

“In-Conversation”

June 2013

Featuring

Waranun CHUTCHAWANTIPAKORN *Thailand's Award winning Veteran photographer*

Conferred Thailand National Artist (Photography) 2010,
FPST, FRPS, FBPS, FSCC, FPSP, FPSEA, FSCPS, FPSNY, FPSK, FPSM, FBSC,
APSA, EPSA, EFIAP, MFPT, MEPSP, Hon.FPST, Hon.FSCC, Hon.FBPS,
Hon.FSCPS, Hon.FPSM, Hon.FPVS, Hon.SFAPA, Hon.PSNY, Hon.ECPA,
Hon.EHKCC, Hon.EYMCAPC, Hon.EPSM, Hon.ESCPS, Hon.ESEAPS
Hon.EBLPC, Hon.EUAPA, Hon.ESCC, E.EGPC, EP.BSC, EP.PSM, SA. WIEP
SE.HKCPAC, SE.35mmPS, HM.FCBA, PSA CSD 9th Galaxy, PSA PTD Photo Traveller XI

Interview conducted by

PhotoVivo.com



ABOUT WARANUN CHUTCHAWANTIPAKORN

Waranun Chutchawantipakorn, born 1954 in Bangkok, is one of the most distinguished photographer in Thailand ever with a long string of photography awards under his belt. In 1981, he enrolled in a photography course at Bangkok Technical College and became a member of The Royal Photographic Society of Thailand the following year. He was admitted as a Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain (FRPS) in 1987.

Waranun actively participates in contests organised by photographic societies around the world and mostly are recognised by the Photographic Society of America (PSA). His entries have been ranked among the world's top ten for the past 22 years and have been awarded first place 17 times in the Photo Travel Division. His works have also been published in books such as *Siam In Focus*, *The Royal Barge*, *Images of Shanghai*, *The Sacred Buddha Images of Thailand* and others.

Waranun is now an honorary adviser to The Royal Photographic Society of Thailand, Siam Colour Slide Club, Bangkok Photographic Society and the Photographic Federation of Thailand. He is conferred the Honorary Fellowship of Photovivo Singapore in 2009.

Questions:

What is your favourite place/country for photography?

Huangshan in China, I would say. It was recognised as one of the world's heritage by UNESCO. When I was a child, I always thought that this landscape exists only in Chinese paintings until I eventually got the chance to photograph this amazing landscape, and it kept me returning to this place numerous times in my attempt to capture my dream landscape.

As a Judge in many local and international photography competitions, what are the things that you look out for in the colour print, monochrome and travel section?

For Colour section;

What is important is that the subject has to send across the message and match with the title. Next, will be the colour and dynamic range detail. The image should tell the story and attract the attention of the judges and viewers. Fine composition, good image quality and lighting also play a key decision in the selection of the winning shot.

For Monochrome section;

The dynamic range and tone to separate the black and white is very important. It is very important for the photographer to exhibit the ability to have new ideas and technique to create a unique piece of work, which differentiates it from other existing works.

For Travel section;

The travel images should give the sense of reality of the real world. Over enhancing or distorting the reality of the image using the software will cause the picture to be disqualified. The image must have an anchor point to get attention and tells an interesting story about the subject. A good photographer must use his skill and experience to express the captured moment in his own style to differentiate the photograph from any other past works taken by other photographers.

What are the criteria you have in the final round selection to select the award winning picture?

In the final round selection, I always consider the level of difficulty in photographing the image as one of the main factors in choosing the winning entry. In some photography outings, a scene can be staged with models and props, but different photographers have different interpretation of it and have different ways to shoot it. Other criteria include the technical aspect such as how eye-catching is the image, the exposure, lighting etc.

Do you have any advice for new photographers who are keen in joining competitions and salons?

For the new photographers joining the competitions and salons, if at all possible, one must observe past years' winning entries from whatever resources you can get. Try to appreciate the "photography culture" of the organisers. The photography competitions organised in various countries and their respective judges have their unique photography culture. For example, this may be stereotypical but it seems to be true most of the time;

- many photographers in Europe specialise in landscape photography and they have some of the best landscape shots ever
- many photographers in China have some of the best portrait shots of their rural natives

At times, one may also not understand the taboo. To you, a person photographed digging his nose may be a norm in his society but could be otherwise in another. If you were to send your best landscape shot to enter a photography competition organised in Europe or submit a portrait of a Chinese rural native to a competition organised in China and pit your images against the very best from these countries, one will have an extremely low chance to make it to the final round. My another advice. Please always try to submit your work as early as possible mainly because your images will usually appear in the front of the queue. This will be to your advantage.

What would like to see in the progress of Salons in future?

Today, the cyber digital world has influenced the salon photo competition greatly and differentiates it from the past. The ability to submit images online, pay the entrance fee by Paypal already provide the amazing speed of change to the salon. It all seems so easy to submit for Salons today. In the past, we have to print the pictures or submit the slides and these take weeks to reach the organisers. We cannot duplicate the prints and slides as readily as what we can do today with digital files. However, I also foresee the weakness of the online system. Though this may encourage more photographers to submit, we should also discourage dishonest photographers to submit the competition using others' digital images. Violation of copy right and digital retouch and use of others' work in photography competition should be avoided.

What are the equipments you would bring in your photography shoot?

I travel with minimum gears which include; Canon 5D mkII and Canon 1V for color slide and 5D for infrared. My Lenses include 16-35mm L, 24-105mm L, 70-200mm L, Minolta mirror reflected Lense 250mm, Nikon 500mm. Adaptors are used to mount the Minolta and Nikon lens on the Canon body.

Any advice for new photographers to improve their photography?

For a new photographer to improve one's skill, by solely reading photography books and manual is not sufficient. One must go out and practice as much as possible to enhance one's photography skill. I have seen many new photographers too shy to show their works. One of the best ways to learn is to let senior and established photographers to review and critique your works if opportunity allows. Find a mentor in photography and seek frequent advice by having more critique sessions. Be ready to take constructive criticism, as they are for your own good.

Any advice for serious amateur photographers to further their interest in photography?

For senior photographers, the photography salon (competition and exhibition) is like a kind of sport. One who fails must have the courage and do not give up. One who succeeds should encourage the others. Live and love photography, keep on practicing to scale new heights. Be patient during learning as the learning journey is a long one and there will be no short cut. The attitude of never giving up till one sees the finishing line is found in most of the famous and successful photographer.

What is your future plan?

I am the fifth photographer who was awarded as Thailand National Artist in the photography category in Thai history. This is one of the highest honour and achievement for me and my family. After being conferred this honour, I will be spending more time in conducting lectures at Universities all over Thailand and imparting my photography skill to both new and senior photographers. I am happy lecturing photography in the various universities in the provinces of Thailand and I hope the photographers benefit from my lectures.

Selected Works

























