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Cannes Wrap-Up - June 2010

Thai Team Puts On Calm Face at Cannes

This year was the sixth year the Thailand Film Office, Office of Tourism Development had participated in the prestigious Festival de Cannes. Teamed with the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, a full slate of activities was carried out at the "Thaïlande" booth in the Village International.



Thailand's presence at the glamorous festival

Many of the over 200 visitors to the booth expressed concern and condolences for the lives and the property lost.

But in general, producers and production companies alike indicted support for continuing to shoot in Thailand with 5 production companies (from UK, USA, Denmark and France) indicating plans to film feature films, reality competitions and television programs in Thailand this year (2010).



However, as business was carried on normally at the Festival in France, some of the worst civil unrest in recent Thai history was unfolding in a 4 square mile section of Bangkok. News of the Bangkok disturbances was flashed around the world on internet and broadcast media casting a pall over

Meanwhile, at the Thailand booth, a seminar was held on May 14th on "Post Production Services in Thailand" led by Technicolor Asia and Kantana Creation Co., Ltd. In April, P3 Magazine had named Thailand one of the top three production services companies in Asia.

The Thai Opening Reception held on May 15 was presided over by Flight Lieutenant Suriya Soucksakit, Vice Minister for Culture and Mr. Atthachai Burakamkovit Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Tourism and Sports.



Zoe Popham of Technicolor Asia chats with participants of the Post Production Seminar which just concluded

And on the 16 May, the Office of Contemporary Art and Culture within the Ministry of Culture held "Thailand Film Pitching Projects part II".

But the biggest celebration of all, despite the bad news from home was the Palme d'Or Award presented to Thai director Apichatpong Weerasethakul for his "Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives".



Coming home party for Apichatpong Weerasethakul at the Thai Film Archive in Salaya, Nakhom Pathom, Thailand.

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What's News?

Who is saying what?



photo courtesy AMW International Co. Ltd

Vietnamese Director Le Thanh Son ("Bay Rong -Clash") at the Phuket Film Festival (June 8) said "Vietnamese film makers like using post production services in Thailand because the technicians both foreign and Thai are well trained. But it is not only better training, their attitude toward work is much more focused than in Vietnam – they seem to care about their work and do it quickly and proficiently. Thailand has the best post production facilities in all of Asia."

"Thailand picks up the pieces"

Thailand's film business suffered during the country's civil unrest — and at least one arthouse cinema shuttered — but the situation is now getting back to normal", according to Liz Shackleton in the June 17 issue of Screen Weekly

Producer Frank DeMartini: "It has been a pleasure working with Prachya and the entire Thai team. They are dedicated and hard working. We could never have gotten as much done as we did in the short period of time we had if it were not for their commitment to the project.



Yes, the unrest was a little unnerving but we were shooting 10 minutes away from the main demonstration point and we had absolutely no interference. As a matter of fact, during that entire time the only difficulty we had were traffic problems caused by police shut-downs of routes near the demonstration assembly points.

Mind you, we were in touch with our bonding agent daily to discuss a 'plan B' for shooting but we never had to implement. Will I shoot again in Thailand? Of course! The crews, the equipment, the work ethic, the hospitality all make for some of the best location shoots that can be found."

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What's Up Private Sector?

Bangkok based De Warrenne Pictures recently provided production services to the Hollywood action thriller "Elephant White" starring two time Academy Award winner Djimon Hounsou ("Blood Diamond") and 2010 Golden Globe winner Kevin Bacon ("Apollo 13").

Acclaimed Thai director Prachya Pinkaew ("Ong Bak", Tom Yum Goong") helmed his first English language movie for Nu Image/Millennium Films ("Rambo 4").



photos courtesy DeWarrenne Productions

Thai Producer Tom Waller worked with Millennium's Frank DeMartini ("Mad Money", The Prince and Me 4") in recruiting an all Thai crew for the eight week shoot which took place on location in and around Bangkok, and at Moonstar Studios, just as political unrest unfolded on the streets of the city.

"We were never once delayed by the red shirts situation, thanks to careful planning and avoidance of the trouble areas" says DeWarrenne's Oscar Kahar, Production Supervisor on the film, which is currently in post-production and due to be completed for release by the end of the year.



(L to R: Ms. Kahar, Mr. Waller, Mr. DeMartini, Ms. Wanasiri (Director Thailand Film Office), Mr. Hounsou

RED Cameras were supplied by Studio Ari and Red Films Asia, with lighting and grip equipment from Gearhead Co. Ltd., special FX by Rang SFX. Catering was provided by Too Kup Kao and transportation from Amnat Vans and Hippro Club Co. Ltd.



Film Me

The shadows creep ever so slightly across the forest, lighting patterns playing tricks with your eyesight. Wait, did something move? What is that shadow gliding from tree to tree? A shiver runs up your spine as you drive faster through the dense forest. But don't worry. You are in one of the many rubber tree forests in Thailand, wonderful settings for any ghost or horror picture you are looking to make.



In 1901 British planters introduced rubber trees into the Malay Peninsula, where the soils and climatic conditions were highly suited to rubber cultivation. In Thailand early government restrictions on foreign investment led to development of the industry by local smallholders, usually subsistence rice farmers who were able to start rubber tree stands on the relatively abundant free land in the area.

Land under rubber cultivation expanded rapidly in the 1930s, consisting mainly of smallholdings controlled by Chinese, Thai, and Thai Malays rather than large, European-owned plantations, as in other Asian countries. Thailand had about 1.6 million hectares in rubber in the mid-1970s, of which about 10 percent were located in an area along the Gulf of Thailand southeast of Bangkok.

Of the 500,000 holdings in the early 1980s, about 150,000 were under 2.5 hectares in size, and another 300,000 were under 10 hectares. The remaining larger holdings were operated more as

expanded smallholdings than as plantations. Production was increasing in the early 1980s and had reached about 830,000 tons in 1987.

An extensive replanting program, in which old tree stock was replaced with new high-yield varieties, had reportedly been carried out in about half the planted area by the mid-1980s, significantly increasing the potential for expanded production. Tapping of rubber trees starts in the fifth to seventh year after planting and then continues for 25 to 30 years. A special knife is used to incise the bark so as to wound the resin canals without damaging the cambium.

After 30 years a decline in latex production makes further tapping of the trees uneconomic – all the more reason to find a new use as background location in films, TVC, and music videos.



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Now you know more about us so come to Thailand and Film It!

