



What's in a face? We have an innate tendency to pay attention to faces from birth. Our brains are fine-tuned to perceive, recognize and remember them - it is one of the reasons you can find a good friend in a busy street, or pick out your parents in a crowd. Asian faces have an incredible diversity of beautiful design, reflecting the region's varied cultures and histories. **Inbound Asia Magazine** celebrates them with the help of selected regional photographers.



Gracious welcome of a man, Kerala, India (2002)

Gesine Unverzagt

Photographer, 'Faces of Asia-Traces of Life' Photo Exhibition 2010
Renaissance Resort & Spa, Koh Samui

"I love Asia because of its spirituality - there is always more than you see at the first glimpse. What interests me in portrait photos is not only beauty but what there is behind, the lifeline of suffering and joy that creates a personality. Most of the time I try to speak to the people I would like to photograph, even if I don't speak the same language. Through my photographs I try to find who people are and not what they are pretending to be.

I would not say that I approach Asian cultures in a different way with my photography, just always with a smile. What I have learned after all these years of travelling to foreign countries is that you can learn from every single person, so meeting people with humbleness, to me is the way to encounter. Unlike many other parts of the world, Asians are mostly friendly, curious and open-minded towards a camera because they love to take photos so much themselves.

I cannot pick out any particularly memorable face I have photographed. Every picture tells a story and reminds me of the situation it was taken - with every single person there has been a special relationship."

www.gesine-unverzagt.de

www.renaissancekohsamui.com



Beauty in Mumbai, India (2006)



The smoke of which dreams are made,
Uttarakhand, India (2008)



Fashionable lady in Hanoi, Vietnam (2007)



Beauty in Mumbai, India (2006)



Confident girl, Rajasthan, India (2000)



The pleasure of a cheroot cigar, Bagan,
Myanmar (2010)



Skeptic in Guangxi, China (2006)





Chalit Masanglong

Photographer & Artist, Thailand

“I tell all of my subjects to act naturally and imagine I have vanished. Once you get past the initial awkward stage of someone being self-conscious, they quickly revert to their natural character and behaviour, so patience in photography is definitely a virtue. To me, nowhere offers better opportunities for portrait photography in Asia than the south of Thailand. Women are my favourite subject, especially Muslim girls in traditional dress. Being Thai and Muslim myself, I have a very deep appreciation of my religion and culture; it is probably the subject I feel most comfortable capturing, and I enjoy presenting it in a beautiful and positive way. Taking shots of people I am familiar with helps me convey character and emotion. I just ask them to continue with whatever they are doing, and when the moment is right, press the shutter.”

Young Muslim girls in Bangkok, Thailand (2010)
Models: NuRynn, Nas, May, Nuch



Chinese tribal exhibition, Kunming, China (2009)



Chinese tribal exhibition, Kunming, China (2009)



Muser kids, Tak, Thailand (2008)



Pretty face, Chiang Rai, Thailand (2008)



Dai girl, Kunming, China (2009)



Chinese tribal exhibition, Kunming, China (2009)



Muser woman, Tak, Thailand (2008)



Chinese tribal exhibition, Kunming, China (2009)



Tai Lue girl, Kunming, China (2009)



Chinese tribal exhibition, Kunming, China (2009)

Vatcharin Tavornwong

Photographer, Asia

“Eye contact is the most important thing for me in portrait photography, so I like to get really close up to my subjects. Eyes create a connection between the subject and the viewer, a bond that transcends the medium of the image, especially when light reflects on them – it helps make the subject come alive on the paper. Light is also a useful tool in creating character and feeling by highlighting specific features or interesting shapes.

Wrinkles are a favourite subject of mine. One of the most memorable faces I have ever captured was that of my Grandmother; she brought me up and was my first subject when I began to start taking my photography seriously.

Asia is perhaps most ideal for the photography of costumes and tribal outfits though, with different traditions and variations distinct even from village to village.

Although it is tempting to stick with familiar faces when taking photographs, strangers are a challenging but rewarding subject for photography because with fresh eyes you can see their uniqueness right away.”





Kecak dancer, Bali, Indonesia (2007)



P'O woman, Sagar, Myanmar (2007)



Buddhist monk, Thimphu, Bhutan (2007)



Yi woman, Lijiang, China (2007)



Chinese girl, Lijiang, China (2007)



Burmese girl, Bagan, Myanmar (2007)



Yi woman, Zhongdian, China (2007)



Balinese girl preparing for a dance performance (2007)



Flower Hmong woman, Sapa, Vietnam (2009)



Cambodian girl, Siem Reap, Cambodia (2008)



Akha woman, Northern Thailand (1993)



Karen Padaung girl, Mae Hong San, Thailand (1993)



Sri Lankan dancer, Kandy, Sri Lanka (2009)



Black Yao woman, Sapa, Vietnam (2009)



Red Yao child, Xiaozhai, China (2009)



Rajasthani man, Jaisalmer, India (2010)



Holy man, Kathmandu, Nepal (1999)



Ifagao tribal elder, Banaue, Philippines (1993)



Shan boy just ordained as a novice monk (2010)



Woman dressed for Chinese opera, Hong Kong (1996)



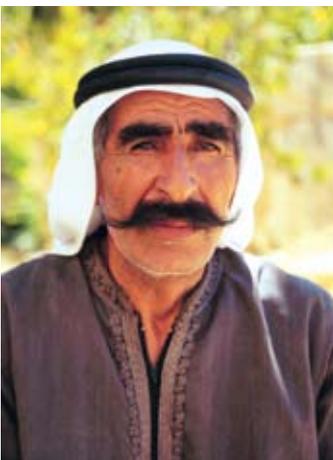
Flower Hmong girl, Sapa, Vietnam (2009)



Red Yao woman, Xiaozhai, China (2009)



Geisha, Kyoto, Japan (2010)



Lebanese man, Baalbek, Lebanon (1999)



Rajasthani woman, Jaaisalmer, India (2010)



Akha woman, Kengtung, Myanmar (2010)

Jay Tindall

Co-founder Remote Lands, Inc. & Asia travel specialist

“Few places have as much diversity of people and places as Asia. Regional cultures such as tribal people, are disappearing quickly, and it is important to capture them before they have been changed forever. When taking photographs, I always respect the subject matter – whether it is a person, a temple, or some special activity. You will usually get much better photos that way.

The most important thing when taking photos of strangers is to get close! I rarely try to sneak snapshots, unless I’m in a situation where there is no other way. It is always better to talk to people, make them comfortable with you, and then the door opens up for the best photo opportunities.

I know what my reaction would be if someone I don’t know came up to me and stuck a camera in my face so I try not to do that to others unless I have their permission (either openly or at least some sort of visual acknowledgement).

Any face can be a good face. It is more about the story it tells and the emotion it conveys. One that stands out for me was a 95 year old Yi minority woman in Yunnan, China. She was the mother of one of the few remaining shamens in the entire area and they both invited me into their home for a ceremony. She didn’t have a single tooth in her mouth and spoke no English of course, but she was incredibly friendly and animated. I really felt privileged to have that experience.”

www.remotelands.com