an assertion of paradoxes

— Anida Yoeu Ali

Buddhist Hugs

Kosal Khiev

Buddhist slug how a Buddhist hug
Love moving thru like a Buddhist bug
Never knew this but it's true love in it's purest
Inquisitive muralist painting pictures
Pillars crawling and scrawling scriptures through villages
witnessing heroes and villains
The innocent being pillaged
No this isn't sacrilegious this is spirit in it's infinite vision
The inner workings of hurting breaking through a cocoon
when it's healing
I'm feeling so infinite
My being stretches in measures taking pleasures
in meadows so I just let go
let flow take over I'm flowing over these ghettos
Dressed in penny loafers and broken stilettos
Shadows that battle rattling cages like Hades opened up before it closes its hat up
So enter the mad hatter
Where the laughter just goes
But focus what matters
Questions of why it goes
But what does it matter
I'm just a Buddhist slug
Giving out Buddhist hugs
Love moving through like a Buddhist bug

B. Bug

Patricia Lavasseur de la Motte

What is a bug? A bug is most commonly thought of as a harmful insect. We find them unpleasant at first sight and most of the time we fear bugs or tend to avoid them. Indeed, we fear what we don't really know. Yet the study of bugs can help us understand the origin of our own existence. We should bear in mind that simple bugs were some of the earliest life forms on earth. Although they seem insignificant, bugs are in fact resourceful creatures and constitute an integral part of the cycle of nature. Haven't we heard people say that if a nuclear incident occurs, only bugs would survive? So bugs should not be underestimated; a fortiori, bugs are remarkable creatures.

Performance artist Anida Yoeu Ali chose to perform as a fabulous creature that spans 40 metres: The Buddhist Bug[1]. Just like in Kafka's famous novel[2], Ali metamorphoses herself into a huge bug. The parallel between the metamorphosis of Kafka's protagonist Gregor, who wakes up one day as a human-sized bug, and Ali's transformation actually goes much deeper than just appearances. Kafka uses the metamorphosis of Gregor to stigmatise the pressures of society (including family) on individuals; in effect saying that individuals are as insignificant as bugs. Kafka criticises the lack of balance between individual human existence and the rules imposed by society that offer little room for self-development. In her performances, Ali embodies a fantasy bug-like organism[3] to question her own identity as a Khmer Muslim woman living in Cambodia where 95% of the population is Buddhist. It is a way for the artist to share her personal turmoil, or in her own words, "exploring

issues of dual ethnicity, belonging, and alienation". Ali raises issues of her difference, of her "individuality", and of being part of a minority[4] within a religious majority. In a broader sense, her work also highlights how globalisation tends to impose models and rules, thus bringing about uniformity and unvaried thought. Is there really a place for individual expression in today's world? Do we, in contrast with bugs, not have consciousness that allows us to think, speak, argue, and identify ourselves?

Surprisingly Ali calls the BBug "s/he", speaking of s/he almost as her alter ego that has become an important part of her art practice and life. It is interesting to note that the Bug is gender neutral, maybe to allow flexibility to the performance and in the audience's reactions. The BBug is personified at the top, facilitating the artist's extroverted free expression through her alter ego. Ali says: "For me, performance and storytelling become ways of bridging the interior and exterior space of self as well as initiate critical dialogues between communities and institutions". With its lengthy linear body, the Bug symbolises the sinuous bridge between cultures, religions and identities; its changing and irregular shape is a testimony of obstacles or misunderstandings encountered at the different moments of performances. As Ali's family had to leave Cambodia for the U.S. when she was young[5], the Bug's linear shape may also refer to the Khmer roots Ali wishes to re-connect to since her return to the country in 2011.

But unlike the repulsive and mute bug of Kafka that meets a tragic end, Ali's saffron-coloured creature is friendly, intriguing and aims to converse with her surrounding environment. Ali chose Performance Art to make people observe and react to the presence of the Bug. S/he does not speak and thus an improbable dialogue takes place between it and the public. From a variety of urban and rural spaces, a series of performances are being recorded and photographed, "creating moments that transcend the ordinary [...], resulting in humorous and surreal scenarios". Ali describes these interactions thus: "The Bug travelled on a cyclo and remorque to visit various neighbourhoods. Curiosity was a mutual reaction between the Bug and people. Many people stared. Some smiled and laughed. Others pointed. Some people tried to make contact". She adds: "people react as if she [the bug] is real, like a real creature[6]". Although the Bug's repre-

sentation references Muslim and Buddhist aesthetics, mainly in shape and colour, some people's unprompted behaviours reveal deeper layers of truth and sincerity. As in Buddhist practice, spontaneity reveals the true nature of human beings and our purpose to attain the ultimate freedom. We may even say then that Bug's performance becomes a catalyst for genuine self-expression and freedom, revealing the nascent individual in all of us. S/he is Buddhist after all! This is a valid consideration not only for the audience but also for Ali herself whose performance is improvised, that is to say, spontaneous.

Within the different locations where the performances take place, The Buddhist The Bug aims to question, even challenge the notion of identity expressed through ways of life, religion, culture and cross-culture. Just like Ali, who came back to Cambodia after many years overseas, it is important for us to explore our roots and heritage to understand who we are. This applies especially for this time when living or working away from our country of origin becomes more common, and affiliation to an identity confers a sense of individuality in our global world. The questions raised by the Buddhist Bug are universal, and may perhaps lead to a precipitation of self-realisation. Who would have thought that a simple (yet not so simple) bug could give rise to all this? Perhaps now you will never see a bug as you did before.

---

1 *The Buddhist Bug or BBug*
2 *Kafka, Franz, The Metamorphosis, (Die Verwandlung), Kurt Wolff, 1915.*
3 *Bug's orange "skin" is the colour of Buddhist monk robes while the head covering is derived from the Islamic hijab.*
4 *Ali's family originates from the Cham Muslim community in Cambodia.*
5 *Ali's family left Cambodia during the regime of the Khmer Rouge.*
6 *Interview with Anida Yoeu Ali, 21 February 2013.*

Creature of Habitat

Colin Meyn

Anida Yoeu Ali tells the story of a displaced being

There are some striking similarities between Anida Yoeu Ali and the subject of her latest exhibition, "The Buddhist Bug Project." The bug's face, for example, which is framed by an orange hijab, is Ms. Yoeu Ali's. And like Ms. Yoeu Ali, the bug stands out in its surroundings. Or, rather, it doesn't quite fit in.

Ms. Yoeu Ali is herself an amalgam of cultural and ethnic identifiers, each of which comes with its own—often conflicting—belief systems and stereotypes. And her exhibits are never straight-forward: The latest show, which opened on Friday, features photographs, video installations and a live performance from Ms. Yoeu Ali.

"The level of experimentation and trans-media is rooted in that culturally I am so mixed—Muslim-American, Khmer, Cham, Malaysian. There is not enough wiggle room for me as an artist to choose one medium," she said.

As a semi-autobiographical representation of Ms. Yoeu Ali, the Buddhist Bug embodies many things at once. Its body is made of fabric that is the color of Buddhist monks' robes but also forms the hijab that covers her head. The creature is often on the move, and while she seems to be perfectly comfortable in Phnom Penh, the people the Buddhist Bug encounters often don't know what to make of her.

What is certain about Ms. Yoeu Ali's latest creation is that it dominates the landscapes it inhabits. Much like elements from her last exhibition, "The Space Between Inside/Outside," Ms. Yoeu Ali uses cloth, color and movement to transform everyday settings into something spectacular.

In one scene, which is presented through both photographs and a video, the Buddhist Bug, which is made of a 40 meters of orange lycra fabric wrapped around a series of hoops, winds down a two-story spiral staircase in the alley between low-rent apartment buildings that could be anywhere in Phnom Penh.

The video of the scene, shot by Adele Pham, begins with a close inspection of the Buddhist Bug, but then moves between the various people looking at the creature, and from the perspective of Buddhist Bug, we see the minute details of the scene: drying fish and old men chatting, bringing significance and depth to a scene that would otherwise seem perfectly ordinary.

And while the interactions between the Buddhist Bug and the Cambodians she meets sometimes verge on the absurd, there are moments of poignancy. In one of the photographs in the exhibit, shot by Masahiro Sugano, the Buddhist Bug stands face-to-face with a woman from a Cham fishing community. One is wearing black pants, a striped shirt and a blue hijab while the other is wearing a giant orange caterpillar costume, but they share much more in common than their outfits imply.

Ms. Yoeu Ali, who describes herself as "a first generation Muslim Khmer woman born in Cambodia and raised in Chicago" was born in Battambang in 1974 and, after living for a brief time in the refugee camps along the Thai border, moved to the U.S. where she lived until two years ago, when she returned with Mr. Sugano, her husband and collaborator, and two children back to Cambodia.

Ms. Yoeu Ali also describes herself as a "political agitator," and although she says she makes a point to remain apolitical in her work in Cambodia so as not to place any undue scrutiny on her assistants and collaborators, her characters often find their way to settings of conflict, dispute and loss.

In "The Space Between," a lady in a sprawling red dress draped herself over the dilapidated buildings around the filled-in Boeng Kak lake, where residents have for years been protesting their eviction at the hands of a local business interest. The Buddhist Bug finds itself face to face with members of a poor fishing community that has been moved to make way the massive—and still unfinished—Sokha Hotel along the banks of the Tonle Sap river.

"She herself is a displaced creature," said Ms. Yoeu Ali of the Buddhist Bug. "So it makes sense that she visits displaced communities."

Ms. Yoeu Ali says she often finds her own frankness in conversation and directness to clash with what she calls a "passive-aggressive energy" in Southeast Asia. And the Buddhist Bug seems to have its own struggles fitting in here.

In a number of the exhibit's photographs and videos, the people taking in Ms. Yoeu Ali's performance are laughing, looking quizzically or staring in awe at the scene playing out in front of them. In other photographs, the Buddhist Bug is touring the city on a cyclo, but looks completely out of place with its expansive body scrunched into a seat fit for a small human.

And although Ms. Yoeu Ali says she has neither the intention nor the ability to shape the unfolding narrative of modern-day Cambodia, she and the Buddhist Bug are very much part of it.

"Contemporary Cambodia exists not only in Cambodia but also outside," she said. Cambodians who have grown up outside the country "can bring our energy and ideas and not disrupt the narrative, but rather contribute to it," she said.

First published in The Cambodia Daily, March 2-3, 2013

Same Skin, Orange Bugs.[1]

Vipash Purichanont

I was first introduced to Anida Yoeu Ali's The Buddhist Bug Project in 2009 when it was exhibited at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago where we were both Master's degree students at the time. I remembered seeing myself stand and look at this orange bug even before I knew her. The bug was creeping on the gallery's floor while two projectors showed a typical forest scene.[2] I learned only later on of her Cambodian Muslim origins from Battambang and, of course, her perfect American English. Her multiple identities, as well as her passion for Cambodia, awed me. The description of the piece stated that her bug was the hybridization of a Muslim woman's headdress and a Buddhist monk's robe. However, I would have been quite surprised if anyone in the audience would have been aware of the geopolitical tension that she intentionally wove together. This project eventually came again to my attention when she moved back to Cambodia in 2011 and created this current series. The piece highlighted the solitary struggle of the bug when it returned to its homeland. It was amidst the Cambodian community she had longed for that The Buddhist Bug found itself to be the object of other people's gaze. Southeast Asia is gradually transforming itself into a single community causing great concern to the issue of cultural confrontation of ASEAN[3] subjectivities. The Buddhist Bug Project puts this tension on display.

In Southeast Asia, the new millennium has become the age of collaboration. Former political enemies need to reorient themselves toward each other as business partners. Modern notions of National identity are being challenged by economic necessity that force trauma to be forgotten. The return of the Asian diasporic artists to their homeland in this decade predicts a truly causal moment of change in cultural demography. The Buddhist Bug Project underscores this encounter, when national identities become neutralized under the name of friendship. An everyday confrontation occurs with the manipulation of multiple sets of identities that are specific to the judgment of the subject and his preserver and vice-versa, which consciously attempts to transform foes into friends. In *Campus Meal #1* (2012), The Buddhist Bug was filmed at the cafeteria on the campus of the Royal University of Phnom Penh. The visiting "lecturer" sits alone at the table. Is she ready to order? She looks at the waitress while the people surrounding her gaze. Were they staring at her hijab? Or perhaps at her Buddhist orange robe, material which she carries for her morning classes? Is it because of her American accent, or because she is not a regular at this particular lunch hour? *Spiral Cyclo* (2012) portrays quite a similar experience. The Buddhist Bug is in an alley at the central market. The unlikely 'visitor' is dropped off by a cyclo driver. She slowly climbed up a spiral staircase, while people on the street gaze curiously. Might she be another 'foreigner' who comes to visit a friend who just moved in to teach English? Are they laughing at her because of an awkwardness in her movement from the cyclo up to the staircase? Unlike Homi Bhabha's ambivalence of mimicry, the return from exile diasporic subject seems to inherit a different uncertainty from those who are in the realm of the colonizer.[4] It is not almost the same but not white that we need to pay attention to here; It is the same but different.It was the difference in this sameness that is detected here, which can be identified by gesture. This uneasiness needs to be defined in motion. To provide an analogy, one might think of the moment one encounters the ubiquitous same-same-but-different T-shirt found on backpackers everywhere in Southeast Asia; the T-shirt that says "same-same" on one side and "but different" on the other. Upon meeting the backpacker, one reads the words "same-same" which signals to the viewer that the object of his or her gaze might be the same as any other. Walking pass the backpacker, one might unintentionally look back just to check if the "but different" is

there, although one knows it is. In this case, The Bug in *Campus Meal#1* (2012) certainly gazes back at the waitress as well as the Bug in Spiral Cyclo (2012) gazes at people in the street. It dawned on me that perhaps we are all wearing this same kind of t-shirt these days. It was this performativity of The Bug that dramatized the given moment of encountering other subjects until it is visible to the naked eye.

If two video pieces reproduce the moment of confrontation, photographic works in this project eternalize that instant. However, it appears to me that we need to consider this series in a consequence. In *Streetside Salon* (2012), the photograph captured the Buddhist Bug when she was standing on the pathway. Perhaps, she was waiting for a cyclo to pick her up; we never know. We only see a reaction of the crowd to her presence. On the streets of Phnom Penh, the Buddhist Bug is entirely an object of observation although she is constantly moving; the cyclo granted an exposure to the city in the same way that this different sameness can be detected. How could this situation be overcome? It is conceivable only when the others were put face to face with each other. Judith Butler once said "someone or something else speaks when the face is likened to a certain kind of speech; it is a speech that does not come from a mouth.[5]" She indicated that to meet face to face with one's own 'other' is the only way we can communicate without language. The face, therefore, "agonized vocalization[6]". The Buddhist Bug never speaks; She only gazes slowly, seeing whether there is someone who is willing to 'face' her. She finally found what she had sought in *Refection #1* (2013). She is standing and facing a lady who is covered with clothes and headdress that look similar to the Bug's. The lady smiled, and still camera perpetuated it. This was only the moment that the Buddhist Bug is with someone. They began a journey *On the River* (2013) to the destination of a harmonic possibility.

The question is: what we can learn from The Bug? In these coming years, a free-flow of skilled labor will result in a new cultural integration of economic supremacy. It will create numerous joint professional communities that will overshadow existing communities of cultural diversities; a more complex power structure that intertwine within classes rather than cultures as they used to be. It is not anymore a matter of displacement, rather a vertical re-placement that everyone is facing. This is a moment of cultural interruption and re-appropriation.[7] These create a tension between the new mobile community and the local immobilized. Transnational Southeast Asia is generating a new form of mimicry, not of the Franz Fanon black skin and white masks kind, but same skin, different gesture. More bugs are appearing from this inter-circulation of labour within the region. Nonetheless, we need to recognize that the state of the Bug is impermanent; it is transformative, within every bug contains a possibility to be a butterfly. This implies that a certain period of slowness and stillness is necessary in contrast to a rapid development of its surrounding. Let us hope that the bugs will continue to survive, make a cocoon, then become butterflies.

---

1. *I would like to thank Prof. Nora Taylor for her comment and revision of this essay.*
2. *"New Works" Sullivan Galleries, Chicago, Illinois, USA. 25 September 2009.*
3. *The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is a geo-political organization of ten countries located in Southeast Asia. Its members include Brunei, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. ASEAN aims to encourage economic growth, social progress, cultural development through collaboration between members.*
4. *Homi Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse" October (Vol. 28, Spring, 1984): 125-133.*
5. *Judith Butler, Precarious Life: The Power of Mourning and Violence (London: Verso, 2004): 113.*
6. *Ibid., 114.*
7. *2015 will be a year that Southeast Asia puts the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) into practice. Who would have foreseen of this moment when Singaporean hospitals are run by Filipino and Malaysian nurses and new construction sites in Laos are supervised by Thai engineers long before the AEC? On one hand, It appears that the same dominated economical superstructure of the region will continually maintain and develop itself. On the other hand, this also means that tension and conflict on illegal immigration would not be resolved and low skilled labour remains immobilized (or seeks to mobilize illegally).*

Respondents

Kosal Kheiv

Kosal Khiev is an exiled poet, tattoo artist, and survivor of the US prison system. After serving 14 years in prison and upon his release in 2011, the U.S. government deported Kosal to Cambodia, a country he had never been. Since his arrival, he has taken the urban arts scene by storm, using spoken word to uplift his situation with compelling performances at open mics, universities, and public stages. Kosal was selected as the poet to represent Cambodia at the 2012 London Cultural Olympiad for the Poetry Parnassus, the largest historical gathering of world poets. The Studio Revolt film "Why I Write" featuring his spoken word performance was recently awarded "Best Poem Performance on Film" at the Berlin Zebra Poetry Film Festival. Kosal continues to collaborate as an artist-in-residence with Studio Revolt on projects such as Verses in Exile his upcoming web series and the documentary Cambodian Son about his first year living in exile in Cambodia.

www.spokenkosal.com

Patricia Lavasseur de la Motte

Patricia Levasseur de la Motte earned an MA in Museology and an MRes in Art History (Asian Arts) from the Ecole du Louvre, Paris. In her former role as Assistant Curator for Photography and New Media at the Singapore Art Museum (SAM), she curated and co-curated several exhibitions including Alain Fleischer, Time Exposures, SAM (2008), TRANSPORTASIAN: Visions of Contemporary Photography from Southeast Asia, SAM (2009); Rainbow Asia, Seoul Arts Center, Hangaram Museum (2010); and Video, an Art, a History 1965–2010: a Selection from the Centre Pompidou and Singapore Art Museum Collections, SAM (2011). In 2012 she was also one of the 3 curators of the 3rd Singapore International Photography Festival. She is presently an Independent Curator, working on The Philanthropic Museum, an on-line museum project dedicated to photography and video arts. (Singapore, 2012). Since 2011 Patricia is a Member of the CIMAM (International Committee of Museum of Modern and Contemporary Arts) – ICOM.

www.thephilanthropicmuseum.org

Colin Meyn

Colin Meyn is an associate editor and reporter at the Cambodia Daily in Phnom Penh who covers a range of social issues as well as the arts. Prior to working at the Daily, Colin was the editor of Lift magazine, a weekly print publication that engaged young Cambodians in social, political and cultural issues and events. Colin has covered the arts in Cambodia throughout his four years as a journalist in Phnom Penh, writing about Cambodian artists who have grown up in the country as well as those who have returned to the country to contribute to the arts scene here. Colin grew up in southern Maine and studied journalism at Northwestern University.

Vipash Purichanont

Vipash Purichanont is a postgraduate research student in MPhil/PhD in Curatorial/Knowledge at Goldsmiths, University of London. He is a curator and art historian. His area of interest is Contemporary Art in Thailand and Southeast Asia, Critical Theory and Social Practice. He graduated a dual degree program in Master of Art in Modern Art History, Theory and Criticism and Arts Administration and Policy at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. His curatorial projects included: Kamin Lertchaipraset's "31st Century Museum of Contemporary Spirit Labaratory @Chicago" and Nipan Oranniwesna's "Speechless". Vipash's writings included a catalog essay for Thai Pavilion in the 52th Venice Biennale (co-written with Surakarn Thoesomboon.)



ARTIST INFO

Artist Bio

Anida Yoeu Ali *(b.1974, Battambang)* is an artist whose works span performance, installation, video, poetry, public encounters, and political agitation. She is a first generation Muslim Khmer woman born in Cambodia and raised in Chicago. After residing for over three decades outside of Cambodia, Ali returned to work in Phnom Penh as part of her 2011 U.S. Fulbright Fellowship. Utilizing an interdisciplinary approach to artmaking, her installation and performance works investigate the artistic, spiritual and political collisions of a hybrid transnational identity. From the Faroe Islands to the Bronx, Copenhagen to Ho Chi Minh City, she lectures, exhibits and performs internationally. Her pioneering work with the critically acclaimed group I Was Born With Two Tongues (1998-2003) is archived with the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Program and the Hemispheric Institute Digital Video Library. Her artistic work has been the recipient of grants from the Rockefeller Foundation, Ford Foundation, the National Endowment of the Arts and the Illinois Arts Council. Anida earned her B.F.A. from University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign) and an M.F.A. in from School of the Art Institute Chicago. She is a collaborative partner with Studio Revolt, an independent artist run media lab in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Studio Revolt's short film about Cambodian American deportations, "My Asian Americana" (2011), won the public vote for the White House "What's Your Story Video Challenge" but was controversially dismissed by contest organizers. In 2013, she will embark on the "Generation Return: Art and Justice Tour" presenting and discussing her works about contemporary justice and its residual effects on the Cambodian American experience. Anida continues to make art and raise her family in Phnom Penh, a city once home to her father.

www.anidaali.com
www.studio-revolt.com



CV/Resume (selected listings)

Anida Yoeu Ali

1974 Born in Battambang, Cambodia
1996 BFA (Graphic Design), University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, IL USA
2005 Southeast Asian Studies Summer Institute (Khmer Language), University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI USA
2010 MFA (Performance), School of the Art Institute, Chicago, IL USA

Languages

English, Khmer

Awards / Grants / Residencies

2013 CAAM Innovation Fund for "Verses in Exile" web series
2013 Season of Cambodia/NYC - Arts in the Diaspora Curator
2012 Beyond Pressure Festival Residency, Yangon, Mynamar
2012 Artist-in-Residence at Canvas (Teo+Namfah Gallery), Phnom Penh
2012 Artist-in-Residence at JavaArts, Phnom Penh
2012 Finalist for White House AAPI What's Your Story Video Challenge for "My Asian Americana"
2011 U.S. Fulbright Fellowship, Creation Mythology Research Project, Cambodia
2010 Grand Prize Award for Link Tv's One Chicago, One Nation Video Contest for "1700% Project: Mistaken for Muslim"
2010 Foundation for Independent Media Festival Tribute "Memory Into Flesh: The Performance and Activism of Anida Yoeu Ali The Film Center, Chicago
2009 SE Asia Resource Action Center 30 year Gala Keynote, San Francisco
2007 Depaul University's Human Rights Education Performance Commission
2006-7 "Butoh Ritual Mexicano" dance residency with Diego Piñon, Mexico
2005-6 "Mixin' It Up: Voices, Stories & Perspectives" commission for Field Museum
2003-4 Dance Theater Workshop "Mekong Project" Residency, Cambodia/Thailand
2003 Insight Arts' Creative Moments Award in Spoken Word, Chicago, IL
2003 Suitcase Fund grant for "Pushing Through Borders" Project, Vietnam
2003 Ford Foundation US delegation to Asian Director's Theatre Festival, India

Solo Exhibitions / Screenings / Performances

2013

"Enter," Insider Gallery at Intercontinental Hotel, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
"Generation Return: Art & Justice Tour," NYC, Chicago, Seattle, LA, SF, Vancouver
"The Buddhist Bug Project," Java Café & Gallery, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
"The Space Between Inside/Outside," 1961 Hotel & Gallery, Siem Reap, Cambodia

2012

"The Public Square" at Our City Festival 2012, Phnom Penh
"The Space Between Inside/Outside," Java Café & Gallery, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
"Belonging to None" Performance Substation, Singapore
"Nite of Revolt (Singapore)," Studio Revolt Film Screenings at Objectifs, Singapore
"The Naked Truth" 90.0FM CambodiaTalk Radio Performance, Phnom Penh

2011

"BODY Series" Featured Poet at Meta House, Phnom Penh
"Gallery X Psar Kandal" public art and exhibition, Our City Festival 2011, Phnom Penh
"Gallery X Mosque Dhiya Uddin" public art and exhibition, Battambang
"Nite of Revolt II: Studio Revolt Film Screenings" at Meta House, Phnom Penh
"Nite of Revolt I: Studio Revolt Film Screenings" at Sammaki Gallery & Phare Ponleu Selpak
"Nite of Revolt I: Film Screenings" at Meta House, Phnom Penh

2010

"The Body In Crisis: Islam, Hybridity and Acts Of Confession" Univ. of Wisconsin Lacrosse
"On the Cusp of Phoenix Rising" performance, SERCAAL 2010, Florida
"1700% Project: Otherance" Performance & Installation Sullivan Galleries, Chicago
"The Body is a Temple: Sacred Acts of Confession" Performance & Lecture at DePaul
"On the Cusp of Phoenix Rising" performance, The Loft, Minneapolis
"The Body is a Temple" Performance at Manifest, Columbia College
"On the Cusp of Phoenix Rising" performance, Mojo's Pen feature, Chicago

Group Exhibitions / Screenings / Performances

2013

"Site/Cambodia" Karen Weber Gallery, Hong Kong
"1975" Exhibition of Diasporic Cambodian Art, Topaz Arts, Queens, USA
"The Hallow Center" Smack Mellon, New York City, USA

2012

"Buddhist Bug Project," Singapore International Photo Festival 3, Singapore
"Care Package" Twelve Gates Arts, Philadelphia, PA USA
"On Pins and Needles" The Philippine Women's University SFAD Gallery, Manila
"Chains of Love/Ties that Blind: Shadows of Empire" Oceanside Museum Art, CA
"Troubling Borders Southeast Asian Women in the Diaspora" UCR Sweeney Art Gallery, CA USA
"Global Hybrid II: Free Your Minds Festival" MetaHouse, Phnom Penh

2011

"Global Hybrid I" MetaHouse, Phnom Penh

2010

"Text off the Page" Group Exhibition, feat. "In Transience" & "Palimpsest for Generation 1.5" performance and installation, Betty Rymer Gallery, Chicago

2009

Graduate Students Group Exhibition, feat. "Buddhist Bug Project (Phase 1: Wood)" performance and video installation, Sullivan Galleries, Chicago
Art Action Group, "1000 Inches" performance & Installation at River Park (Chicago)
"The Walk" Fashion Show feat. "Meditation of the Furies" Sullivan Galleries, Chicago

2008

3 Minute Turns, "Milk Offering" 2M Performance Space, Chicago
Looptopia, "Chador Offering" Part of "Ghostlight" performance installations directed by Dexter Bullard, Chicago May 2, 2008
"Meditation on 3 Prayers" 012 Columbus Space, Chicago
"Wudu Offering" 2M Performance Space, Chicago

Publications (Selected)

2013

Khvat, Yin. "Khmer Rebirth" Surface Asia April/May 2013
Naji, Cassandra. "A Cambodian Home-Coming" Singapore Pocket Art Guide April 2013
Knox, Claire. "New York Festival Draws ire From Local Artists" Phnom Penh Post. Mar 10, 2013
Meyn, Colin. "Creature of Habitat" Cambodia Daily. Mar 2- 3, 2013
Ellen, Rosa. "Bugging around: artist's creature crawls into town" Phnom Penh Post. Feb 28, 2013
"Palimpsest for Generation 1.5," Southeast Asian Women in the Diaspora: Troubling Borders anthology ed. Isabelle Pelaud, Temple Press

2012

Knox, Claire. "Phnom Penh Disconnect: A Refugee's Poetic Journey." Phnom Penh Post 7Days. Nov 9-15, 2012
Naji, Cassandra. "Painting Over Tradition." SEA Globe. Nov 2012
Exhibition Catalog, The Space Between Inside/Outside, Java Arts, Phnom Penh, 2012
Gleeson, Sean. "How A Little Red Stool Inspired Exhibition." Phnom Penh Post 7Days. July 6-12, 2012
Gleeson, Sean. "Java's Artist-in-Residence displays Surreal Scenes." Phnom Penh Post. July 2, 2012
Meyn, Colin. "Outside the White Cube." Cambodia Daily. June 30- July 1, 2012
Naji, Cassandra. "Art Out of The Box." The Advisor. Issue 27
Sloan, Michael. "The Two of Us." AsiaLIFE Cambodia. June 2012
Jay, Phoenix. "Agent Provocateur: Political Agitation as Performance Art" The Advisor. Issue 12
Montaño, Diana. "Royal Lends Voice to Returnees." Phnom Penh Post. April 4, 2012
Giant Robot News Staff. "Did White House Reject My Asian Americana Video Because It Hit a Political Nerve?" Giant Robot. 4/24/12.
Esquivel, Paloma. "Filmmakers 'appalled' by process in White House video contest." LA Times. 4/23/12.
Rivas, Jorge. "Deportation Video Wins White House Contest, But Disappears." Colorlines. 4/11/12
Montaño, Diana. "Deportee Video Wins Accolades." Phnom Penh Post. Feb 22, 2012
Cover Image & Featured works in the book War, Genocide, and Justice: Cambodian American Memory Work by Dr. Cathy Schlunds-Vials, University of Minnesota Press 2012

Credit & Gratitude



A Project of Studio Revolt

Concept + Performance Anida Yoeu Ali
Photography + Digital Post Masahiro Sugano
Videography Adele Pham
Photography Assistance + Technical Advice Vinh Dao
Garment Construction Friends Sewing Workshop, led by Srun Srey Peou, assisted by Sreylen Kung & Tep Yav
Additional Performance Assistance Yang Yanna, Nov Leakhena, Reamchun Borey

Studio Revolt
Champa Kim
Ouch Thoun Virek
Reaksmey Yean
Sek Chen
Vath Tho

Java Arts
Dana Langlois
La Sros

Additional thanks to
Patricia Lavasseur de la Motte
The Philanthropic Museum
Colorhouse Prints
AV Printing
Sky Media

This first generation phase of The Buddhist Bug Project was realized with co-production assistance from JavaArts. We are grateful to Dana Langlois and her incredible team for their support, belief, and help in realizing our vision to bring The Bug home to Cambodia.





On Site Participants

Cyclo Around Town (2012):
Cyclo driver Mr. Met Thoeun and the Cyclo Conservation and Carrier Association

Royal University of Phnom Penh (2012):
Raksmey Meas and the Department of Media & Communication, the students and staff of the cafeteria at RUPP

Central Market Alley (2012): Thank you to the joyous bustling back alley gathering of Cambodian locals too many to name in this alleyway...

Cham Fishing Village of Chroy Changva Chongkah (2013):
Thanks to Tin Jilhar, her husband Ly Matna In, her son In Muslim, and their community. Tin Jilhar with her contagious laugh and warmth allowed us access to her fishing village and organized her neighbors to participate under the hot sun.

Buddhist Temple of Sompheau Preah Troleik (2013):
We are in deep gratitude to the elders who opened the temple to The Bug: Moy Yung, Tep Sareth, Seng Chanthoun, Yeat Reap, Haim Houn, Yeat Sy and the spirit of Lok Ta who visited us that evening.



Photography: Masahiro Sugano
Design: AYA Designs

Gallery Contact
Dana Langlois
Java Arts
56 Sihanouk Blvd.
Phnom Penh,
Cambodia
email: dana@javaarts.org
Tel +855 12 894 180

© Studio Revolt, LLC 2013
Text copyright © the authors, Images courtesy of the artist

All rights reserved.
No part of this publication may be transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording or any storage or retrieval system, without prior permission from the copyright holders and publishers.

www.javaarts.com
www.studio-revolt.com