



## TRADITIONAL ARTS & ETHNOLOGY CENTRE

Media Release August 2013

### ***Carving a Community: The Katu People***

### **A new exhibition opens at the Traditional Arts and Ethnology Centre, Luang Prabang**

**LUANG PRABANG, LAOS** – On the 20<sup>th</sup> September 2013, the Traditional Arts & Ethnology Centre (TAEC) will open a new exhibit entitled *Carving a Community: The Katu People*. The exhibit is the first in the former royal capital of Laos to highlight the distinct cultural traits and crafts of this ethnic minority group residing in southern Laos and the central highlands of Vietnam.

Intricate weavings and basketry and bold woodcarving created by the Katu people are highlights of the exhibit. Of special interest is the carved decoration of the Katu communal meetinghouse. Traditionally, the meetinghouse was the focal point of the village, where members of the community gather to carry out important rites, including buffalo sacrifice. Videos of this annual ritual and daily activities allow visitors to witness the folkways of the Katu.

Funded by a grant from the US Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation, TAEC has collaborated with the Institute of Sociological Research of the Lao PDR, the University of Gothenburg-Sweden, and the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology to conduct research and present this exhibit on the culture and lifestyle of this little known group. The exhibit consolidates research from renowned scholars from these international institutions carried out in the last twenty years, including fieldwork by TAEC earlier in 2013.

#### **About the Traditional Arts & Ethnology Centre:**

The Traditional Arts & Ethnology Centre is a museum dedicated to the preservation of cultural diversity in Laos. Its location is in Ban Khamyong, Luang Prabang, Laos, and is open Tuesday – Sunday from 9.00am until 6.00pm (closed Sundays). Admission is 25,000 Lao kip per person and free for Lao citizens.



This will be the eleventh exhibition TAEC has created since opening in 2007. *Carving a Community: The Katu People* will be on display at TAEC for one year, and entry is included in the regular museum ticket price.

Also at TAEC, the Museum Shop sells fairly traded handicrafts from over 600 village artisans and Le Patio Café serves a selection of ethnic minority food, drinks and cakes.



*Traditional Arts and Ethnology Centre's main exhibition galleries.*

Open: 9.00am – 6.00pm, Tuesday – Sunday (closed Mondays).  
Entry: 20,000 Kip, free for Lao citizens.  
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