

VUTH LYNO EXHIBITION AT SA SA BASSAC GALLERY PHNOM PENH

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Thoamada II, a solo exhibition by Cambodian artist and curator Lyno Vuth is on show at SaSa Gallery Phnom Penh to Mar. 3.

In a series of evocatively posed photographic diptychs entitled *Thoamada II*, Vuth Lyno expands common frameworks of sexuality, family, and memory. This work is an outgrowth of an earlier series of photographic and audio portraits of individual MSM (men who have sex with men) entitled *Thoamada* (2011). In both collaborative series, subjects represent their lives as *thoamada* — normal, everyday, commonplace. These Khmer LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) communities have diverse voices. Vuth asks us — individually and collectively — to reconsider the bounds of love.

The artist will give a talk at the gallery on Feb. 9 starting 6pm. As a sneak preview the artist shares his approach

What was your process working with your subjects?

I interviewed people together with their families, inviting them to share their stories and journey. After the conversation, I asked them to pose for two different photographs. One was a simple family portrait inside their house. They decided on their dress and pose. For the second photograph, I asked them to collectively choose a memory to re-enact, improvised with their belongings and surroundings.

Who are the audiences for these images?

I wish to connect mainly to Cambodians. I want them to see these family portraits as common, like any other; they are all 'thoamada'.

Are there any significant interactions, stories, or memories you'd like to share?

My experiences with all the participants were extremely rewarding and I have learned so much. Each family determines their own definition of family, notions of gender roles and family structure, and ideas of what leads to a good family. There were families with two mothers, there was a lesbian family with one as a father and another as a mother, there was a family with a gay son who also had a transgender sibling, there was a family with an ex-soldier mother and a lesbian daughter. All these challenge stereotypes a great deal.

Each family shared a fascinating story; some participants got very emotional at times, and me too . . . [For example], a lesbian couple remembered how one woman came asking for salt from the other at a meager meal during the Khmer Rouge regime. As resources were scarce, the woman refused, which made the other like her more, and they married soon after the Khmer Rouge lost power. Now they have adopted two daughters and one son with several grandchildren.

About the artist

Lyno Vuth (b. 1982, Phnom Penh) is an artist and curator. His artistic practice encompasses photography and sound and is primarily participatory in nature, engaging specific Cambodian communities and the cultures unique to them. His curatorial practice currently considers community and notions of the alternative. Vuth is a founding and active member of Stiev Selapak (2007 –), who established Sa Sa Art Gallery (2009 – 2010) and SA SA BASSAC (2011 –). He is the Artistic Director of Sa Sa Art Projects (2010 –), a community-based, knowledge-sharing platform and experimental residency program. Vuth's solo exhibitions include Blue Angels, French Institute, Phnom Penh (2008), Thoamada (2011) and Thoamada II (2013) at SA SA BASSAC. His 2012 group exhibitions include Riverscapes IN FLUX, Hanoi, Saigon, Bangkok, Phnom Penh, Jakarta, Manila; 'You Owe Me. I Don't Owe You Nothin' Tobias Rehberger pavilion, ROUNDTABLE 9th Gwangju Biennale. Vuth was Visual Art Curator for 2012's Cambodian Youth Arts Festival, Phnom Penh and participated in Flying Circus Project 2013: Burmese Days, Yangon and Singapore. He is a Curatorial Assistant for IN RESIDENCE, the Visual Art Program of Season of Cambodia, NYC, 2013. Vuth is a Fulbright Fellow, MA Art History, USA, commencing 2013.

About SA SA BASSAC

SA SA BASSAC is a gallery and resource center dedicated to creating, facilitating, producing and sharing contemporary visual art and culture in and from Cambodia.

SA SA BASSAC

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Tuesday – Saturday 10am-6pm