

The First ASEAN Art Therapy Conference

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The First ASEAN Art Therapy Conference was held on June 4, 2015 as part of the Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Congress: "Interdisciplinary Approach to Sustainable Research and Development", organized by the Interdisciplinary NetworkS of the Royal Society of Thailand, to honor the Crown Princess Sirindhorn's 60th birthday, at the IMPACT Forum, Muangthong Thani, Thailand. The ASEAN Art Therapy conference was initiated by Emeritus Professor Dr. Somchai Bovornkitti, the Chairman of Health Forum of the Academy of Science, the Royal Society of Thailand, in order to coincide with coming event that the countries in the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations will become one ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). Details of the conference are deliberated as follows and in the eventual coming proceedings.

Art Therapy in ASEAN Countries

The convention is a note of historic event for ASEAN art therapists as eight Southeast-Asian countries of the notable ten participated, i.e. Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Myanmar, Malaysia, The Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. The P.R. Laos and Cambodia were absent owing to some as yet unidentified reasons. Also there were two highly developed countries, Australia and the United States had energetically participated.

Academic Activities and Contents

The conference comprised 24 oral presentations as appeared in the abstract book on site of the the conference venue. Five prestigious keynotes delivered successively by Associate Professor Asanee Chooarun, Fellow of the Royal Society of Thailand, Associate Professor Dr. Nancy Slater, American art therapist, Ms. Jo Kelly, President of the Australia and New Zealand Arts Therapy Association, Professor Dr. Channarong Pornrungrroj, former Dean of the Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Chulalongkorn University and presently the President of the Art for All Foundation, and Dr. Thaweesak Sirirutraykha, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist of the Thai Ministry of Public Health, followed by 12 invited speakers: Associate Professor Dr. Bussakorn Binson of the Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Chulalongkorn University, Dr. Lourdes K. Samson of the Miriam College, The Philippines, Dr. Nuttika Soontorntanaphol of the Faculty of Fine Arts Srinakharinwirot University, Mr. Ronald P.M.H. Lay of the Lasalle College of Arts, Singapore, Dr. Azizah Binti Abdullah of Universiti Utara Malaysia, Nur Darwisyah Hannani Binti Abdullah Yong of the Ministry of Education, Brunei Darussalam, Dr. Dra Kusmawati Hatta of Indonesia, Associate Professor Estrelita Sazon-Rito of the Far Eastern University, The Philippines, Dr. San Oo, the psychiatrist from Myanmar, Mrs. Laurence

Vandenborre, The Red Pencil Singapore, Associate Professor Bui Thi Thanh Mai, Vietnam whose paper delivered by Emeritus Professor Dr. Somchai Bovornkitti in her absence, and three open presentations from Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand. There were four poster presentations from Thailand. All these presentations will appear in the Proceedings eventually.

Since the nature of art therapy is interdisciplinary task, which involves various specialists and practitioners from the field of psychology, psychiatry, fine art, education, and art education; among these 24 papers, two were music for therapy. Art therapy achieving as alternative psychotherapy, i.e. incorporating art and psychotherapy. Despite, the overwhelmed presentations with numerous papers, the session was smooth; all participants had finished their talks happily and shared their experiences of concepts, ideas, as well as practical aspect. The audience showed attentive interest and support the long attending session.

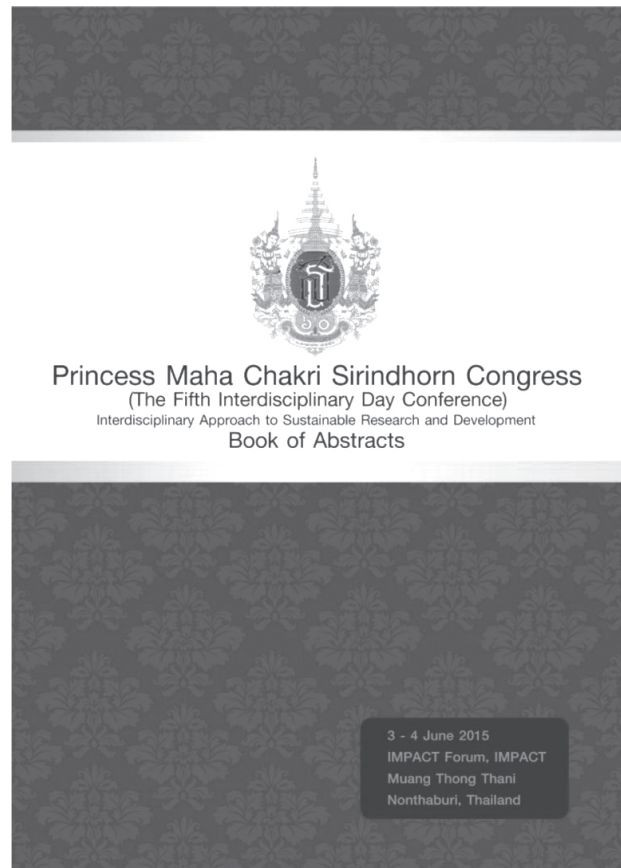


Figure 1. The abstract book.



Figure 2. Presenters' group picture.



Figures 3-7. Mrs. Laurence Vandendorre, Dr. Azizah Binti Abdullah, Prof. Dr. Channarong Pornrungrroj, Dr. Lourdes K. Samson, Prof. Dr. Somchai Bovornkitti



Figure 8. The Conference atmosphere

Figures 9-11. Dr. Thaweesak Sirirutraykha, Assist. Prof. Prapunsak Poom-in and Dr. Nuttika Soontorntanaphol, Assoc. Prof. Estrellita Sazon-Rito

The exhibition of art therapy from Malaysia, The Philippines, and Thailand were interested by the public. Among them, the four posters from interesting research works were most welcome.

ASEAN Art Therapy Prospective

Many attendants of the conference mentioned ethical codes of conducts and practices for art therapy profession that need to be implemented. Besides the ethical issue stated, all presenters unanimously agreed on setting up an ASEAN art therapy association to support the work of art therapists in the Southeast-

Asian community. They agreed on the logo and the name “ASEAN Creative Arts Therapy Association” (ACATA). It is hoped that the association will be formed to support the development of research and practices of ASEAN art therapists. A website will be set up for future communication and information.

Postscripts

“The First ASEAN Art Therapy Conference” has yielded a great success for ASEAN art therapists networks for the development of the discipline and pro-



Figures 12-13. Ms. Jo Kelly, Assist Prof. Dr. Lertsiri Bovornkitti



Figure 14. Mr. Ronald P. M.H. Lay

Figure 16. Nur Darwisyah Hannani Binti Abdullah Yong

Figure 18. Dr. Dra Kusmawati Hatta

Figure 15. Assoc. Prof. Asanee Chooarun

Figure 17. Dr. San Oo



Figures 19-22. Exhibition booths displaying art therapy research works and activities.

fessional practice in Southeast-Asia. Various aspects of art therapy and related professions were encountered for the first time. The members have exchanged their knowledge and experiences. All agreed to the establishment of ASEAN of the Art Therapy association. They expect that the networking would encour-

age better professional development and recognition of the new discipline. Journal, website, research, and conference were discussed. All of them look forward to the next annual meeting. It is believed that ASEAN art therapy has already born.