Backstage: Managing Creativity and the Arts in Southeast Asia
14 August 2021, 10.00-12.00

Virtual panels, in English with Thai interpreter

Background:

The Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) sector is seen as a driving force for economic growth in many countries in South-East Asia (SEA), but the development of this sector faces challenges in terms of coherent financial strategies and local market conditions. Recognizing these challenges and the lack of consistent data on government initiatives and policy impacts in SEA, as well as the under-researched nature of the financing approaches adopted in various countries, the UNESCO office in Bangkok, under the framework of the UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, commissioned a study to review and analyse the financial context of the CCI sector in SEA, with a focus on the sustainability of civil society CCI organizations.

The publication “Backstage: Managing Creativity and the Arts in Southeast Asia” presents the findings of that study, capturing survey responses from 321 CCI organizations and in-depth interviews with 29 organizations from 9 countries in the region (Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam). In particular, it presents the challenges that CCI organizations in South-East Asia currently face at the policy and operational levels and provides recommendations towards strengthening the creative sector in South-East Asia. The publication also identifies the success factors of the organizations and portrays stories that showcase the resilience and adaptability of the creative and cultural workers.

Objectives:

- To present the findings of the study;
- To discuss updated situation with CCI organizations in Thailand and other Southeast Asian countries;
- To gather some recommendations from the region to address common issues.
Agenda:

- 5min Opening by Dr Duong Bich Hanh, Chief of Culture Unit, UNESCO Bangkok
- 20min Presentation of the regional study by Sunitha Janamohanan, LaSalle College of the Art
- 10 min Presentation of Thailand case by Kamonrat Chayamarit, Culture Unit
- 1hr20min Panel discussion with representatives of Southeast Asian CCI organizations

Targeted audience:

- Representatives of government agencies
- Cultural and creative practitioners
- CCI organizations

Study presenters

**Sunitha Janamohanan**, Lecturer in Arts Management, LaSalle College of the Arts

Sunitha Janamohanan has worked in the arts since 1999 with a portfolio that covers a range of art forms and creative industries, from visual and performing arts to literature and film, design, animation, music and heritage. She has been a curator in the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, arts manager and head of programmes for the British Council Malaysia, Education and Outreach Manager for George Town World Heritage Inc., in Penang, and, prior to moving to Singapore, she was the manager of a multipurpose art space called MAPKL in Kuala Lumpur.

**Ms. Kamonrat Chayamarit**, Culture Officer UNESCO Bangkok

Kamonrat is a Culture Officer at the UNESCO Bangkok Office, covering the Mekong cluster countries. She works towards advocating UNESCO culture-related Conventions, with the focus on the UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. She coordinates the culture programme in Thailand and Lao PDR.
Panellists and moderator

**Moderator**

Dr. Duong Bich Hanh, Program Specialist and Chief of Culture Unit at UNESCO Bangkok

Duong Bich Hanh is an anthropologist with a strong commitment to gender equality, cultural diversity and human rights. She is currently leading the Culture Unit at the UNESCO Bangkok Office, covering the Mekong cluster countries and coordinating a number of regional projects in Asia and the Pacific. Her work involves supporting the countries to implement UNESCO’s six cultural conventions and promoting the role of culture and creativity in sustainable development.

**Panellists**

Ms. Sukhontip Prahanpap, Director, Lalanta Fine Art gallery

A Thai native, Sukhontip Prahanpap is a veteran in the art business. She is a founder of La Lanta Fine Art (2016) and Warin Lab Contemporary (2021). Through La Lanta Fine Art, she creates an international platform for local artists. Through Warin Lab Contemporary, she engages audiences with prevailing social issues through a high caliber curatorial program.
**Mr. Prapan Napawongdee, Co-founder, Shma Landscape Architecture**

Prapan Napawondee is the Director of Shma Company Limited for contemporary landscape architecture and urban design founded in 2007. Shma is a creative landscape architecture platform with multidisciplinary professions collaborating to deliver a meaningful and thoughtful design that deals with increasing environmental challenges and to create better earth.

**Kathy Rowland, Co-founder and Managing Editor at Arts Equator**

Kathy Rowland is an independent editor, writer, researcher and producer based in Singapore.

Paul Augustin is a Founder Penang Island Jazz Festival, and the Director of PENANG HOUSE OF MUSIC. House of Music has a mission to archive Malaysian music history.

Kai Brennert, Impact Consultant and Founder at edge & story

Kai Brennert is the founder of edge & story, an evaluation and research consultancy at the intersection of culture and sustainable development. He has lived in Germany, Cambodia, Thailand, Iraqi Kurdistan, Australia, the UK and New Zealand, and worked in more than 20 countries across four continents on partnerships, strategy and evaluation. Kai is also the author of curious patterns, a monthly newsletter for professionals that explores current issues and policies in the field of arts, impact and development.