

**Documentary filming and on-location interview for the NBC Today Show
Pailin/Phnom Penh, Cambodia and Vientiane, Laos
July 14-23 and Sept 6-8 &13, 2010**

Trip Report

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Promoting the Quality of Medicines Program

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About PQM

The Promoting the Quality of Medicines (PQM) program, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), is the successor of the Drug Quality and Information (DQI) program implemented by the United States Pharmacopeia (USP). PQM is USAID's response to the growing challenge posed by the proliferation of counterfeit and substandard medicines. By providing technical leadership to developing countries, PQM helps build local capacity in medicine quality assurance systems, increase the supply of quality medicines to priority USAID health programs, and ensure the quality and safety of medicines globally. This document does not necessarily represent the views or opinions of USAID or the United States Government. It may be reproduced if credit is given to PQM and USP.

Abstract

Chris Raymond and Soho Films visited Pailin and Phnom Penh, Cambodia and Vientiane, Laos July 14-23, 2010 to produce a documentary film on counterfeit medicines entitled 'Pharmacide: the Mekong'. In addition, Chris Raymond accompanied the NBC Today Show news team into the field for on-camera interviews in the markets of Pailin, Cambodia for a special feature on drug-resistant malaria which will air on the NBC Today Show in the U.S. in late 2010.

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Key Words

Pharmacide: the Mekong documentary film, malaria containment, Cambodia, Laos, NBC Today Show, artemisinin combination therapy, Lao FDD, Cambodia DDF, Cambodia CNM

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- Dr. Somthavy Changvisommid, Director of the Lao FDD, and Mr. Souksomhouane Chanthamat, PQM Focal Point at the Lao FDD, for accommodating the film team, facilitating the trip to Laos and being gracious hosts
- Dr. Paul Newton of the Wellcome Trust unit at the Mohosot Hospital in Vientiane for his valuable input to the project
- Dr. Andrew Thomson, of WHO Cambodia; the FSAT team, including Dr. Najib Habib and Dr. Steve Bjorge; and CNM's Mam Boravann for their contributions and assistance in the field production of the documentary.
- Mr. Mark Hammond of SohoFilms, who has dedicated the last three years to helping create valuable media products to raise public awareness about counterfeit medicines in Southeast Asia.
- Mr. Anthony Boni and Ms. Veerle Coigneux for their support and valuable input developing this project
- Ms. Milissa McGinnis for her editorial advice

ACRONYMS

ACT	Artemisinin Combination Therapy medicine
A+M	Artesunate and Mefloquine loose form combination therapy
API	Active Pharmaceutical Ingredient
CNM	Cambodian National Malaria Centre
DDF	Cambodian Department of Drugs and Food
DHA+PIP	Dihydroartemisinin and Piperaquine fixed dose combination therapy
DQI	Drug Quality and Information Program
FDD	Lao Food and Drug Department
FDQCC	Lao Food and Drug Quality Control Center
FSAT	Focused Screening and Treatment
INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organization
LSHTM	London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
NBC	National Broadcasting Corporation
OPH	Office of Public Health
PCR	Polymerase Chain Reaction
PQM	Promoting the Quality of Medicines Program
PSA	Public Service Announcement
QA	Quality Assurance
RDM/A	USAID Regional Development Mission for Asia
RDT	Rapid Diagnostic Tests for Malaria
TLC	Thin Layer Chromatography
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USP	United States Pharmacopeia
WHO	World Health Organization

Background

In 2009, PQM launched a four-part media initiative entitled “Pharmacide” to address the lack of public education regarding the existence and dangers of counterfeit and substandard medicines in Southeast Asia. Initially, a three-episode series of [public service announcements](#) (PSAs) were produced which graphically portray a situation in which counterfeits infiltrate the supply chain, resulting in the death of a patient. These PSAs are slated for broadcast in Laos, Vietnam, Thailand, the Philippines, and Cambodia, all produced in the local language. The target audience is consumers or public at risk of exposure to counterfeit medicines. The PSAs were recently featured in [Nature Medicine’s April 2010 special issue on counterfeit medicines](#).

“[Combating Counterfeit Medicines: on the front lines in Southeast Asia](#)” is the second installment of the Pharmacide media project. It is a 20-minute technical film which outlines the key activities of PQM-supported medicine quality monitoring in the field. Based in Cambodia, the film uses a dramatic recreation of following up a case of counterfeit malaria medicines from a remote village, and illustrates in detail the use of laboratory techniques to determine whether or not a medicine is genuine. This film is targeted primarily at trainees and health staff involved with medicine quality monitoring, as well as policymakers or other key stakeholders.

Currently in production is “Pharmacide: the Mekong,” a one-hour regional documentary film which details the production, distribution, and consumption of counterfeit and substandard medicines in Southeast Asia, as well as the efforts being made to combat their proliferation. The film highlights international efforts and coordination among health professionals and law enforcement and provides basic public education about counterfeit and substandard medicines. After years of establishing close relationships and strengthening quality assurance programs in Southeast Asia, the PQM program can ensure in-depth and difficult-to-access interviews, footage, and information for this film. The film is a co-production between USAID, USP, the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, the European Delegation, the World Intellectual Property Organization, SohoFilms, private foundations, and others. Regional and international distribution of the film will ensure a broad range of public exposure to this important issue, with the intent to increase public awareness as well as inform policymakers and relevant authorities.

Purpose of Trip

Chris Raymond participated in filming for the “Pharmacide: the Mekong” documentary film project in Laos and Cambodia. In addition, he accompanied the NBC Today Show regional news crew into the field to be interviewed on-camera for a special segment for the Today Show, which will air in the United States.

Source of Funding

This trip was supported with funds from USAID/Cambodia and USAID RDM/A malaria and tuberculosis funding streams.

Overview of Activities

July 14-16, 2010

Field filming for Pharmacide: the Mekong documentary, Pailin, Cambodia

Participants:

Mark Hammond, SohoFilms

Andrew Thomson, WHO Cambodia

Mam Boravann, CNM Cambodia

Dr. Ratana, Deputy Director Pailin Health Department

Pailin drug inspectors/juristic police

Chris Raymond, PQM consultant



During three days in Pailin, the film crew documented activities surrounding the “Containment of Artemisinin-resistant falciparum malaria” project on the Thai-Cambodia border. The containment project, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, is a multi-agency effort to contain multi-drug resistant falciparum malaria in zones 1 and 2 of Western Cambodia.

Together with Family Health International, University Research Corporation, and WHO, the



Cambodian National Malaria Centre (CNM) promotes the high coverage distribution and use of long-lasting insecticide treated bed nets, the use of village malaria workers who are trained in proper diagnostics and treatment using Rapid Diagnostic Tests (RDTs) and artemisinin combination therapy medicines (ACTs), focused screening and testing activities in zone 1 villages, and the use of high quality ACTs, including DHA+PIP in zones 1 and 2, and A+M in the rest of Cambodia in the public sector.

The crew filmed the Focused Screening and Treatment (FSAT) activities in two villages in Pailin district, as well as visiting local village malaria workers. The filming was meant to capture the issue of drug resistance in this area, and the importance of high quality medicines. Especially in this border area where counterfeit and substandard medicines were previously known to proliferate, it is crucial that the drug supply and pharmacy outlets are routinely monitored.

The filmmakers accompanied local drug inspectors/juristic police, including the deputy health director of the Pailin Health Department, on various inspections of licensed and illegal outlets. Sample collection in the field was documented. In addition, a raid on a small, illegal drug seller was conducted in one village. A sample of a known counterfeit penicillin G product was discovered (this same product was previously detected through the PQM-supported



monitoring and through INTERPOL operations) among other loose medications. The product was confiscated from the vendor, and information about counterfeit medicines was distributed to the vendor and to the village residents, including the village chief. The vendor received a warning, and the next offense will be fineable. The film crew went to Phnom Penh for meetings and follow up filming at the Pasteur Institute.



July 19, 2010

Filming for Pharmacide: the Mekong documentary, CNM Headquarters, Phnom Penh

Participants:

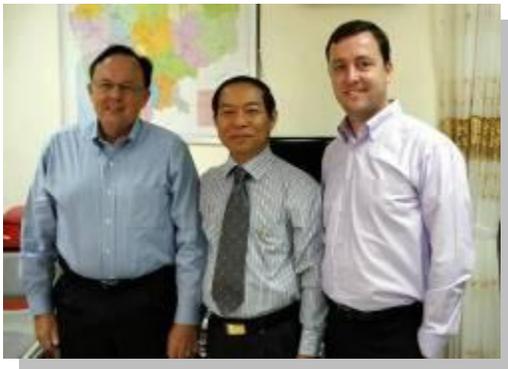
Mark Hammond, SohoFilms

Shunmay Young, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM)

Steve Bjorge, WHO Cambodia

Duong Socheat, Director CNM Cambodia

Chris Raymond, PQM consultant



Filmed interviews were conducted at the CNM in Phnom Penh interviewing Dr. Duong Socheat, Director of the CNM, as well as Shunmay Young of the LSHTM and Steve Bjorge of WHO Cambodia about the issue of substandard medicines and the emergence of drug resistance on the Thai-Cambodia border.

Meeting with MetaHouse and the Department of Drugs and Food at DDF Headquarters

Participants:

Nico Mesterharm, Director of MetaHouse and German-Cambodia Culture Center

Dr. Heng Bunkiet, DDF Director and chairman of IMC Secretariat

Eav Dararath, DDF Inspector

Christopher Raymond, PQM Consultant

A debriefing took place by MetaHouse and PQM to discuss the recent “Pharmacide Arts Project” which opened in July at the new MetaHouse exhibition hall. The opening was attended by the U.S. Ambassador to Cambodia, Hon. Carol A. Rodley, four other Ambassadors, and the Minister of Information, as well as national and international media. The DDF requested to be more integrally involved in the process of developing artwork in any future projects such as this.

Subsequent to the opening, the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs earmarked funding in the next fiscal year to expand the “Pharmacide Arts Project” to include Thailand,

Laos, and Vietnam. The Alliance Frances will then provide exhibition space for a traveling exhibition, which will also include the Cambodian exhibit (see [Annex 1](#)).

July 20, 2010

Filming for Pharmacide: the Mekong documentary, Pasteur Institute Cambodia

Participants:

Mark Hammond, SohoFilms

Chris Raymond, PQM consultant

The group filmed a sequence of Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) and microscopy of samples collected during FSAT in the zone 1 villages. All samples collected in the field subsequently go through testing and storage at the Pasteur Institute as part of the containment project.

Meeting with OPH at USAID, U.S. Embassy Cambodia

Participants:

Chantha Chak, Infectious Diseases Team Leader, OPH

Chris Raymond, PQM consultant

Dr. Chak and Mr. Raymond discussed work plan development, including the need for detailed costing explanations per activity. The work plan is also under review at RDM/A. USAID Cambodia wants to ensure that any overlapping activities which are funded separately by RDM/A and Cambodia should be clearly stated in the work plan. RDM/A will be funding malaria-related activities under the regional funding stream. Dr. Chak was also updated about the meeting with MetaHouse and the DDF.

July 21, 2010

Meetings at Lao FDD, and Interview of Dr Somthavy and Dr Somthavy at FDD, Vientiane, Laos

Participants:

Dr. Somthavy Changvisommid, Director Lao FDD

Dr. Sourisak, Head of QA Division Lao FDD

Thavy Atxayavong, Head of IEC Division, Lao FDD

Mr. Lamphet, Head of Drug Division, Lao FDQCC

Ms. Patsaly, Deputy Head of Drug Division, Lao FDQCC

Mr. Souksomhouane Chanthamat, PQM Focal Point, Lao FDD

Mark Hammond, SohoFilms

Chris Raymond, PQM consultant

The participants discussed the upcoming documentary filming in Vientiane and surrounding areas. It was agreed that Dr. Sourisak would be interviewed, along with Dr. Somthavy of the QA Division. In addition, Mr. Thavisack of the Customs department and Dr. Paul Newton of the Wellcome Trust unit would also be interviewed. The film team and FDD staff would go into the field to do drug inspections as well.

July 22-23, 2010

Filming for Pharmacide: the Mekong documentary, Vientiane and surrounds, Laos

Participants:

Mr. Souksomhouane Chanthamat, PQM Focal Point

Dr. Paul Newton, Wellcome Trust unit, Mahosot Hospital

Mr. Thavisack, Deputy Director, Legislative Division, Lao Customs Department

Mark Hammond, SohoFilms

Chris Raymond, PQM consultant



Dr. Newton and Mr. Thavisack were interviewed about the counterfeit medicines situation in Laos and in the region from a public health and customs perspective, respectively. In addition, the team carried out drug inspections in the Na Sai Thong district north of Vientiane at two pharmacies. At the Salong Pharmacy #3 a previously unknown, unregistered ampicillin product was discovered by the team. After discussing and interviewing the owner, Mr. Salong Chanphimpha and the FDD team confiscated the product which did not have any manufacturer's name or address on the blister packaging. The team brought the samples back to the Lao Food and Drug Quality Control Center (FDQCC) for initial screening testing at the lab.

Additionally, the team filmed at two category 1 pharmacies in Vientiane, interviewing the shop owners and discussing the issue of counterfeit medicines in Laos.

September 6-8 & 13, 2010

Filming for NBC Today Show, Pailin, Cambodia

Participants:

Ian William, NBC Asia Correspondent

Warangkana Chomchuen, NBC Production Coordinator

Najib Habib, WHO Cambodia

Chris Raymond, PQM consultant



The NBC Today Show production crew and correspondent accompanied Chris Raymond and Najib Habib into Pailin for a special feature story on drug resistant malaria on the Thai-Cambodia border. The news crew filmed FSAT activities, village malaria workers and bed net distribution, as well as local drug inspections. They also investigated the issue of the artesunate monotherapy ban, including finding some samples from local vendors which were supposed to have been out of circulation.

The team interviewed Chris Raymond in the border markets, discussing the issue of substandard medicines and the emergence of drug resistant malaria in this region. Topics also covered were the importance of screening and testing of medicines, the crucial role of the national committees

and interministerial cooperation to ensure enforcement against counterfeit medicines, and the USAID-supported PQM program which helps to detect counterfeit medicines in the marketplace.

Follow up interviews took place on September 13 at the Bureau of Drugs and Narcotics laboratory of the Ministry of Public Health, Thailand. The news crew followed the testing of two artesunate monotherapy samples which were purchased during their field visits in Cambodia. Initial screening of the products showed that they contained the correct API; however, there may have been degradation of the product as the TLC spots of



the samples looked to contain less than 80% of the stated content. During the interview, it was made clear that these were preliminary results, and that compendial testing would be required for definitive results. However, it was also stressed that these monotherapy products are banned and therefore technically illegal and should not be sold in the private sector in Cambodia.

Next Steps

- Return to Laos to follow the case of the unregistered ampicillin and to conduct filming in more remote provincial sites
- Return to Cambodia for further filming in Phnom Penh and other possible provincial sites
- Seek permission to film sequences in Vietnam
- Begin interviews and sequences in Thailand
- Await air date for the NBC Today Show special feature, possibly by late October 2010



Pharmacide Arts Project

An exhibition by eleven Cambodian artists



MetaHouse Cambodia
June 24-July 17, 2010

Pharmacide Arts Project

ច្បាប់សាយដី

សិល្បករកម្ពុជា ឈឹម សុផិ, ហេន សុផល, ហាន រដ្ឋា, កង់ វិស័កុណី, ពេជ្រ សុភាព, លាង ស៊ីកន, ឈឹម សុខចាន់សីណា, អៀ សុតន្ទទេវី, សុស្តិ សុដារី និង សុត្តន្ត ពិម័ត្ត បានចូលរួមចំណែកស្នាដៃសំរាប់គម្រោងសិល្បៈ "ហ្គាម៉ាសាយដី" ដែលផ្តោតទៅលើគ្រោះថ្នាក់នៃឱសថក្លែងក្លាយ។ គម្រោងនេះត្រូវបានទ្រទ្រង់ដោយ USAID, Cathy Wills (ឥស្សតករប្រតិបត្តិ) និង the Cecil and Hilda Lewis Charitable Trust ។

យោងតាមអង្គការសុខភាពពិភពលោក (WHO) ទីផ្សារឱសថក្លែងក្លាយពិភពលោកអាចឈានទៅដល់ ៧៥ កោដិដុល្លារក្នុងឆ្នាំ ២០១០ ដែលកើនឡើងចំនួន ៥០ភាគរយ បើធៀបនឹងឆ្នាំ ២០០៥។ ក្នុងចំណោមការចាប់បានចំនួន ១ ០៤៧ ករណីច្រើនជាង ៤០ភាគរយ ដែលធ្វើឡើងជាអន្តរជាតិ និង ពាក់ព័ន្ធនឹងឱសថក្លែងក្លាយ គឺធ្វើនៅទ្វីបអាស៊ី។ នៅប្រទេសកម្ពុជា ការប្រយុទ្ធប្រឆាំងនឹងឱសថក្លែងក្លាយ នៅមានការហាមព្រម និង ជាប្រធានបទដ៏រសើបមួយ។ ប៉ុន្តែយើងមិនប្រកែកទេដែលថា ប្រទេសនេះនៅតែបន្តទទួលរងគ្រោះដែលបណ្តាលមកពីឱសថក្លែងក្លាយ និងមិនមានគុណភាពនោះ។ ប្រជាជនតែងតែជំនឿនគ្រោះដំបូងពីការប្រើថ្នាំទាំងនោះ។ វិទិត្រករ អ្នកចតុប អ្នករចនាក្រាហ្វិក និងអ្នកចំណាក់កម្ពុជាឈ្លីៗ កំពុងលើកកំពស់ការយល់ដឹងអំពីបញ្ហាសំខាន់នេះ តាមរយៈស្នាដៃផ្សេងៗដ៏សំបូរបែបរបស់ ពួកគាត់។

PHARMACIDE

In a broad variety of mediums, these new works by Chhim Sothy, Hen Sophal, Han Ratha, Kong Volleak, Pich Sopheap, Leang Seckon, Lim Sokchan Lina, Ouer Sokuntevy, Suos Sodavy and Sokuntak Piteak contribute an artistic perspective on the health risk dangers brought about by the growing proliferation of substandard and counterfeit medicines being trafficked throughout the Greater Mekong Region.

According to the WHO, the world market for fake pharmaceuticals will reach 75 billion dollars in 2010 - a 90% increase in only the last five years. More than 40% of the 1,047 global counterfeit medicine-linked arrests were made in Asia, with the elusive source of these fake medications thought to be mainly in China and India. In Cambodia the fight against fake medicines is only beginning and for the most part, the general public is unaware that counterfeit and substandard pharmaceuticals have penetrated the local marketplace.

As this deadly menace grows, there is need for a call to public awareness as there is no denying that Cambodia has suffered at the deadly hands of these traffickers, particularly with substandard anti-malarials, and indeed their victims can be found in all walks of society.

The Pharmacide Arts Project is supported by US Pharmacopeia, USAID, Cathy Wills and the Cecil and Hilda Lewis Charitable Trust, UK.

Hen Sophal

Pharmacy in Cambodia

Cambodian people are facing a problem affecting their health by eating chemical-laced food. Vegetables, fruits, fish and meat containing chemical poisons can cause serious illness. Medicine, another daily commodity, should also be free from unwanted additives, and must be checked and controlled by the Ministry of Health,

Many of the victims of substandard medicines are poor Cambodian people. Because of this new reality, I created my painting to show to the public the various, if not nefarious facets of the medicine business in Cambodia. In my painting I want to raise awareness for Cambodian people by showing the potential problems in using counterfeit medicine. I hope that Cambodian people will understand clearly about the dangers brought about by using fake medicine, and I hope this painting will remind them to think about where they purchase their medicines.



Lim Sokchanlina

Untitled

In very strong sun light... on a dusty road...a doctor sells medicine.

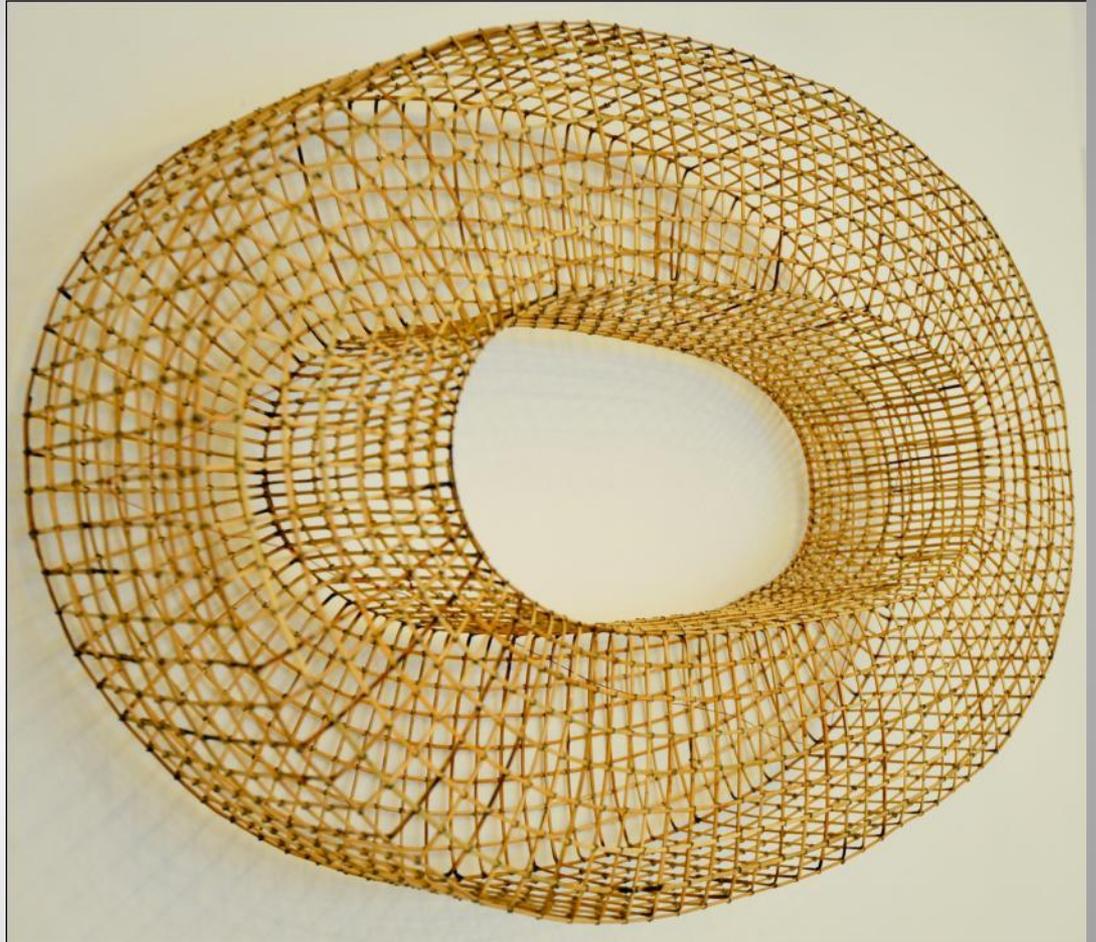
Under these conditions the medicines will be destroyed. One should not buy any medicines exposed to these conditions.



Pich Sopheap

Pills

No Statement



Sukuntak Piteak

Counterfeit medicine sellers are Murderer

The reason that I made this painting is because I wanted to show the daily living conditions of Cambodians, specifically people who are using medicines everyday without knowing whether these medicines are of good quality or not, without considering whether the place where they buy these medicines is safe. There are many unlicensed drug sellers who sell medicine for a cheap price, and some who even know that the medicines they sell are counterfeit - medicines that can kill, not cure. It's because of their greed that they don't care; it's all in the name of turning a profit. In my painting I want to let people understand that whenever they go to buy medicine they need to be sure that the medicine is of good quality, or fake, and if they are sick they need to go to see the doctor or health center to make sure they are taking is safe. The painting also show the health risks of using counterfeit medicine for if the people keep taking fake medicine they can destroy their health, if not their



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HANH RATHAK

Come to help or to kill

Medicine has a duality quality to it, like a double-edge sword or weapon with two faces. Either it can kill you, or save your life depending on the quality of the drug. Medicine is like a tool to use at our disposal - some illegally sell it to make money at the expense of a patient's life, while others legitimately dispense it to genuinely relieve people of their illness.

"Faces" 40cm x 60cm

The smiley and the sad faces is another famous icon that everyone has high frequency exposure to seeing. And we all can relate to happiness and sadness because we constantly express these emotions through out our daily life.

"Face Off" 30cm x 45cm

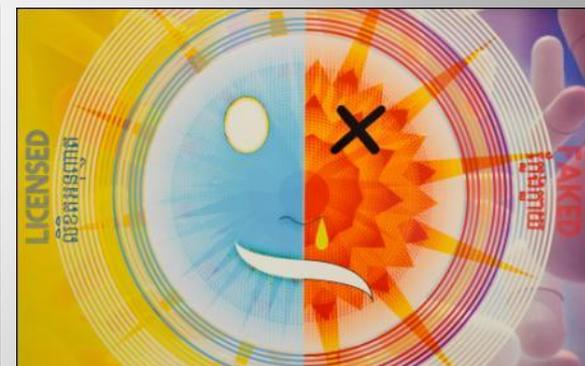
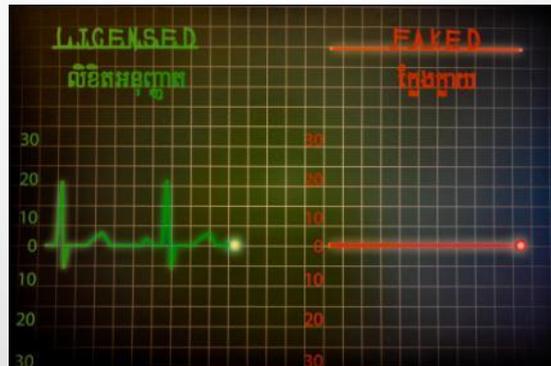
In this piece, I depict a famous video game icon, Mr. Pac-man, facing off his counterpart, Mr. Pac-deadman. Licensed versus faked medicine.

"Pillman" sculptural piece

How can you tell which is real and which is not? Just to bring some awareness to the general public about what is out there. No, I am not saying you should stop taking drug.

"Pulse" 30cm x 40cm

EKG is an electrical equipment use to measure a patient heart rate. Zigzag is a sign for life, while flatling is sign of no life. Licensed versus faked.



Sokuntevy Oeur

APATHY

No statement



Chhim Sothy

Pharmacy in Cambodia

Nowadays, fake drugs can cause a great danger to people's health. Fake drug users die every year and today this is a life threatening issue that the government needs to pay attention to. Lack of proper control and poor enforcement of relevant institutions, manufacturers, distributors, and unauthorized pharmacies, still prevails.

Sales are ongoing, and both urban and rural, and not just uneducated people purchase fake and ineffective drugs daily. This can seriously harm their health because of their substandard nature of these medicines.

Opportunists, who think only as to how to gain the most money, have actively imported expired and counterfeit drugs to distribute throughout Cambodia. For our national well-being, I hope that may the government takes strict measures against on counterfeit traffickers as these distributors are akin to killers..



Sous Sodavy

Death or life with medications?

Medicines can easily be transported and sold and for those without morals, fake medicines can easily be trafficked and sold to an unsuspecting public. In the painting you will see a mountain of counterfeit medicines around the world that are in fact used by many people everyday in their daily lives, For the people using these fake medicines without knowing their true nature, they put their health at risk. If you look to the person taking the white and black medicines you will imagine you are wearing white dress and standing around the dead bodies, and in the painting you will see also the person taking the colorful medicine, keep increasing.



Kong Volleak

Say "No" to the counterfeit medicines

The uncontrollable greed and ambition of a number of people push them to commit various crimes by which many poor people are victims. In this way, medicine is a two-faced weapon that can either save or kill human lives. Even more serious is the production of the counterfeit drugs. It is an illegal act and serious crime that can take people's lives. This artwork serves as a message appealing to the whole of humanity to stop all production of counterfeit drugs and stop this illicit trade and turn back to the generosity and love in order to live together in a world without such drugs. This artwork also reflects my belief that the counterfeiting of drugs is a crime and we the consumers are its victims. Please buy drugs from any legally authorized pharmacy.



Leang Seckon

Poisonous Flower

The rice field full of the water with beautiful water lily. All the alive creatures in the water, buffalo and me are busy looking for food.

I have wash my hands and ready to take the water for drinking but the blue poison in the water get in to my head and the whole body and it spread into all the plants around and the fresh attractive color.....and gourd that the people eating. DDT medicine have killed a lot of crabs and the baby of the buffalo which just born for 10 days was died too and I was so sad because the poison medicine is still in me nothing can help. The land which always bring the glory with beautiful plants but now I do not see any more those plants, the land become destroyed because of the chemical but the farmer still need it.



Pharmacide Arts Project

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