

Bryan Watt - Lao Children Fundraiser

Bryan began his studies at Brooks Institute during September 1995. In 1998 he participated with 19 other students and his instructor Paul Liebhardt, in the Brooks sponsored documentary project, "The Mekong Expedition." Bound together with the collective goal of documenting life along the Mekong, the group spread out to cover the river from its source to its many tributaries. For one hundred days the photographers captured on film and in their hearts the splendor and diversity of Southeast Asia. Bryan spent much of his time in Thailand and Laos where he was irrevocably moved by the desperate need of the children of the area. Returning from the Mekong the group produced a book and a DVD title.

Upon completion of his undergraduate studies, Bryan entered graduate school working towards his Master of Science degree in photography. Bryan became a graduate assistant and worked his way to a full time faculty position at Brooks Institute. After completion of his graduate school course work Bryan focused his thesis work on the Akha tribe in Northern Laos. Returning to Laos, he lived in a tent on the outskirts of a small Akha village. Eventually gaining their trust, Bryan helped deliver first aid to many sick and injured villagers and was frequently overwhelmed by the quantity of individuals needing assistance.



Brian Watt & Leila Srour

Shortly after returning from Laos Bryan convinced his wife Leila Srour, a pediatrician, to give up her practice in Santa Barbara, California and move to Laos for an undetermined period. Resigning his position at Brooks, he and Leila left Santa Barbara during May of 2002 and moved to Vientiane, Laos where they have been working with multiple health organizations helping children. They network with Lao doctors and foreign doctors who come there to assist. They volunteer with Health Frontiers, and collaborate with the Women's International Group medical welfare committee and visiting surgical teams.



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Bryan believes a socially responsible photographer leaves with a part of the subjects soul; and in return must give by helping those in need. Bryan and Leila help to arrange medical care at the local, provincial, and national level, and have even helped Lao children to travel overseas for heart surgery and facial-reconstructive surgery. Bryan donates all of the proceeds from his photography to support this cause and Leila donates her medical expertise in the field of pediatrics.

Bryan and Leila hope to return to the northern city of Muang Sing in Laos near the Chinese border to complete the building of a primary school for 286 children in their village of Ban Nong Boua. The parents of these children have built a temporary 11 classroom structure with sticks and a thatched roof. With money donated from Korea, the Lao Government had sufficient funds to build 5 permanent classrooms. Bryan and Leila's goal is to be able to complete the other 6 rooms and a children's center with an estimated cost of \$20,000 or about 70.00 per student.

It is Brooks Institute's goal to raise this money by having a silent auction of prints donated by friends of Brooks, alumni, faculty, staff and students. The prints will be on display from May 26, 2008 until July 10, 2008. The auction will take place on June 6th.



Help us help
build a new school for these kids

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All images contained on enclosed disk are released to you for use to publish in conjunction with publicity associated with this fundraiser. Thank you for helping us spread the word.

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By signature below I understand that I am donating this photograph to Brooks Institute for the purpose of a silent auction and that all proceeds will be donated for the purpose of supporting Bryan Watt and Leila Srour in Laos. Should your donation not be sold our gallery staff will contact you concerning the return of your artwork.

Date: _____

Authors Signature: _____

Title of Piece: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

All photographs exhibited in the gallery will include a short bio. Please provide your information in the space below. Do not exceed 175 characters.

Authors Bio: _____
