

ATHIKHOM SAENGCHAI

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Portfolio: athikhom.visura.co/ IG: www.instagram.com/s.athikhom/

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Documentary photographer focusing on marginalized ethnic groups, endangered languages and cultures, and cultural heritage and memory.
- Writer specialized in photography, history of photography, culture, and travel.
- Published photos and stories on international and domestic platforms.
- Extensive experience in project management, monitoring, and fieldwork coordination in Thailand and Europe.
- Skilled in digital preservation, archive management, qualitative research, intercultural communication, and translation in German and English.

EDUCATION

Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand

2002

Bachelor of Arts (1st Class Honors) in German Studies

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Freelance Documentary Photographer & Writer

2017 – present

- Plan and execute photo projects and assignments focusing on cultural, social, and political issues of marginalized ethnic groups and endangered languages and cultures in Thailand and overseas.
- Edit and sequence photos, write captions, and prepare images for dissemination in various formats such as website, book, magazine, report, social media, slide presentation, etc.
- Write stories on photography, history of photography, culture, and travel for magazines and websites in Thailand.
- Contributor to National Geographic Thailand and The Siam Society.
- Published in National Geographic, National Geographic Traveler US, Bloomberg, Denver Post, National Geographic UK, National Geographic Traveller India, Lonely Planet, Bangkok Post, The Standard, etc.

Project Assistant

2014 – 2022

The Digital Archive of Modernized Siam and The Arc of Memory Research Unit, Chulalongkorn University | Bangkok, Thailand

- Digitized historical documents related to the modernization of Thailand dating from the 1890s, kept in private archives in Italy, to preserve in digital format.
- Developed, managed, and monitored the projects and applied for funding from public and private organizations.
- Planned, coordinated, carried out, and documented fieldwork in Italy and Thailand.
- Designed and managed the project website and created content on cultural heritage and memory related to the projects.
- Represented the projects at international fairs, events, and meetings in Italy and Thailand.

Project Coordinator

2005 – 2009

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e. V. | Bangkok, Thailand

- Managed projects to strengthen the parliamentary system and economic and social stability and promote the rule of law and public participation.
- Created an international platform to find peaceful solutions to the ongoing insurgency in southern Thailand's multicultural and multiethnic border provinces.
- Collaborated with local partners, including governmental agencies, NGOs, and universities.

SELECT PHOTO PROJECTS

Moklen

2021 - present

Project Location: Phang-nga and Phuket, Thailand

The project documents the severely endangered language and culture of the Moklens, an ethnic group scattered in southwestern Thailand, and the ongoing efforts to preserve it. I have been working with local Moklen communities and a team of experts in linguistics, folklore studies, and archive management in the project “Research and Documentation of the Moklen Language and Culture in the Southeast Asian Context” to create an online community archive of the Moklen language and culture. The project receives funds from the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation.

Work in progress: <https://athikhom.visura.co/moklen-language-and-culture> (password: moklendoc)

Photos and stories from this project appeared in:

- National Geographic Thailand (Facebook page, in Thai; 2022) <https://www.facebook.com/NationalGeographicThailand/posts/pfbid0JrzN31ukYWslkGDJKkf26oJ74wMtDB17ZTuQSEXbcX9cwspuMaLxKeydVNSj5N2xl>
- National Geographic Thailand, December 2022 (included in Pictures of the Year 2022)
- Diversify Photo (Photos of the Year 2022) <https://diversify.photo/2022-best-of-the-year/#202112>
- The Active / Thai PBS (2023): <https://theactive.net/video/local-20231202/>
- Decode Plus / Thai PBS (2023): <https://decode.plus/20231111-save-mai-khao-beach/>
- Public Talk “*Knowledge Building for Community: The Moklen Language & Culture Documentation Project*” (talk series *Arts for Community*, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University): <https://www.arts.chula.ac.th/th/pr/2024/03/02/17011/>, https://fb.watch/rnl5bP_KOB/

Kurdistan

2018 – 2020

Project Location: Iran, Iraq, and Turkey

The project follows my journey in the “Land of the Kurds.” As the world’s largest ethnic group without a country of their own, Kurdish people have suffered violence, discrimination, and assimilation by local governments for decades. Despite endless loss and suffering, the Kurdish identity still holds them together. The project is presented in two photo stories: “Kurdistan: Field Notes,” as an introduction to Kurdistan in various aspects, from the turbulent history of conflicts to peaceful landscape and ancient culture, and “The Other Side of the Mountains,” as my reflection about the fate of Kurdish people.

Photos and stories from the project were published in:

- National Geographic Thailand (in Thai; 2022): <https://ngthai.com/cultures/44124/kurdistan/>

Little Myanmar

2018

Project Location: Bangkok, Thailand

Despite being an integral part of the workforce in Thailand for decades, Myanmar migrant workers are still discriminated against by the ethnocentric Thai society because of their ethnicity, poor backgrounds, and language barrier. This project documents Myanmar workers in Yaowarat, Bangkok's Chinatown, who are the anonymous driving force of this commercial quarter and live together as a sub-community inside this Chinese community. To reduce social bias against them, the project portrays Myanmar workers as humans like all of us who would endure any hardship, hoping for a better future for themselves and their families.

Photos and stories from the project were published in:

- National Geographic Thailand (Facebook page, in Thai; 2021, 2022)
<https://www.facebook.com/NationalGeographicThailand/posts/10166930265740038>

OTHER SELECT PUBLICATIONS

The global hunt for a secret cache of stolen Thai treasures runs through Denver.

The Denver Post (December 02, 2022)

<https://www.denverpost.com/2022/12/01/prakhon-chai-bronzes-douglas-latchford-emma-bunker-denver-art-museum/>

A brighter future for Thailand's past.

Bangkok Post (July 21, 2022)

<https://www.bangkokpost.com/opinion/opinion/2350519/a-brighter-future-for-thailands-past>

Thai heritage must not be lost.

The Standard, in Thai (March 15, 2022)

<https://thestandard.co/thai-cultural-heritage-must-not-be-lost/>

China Migration Wave Arrives in Unexpected Places After Pandemic

Bloomberg Businessweek (January 2024)

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2024-01-17/china-migration-wave-arrives-in-unexpected-places-after-pandemic>

ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

A Journey in Color and Culture: Bloomberg Media Studios & Bangkok Bank (2023)

<https://sponsored.bloomberg.com/article/bangkok-bank/a-journey-in-color-and-culture>

SELECT ARTICLES

Photography vs. truth.

National Geographic Thailand, in Thai (January 28, 2022)

<https://ngthai.com/photography/39779/truthornotonphotos/>

Early photography in Thailand.

National Geographic Thailand, in Thai (June 17, 2021)

<https://ngthai.com/history/36440/earlyphotographyintha/>

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English – Fluent

German – Fluent

AFFILIATIONS

Diversify Photo

Full member photographer

2020 – present

The Siam Society

Heritage Partner of Siamese Heritage Trust Knowledge Hub

2024