

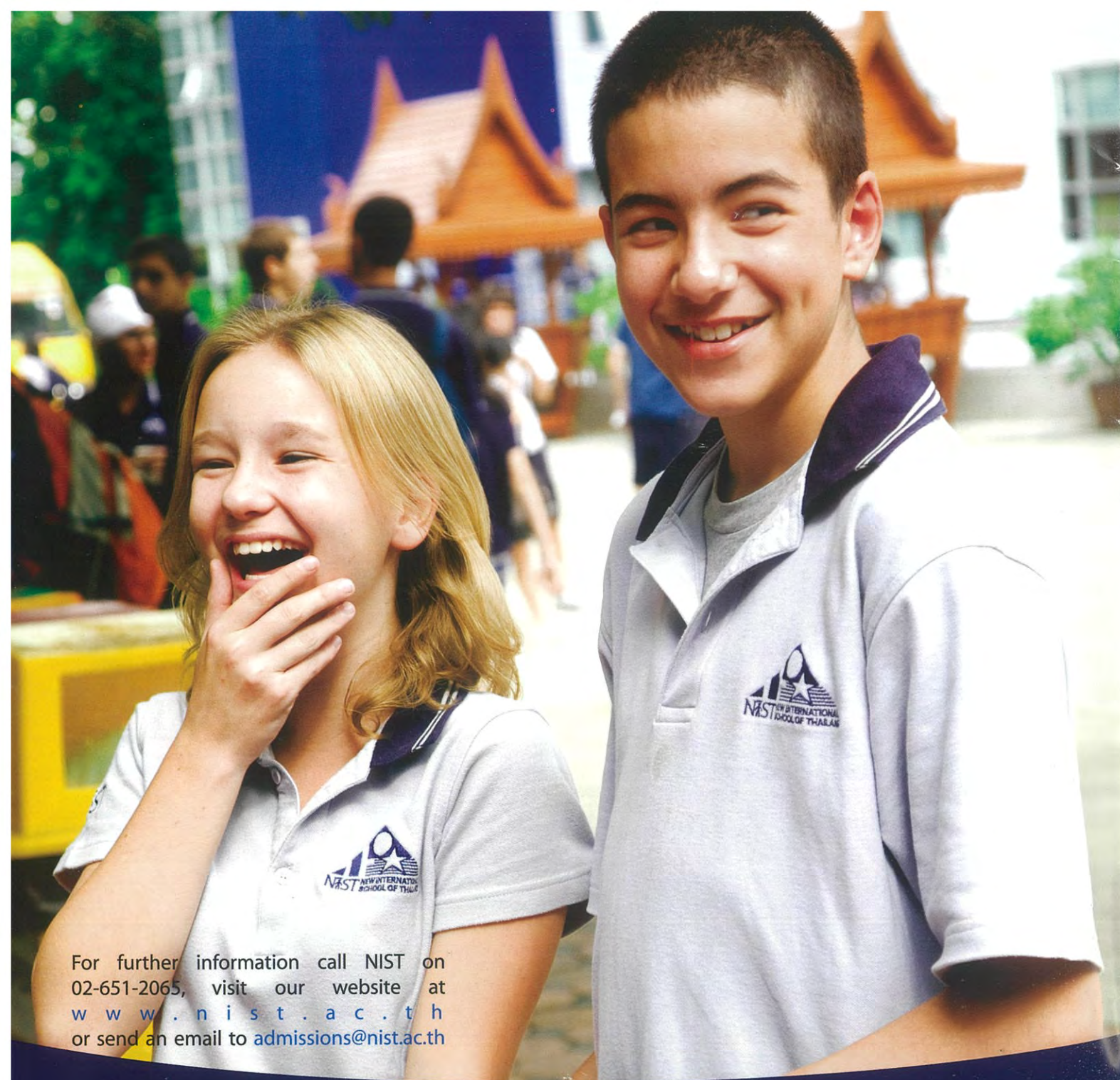
DATELINE

BANGKOK

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS' CLUB OF THAILAND MAGAZINE

THIRD QUARTER 2009

FCCT/OnAsia
Photojournalism
Contest 2009



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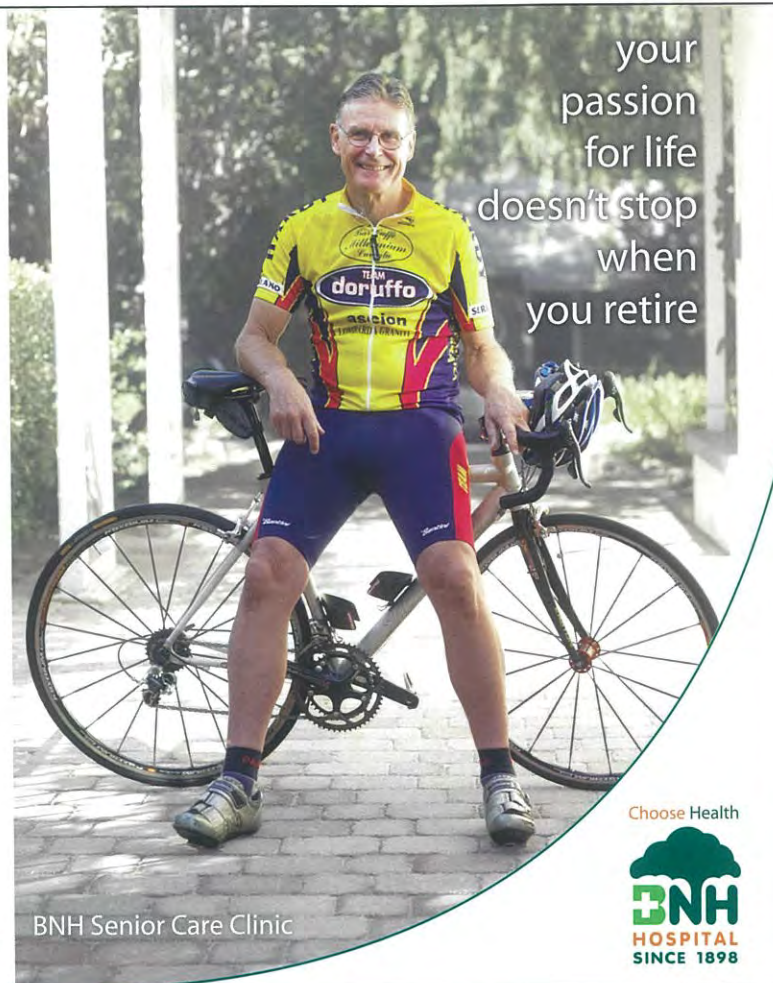


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Take a front line seat at world events and be part of the buzz in the region by joining the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand.

Found at the heart of Asia's news and providing a hub of conviviality and professional commitment, the FCCT is a must for anyone wanting to engage in our times.

Frequent programme nights reveal and explain current affairs. Meet friends, colleagues and leading figures from the region's business, government, diplomatic and media circles at the bar. Press conferences, film nights and international receptions all happen here.

Members have special privileges: exclusive Internet access; this unique quarterly magazine for free; a weekly bulletin detailing upcoming events; insight into path-breaking photography and art, Jazz on Friday nights, special gourmet nights, and more. For street cred and sustenance in these trying times, the FCCT is the only choice.

FEEDING THE MACHINE

Dateline magazine looks at the stories behind the stories. All offerings will be considered, from articles and photo essays to letters, essays, haiku or sonnets. How you covered a story, what you think about how journalism works, or even some gossip for the Soi Whispers column – send it all in, to editor Jim Pollard (jimpollard_1999@yahoo.com) or deputy editor Greg Lowe (greg.lowe@fccthai.com). Submissions are paid for with glory and bar coupons.

Great Photos from Across the Region

By MARWAAN MACAN-MARKAR

There was a time when the walls of the FCCT served as an exhibition space for painters and photographers. Some years would see three if not four painters display their works for shows that lasted a month. But the growing number of snappers who wanted to exhibit their pictures prompted a shift to dedicate our walls to the photographers who work in Southeast Asia and beyond. It was also a way of embracing those who are very much part of our foreign media community.

This decision, made three years ago, coincided with an idea that won immediate approval by the executive committee at the time – to have an annual FCCT photo contest. Patrick Barta, the *Wall Street Journal's* correspondent, was the moving force. He took upon this challenge to organise it in addition to being a board member who already had the demanding responsibility of editing this magazine that year.

His efforts since then have not been in vain. There are ample signs with this year's contest that word is spreading about our annual competition, which seeks to reward the portrayal of Asia by local and foreign photographers. The number of submissions has ballooned from 45 during the first year and about 70 last year to 180 this year. Many who sent the total of more than 5,000 single images to be judged were professional photographers. And the terrain they covered has expanded from Southeast Asia, which was largely the case during the previous years. This year's contest attracted submission with scenes in India and Bangladesh, on one side, to Japan, on the other.



Current affairs naturally dominated the images we received. There were entries that focused on Thailand's political turmoil this year, the conflict in the deep South, the impact of the typhoons in the Philippines and photo essays that captured moments from Indonesia's latest election. The scenes from military-ruled Burma revealed the risks photographers took to get their images, including some from the border regions where tension and terror prevail.

The themes covered were as eclectic. While some shed light on the sex trade and HIV in the region, others submitted images of families that live in graveyards, midget wrestling in the Philippines, elephants that lumber through urban sprawl and India's abundance of festivals.

This issue of *Dateline* is filled with those who emerged as winners. They are moving images of a two-year-old child's body being

dug up after he was buried in a mudslide and that of wailing child whose body is a haunting reminder of poverty and hunger. The best photo for the theme of migrants, refugees and stateless people was the train journey home of a Bangladeshi woman. The photo essay prize was awarded to a series that captures the story of elephants forced to live in abandoned buildings in a Bangkok suburb.

Japan, however, was the setting for the top prize – Photographer of the Year. Androniki Christodoulou, a Tokyo-based photojournalist, submitted work of a Japan one rarely hears about – or sees, as in this case. Among them were a series of images of the country's largest slum in Kamagasaki, where an estimated 30,000 people live.

"All of the photographs required dogged reporting and a knack for building confidence with the subjects to gain access to a world not often seen by the mainstream population," noted the judges, who spent an entire Saturday (from 11am till close to midnight) to make their selections. "The photos also demonstrated great technical skill in capturing images in an array of difficult and diverse environments, enlightening her audience."

A two-month-long exhibition will open at the club in early December to showcase these winning entries and others that were singled out for their merit. We hope it attracts more than our usual flow of guests to take in scenes that shed light on the abundance of images that keep changing, evolving and helping to define the region we live in. May it also help to cement our credentials as the oldest and largest foreign press club in this corner of Asia. ■



Dog Days at the FCCT

Some have said that our members are animals, but on this occasion it certainly could be said of our guests.

The FCCT played host last month to Thailand's only search and rescue dog association, the Thai Rescue Dog Association, as well as an officer from the Canine Unit of the Royal Thai Police.

Also there to talk about the our role in animal welfare, especially in the case of natural disasters, was Dr Ian Dacre from the World Society for the Protection of Animals.

When asked for permission to bring the dogs into the club, Maneeya Center's building manager said that it was the first time in over twenty years that she'd had such a request.

But the real stars of the show were Savannah, Tiger, and the rest of the dogs who showed up to strut their stuff at the club.

Actually, the dogs seemed quite relaxed at the club, as many people are once they soak up the atmosphere and a few even took a quick snooze. That's been known to happen too.

Discussed that night were the challenges of having functioning dog and handler search and rescue teams at the ready to respond to an emergency.



The TRDA was able to locate bodies of people caught in the Esplanade building collapse in Nonthaburi in May, but at the moment there are only two teams who are fully qualified to do so.

It's rigorous training for both human and canine involving at least a two year commitment and out of all of the dogs that have taken part in the TRDA's training, only 3 have passed on to the next level.

The dogs and handlers demonstrated the skills of these highly trained animals at the end of the programme.

When handlers took up positions on the floor that resembled people in distress, the dogs responded with barks and nudges, signaling that something was wrong.

Dogs superior sense of smell make them extremely useful in search and rescue operations but the TRDA faces

many challenges as an all volunteer organisation. Funding is always an issue, since the government doesn't seem likely to underwrite a programme of this nature anytime soon.

As the handlers pointed out, for the dogs, it's a game. They are initially trained with toys and directed to locate them and are rewarded with treats. They are exposed to different obstacles and situations they may encounter in partially collapsed buildings and other precarious environments.

But what's just fun to these special dogs could be a matter of life or death to us humans. And who knows, having a rescue dog around to bark and revive a member might come in handy when someone's had a few too many at the club and tipped over. ■

— Anasuya Sanyal

NOTE: The FCCT Year End Bash will be held at one of the best hotels in the world – the Mandarin Oriental, on the banks of the Chao Phraya – on Sunday December 13, and we have the famous Author's Wing lounge to ourselves for the evening.

Festivities begin with sunset cocktails and complementary canapés along the riverfront garden at 6pm, followed by an outstanding holiday dinner at 7.30pm created just for us by the Oriental's legendary executive chef, Norbert Kostner, and finished with a traditional Christmas pudding.

We will have our own traditional lucky draw after dessert and

coffee. Plus we've got the usual cache of prizes including spa and resort weekends at top places in Thailand, dinners and holiday weekends around town, and some special surprises.

Our very own Friday night band, the Bylines, will provide the music.

Join us for a memorable evening as 2009 draws to a close, as we meet old friends and perhaps make a few new ones. Please reserve your tickets early through the FCCT office, by phone, e-mail or in person. (Members: 1,400 baht, non-members 1,800 baht; lucky draw tickets 100 baht each).

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The FCCT gratefully acknowledges the generosity of our sponsors whose contributions to the Club's programs and activities have ensured we remain Bangkok's premier public forum. Please support our sponsors when you can, as they support us!

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JACKIE CHAN: A Great Bundle of Positive Energy

IF YOU were ever had any doubt from his movies that Jackie Chan is a bundle of energy, that doubt is removed the moment you meet him. Jackie arrived at the FCCT like a whirlwind on the evening of Monday, November 10.

Sitting at the top table he attacked a bowl of nuts, refused all other food and stuck to water. When it was suggested that the event start, he clapped his hands together and said "Yes, I like to work!"

At the podium he delivered short introductory remarks, and then clearly couldn't stand sitting in one place any longer. He leaped up and stood behind the table, only occasionally sitting for a few seconds after he had delivered a long answer to a question.

Most of the time he was prowling passionately behind the microphones, gesticulating excitedly, talking fast, sometimes groping for the right word, his spirit and humour filling the room and drawing an enthusiastic response from the delighted audience.

He was in Bangkok, courtesy of the International Peace Foundation's "Bridges" dialogue programme. Chan is widely known for his philanthropic work for a range of causes, from disaster relief to handicapped children to endangered wildlife. Among other things, his donations have helped build 24 schools in China.

And when he speaks of his causes, he does so with an unmistakable and infectious passion and commitment. I remembered the public service announcements he did years ago for tiger conservation. His message was "When the buying stops, the killing will too." The message was aimed at the Chinese market, which has largely been responsible for the decimation of wild tigers for their body parts.



The supposed medicinal benefits from animal body parts were "baloney", said Chan, who launched into an impassioned diatribe: "After that I not only protect tigers, I protect rhinos, sharks, everything... through the tiger thing I learned so many things. So many nonsense going on, old traditional things, tiger bone helping people do this, bear gall helping people do that. All baloney! Really, it's all bad business people speaking nonsense, saying you take this you take that... New technology [is] 10 times better than the tiger bone. I always tell the Chinese people, 'Don't trust the old things. It's not like the pig...' (he breaks into Cantonese and looks around for a helpful translation). You use the pig leg and you run faster; that's baloney. Because the Chinese still follow this old traditions, we have to speak out these kind of things... this nonsense."

Jackie Chan is an ambassador for United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef). The audience listened in silence to his tale of a six year old girl from a poor family

who could barely see, but hadn't the courage to tell her parents, living in fear and enduring beatings for two years at home for not being able to perform at school and at her homework.

All she needed was a pair of corrective glasses, he said, outlining how he got celebrities together and donated funds and organized a drive to get the spectacles for thousands of visually challenged children. Jackie Chan himself donated US\$2 million.

"I travel around the world, I see so many unfair things," he said, talking repeatedly of how he wants to be a superman and help all the people who need help.

"Peace, in this moment right now, is very important. We have a natural disaster every single day. We try to protect trees, we try to protect the sea, the fish, but people still do the underwater dynamite. Boom! Do you know how many fish die? Boom! One boom, I don't know how many... trillions. I want to be a superman. I want to suck all the weapons out, no weapons at all."

He sat at the end of that, with a heavy sigh: "Just sometimes I see these kinds of things, really really sad. When I was young I always asked 'Why, why, why?' So at the end, I not ask why any more, I just do it. I know that everybody has a good heart, but sometimes you just don't have time to do something. OK, now you have \$10, you want to do something. I am willing to become a bridge, I have my foundation, come on, donate to me. I will do it. I am willing to do it." ■

— Nirmal Ghosh

This first appeared as a blog on www.straitstimes.com, and is reproduced courtesy of The Straits Times.

FCCT/OnAsia PHOTOJOURNALISM CONTEST 2009

Three years ago, the FCCT began honoring the region's top photographers through its annual FCCT Photojournalism Contest. Since then, the contest has grown by leaps and bounds, and this year was no different.

With the help of several new sponsors – including contest co-sponsor OnAsia, the region's premiere photo agency – the number of submissions for this year's contest more than doubled from the previous year. They came from all across Asia, from the slums of Osaka to the remotest villages of Bangladesh to the darkest corners of Myanmar. They chronicled the good – and the bad – of living in Asia. Photographers examined the sex trade and HIV in Thailand; the plight of stateless peoples in Bangladesh and Myanmar; the 2009 election in Indonesia, one of the world's biggest emerging democracies; and the color and pageantry of India's

countless religious festivals. They also were on hand for many of the region's biggest news stories, from Typhoon Ketsana in the Philippines to the "red shirt" rallies in Thailand. In all, the submissions were the strongest the judges have seen yet and a testament to the persistence, dedication and imagination of the region's photographers at a time of deep uncertainty over the future of the industry.

The judges selected winners in four categories: Spot news, feature photography, refugees and migrants (a special category sponsored by the International Organization for Migration) and photo essay.

FCCT and OnAsia would like to thank all our outstanding sponsors for agreeing to support this year's contest: OnAsia, Star Alliance, TQPR, Anantara Hotels, Peninsula Hotels, Bloom Photography, Mandarin Oriental, IOM. ■

SOI WHISPERS

☛ *Chronicle of Thailand* was launched in November by former Prime Minister **Anand Panyarachun** at a well-attended party at *The Four Seasons*. The 444-page tome weighs in at just under three kilograms, and was based mainly on the archive of the *Bangkok Post*. The book should become a reference staple for journalists in the region, and was edited by club member **Nicholas Grossman**. It also drew upon the talents and archives of numerous FCCT members. Although the club itself did not figure that prominently overall, the controversial speech of politician **Jakrapob Penkair** in August 2007 – which in itself attracted absolutely no international media interest at the time – garnered a brief mention. So too did the violent deaths in Thailand of two former club presidents. The first was **Darrel Berrigan**, a former *New York Times* correspondent, and the founder and editor of the *Bangkok World* newspaper – the man who gave Bangkok nightlife columnist **Bernard Trink** his first break in 'journalism.' Berrigan was murdered in October 1965 during a tryst that went murderously awry. Nearly two decades later, a legendary and hugely popular chronicler of the American War in Indochina, Australian cameraman **Neil Davis**, died tragically during wild gunfire from tanks in a botched coup attempt. Davis's sound man, American **Bill Latch**, was also killed. Another grim tale was the still unexplained murder of **Claudia Ross** in March 1973, an idealistic 27-year-old American reporter for the *Bangkok Post*. Other foreign journalists mentioned include American **Paul Handley** for the confirmation by a senior policeman in January 2006 that his incendiary book, *The King Never Smiles*, would not be appearing any time soon in Thai bookshops. FCCT stalwart **John Everingham** popped up on the radar for his daring swim across the Mekong River in early 1978 to extract his beautiful future wife, **Keo Sirisomphone**, from communist Laos. The entry noted that John and Keo's older son, **Ananda**, is one of the hottest young actors in contemporary Thai cinema. Another epic river-related tale was member **Steve Van Beek**'s 1000-kilometre paddle in a canoe down the Ping and Chao Phraya rivers in 1988. A former club president, **Rodney Tasker**, featured in early 2002 with his *Far Eastern Economic Review* colleague **Shawn Crispin**. The pair found themselves in extremely hot water over an intelligence item in the magazine suggesting that relations between the palace and Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra were not everything they might be. ■ *Remember, you read it here first.*



CATEGORY: SPOT NEWS

For the best photos of news events taken in Asia



▲ **First Place:**
▲ **Lino "Linus" Guardian Escandor**

The body of two-year-old Ian Colagong is dug up in the mud after his house, near a river in San Jose, Philippines, was buried in a mudslide in September 2009. Colagong and his six brothers all died inside their home after flooding and landslides triggered by Tropical Storm Ketsana, which also killed more than 250 other people in Luzon.



▲ **Honorable Mention: Thiti Wannamontha**

The fire at Santika in Bangkok on New Year's Eve 2008-09 left 59 dead and at least 243 injured. The blaze broke out while some 1,000 revellers were celebrating and bidding farewell to the pub, which was to be closed after the "Goodbye Santika" party.

>>

Second Place:
Kittinun Rodsupan

Students in an astronomy program watch a solar eclipse through a filter made from plastic bottles at Chulalongkorn University in January 2009.



<<

Third Place:
Dannyboy Pata

A policeman tries to draw his gun on students during a protest near Malacanang Palace in Manila in August 2009.

>>

Honorable Mention:
John Javellana

Motorists drive by vehicles lined up along a road after flash floods caused by Tropical Storm Ketsana hit a village in Manila in September 2009. Nearly 60 people in the area were killed.



CATEGORY: FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

For the best non-news "Feature" photos taken in Asia



<<

First Place: Graham Crouch

Severely undernourished and wasting, one-year-old Neeraj Adiwasi is weighed at a feeding centre in Shivpuri, Madhya Pradesh state, in India. Despite 15 years of economic growth, the incidence of child malnutrition has barely changed – 46 per cent of children under five in India are malnourished, which is twice the rate of sub-Saharan Africa. A report released recently said that a mixture of poor governance, the caste system's disempowerment of women and superstition are preventing children getting the nutrition they need, condemning another generation to brain damage, low earning potential and early death. Currently, about 3,000 children die every day in India as a result of malnutrition.

>>

Second Place: Sudipto Das

A 6-year-old Royal Bengal tiger is released into a mangrove swamp at Kalash Island in West Bengal, India after being trapped in a nearby village. The big cat is slipping towards extinction due to a shortage of prey in the forest and rising water levels.



Third Place: Ritesh Uttamchandani

Pravin Janak was born with a birth defect that led to the amputation of his left leg. His dream was to win the Mumbai Bodybuilding Championships for the handicapped. But he did not win. An alcoholic, he now scavenges on his father's income and has given up hopes of being an ace body builder.



Honorable Mention: Nicolas Asfour
Contestants get dressed backstage during Miss Tiffany's Universe Contest 2009 in Pattaya, Thailand in May 2009. The Miss Tiffany contest is held to promote a positive image of transvestites and Thailand tourism.



**Honorable Mention:
Sandipan Majumdar**
Village boys play with geese in West Bengal, India

CATEGORY: MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

For the best photos focusing on the struggles of migrants, refugees and stateless people in Asia



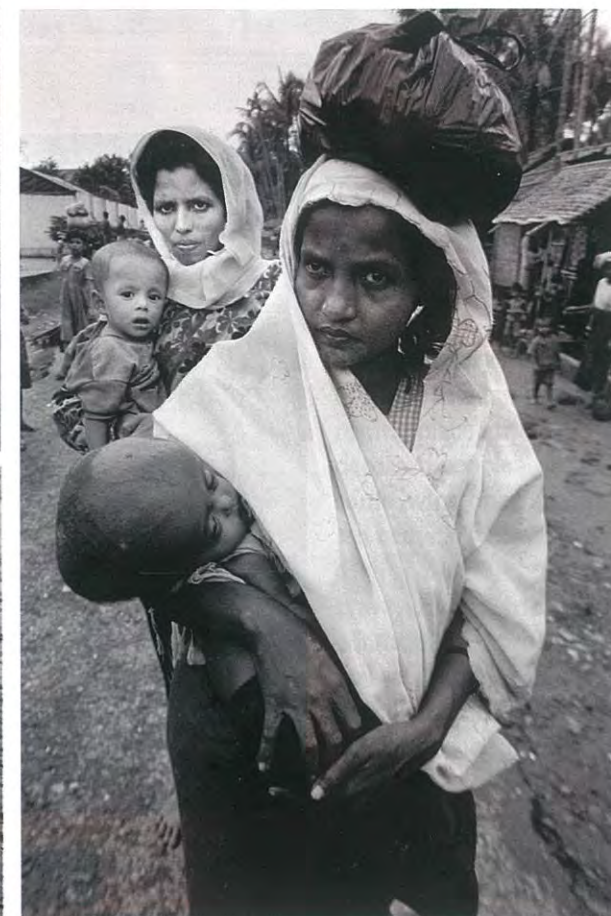
First Place: Andrew Biraj

A woman sits between carriages as a train travels to Mymensing from Dhaka in Bangladesh. Millions of residents travel from the capital city to celebrate the Muslim Eid al-Fitr holiday, and many cannot afford the ticket price.

>>

Second Place: Orit Drori

Finding a way to fill their stomachs at the end of the day is the principal occupation of millions of Burmese, especially the residents of Arakan State in the northwest, which includes many stateless Rohingya migrants.



Third Place: James Mackay

More than 2,100 political prisoners are currently incarcerated in Burma's notorious jails. Many others have been set free but are haunted by their experiences there. "Even Though I'm Free I Am Not" is a global documentary photography project through which former Burmese political prisoners in Southeast Asia, Australia, Japan, Europe, USA, Canada and Burma itself are photographed to raise awareness of their colleagues still in jail.



CATEGORY: PHOTO ESSAY



An elephant finds refuge from the sun in a room at the housing development

First Place: Brent Lewin – Urban Elephants

After years of unsustainable growth in Thailand in the 1990s, countless developers went bankrupt and were forced to abandon their projects. Ten years later, many of Thailand's poorest live among the abandoned foundations of skyscrapers and suburban homes-to-be, including in the Bangkok suburb of Bang Bua Thong.

Surrounded by marshland and overgrown tropical vegetation, several hundred squatters occupy the concrete foundations of two-storey townhouses. Unknown even to many of its inhabitants, five families live with 10 domesticated elephants, side-by-side with their handlers, or mahouts.

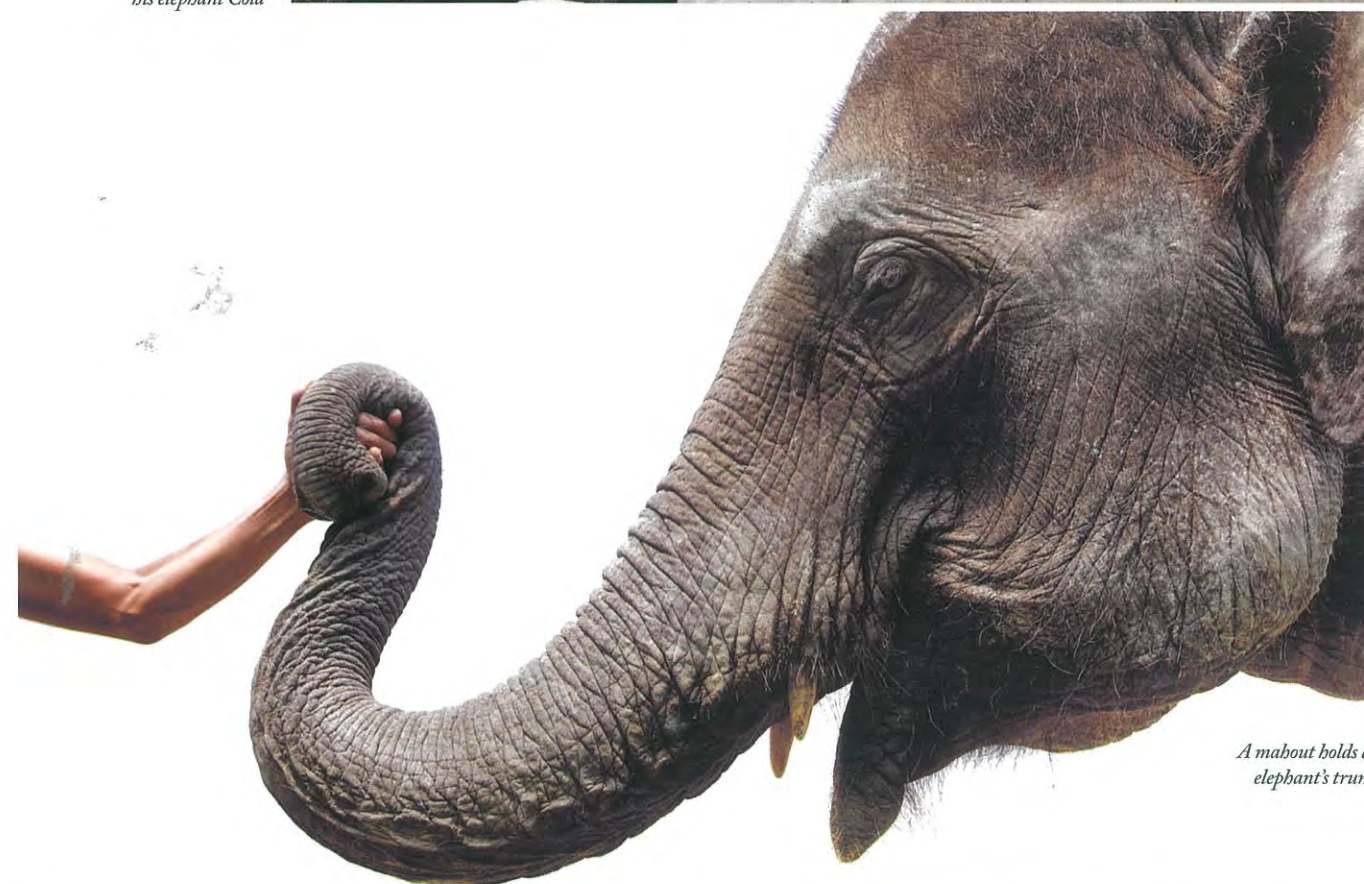
Many of the elephants use the abandoned structures as a jungle gym—they clamber in and out of the many rooms, and some even climb the stairs to the second floor. The families are rice farmers from a poor province in northern Thailand who supplement their income when the rice season ends by trucking the elephants into town daily, walking them in the street to find people willing to pay to feed the elephants.



An elephant scratches its head on a wall at an abandoned housing development in Bang Bua Thong, Thailand.



Mabout Wan poses with his elephant Cola



A mabout holds an elephant's trunk.



A mabout leads his elephant to a sleeping area at the abandoned housing development



A close-up of an elephant's eye at the complex.

Second Place: Afriadi Hikmal – Sheltered Lives

In a house in West Java, Indonesia, a group of people afflicted by cerebral palsy and other disabilities and who have known each other since childhood spend their days undergoing physical therapy and counselling. Most were sent to live here as toddlers. For many, their families have moved on, losing contact as life hands out its distractions.

A child in the home died once. With exhaustive efforts, caretakers managed to get in touch with the family and inform them. A courier bearing Rp.500,000 (\$43) for funeral expenses arrived, but the family never came.

Wisma Tuna Ganda Palsigunung strives not to forget. Two-thirds of its residents cannot walk. Of the 91 residents who have lived in its rooms since 1975, a quarter have eventually been able to leave and live independently. Another third have stayed for their whole life.



Iwan is now the oldest dependent of the shelter. He has lived there since he was three, brought by his family, which then disappeared.

Before physical therapy, a child is massaged and strapped with supporting equipment on the hands and feet.



A child undergoes "sitting therapy." The therapy only works at the age when a child's bones are still developing.



"Standing therapy" – with supports – helps straighten a child's bones.

Third Place: Susetta Bozzi – The Two Indias of Gurgaon

Once a nondescript little town in the shadow of New Delhi, Gurgaon has turned into the realization of the new Indian middle-class dream. Those who live there can afford some of the luxuries not available to ordinary Indians, such as reliable running water and electricity, clean streets, and even 24-hour security.

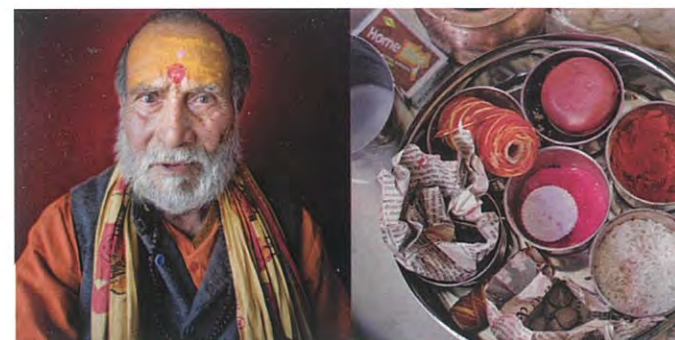
Inside their apartment buildings and gated communities, residents can also enjoy Indian indulgences, such as an army of maids, chauffeurs, and gardeners that live in another world – the vast shantytown just across the street. The "Shining India" dear to the politicians and the dark India that they would love to forget are as close as ever.



Surender, a construction worker in Gurgaon.



Sita, a schoolgirl lives in Chakharpur shantytown in Gurgaon.



Kishor Baba, a priest at Hanuman Mandir in Gurgaon



Ajay Sharma, a human resources assistant at Infinity Towers in Gurgaon



Kushal, a college student is going to watch a movie at the City Center Mall in Gurgaon



Ashutosh Gupta, an employee at GE Money in Gurgaon



Kumar, an executive at the DLF City Club in Gurgaon



Saroj Sharma, a housewife and resident of WO Housing Complex in Gurgaon



Honorable Mention: Richard Humphries – Southern Thailand

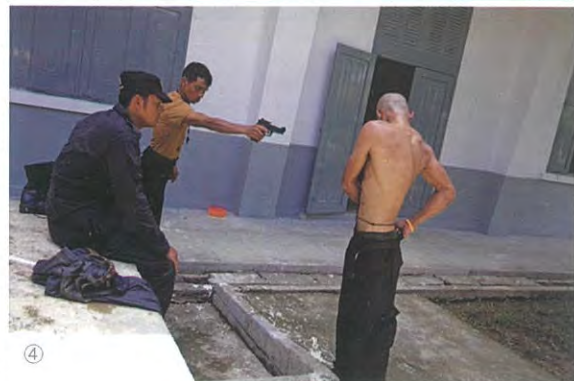
Ethnic tensions continue to claim lives in Southern Thailand. The conflict has claimed more than 3,000 lives since 2004, and yet a solution seems as far away as ever. The region is becoming increasingly militarized, with militia units armed and trained by the Thai Army, and reports of human rights abuses continue.



1) An armed helicopter gunship from the Royal Thai Army conducts a patrol of the southern Thai town of Narathiwat.



2) A Buddhist Monk collects morning alms under armed military protection in the southern Thai town of Pattani.



3) Muslim parents watch over their children as they play on rides during an agricultural fair.

4) New members of a militia unit go through an initiation ceremony during the first day of training at a military camp near Narathiwat.

5) Muslim children attend evening prayers at an Islamic school, or Pondoh, near Narathiwat.

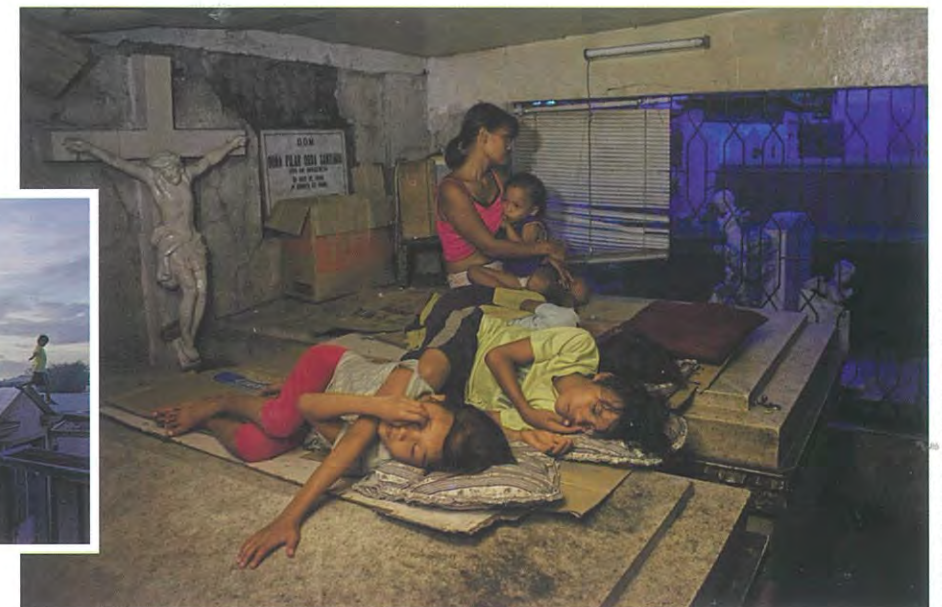
6) Kariya Duramae, 24, lies dead in the road after he was gunned down by suspected Islamic insurgents while on his way home from a village meeting.

7) A man prays over the grave of a relative in the southern Thai town of Narathiwat.



Honorable Mention: Gerhard Joren – Living Among the Dead

This cemetery in the heart of Pasay in Manila is the resting place for over 10,000 deceased people - and some living ones. About ten cemetery caretakers and their families live in the graveyard, in terribly poor conditions. But the residents feel safer among the graves than living on the outside in a neighborhood known for drugs and violence.



PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR

Androniki Christodoulou

Many photographers submitted stunning individual shots or photo essays. But Androniki Christodoulou, a photojournalist based in Tokyo, towered above the competition because of the consistency and range of her work.

She submitted three photo essays, and each alone was considered strong

enough to win a prize. Each essay brought viewers into a completely different world, showing the bleak environs of the slums of Osaka, the colorful back rooms of the "Otaku" subculture, and the rich traditions of Yabusame, the Japanese ritual of equestrian archery. All of the photographs required dogged

reporting and a knack for building confidence with the subjects to gain access to a world not often seen by the mainstream population. The photos also demonstrated great technical skill in capturing images in an array of difficult and diverse environments, enlightening her audience.

Kamagasaki: Japan's slum

Kamagasaki is known as Japan's largest slum, with the country's largest day laborer concentration. Some 30,000 people are estimated to live within a 2,000-metre radius in the region.

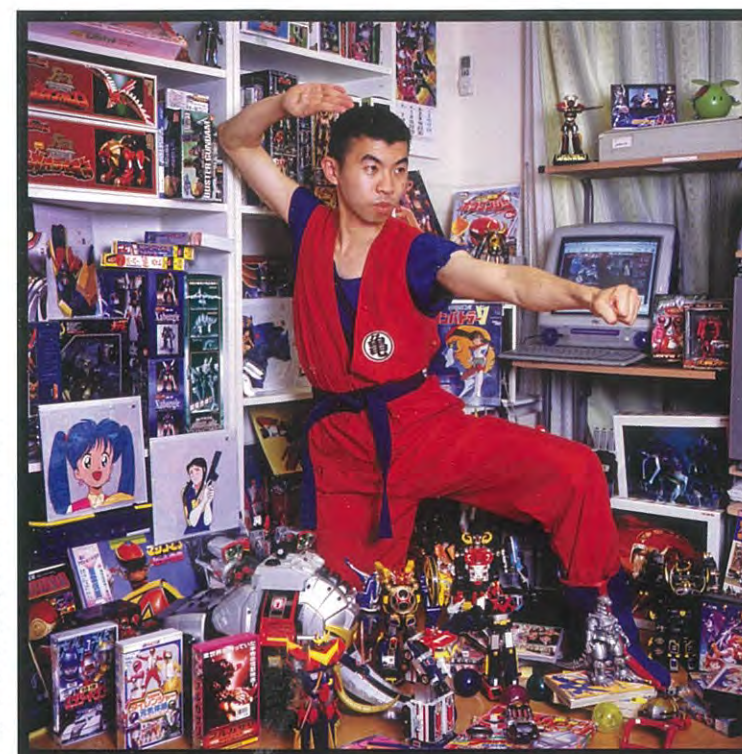
Workers came to Kamagasaki in the 1960s to work on construction sites for the 1970 Osaka Expo, which marked Japan's recovery from World War II. But now there are 200 applicants for every job. They tend to be in their 50s - too young to retire and get state pensions and too old to be considered an attractive labor force. Many stay in flophouses or night shelters. Around 4:30am every morning they go to the Airin Labor and Welfare centre hoping they will be picked up by job contractors, or get one of the few daily jobs offered by the center. As Japan's recession continues, the number of middle-aged men wandering the streets of Airin is increasing.



(1) Day laborers hope to get picked up by contractors offering work or to get some of the few jobs offered by the Airin Labor Welfare Centre. (2) Homeless day laborers queuing outside Airin Labor Welfare Centre for tickets to night shelters in the area. (3) Men sleeping in a night shelter for homeless day laborers in Airin. (4) Homeless day laborer.



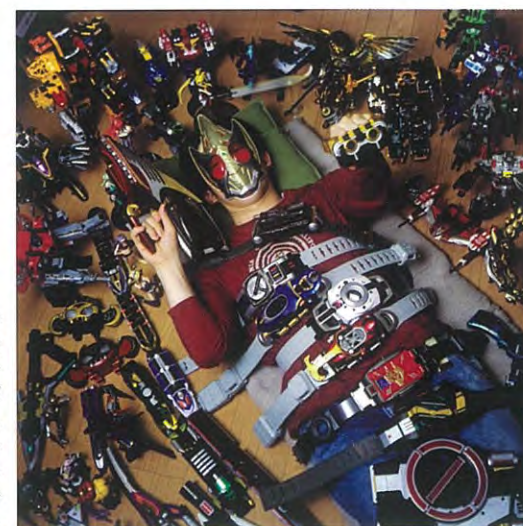
Koichi Nakayasu's collection includes Japanese anime and live-action TV shows for kids, soundtrack CDs and video games. He started collecting eight years ago, and now his collection is worth the price of a decent car - about \$17,000.



Harada Mariju has 13,000 manga (enough to earn her the title "manga sommelier"), 1,000 limited edition anime DVDs, and 7,000 videogames, including dating simulator games of the sort popular among lonely men. "I have given up on the three-dimensional world," she says. "I try to look normal when I go outside, but that's the extent of it."



Quintessa is collecting Kamen Rider belts and Transformers. He also has lots of train stuff and light novels.



Otaku Rooms

Since the 1970s, the "otaku" subculture has emerged with people who like reading manga, watching animation and playing video and later computer games. The once-underground culture of gigs, who enjoyed their hobbies at home and could hardly communicate with people that didn't have similar hobbies, is now rapidly becoming mainstream.

With the Akihabara area of Tokyo as its centre there are more and more places where otaku hang out, buy items for their collections, try new games, or enjoy the company of maids at maid-cafes.



Nitaira is an itasha (otaku car) owner whose car is decorated by Ayanami Rei (from animation Evangelion) figures.



Tadao Shiraki has more than 1,000 comic books and 200-300 Gundam (Japanese animation) figures. He spends about 50,000 yen a month for figures plus 50,000 for manga.

Yabusame – The Ritual of Equestrian Archery

Yabusame is a tradition of equestrian archery that has been kept alive through the centuries by an old samurai family, the Ogasawaras. It is performed as part of festivals in several Shinto shrines around Japan. In earlier times it was kept inside palace walls to be viewed only by nobles, but now is performed in public.



- 1) After a morning purification of Shinto priests in the sea, they carry seaweed for the shrine's protection on the first day of their 3-day annual Yabusame ritual.
- 2) Young girls that perform a religious dance sit in the inner yard of the shrine.
- 3) Offerings to the gods during the second day of the 3-day annual festival.
- 4) Getting dressed for the Yabusame ritual.
- 5) The first three yabusame archers will devote their three first shots to the gods of Tado shrine.

ABOUT THE JUDGES

ROLAND NEVEU is a French photographer who has worked in many countries around the world. He is perhaps best known for his photographs of the Khmer Rouge when they took over Cambodia in April 1975 (he did a book on 'The Fall of Phnom Penh'). He went on to cover fighting in the Middle East, Afghanistan, the Toureg rebellion in the Sahara (Mali), and did early reports about Aids in Africa. He has also been a stills photographer on many movie sets, both in the US and Southeast Asia. Married with two children, he has lived in Bangkok since 1992.

OLIVIER NILSSON is a veteran Bangkok-based photo editor with 18 years of experience at the Associated Press. He graduated from the Ecole Supérieure de Journalisme in 1986.

PATRICK DE NOIRMONT is a photographer based in Bangkok and Paris with more than 30 years of experience. He was an integral part of the teams that launched both the AFP and Reuters International Picture Services. In addition to running various wire service bureaus in Paris, Johannesburg and Bangkok, he has covered numerous events including the Yom Kippur war in Israel, the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, the first Gulf War, and the transition of South Africa from apartheid to the election of President Nelson Mandela. Assignments sent him to Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi and Congo to cover conflicts, riots and famines. Asia saw him covering the military advances of the Taliban in Afghanistan, the handover of Hong Kong to China, the coup in Cambodia, and the uprising in Indonesia following the fall of President Suharto.

ABOUT THE PHOTOGRAPHERS

NICOLAS ASFOURI is a photographer for Agence France Presse.

ANDREW BIRAJ was born in Bangladesh and studied in the UK. Currently a photographer for Reuters, his work has been published in The New York Times, The Guardian, The Observer Magazine, The Times, the Christian Science Monitor and other publications. His work has been featured at Visa Pour l'Image, Perpignan, France; the Angkor photo festival in Cambodia; the Yangon Photo Festival in Myanmar, the International Photography Biennial of the Islamic World in Iran; and the National Art Gallery in Malaysia, among other places. He was selected for the World Press Photo Joop Swart Masterclass grant in 2008. He has also received numerous prizes including 1st prize, "Environmental Picture Story" category of "Best of Photojournalism" by NPPA, 2008; and 2nd Prize, Photojournalism category of the Venice International Photo Contest, 2007.

SUSETTA BOZZI is a freelance photographer based in Beijing, China. After working as a graphic designer she turned to photography in 2003. Her photographs have appeared in publications including Capital, Elle, Gente Viaggi, Io Donna, L'Espresso, The Observer, Vanity Fair and The Wall Street Journal. Her work has been featured at the Angkor Photo Festival in Cambodia. Three of her stories received an Honorable Mention at the International Photography Awards 2009.

ANDRONIKI CHRISTODOULOU was born in Thessaloniki, Greece in 1968 and has been based in Tokyo since the end of 2004. She studied photography and photojournalism in Greece and the UK and has worked for Greek and international magazines and newspapers since 1997 as a freelance photojournalist. She had several exhibitions of her work in Greece, London, Tokyo and New York. From 2005 until the middle of 2009 she has been represented by the New York-based photo agency World Picture News and she is a member of SHA-D&A, a Tokyo based photographers' collective.

GRAHAM CROUCH, 42, is an Australian photographer currently based in New Delhi. He worked on The Australian for 24 years, specializing in sports photography and covering many events such as the Olympics, Formula One car racing, international cricket and football, etc. He also covered news, business, features and arts, before traveling to India for new experiences. He works for The Australian, plus The Times in London and The National in Abu Dhabi.

SUDIPTO DAS is a self-taught photographer now working as a senior photojournalist for The Times of India. He has also worked for the Associated Press, the European Press Photo Agency, BBC News online, SPAN and India Today magazine. He has covered a number of national and international assignments and received several international awards, including grand prize winner, Intrepid Photography Competition 2008, Australia; 1st in the portrait category of the Olympus Photo Contest 2008, Spain; Environmental Photographer of the Year 2007, UK; 1st prize in WHO International photo contest 2007, Switzerland; National Geographic Rising Star award, USA. His work has been shown in group exhibitions in Washington DC, Singapore, Amsterdam, London and elsewhere.

ORIT DRORI is an Israeli-born photographer from Rome who now lives in Chiang Mai. After studying in Rome, Drori worked with Gruppo Editoriale La Repubblica L'Espresso Editorial Group and has shown work in a number of solo and group shows in Rome, Jerusalem, Vienna and elsewhere. Much of Drori's work focuses on Burma.

LINO "LINUS" GUARDIAN ESCANDOR II is a photojournalist for The Manila Bulletin in the Philippines. He won second place, spot news in the Asia Media Awards 2008 and was recognized in the FCCT Photojournalism Contests in 2007 and 2008. He has won numerous other awards, including Photographer of the Year, US-Philippine Military Exercises Photo Contest, 2009. He was among 100 photographers chosen to attend the Eddie Adams/Barnstorm XXII 2009 workshop in Jeffersonville, NY in Oct 2009.

AFRIADI HIKMAL is Indonesian who took up photography as a stringer in 1996. He worked at BIAS, then several tabloids in the late 90s before becoming chief editor at Nurani (Jawa Pos Grup) from 2000 to 2005. He then did four years as chief photographer at 'Behind The Screen' magazine, before joining the Jakarta Globe in August last year. His pictures have won numerous awards in various photo competitions in his country.

RICHARD HUMPHRIES is an award-winning British-born freelance photojournalist. He has completed assignments for Time, Newsweek International, The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Daily Telegraph, The Sunday Times and The Guardian

to name a few. Since 2004 he has been represented by New York-based photo agency Polaris Images. He is particularly interested in social issues, especially those that stem from ethnic and racial tension, conflict and dispute over borders, as well as issues relating to the environment. He has been living and working in Southeast Asia for over 13 years.

JOHN JAVELLANA is a photographer for Reuters.

GERHARD JÖREN is a Swedish photographer who worked first in advertising in New York in 1982, before he began shooting for Scandinavian dailies Aftonbladet and Dagbladet. He moved to Hong Kong in 1987, which he used as a base for wide ranging travels and freelance assignments for many magazines. For the past seven years he has been working on a black-and-white book exploring the weird, wacky, and the sometimes sad and scary faces of sex.

BRENT LEWIN is a documentary photographer who splits his time between Toronto and Bangkok. His work mainly focuses on the plight of the Asian elephant in Thailand and has received awards from Pictures of the Year International, Photo District News, the International Photo Awards and Prix de la Photographie Paris. His work has been featured in National Geographic, GEO and American Photo among others. He is represented by Redux Pictures and OnAsia.

JAMES MACKAY was born and raised in the UK. His work has been published The Independent, The Irrawaddy Magazine, the Democratic Voice of Burma, and elsewhere. He was short-listed as one of the Young Photographers of the Year 2007 in SHOTS magazine and recognized by Prix de la Photographie de Paris in 2007 and 2009, when his project "Even Though I'm Free I Am Not" was awarded runner-up in the Political Photojournalism category. His work revolves mainly around Burma.

SANDIPAN MAJUMDAR, a Kolkata-based photographer, has been recognized in a number of international contests including the Muslim International Photo contest, 2008; Epoch Time's International photo contest, 2008; India Shots International photo contest; and the Washington Post International Photo contest, 2009. He also won the BD Bangur Loan award in 2008 for his project "People and Culture of West Bengal," in India.

DANNYBOY PATA is a photo correspondent for GMA News TV and a photojournalism teacher at a state-owned university in Manila, Philippines.

KITTINUN RODSUPAN has been working as a photographer with the Nation Multimedia Group for 15 years. His photographs are published in The Nation, Bangkokbiznews and Kom Chad Luek.

RITESH UTTAMCHANDANI works as a Senior Photographer for Open Media Network in Mumbai, India.

TITI WANNAMONTHA is a photographer for The Bangkok Post.

Journalist and Consummate PR Man, Steve Joel 1953 - 2009

Steve Joel, the consummate public relations man, always had a swagger about him. In a well-tailored suit and leather briefcase, his Cambodian krama scarf draped over his shoulders, Steve was at the ready to perform his famous Marlon Brando-esque greeting of the day.



Joel passed away on October 25 at the age of 56.

Over the years he was at his best when overseeing and organizing media events. He would be fired up and ready and it was a game he never gave up on, even as he grappled with declining health over the past year.

Armed with an arts degree from the University of New South Wales – with majors in English literature, political science and French, Joel entered the world of journalism, starting out with Australian Associated Press (AAP) in 1974 in Sydney before going to London with AAP and Reuters.

Joel was the comic, an enduring part of his character. Australian journalist mate Richard Sleeman, who worked with Steve in London, tells the following story:

"Steve caused great mirth by referring to the short, incompetent office manager as 'the jockey from Jerilderie' – a name which stuck for some time. The manager was referred to universally as 'JJ' as a result. Steve's specialty was cutting down to size the pompous and unprofessional."

"When there was an attempt to kidnap Princess Anne in the Mall that year, JJ told us we had to find an Australian witness and get some quotes. It wasn't a big enough story for JJ – it had to have an Australian angle, he figured. So Steve suggested we'd likely locate an Aussie in the nearest pub. We did. Only problem was this guy was blind – literally. He had a Seeing Eye dog. 'Did the dog come from Australia?' Steve asked the guy. 'Of course,' the blind guy said. 'What did he see then?' Steve asked. 'Everything,' the bloke said. So Steve's story quoted the Aussie 'witness' as saying: 'He went for her like a dog at a bone.' It ran in every paper in Australia – the first and only time a dog's been quoted in the newspaper, near as I know!"

"What a character – beneath all that manic bluster and cynicism was an essentially decent and talented human being whose friendship I was blessed with for many years," says Sleeman.

Joel later worked for United Press International. In 1980 he found his way to Thailand working at the PR firm of Ted Bates. He left in 1982, going to Singapore initially with Batey Advertising before striking out on his own in the nation state with Joel Publicity.

He returned to Sydney in 1987 and built a PR business there with clients in aviation and tourism. Come 1994, Joel returned to Bangkok – his PR work drawing in a diversity of clients from real estate through to security and even fitness centres.

Then in 2007, he sold the business amid hopes of venturing into the growing Vietnam market.

His capacity to organise PR events and determination to ensure his client's story gained front and centre page was the strength of the man. He came from a wider family including his uncle Sir Asher Joel – a businessman, politician and publisher – but for Steve perhaps a shadow cast over his own path in his efforts to emulate the man.

But Joel needed only to be himself as we knew him to draw friends and colleagues. His generosity and sincerity, the humour of the man and the soft side – he would go out of his way to buy souvenirs for friends or dolls and trinkets to present to staff or secretaries. It was a thank you, a forging of a bond or simple gratitude.

John Shepherd, another long time friend in Bangkok tells another tale of Joel's mirth.

"I remember Steve from 29 years ago when this handsome looking dude walked into the fitness centre and asked me to make out an exercise routine for him. I asked him what his goals were and he said he wanted to lose about 7lbs. I explained this would take 5 or 6 weeks with regular exercise and sensible eating, to which he exclaimed 'What, you mean I can't do lose it tonight?!' I realized then we had a comedian on our hands and with his wit and mimicry he would have members splitting their sides with laughter."

His professional success generally translated into bottom-line corporate results. Allan Davidson, who oversaw Budget Rent-a-Car here in Thailand, was a beneficiary of Steve's PR skills.

"Steve played a big role in building the Budget business in Thailand with his constant ability to generate column inches, and the results were simply fantastic. Probably his biggest coup was inviting a couple of elephants to the Budget Charity Car Wash day. The photos of the elephants spraying water on cars went worldwide including Chicago where Budget HO was located. The Head Shed (head office) loved it."

We all knew Steve had a darker side, the troubles of a man that for many years were kept at arms' length, as he carried on his life. But as we saw in the past 18 months, the demons that wracked him steadily gained a foothold from which friends were unable to free him.

On October 25 just after noon Steve finally escaped them.

But for those who knew him over the past dozen years here, we see him heading off across Patpong in the morning sunshine, preparing for another day a client's needs to fulfil a message or a story ready to be told.

Father Joe Maier, who Steve had known for 20 years, remembers him as "always being around, always there to help whenever he could".

Father Maier says he remembers Steve as in the old Irish Song "Murphy can't go Home". "He sits at the bar smoking his cigar and boasts he is never alone, but his big heart is broken and he can never go home ... no-one waits but old Father Time Steve sits at the bar smoking his cigar..." ■

– Ron Corben

i think, therefore IB



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