



Conserving Heritage in Southeast Asian Cities: Planning for Continuity and Change



The Getty Conservation Institute

31 October to 14 November, 2009
Chiang Saen, Chiang Rai Province, Thailand

Programme Announcement

Thailand's Fine Arts Department (Ministry of Culture) along with the Getty Conservation Institute, and SEAMEO Regional Center for Archaeology and Fine Arts (SPAFA) are collaborating to present a workshop entitled *Conserving Heritage in Southeast Asian Cities: Planning for Continuity and Change*, which will be held at the historic settlement of Chiang Saen (Chiang Rai Province), northern Thailand from 31 October to 14 November 2009. The workshop is the second in a series planned under the Getty's Southeast Asia Initiative. The first workshop, "*From Risk Assessment to Conservation: Safeguarding Archaeological Complexes in the Mekong Region*," took place at the World Heritage site of Vat Phou, in Lao PDR in March 2008 (for more information on that workshop, see http://www.getty.edu/conservation/education/sea/sea_component1.html).

The purpose of the workshop is to address some of the common conservation issues heritage professionals encounter at their sites throughout Asia:

- how to engage local community residents in making decisions about conserving built heritage;
- how to achieve more sustainable cultural tourism;
- how to integrate heritage planning with other planning activities (i.e. urban design and land use); and
- how to assess risks, prioritize needs and develop strategies for effective conservation by using value identification and risk assessment methodologies.

The workshop will provide a structured framework concerning international principles and methodologies regarding the conservation and management of archaeological and historic sites within urban contexts. In so doing, it is hoped that the workshop will help to improve conservation practice in Southeast Asia and strengthen the region's network of conservation professionals.

Chiang Saen, located on the Mekong River in far northern Thailand near the borders of Myanmar and the Lao PDR, is a fortified settlement that now is home to approximately 2,000 residents. Settled in the early 14th century, Chiang Saen was part of a series of at least three settlements covering areas in both Thailand and Lao PDR. In 1831, rival military groups fought for control of the city. As a result, some of Chiang Saen's city walls and religious structures were either demolished or damaged, and by 1860 the city was abandoned. It was reoccupied in 1890. The city's residents now represent at least six minority groups. Chiang Saen contains over 100 monuments, and since the late-1950s the city has received substantial conservation assistance from Thailand's Fine Arts Department. These will provide a stimulating basis for discussion and exercises during the course of the two-week workshop in November 2009.

Participation in the workshop will very likely include a post workshop phase of brief assignments (8-16 hours every two months over the course of a year). Participants will be required to respond to assignments that relate directly to their site responsibilities and the methodologies discussed during the course. The purpose of these post-course exercises is to provide continued support to participants once they have returned to their home institutions, and to extend the learning of the course beyond the limited two weeks on site at Chiang Saen.

The workshop will be conducted in English and will be open to 25 young heritage professionals -- mainly from Lao PDR, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia and Myanmar. Some seats maybe assigned to representatives from other Southeast Asian countries, depending on the number of applications received. In order to attend, participants must have some responsibility for similar sites in their own country, an ability to work in English, a commitment to work with instructors/mentors on tasks at their home sites after the workshop's conclusion, and the signed approval of their supervisor. The workshop will be comprised of classroom lectures by both Thai and visiting international heritage professionals, field exercises, and final group presentations. During the course of the workshop, participants will be asked to actively participate in classroom discussions and group work. Participants will also be given the opportunity to present the challenges they face at their own sites and to discuss them with their colleagues and instructors, thus receiving new ideas about their sites and novel approaches to those sites' conservation.

Participants will be selected through an application process. Expenses related to tuition, travel, and accommodations will be covered by the partner organizations. Please distribute these applications to your staff and to those you think would benefit from this workshop. If you have any questions, please contact: Ms. Jay Tunprawat, Project Coordinator, SEAMEO – SPAFA, tel. +66 2 2804022-9, fax +66 2 2804030, email: patchy@seameo-spafa.org.