



Issue 4 – January 2018

Note from the Editors

The [Southeast Asian Art Academic Programme](#) is a transformational programme that aims to further the understanding and preservation of ancient to pre-modern Buddhist and Hindu art and architecture in Southeast Asia. The Programme is supporting approximately 80 scholarships between 2014 and 2019, funds three fully endowed academic posts at SOAS and establishes conferences, symposia and master-classes in London and Southeast Asia.

SAAAP is designed to strengthen SOAS' research expertise and existing institutional links to create a vibrant network linking the art, archaeology and heritage organisations in the Southeast Asian region.

This edition of the SAAAP Newsletter has been edited by Peter Sharrock (SAAAP Outreach manager), Chloe Osborne (SAAAP Programme Administrator) and Selina Chong (Alphawood Scholar at SOAS). If you would like to be involved in the production of future editions of the Newsletter, or if you would like to report on any news from the region or any SAAAP-related activity you've been a part of, please do let us know – we'd be delighted to hear from you!

Note from the Chair: Dr Tamsyn Barton

On behalf of the Southeast Asian Art Academic Programme, I'd like to offer my warmest wishes for a happy new year and a fulfilling 2018. The SAAAP team at SOAS are looking forward to a year of big milestones and exciting new projects, many of which we detail for you in this edition of the Newsletter.

Of course, SAAAP's central mission is to support and *advance the understanding and preservation of Southeast Asian Buddhist and Hindu art and architecture from ancient to pre-modern times*. When we talk about "advancing understanding," one of the means by which we do this is by supporting the publications that serve to communicate knowledge, inform discussion and engage and inspire new audiences.

SAAAP has much to announce by way of publications this year, which we're delighted about. For example, *Vibrancy In Stone: Masterpieces of the Đà Nẵng Museum of Cham Sculpture*, a beautiful new centenary catalogue of the museum's collection, has now been published with support and editorial leadership from SAAAP, with the book now available to order. We're also delighted to announce a new six-part book series, supported by SAAAP in partnership with NUS Press. In this Newsletter, we're very

happy to be kicking off this exciting new project with an announcement and further detail from NUS Press Director Peter Schoppert.

Pratu, the online, postgraduate journal of ancient Buddhist and Hindu art and architecture is soon to be launched. Emerging and early career scholars interested in publishing through *Pratu* are encouraged to get in touch – you can find out more about the journal, and how to express interest in making a submission, in this edition of the Newsletter as well.

With these publications and more lined up in 2018, we certainly mustn't overlook another significant milestone for SAAAP this year. In September, we will be welcoming our fifth cohort of Alphawood Scholars to SOAS – a huge landmark for the Programme. We are extraordinarily proud of our Scholars' achievements, both whilst on award and afterwards when they return home to make new contributions to the field.

We're inspired to think that some of tomorrow's most important and influential publications will be authored by our very own Alphawood Scholars and alumni – we're proud to support them in accomplishing their potential, and look forward to announcing the next cohort in the coming weeks.

In the meantime, please enjoy this latest edition of the Newsletter, and never hesitate to get in touch with the SAAAP Office with any questions, comments or ideas. We'd love to hear from you.

Tamsyn Barton is Chair of the Southeast Asian Art Academic Programme Board and a Trustee of SOAS University of London.



Dr Tamsyn Barton, Chair of the SAAAP Programme Board with a group of this year's Alphawood Scholars, along with Dr Peter D. Sharrock (SAAAP Outreach Manager) and Professor Anna Contadini (SAAAP Board Member and Chair of the SAAAP Outreach Sub-board and Scholarships Sub-board)

Đà Nẵng Catalogue Launch

Peter D. Sharrock (SAAAP Sub-board member)

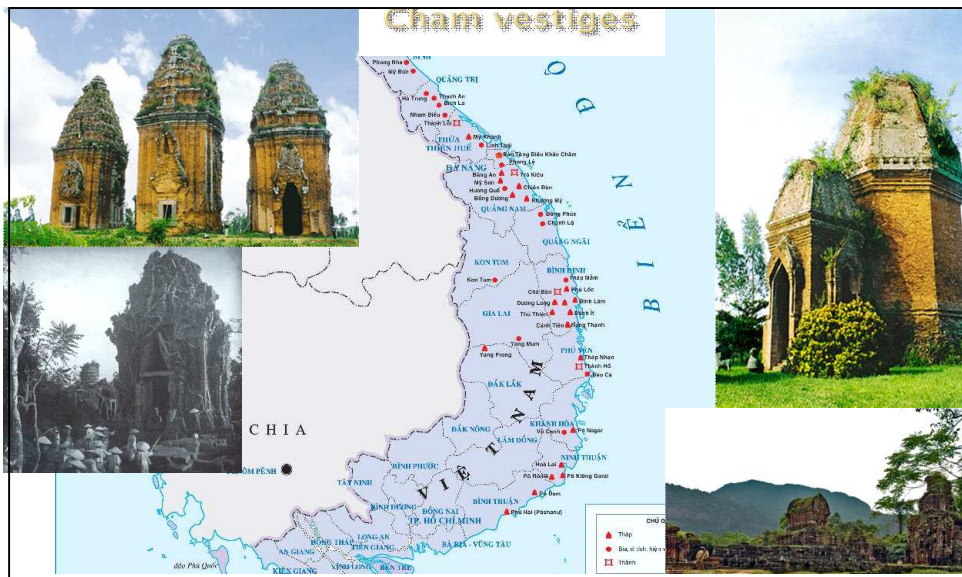


SOAS launch of *Vibrancy in Stone: Masterpieces of the Đà Nẵng Museum of Cham Sculpture*

Director Vo Van Thang told a packed lecture theatre in the Paul Webley wing that it was a dream come true to publish a catalogue of 100 masterpieces of his museum's world-leading collection of Cham sculpture on the centenary of its founding. Scholars from Vietnam and around the world contributed their latest research on this all but lost civilisation.

The SOAS launch of this milestone publication on 12 January, followed a launch at the Museum in Vietnam that is reported elsewhere in this Newsletter. Mr Thang said the museum staff found the collaboration deeply rewarding. He recalled how the richness, depth and stirring spontaneity of Cham art, after being covered for centuries by dense tropical flora, had been gradually uncovered by scholars of various disciplines since the early 1900s. The Chams arrived in boats early in the first millennium and settled enclaves along the coast of what later became central Vietnam. The genius of the Chams was to build, along what is today Vietnam's littoral, one of the earliest internationally active trading polities of the region in the early centuries of the first millennium of the Common Era.

The skill of the Chams in shipping and trade brought them early prosperity, which enabled them to develop their exceptional gifts for constructing monumental temples in brick and in carving masterpieces in stone that have a vibrancy and human intimacy that made the Chams the Etruscans of early Maritime Asia. They employed their shipping skills to make their ports the favoured first stop for the vessels of the maritime trade between China, Europe and the Arab states. Sitting in the audience was Professor Ian Glover of UCL, whose excavations at Tra Kieu uncovered an extensive 2nd century Chinese trading depot.



Map showing Cham sites as red dots. Brick sanctuaries along the coast rose up to 43m. (courtesy Vo Van Thang)

From the 5th to the 15th Century, the Cham polities, which resisted fusing into a single state, developed a culture of a complexity and richness that rivalled or excelled that of all their neighbours, in what historians have called a 1,000 year miracle of an islands people surviving on the Southeast Asian mainland. The Cham genius for music and dance is rendered visible in the 7th century My Son E1 altar pedestal that is now one of the Vietnamese national treasures in the Đà Nẵng collection.



Dancers with scarves and a flautist on My Son E1 pedestal (Paisarn Piemmettawatt)

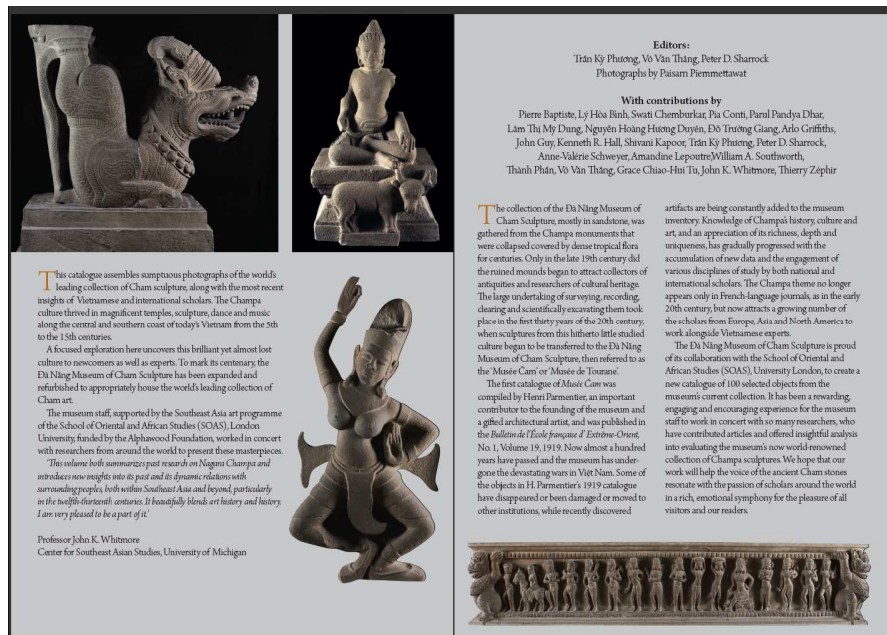
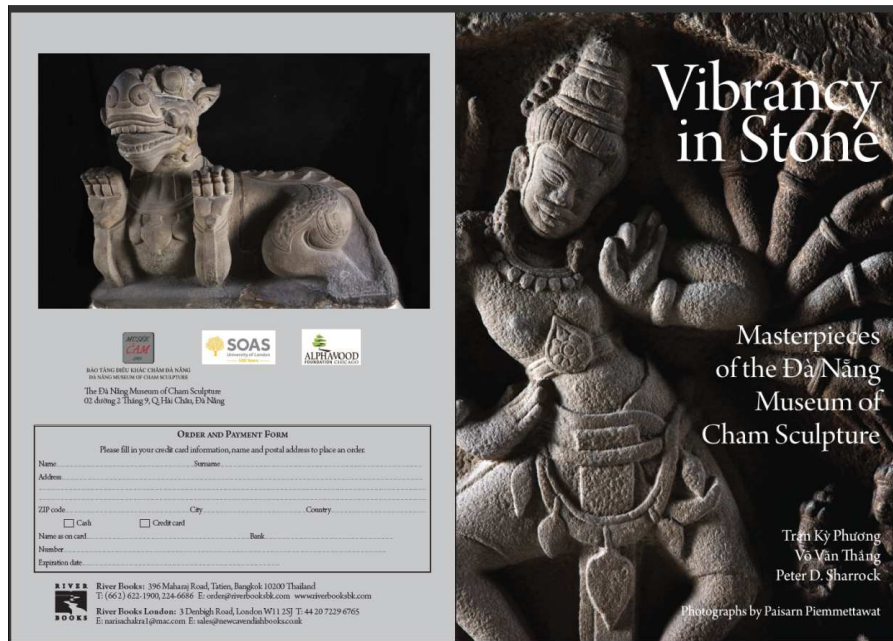
Temple song and dance developed in Champa in the 7th Century with the arrival from India of bearded Shaiva ascetics of the Pashupata sect, who enlivened the temple rituals of Champa and neighbouring Cambodia with their laughter, song and dance offerings to Shiva. The new catalogue contains a breakthrough study in the book of these ascetics by Swati Chemburkar and Shivani Kapoor from Mumbai.

Grace Chiao-Hui Tu, a SOAS alumna now completing her PhD at Leiden, explained at the launch that dancers with scarves were uncommon in India but known in Tang China. This was one of many Chinese motif and concept transfers into Cham sacred art traced in her paper in the catalogue, which included dragons, 3-D representations of scenes featuring the Buddha and Bodhisattvas, ferocious guardians, monks wearing Chinese sandals, and a major Buddha icon seated with legs pendant and

both hands on his knees, which is known from gigantic cliff and cave reliefs in China and, in Southeast Asia, found only in Champa.

Peter Sharrock of SOAS showed how newly found inscriptions were radically changing our understanding of how the Cham and Cambodian courts interacted in the 12th and 13th Centuries that saw the apogees of the both states, ahead of the decline of both before the rising power of Vietnam and Thailand.

The catalogue, made possible thanks to the generous funding of the Alphawood Foundation of Chicago, will be on sale in the UK in March.



Peter D. Sharrock is SAAAP Outreach and Scholarships Sub-board member, and Senior Teaching Fellow in the Department of History of Art and Archaeology at SOAS

The Relaunch of the Cham Museum, Đà Nẵng, Vietnam

Duyen Nguyen (Alphawood PhD Candidate)

On 16 October 2017, the Đà Nẵng Museum of Cham Sculpture (DMCS) officially re-opened all of its galleries after nearly two years of refurbishment. Since its establishment in 1915, the museum has been enlarged and renovated to house the expanding collection and accommodate modern museological approaches; however, the display of sculptures at the DMCS still has drawbacks. Under this revamp, sculptures are displayed in galleries named after the sites where they were excavated, while still following an acceptable chronology. In addition to administrative, storage and permanent exhibition space, the refurbished building features new amenities including a reception hall, thematic exhibition rooms, visible storage, an education center, an auditorium, a library, the souvenir shop and cafeteria. The total area of exhibition space is 1755 m² with 433 objects on display. The new circulation flow now starts from the reception hall and continues through the main galleries of Trà Kiệu, Mỹ Sơn, Đồng Dương and Tháp Mẫm. The collections of Quảng Bình, Quảng Trị, Thừa Thiên –Huế, Đà Nẵng, Quảng Nam, Quảng Ngãi, Bình Định – Kon Tum are re-located in the two-storey building. Three new permanent exhibitions have been added, including “Champa Inscriptions”, “Sa Huỳnh – Champa ceramics” and “The Cham People in Ninh Thuận”. Each gallery has introductory panels and object captions in both English and Vietnamese. Apart from free guided tours, other means of interpretation such as audio guides, touch-screens and pamphlets are also offered to museum viewers.

After the re-opening of galleries, the museum also introduced a new catalogue, titled “Vibrancy in Stone: Masterpieces of the Đà Nẵng Museum of Cham Sculpture”. This publication has come out as a result of a two-year collaboration between the Southeast Asian Art Academic Program (SAAAP) of SOAS and the Cham Museum. The book launch was held on 21 December 2017 in the presence of Mrs. Narisa Chakrabongse – CEO of River Books – and her staff, local authorities, representatives of publishing houses and museums in Đà Nẵng, scholars, students and museum visitors.

Attending this event, Mr. Nguyễn Trọng Thao - Vice Director of the Department of Culture and Sport of Đà Nẵng city expressed his pleasure at the completion of the catalogue and his deepest thanks to both Vietnamese and scholars for their contributions to the catalogue's content. “Together with the improvement of the display of artefacts at museum galleries, the catalogue, which features introductory essays, in-depth entries on nearly one hundred sculptures and high- quality photos, will help visitors and readers around the world fully appreciate the value of the collection of Champa sculptures that the museum has been preserving”, he further remarked. As a side product of



Alphawood Scholar and SOAS PhD Candidate Duyen Nguyen presenting the new SAAAP sponsored publication ‘Vibrancy in Stone’ at the relaunch of the Cham Museum, Da Nang, Vietnam

this book project, River Books also transferred to the museum library a CD collection of photos taken by professional photographers, which could be used later for promotional activities. According to the museum director, Mr. Võ Văn Thắng, a Vietnamese version of the catalogue will be published in the coming time for the benefit of a wide community of Vietnamese readers.

Duyen Nguyen is an Alphawood Scholar and PhD Candidate at SOAS.

Alphawood alumnus Socheat Nhean Takes up a Role at the Royal University of Fine Arts to Teach, Preserve and Promote Khmer Culture

Samnang Kim

Socheat Nhean has studied Cambodian culture, history and society since his first visit in 1999 to Angkor Wat. He was amazed by the art and architectural construction of this huge and magnificent stone temple and others nearby, built by his ancestors 1,000 years before. He committed himself then to the study of archaeology and art history. Later that year, he won a Cambodian government scholarship to study archaeology at the Royal University of Fine Arts (RUFA), where he had a chance to meet and learn from many Cambodian and foreign professors, some sponsored by UNESCO.

After a period of five years, Socheat graduated from RUFA in mid-2004. Because of his strong interest in the history of the Khmer Rouge genocide, he immediately joined, as a volunteer, the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam), a research institute whose mission is to document crimes committed during the Khmer Rouge regime. However, after a period of six months, he was promoted to a researcher and became responsible for conducting interviews of former Khmer Rouge soldiers, officers, and survivors. He created documents which preserved the details of this period for researchers and other parties who were interested in the history of the Khmer Rouge, as well as the younger generation of Cambodians.

In August 2007, he went to the US to study anthropology at Northern Illinois University, where he wrote a thesis about the socio-political structure of the Khmer Rouge, enquiring into how orders were implemented to kill the victims and how the network was culturally connected from the bottom to the top of the Khmer Rouge ranks. Graduating in late 2009 with a master's degree, Socheat went home to work at DC-Cam to work as editor-in-chief of "Searching for the Truth" magazine, which focuses on Khmer Rouge-related issues. Throughout this time, he kept in touch with the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts.

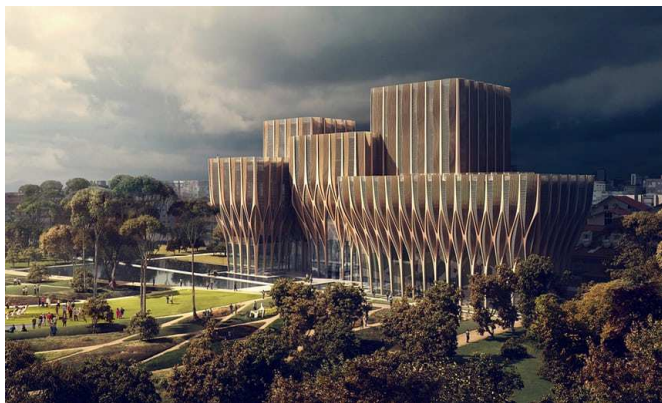


Socheat Nhean, Alphawood Alumnus and SOAS MA Graduate

His interest in the ancient history and culture of Cambodia never waned. In July 2014, he won an Alphawood Scholarship to study History of Art and Archaeology at SOAS University of London. He was the first Cambodian student to access SOAS under this prestigious scholarship scheme and he earned a master's degree. Before, during, and after SOAS, Socheat assisted in preparing the creation of a new Sleuk Rith Institute, with a revolutionary design by the late world-renowned architect Zaha Hadid, which will be the home of a school, a museum and a research center. He travelled with the Zaha Hadid team of architects and designers to visit Angkor Wat, Koh Ker, Preah Vihear and other temples so that the team could be inspired by the ancient architecture to design the future Sleuk Rith Institute. The design of Sleuk Rith Institute was launched in London in October 2014 where Socheat recorded and photographed the event.

At SOAS, Socheat was inspired by the vision of the Alphawood Scholarship, which was to promote the teaching, understanding and preservation of ancient to pre-modern Buddhist and Hindu arts and architecture in Southeast Asia. Since then, he promised that he would commit to do more research, teaching and preservation of Cambodian arts in accordance with the vision of the scholarship programme.

In August 2017, he was notified that he would join the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, which would give him an opportunity to promote Cambodian arts and culture to the general public. He was assigned to work at his former university RUFA. He arrived just after the university celebrated its 100th anniversary. RUFA is the oldest university in the country. Coincidentally, SOAS also celebrated its centenary in 2016. Socheat was assigned by SOAS to organize a ceremony and celebrate this anniversary with alumni in Cambodia.



Zaha Hadid's design for the refurbished Sleuk Rith academy

At RUFA, Socheat's role is to work in Academic Affairs, the backbone of the university, supporting the work of faculty, advising each faculty member, initiating university curriculum, and supporting faculty research and teaching. In this new role, Socheat brings what he learned from SOAS to implement at RUFA, which is to promote the understanding and preservation of Cambodian history and Buddhist and Hindu arts in accordance with the vision of the Alphawood-sponsored

SAAAP programme. Socheat is also to establish a university newsletter in order to promote RUFA, keep former and current students connected, and promote Cambodian culture and arts to the public.

Socheat recently began work with the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts to create a Collective Management Organization, which aims to protect owners of rights and related rights owners throughout Cambodia and other countries.

Samnang Kim graduated from SOAS in 2016 under the Alphawood Scholarship programme with a master's degree in history of art and archaeology. He is currently a GIS and IT Coordinator at Apsara Authority under the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts. Apsara Authority was established in 1995 to protect, safeguard and preserve national cultural property in the region of Siem Reap/Angkor, Cambodia.

The ELAS experience: How academic English courses prime students to thrive at PG level at SOAS

Hninn Wut Yee Latt

My name is Hninn Wut Yee Latt, an Alphawood Scholar from Myanmar who completed three terms of the SOAS English Language and Academic Studies (ELAS) Programme. This was priceless in helping me to my path in the SOAS Postgraduate Diploma in Asian Art in 2017-2018.

In ELAS, there are a great number of classroom activities that can improve my skills in speaking English, in critical thinking, in generating new ideas, and in cooperating with others. In English, I practised the four skills of writing, listening, reading, and speaking, and I learned to combine these into preparing and making presentations with self-confidence. It was a precious foundation course for moving into the academic subjects in the Diploma, where I find I no longer need to worry about my language much and where I can follow the lectures easily.

In ELAS, I studied not only English but also one academic subject which in my case was 'humanities'. This broadened my knowledge through reviews, debates, discussions, relevant video clips etc. This prepared me for participating in the Postgraduate Diploma classes, where I can now present my ideas without fear or shame and deepen my studies in discussions with teachers and classmates.

In term two of ELAS, I joined the research methods course. This course taught me how to find ways for preparation of essays or a thesis, including how to choose a subject title with reasonable scope, how to search the library (photo below) and electronic search engines. I learnt how to make a clear introduction, develop an essay body and draw a conclusion, with bibliography. These skills are so important to a Diploma student, who must write several essays. I am grateful for the research methods course, which showed me how to choose topics and finish my essays.

In term three, I also studied for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) for non-native English language speakers. I practised hard each of the skills that are tested -- writing, listening, reading and speaking -- with different kinds of methods in class and with my classmates. Our teacher trained us very well, using many teaching materials and methods. There is no doubt that this course was very useful and helpful for my present and future studies.

Thus, the whole of my ELAS study was quite priceless for me. It gave me so much valuable knowledge and training for my education. For students like me, ELAS is a sine qua non for study in SOAS.

Hninn Wut Yee Latt (Myanmar) is a current Alphawood Scholar at SOAS (Postgraduate Diploma in Asian Art)



Alphawood Scholar Hninn Wut Yee Latt during a visit to the SOAS Library

New and Recent Projects

Announcements

The Southeast Asian Art Academic Programme would like to announce a number of recently approved and soon to launch initiatives:

- ✚ **Pratu**, the SAAAP-sponsored online postgraduate journal dedicated to the study of ancient Buddhist and Hindu Southeast Asian art, architecture and archaeology, is issuing a call for Expressions of Interest from potential contributors. If you or a colleague of yours is interested in submitting an article for publication in *Pratu* when the full Call for Submissions is launched, please contact pratujournal@soas.ac.uk with your proposed topic or for further information
- ✚ SAAAP is proud to support the **National Museum of Cambodia in Phnom Penh (NMCPP) in a professional repair of its collection of accession books**, currently underway. Led by the NMCPP's Seang Sokha, an Alphawood Alumnus, this project is designed to help conserve key archive documents for the museum and for researchers, and represents a strategic relationship with one of the major museums of Southeast Asia. More detail on this project will be announced in forthcoming SAAAP Newsletters
- ✚ **Also at the NMCPP, Alphawood Alumna Khun Sathal is leading on a Critical History project** which examines the historical evolution of display at the Museum, based on documentation in diverse Cambodian and French archives. Publications are planned through this important new project over the course of the coming years - please keep up to date with the Critical History project in the SAAAP Newsletter and through social media
- ✚ SAAAP is currently planning our next **Summer Programme** in Southeast Asia, to be held at the National University of Singapore from 1 - 7 July 2018. Following on from Summer Programmes at Trawas in 2016 and Yogyakarta in 2017, the Singapore Summer Programme will provide a focus on museum strategies in consideration of the ancient to pre-modern Buddhist and Hindu art in the region. The full programme will be published in the next edition of the SAAAP Newsletter, or you may contact Peter Sharrock at ps56@soas.ac.uk for further details

SAAAP and NUS Press to launch new research publication series

We are delighted to announce *Southeast Asian Art and Archaeology: Hindu-Buddhist Traditions*, a new research publication series with National University of Singapore Press. Co-edited by Ashley Thompson and Pamela Corey with the support of an international Editorial Board, the series aims to support innovative work in the field, publishing monographs, edited volumes and critical English-language editions of seminal Southeast Asian texts in adherence with the [SAAAP remit](#).

The project has been developed in close collaboration with NUS Managing Director Peter Schoppert as a means of bringing the research dimensions of SAAAP's work to another level: building on an established dynamic to drive further intellectual development in the field. With institutional agreements now in place, watch the SAAAP and NUS websites for our formal launch with a first Call for Manuscripts!

PhD Fieldwork Research Support: Collecting and Collections of Thomas Stamford Raffles (1781-1826)

Miranda Bruce-Mitford

The primary purpose of my research trip to Java, Bali and Singapore – partially funded by SAAAP - was the viewing of museum objects for comparative purposes, attending a programme on ancient Javanese art, and meeting and learning from local experts.

I visited museums and examined 9th-14th Century Hindu and Buddhist sculpture in Jakarta, Bogor, Yogyakarta, Pekalongan, Solo, Ubud and Singapore. I found my meetings with museum staff particularly valuable: they were all interested in my research topic and shared their knowledge generously, and patiently and their remarks added greatly to my thinking on the Raffles Collection.

At the age of 30, Sir Stamford Raffles was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Java (1811–1815) during which time he assembled an extraordinary collection of Javanese art and ethnological material that he shipped to London and which I now regularly visit in the British Museum with students on SOAS postgraduate Diploma modules in Asian art.

I attended the SOAS-UGM Summer Programme of SOAS-Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) on early Javanese art in Yogyakarta. This drew students and international experts whose input was useful for deepening my knowledge of the sculpture in the Raffles Collection. I presented a preliminary paper on that subject and, as part of the programme, visited the major 8th- and 9th- century Central Javanese Hindu and Buddhist monuments known to Raffles and illustrated in his *History of Java*. The input of my colleagues on these visits added to my enjoyment and to my understanding of the architecture and iconography of the period, and I am grateful to SAAAP for the opportunity to attend this programme.



Miranda (far right) visiting the Siva temples on the volcanic Dieng Plateau with Prof. Umakanta Mishra (Odisha), Grace Chiao-Hui Tu (Leiden) and SAAAP alumnus Panggah Ardhiyansiya (Borobudur Conservation).

Miranda Bruce-Mitford is a PhD Candidate at SOAS.

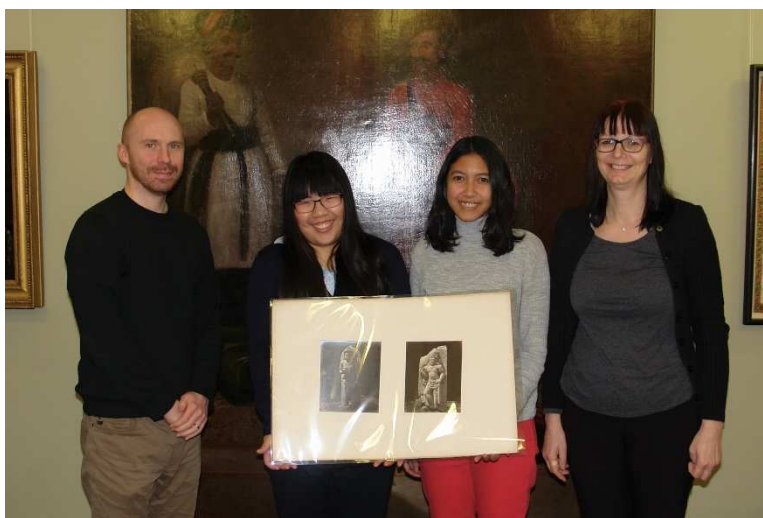
Postgraduate Internships: Pawinna Phetluan and Aria Danaparamita reflect on their experience of interning at the Royal Asiatic Society, London

Pawinna Phetluan and Aria Danaparamita (Alphawood MA Alumni)

After I finished my MA History of Art and/or Archaeology in SOAS, I decided to apply for an internship at the Royal Asiatic Society (RAS) supported by SAAAP. I wanted to use my knowledge and experience from SOAS to work with Pre-modern Buddhist and Hindu arts. Based on my archaeological background, I dedicated my time to work in Quaritch Wales's collection because he was an archaeologist and SOAS teacher who surveyed and excavated a lot of pre-modern archaeological sites in Thailand, where I am from, such as Sri-Thep and Wiang Sa. I worked mainly with Quaritch Wales's personal notes and learned how he worked and recorded archaeological evidence – useful skills for my future work. I created a new display in the reading room from the personal papers of Quaritch Wales, as part of a RAS Collections Open Evening on 21 November 2017. Then, I moved to catalogue Godfrey Phipps Baker, whose work involved the drawings of ancient and pre-modern Java antiquities. I created new labels to interpret and explain the Hindu pre-modern arts from his catalogue. I found my time in RAS very exciting, precious and wonderful. The staff were very helpful and motivated me to do a lot of new work I had never done before. I also thank the Alphawood Foundation and SAAAP for providing me with the excellent opportunity just after graduation. - **Pawinna**

I am very grateful to SAAAP and the Alphawood Foundation for making possible their internship programme at the Royal Asiatic Society (RAS). As a student, it was an honour for me to have the opportunity to work with the collection under the supervision of the kind and generous staff at the RAS, a leading institution and archive of Asian materials. With my interest in the archaeology of Java, I researched and catalogued two collections related to classical Javanese Hindu and Buddhist antiquities. The first was a series of

photographs commissioned by the Batavian Society of the Arts and Sciences that documented the architecture, statues, and reliefs at various temples in Java, including Borobudur. This was a valuable collection, comprising some of the first photographic records of Borobudur. I then curated the photos and crafted labels for an exhibition display as part of the RAS Collections Open Evening on 21 November 2017. The second collection was 'Java Sketches' in the Baker Collection, consisting of drawings and engravings of pre-modern Hindu-Buddhist objects. Working with these collections allowed me to apply knowledge and skills on interpreting Hindu and Buddhist iconography to describe the objects, whilst affording me practical experience in the management of an art collection, contributing to my future career path. – **Aria**



(Left-right) RAS Librarian Ed Weech, Pawinna Phetluan, Aria Danaparamita and RAS Archivist Nancy Charley

Pawinna and Aria are Alphawood alumni who have just completed their MA in History of Art and Archaeology at SOAS.

Upcoming speakers at SAAAP sponsored events with the Centre for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS)

Ashley Thompson

With generous funding from SAAAP, SOAS's Centre for Southeast Asian Studies hosts an annual series of research events on ancient to premodern Southeast Asian Hindu and Buddhist art, architecture and archaeology. The Research Talk series in Term 2 this year (January-March 2018) showcases early career scholars who are shaping new developments in the field.

We open with Tuy Danel, a Cambodian doctoral candidate currently completing his dissertation at the Sorbonne, on Angkorian jataka reliefs. Given the predominance of Hinduism at Angkor, this field of Buddhist art has received relatively little attention; Tuy Danel's meticulous analyses lay bare the complex history of Buddhism at Angkor leading to its expansion from the late 12th Century.

Next in line is Dr. Lawrence Chua, Assistant Professor at Syracuse University, on premodern Buddhist conceptualisations of space and the long tradition of Siamese state funeral pyres. An architectural historian, Dr Chua's innovative work draws from a range of materials including premodern temple murals, illustrated manuscripts, poetry and building plans to deepen established modes of describing and analysing Southeast Asian monuments.

In the final talk of Term 2, Suppawan Nongnut brings the unique perspective of a scholar-practitioner to related themes of artwork anchored in Siamese funerary practice. On completion of the MA in the History of Art and/or Archaeology at SOAS in 2015, Suppawan Nongnut returned to her curatorial work at the National Museum of Bangkok. Amongst her myriad responsibilities at the Museum is the conservation of the 'Great Victory Chariot' still used in Thai royal funerals. Her talk will address the history, symbolism and recent restoration of the Chariot housed in the Museum and used in the October 2017 funeral of Thai King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

Two Collaborative Research Workshops in Term 3 (May-June) provide forums for exchange between established scholars and advanced students on methodologies in the History of Southeast Asian Hindu and Buddhist Art, Architecture and Archaeology while exploring key topics in the field. The first Workshop brings together SEAMEO SPAFA Senior Researcher Wannasarn Noonsuk and University of Wisconsin Associate Professor Kim Nam, two archaeologists making incisive contributions to understandings of early Southeast Asian politico-cultural entities through concomitant attentiveness to new archaeological research and the ongoing evolution of interpretive frameworks. The second Workshop brings together three Cambodia specialists – anthropologist Ang Choulean, archaeologist Eric Bourdonneau and historian Gregory Mikaelian – all of whose work evinces an abiding concern for the role of the work of art in sustaining long-term cultural dynamics over and beyond the Angkorian period. SOAS doctoral students will act as respondents in roundtables following the research presentations at each Workshop.

For more on these and other exciting events, see <https://www.soas.ac.uk/cseas/events/>.

Ashley Thompson is SAAAP Research & Publications Sub-board Chair at SOAS, and Hiram W. Woodward Chair in Southeast Asian Art at SOAS.

Talking Alphawood Scholarships with Prospective Students

Liam Roberts

In November, as we launched the latest round of the Alphawood Scholarships at SOAS, I was delighted to have the opportunity to visit Thailand, Malaysia and Vietnam to talk about the Southeast Asian Art Academic Programme and to invite scholars from the region to consider an application for award. Having joined SAAAP in 2017, this was my first opportunity to visit some of the universities in the region, to meet a range of emerging scholars and recent graduates and to share something of the SOAS experience with those thinking about joining us next year.

Visiting Thammasat University in Bangkok, I was able to meet with a range of students and staff from both Thammasat University and neighbouring Silpakorn University to discuss life at SOAS, postgraduate programmes in the Department of History of Art and Archaeology. I was very pleased and fortunate to be joined by Alphawood Alumna Udomluck Hoontrakul and SOAS Centenary Fellow Rasmi Shoocongdej, who also spoke to the group about what makes studying at SOAS such a unique and enriching experience.

At Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) in Penang, I spoke with around 30 undergraduate and postgraduate students as well as staff from the Centre for Global Archaeological Research, also based at USM. The group was enthusiastic and interested in the process of application and how they could take the next step towards postgraduate study here at SOAS. We spent time “troubleshooting” application processes and discussing the experiences students build up while on award – from behind the scenes access to the British Museum and the V&A through the Postgraduate Diploma in Asian Art to the range of modules students can take in the MA Religious Arts of Asia.

Finishing the week at the University of Social Sciences and Humanities at Vietnam National University in Hanoi, we brought together over 50 students and staff to discuss the Alphawood Scholarships at SOAS and what students could expect from postgraduate study with us next year. The group was very interested in the highly international aspect of the university and of the programme itself, and recognised that there is



Liam Roberts met with over 50 students at the University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University in Hanoi in November 2017.

something unique about studying in London that can help students and staff to build valuable

international connections. So, though it can seem surprising, coming to London really can help to build and strengthen Southeast Asian networks of scholarship and expertise as well.

We're now looking ahead to welcoming the fifth cohort of Alphawood Scholars next September – when we do, I'm looking forward to seeing a few familiar faces amongst the group.

Liam Roberts is Programme Manager of the Southeast Asian Art Academic Programme at SOAS.

Regional recruitment drive attracts interest and applications for Alphawood Scholarships

Lia Genovese

In September and October 2017, I led six SAAAP recruitment presentations in Thailand and Laos which attracted 180 potential candidates to learn more about the programme. The presentation at Silpakorn University (Bangkok), organised by Dr. Pira Venunan (Lecturer in Archaeology & UCLA alumnus), was attended by mostly MA archaeology students. The presentation at the Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre (SAC), organised by Dr. Trongjai Hutangkura (Lecturer in Thai History & Archaeology), attracted an audience of MA students, as well as SAC professionals, museum curators, freelance art historians and two Cambodian students on an MA scholarship at Silpakorn University. The four events held in Laos were successful, following a meeting with Dr Christine Hawixbrock, EFEO director in Vientiane. Dr Hawixbrock's yearly excavations at the World Heritage site of Vat Phou in southern Laos are financed by the EFEO and offer archaeology students from the National University of Laos (NUOL) practical experience in excavations. The largest audience in Laos attended the presentation at NUOL, organised by Mr. Sommay Singthong (Lecturer in History & Archaeology). Approximately 100 attendees were present, consisting mainly of BA archaeology students, of whom 50 were in their final year and the remaining 50 in their third or second year. The final event in Laos was held in Champasak at the WH site of Vat Phou, organised by Mr. Oudomsy Keosaksith (Director). The presentation, attended by museum curators and heritage professionals has already generated a number of applications for Alphawood Scholarships next academic year.



Presentation by Dr. Lia Genovese to museum curators and heritage professionals at the World Heritage site of Vat Phou, a Khmer-era temple in Champasak Province, southern Laos.

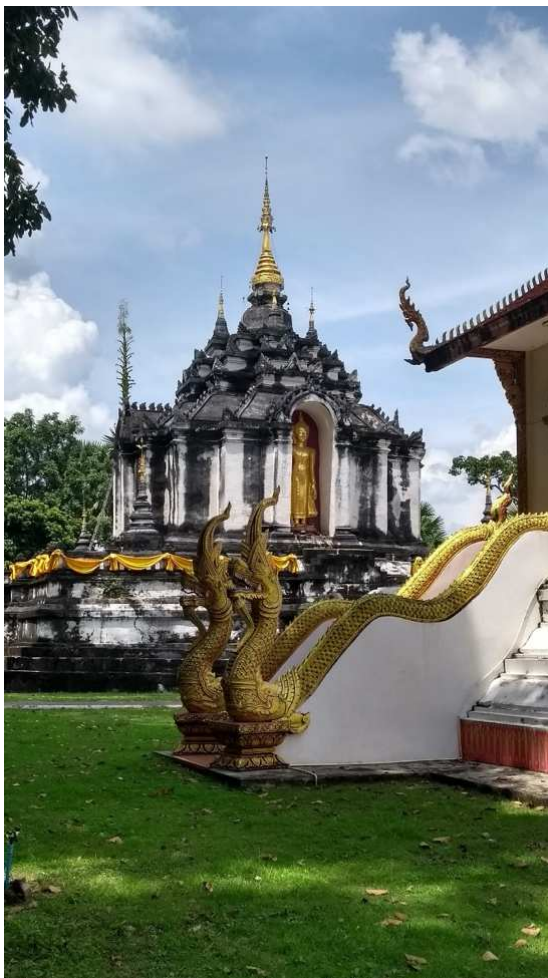
Lia Genovese is a SOAS PhD Graduate and Independent Lecturer.

Research Trip through mainland Southeast Asia

Ashley Thompson

With generous support from SAAAP, Professor Ashley Thompson undertook a Southeast Asian odyssey in the autumn of 2017. Research on post-Angkorian 4-Buddha sculptural ensembles for an upcoming monograph took her to Northern and Central Thailand, Lower and Upper Myanmar and all over Cambodia. Along the way she was also able to meet with past and future Alphawood Scholarship students, and with regional authorities committed to supporting scholarship and conservation of Southeast Asian art. She joined with Alphawood alumni to run information sessions for potential students in Yangon and Phnom Penh, where she was also able to discuss the programme's regional impact with Cambodia's Minister of Culture and Fine Arts, Phoeung Sackona. In Bangkok she discussed programme developments and ongoing student recruitment with Silpakorn University

Associate Dean Vichaya Mukdamanee, as well as Alphawood alumnus and Bangkok National Museum Curator Suppawan Nongnut. Research talks delivered over the course of the research leave period, at Phnom Penh's Royal University of Fine Arts and French Cultural Institute, as well as at Cornell University, New York, the Power Institute, Sydney, and the *Institut national des Langues et Civilisations Orientales* (INALCO), Paris, offered the opportunity to share ongoing work with Southeast Asian and other international Southeast Asian art scholars more broadly.



Wat Phra Yeun, Lamphun, Northern Thailand, a 14th-century monument with colossal Buddhas in each of its 4 external niches.



Ashley Thompson with Alphawood alumnus Kim Samnang, and Hang Chan Sophea, Senior Archivist, Angkor Conservation Office, at Prasat Steung of Preah Khan in Kompong Svay, Cambodia.



Meeting with Alumni and prospective students at the University of Yangon.



Ashley Thompson and Alphawood alumni Nhean Socheat, Chhum Meng Hong and Chhay Davin running an information session for prospective students, Royal University of Fine Arts, Phnom Penh.



With Alphawood Alumni, Phnom Penh. From left: Seang Sokha, Chhay Davin, Khun Sathal, Chhum Meng Hong, Ashley Thompson, Suon Bun Rith, Nhean Socheat with his wife.



Minister of Culture and Fine Arts, Phoeung Sackona, Ashley Thompson and Secretary of State for Culture and Fine Arts, Prak Sonnara, Phnom Penh.



Ashley Thompson with Alphawood alumni and National Museum of Thailand curator Suppawan Nongnut, in front of the Royal Chariot, National Museum, Bangkok.

On a more sombre note, Professor Thompson was also able to join former students and colleagues, along with Cambodian authorities, to pay final respects to one of the Southeast Asian region's most monumental cultural figures of all times, Vann Molyvann (1926-2017).



The State Funeral of His Excellency Vann Molyvann, Siem Reap, Cambodia. Middle row, from left: Minister of culture and Fine Arts Phoeung Sackona, Ashley Thompson, Professor Ang Choulean, Royal University of Fine Arts.

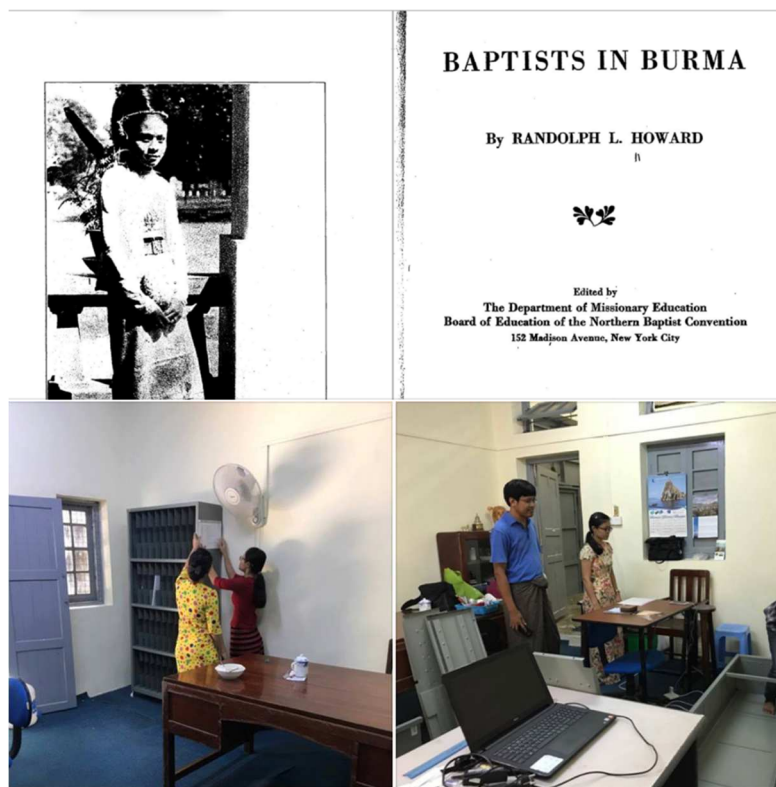
Ashley Thompson is Hiram W. Woodward Chair in Southeast Asian Art, Chair of the SAAAP Research & Publications Sub-board, Member of the SAAAP Scholarships Sub-board and Chair of the Centre for South East Asian Studies at SOAS.

Fixing up the E. Moore Collection, Anthropology Library Annex, Yangon University Campus, Myanmar

Nay Myo Aung, Ei Shwe Zin Phyoo, E. Moore (trans. Ven. Dhamma Sami)

SAAAP funding has helped us fix up the new E. Moore Library Annex on the Yangon University campus, making it an important research location for students and teachers in a country where book imports were stopped for decades as Burma followed its own road to socialism. Most of our readers are undergraduate and postgraduate students and teachers of Yangon University Archaeology, History and Anthropology departments. Many are regular readers, as many of our books and articles are not available elsewhere in the country. Thanks to our space within the Anthropology Department Library annex, we have room for books, reading and discussing. We applied to SAAAP to paint and fix-up the premises with two coats of cream-coloured paint and new blue carpets to match the colour of the Department of Anthropology, Yangon University. We are re-arranging books to allow readers in three rooms with the fourth for storage. Other improvements are new lighting and an exhaust fan. By far the most important change is the book and article shelving. We are buying new cupboards with glass to protect from dust and insects. In addition, the articles are being put into ring-binders for the new box-

file cupboards. Finally, we are buying a new book shelf so that we can display new arrival donated books regularly posted on our Facebook page with 385 members.



Thanks to the Alphawood Programme Board and the Outreach Sub-board, we are delighted to be fixing up the E. Moore Collection, Anthropology Library space. Soon it will be the 100th Anniversary of Yangon University. The grandfather of E. Moore was a Professor and President at Judson College from 1913-1921, so on the new Yangon University campus at its inauguration. [Baptists in Burma in the library and [online](#).

Top left-right: the opening pages of *Baptists in Burma* (1931) opening pages

Bottom left-right: assembly and installation of new box-file cupboards for the new library renovations

Please follow the E. Moore Collection Anthropology Library on [Facebook](#) to find out more!

Elizabeth Moore is SAAAP Outreach Sub-board and Scholarships Sub-board member, In-Region SAAAP Liaison and Professor Emeritus at SOAS.

SAAAP Academic Support Fund

The Southeast Asian Art Academic Programme invites applications to its Academic Support Fund.

The Fund supports individual and group research projects, conferences, workshops, publications and other activities and outputs which further the research and outreach aims of the Programme and its remit. The Fund is open to all SOAS staff, current SOAS postgraduate students and SOAS alumni, and applications may be submitted at any time.

To find out more and to apply for project support, please visit the [SAAAP home page](#) and download our [application form and submission guidelines](#).

Sign up and join in with the SAAAP Newsletter!

The SAAAP Newsletter is published three times annually, with contributions from across the SAAAP Community – Alphawood Scholars and alumni, SOAS academics and key international project partners. The Newsletter is edited by Dr Peter Sharrock and Chloe Osborne, and this edition features Alphawood Scholar Selina Chong as our Student Editor.

The Newsletter is open for new contributions and submissions from Alphawood Scholars, alumni, academics and partners – if you are interested in having your article featured in the Newsletter (or if you are interested in Student Editing a future edition), please contact Dr Peter Sharrock at ps56@soas.ac.uk.

You can also sign up to the Newsletter to ensure you receive future editions directly in your inbox. Please email alphawoodscholarships@soas.ac.uk to sign up. We look forward to hearing from you!

