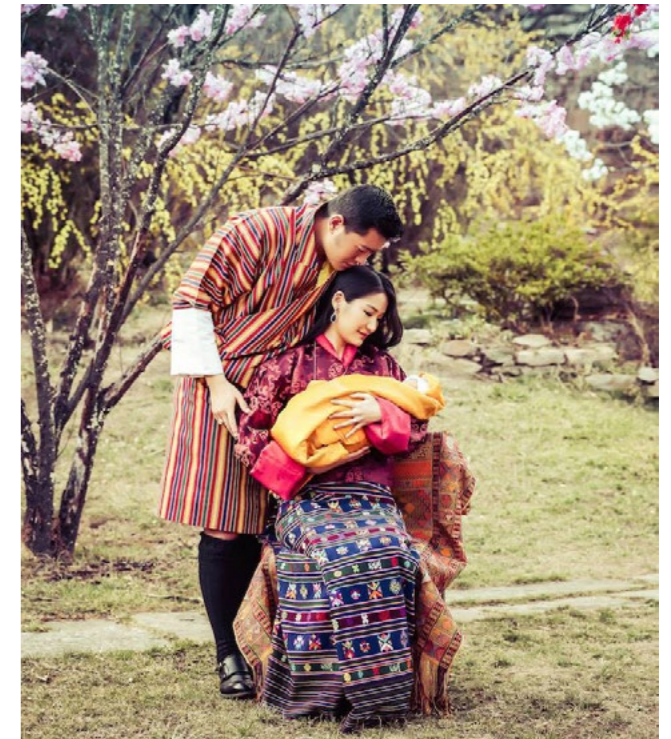


The Buddhist

KINGDOMS OF BHUTAN AND THAILAND

Flourishing popular cultures rooted deeply in their national identity.



Over the last nine years, I have been working closely with the Government of Bhutan and local artists to create a responsible space for emerging artists to thrive. Demonstrating a commitment to the preservation of culture, art and the local artist, and underscoring their vital roles in a holistic society.

Inspired by local artists, guided by my experience, and strengthened through creative relationships, the Bhutan Culture Company seeks to empower Bhutanese artists to share their ideas with the world. By providing access to training, developing infrastructure and creating opportunities for collaboration we seek to connect emerging artists to the tools they need to make their dreams a reality. Creative Collaboration and community involvement are two fundamental factors in determining which path the Nation will choose on its journey to modernity. The fruits of such collaborations are blooming throughout the local arts

community, uniting individuals from all socio-economic and educational backgrounds and creating more opportunity for expression, employment and inclusion.

Art brings people together; it breaks down societal barriers and reflects the diversity of a nations rich culture and people.

A few of our official creative collaborations in Bhutan include: The Babyboomers, Bhutan's first popular rock band (www.thebabyboomersbhutan.com). Jamyang Wangchuk, Writer, Director, Producer, and Bhutan's first actor to be recognized internationally for his role playing the young Dali Lama opposite Brad Pitt in the feature film Seven Years in Tibet. His directorial debut, Gyalsey Legacy of A Prince, is pioneering a new era in Bhutanese Cinema. And Chimmi Choden, who is the first internationally acclaimed fashion designer in Bhutan.

The Bhutan Culture Company founder Aine Carey splits her time between the Himalayan Buddhist Kingdom of Bhutan and Koh Samui, an island in the Buddhist Kingdom of Thailand and shares her impressions on the emerging Bhutanese and Thai contemporary artists and their importance to the local and world community.



Our vision is not only about sustaining contemporary artistic expression in Bhutan, but about the preservation of a culture whose wisdom is, we believe, of paramount importance to the world community. Bhutanese artists exhibit an incredible willingness and ability to embrace change and thrive due to their understanding that all life is interdependent, while at the same time consciously exploring the meaning of “cultural influence,” and its impact on themselves, their community, their nation and the world.

During these last nine years, I have found myself drawn to another intriguing destination, the small island of Koh Samui in the Gulf of Siam. On the surface it is a place that seems to have been inundated with foreign influence almost to the point of annihilating authentic Thai identity, but upon deeper exploration nothing could be further from the truth. Due to the same Buddhist understanding as Bhutan, that all life is impermanent and interdependent, a new Thai cultural movement is being expressed in the local creative scene.

The Bhutan Culture Company is currently collaborating with Mikolaj Krawczunas and Samui Circus Studio and its founder Thai Fire Artist, Poppy Sanman.

Mikolaj is recognized internationally for his unique photographic style and currently resides in Koh Samui. Poppy is a very well known and internationally respected fire-juggler and performer. Poppy created the studio as a place for local and international artists to rehearse and learn the art of fire juggling, dance and performing arts. Poppy has a passion and reverence for his cultural values, traditions and stories, and brings this awareness to his art.



Samui Circus gives workshops and classes for children and adults to learn circus arts from the performers, as well as providing talented and responsible performers to the many venues on Koh Samui. Samui Circus provides a wonderful community service, by creating job opportunities for the performers and business opportunities within the community, that initiate cultural exchange and inclusiveness between foreign visitors, expats and Thai nationals, demonstrating interdependence in action and building lasting relationships and impressions.

I hope my impressions inspire you to visit Bhutan and Thailand, and to experience through the eyes of your heart these vibrant cultures and emerging art scenes that welcome each visitor with their transformative embrace. Art is not aware of its Self; it expresses itself as an impulse to become, to create. In Bhutan and Thailand there is an energy of becoming, of evolving, which manifests itself as openness, generosity of spirit and compassion, and is expressed through these Bhutanese and Thai artists. It is the innocence of play and inclusiveness, combined with the creative force of dynamic action and natural curiosity which makes the experience of these two ancient cultures both holistic and nurturing.

