



Happy New Year!



left: Black Necked Cranes
Shangri-La, China
Right: Tibetan Mastiff



Canon Singapore Takes Aspiring Young Documentary Filmmakers on Conservation Film Expedition to China

December 2007 saw six students from Singapore's Nanyang Technological University's (NTU) School of Art, Design & Media (ADM), venture into the Tibetan region of Yunnan - China, on an exciting & ground-breaking expedition to make two conservation films - on the black necked crane, & the Tibetan mastiff.

This event, funded & initiated by Canon Singapore, was organised in association with Wildlife Asia & NTU. The films were on two projects run by the China Exploration & Research Society (CERS), whose President is Wong How Man, Patron of Wildlife Asia. Both crane & mastiff are highly endangered & the issues affecting them quite complex - thus allowing the students great scope to make compelling films. The finished films are to be used for educational purposes by CERS.

Wildlife Asia's Executive Director Chris Dickinson led the expedition, contributing his knowledge & enthusiasm to the learning experience.

The student teams comprised: Mastiff Team - Ellen Tay, Felice Tang, Danny Lim; Crane Team - Boo Xinying, Joseph Peng & Kenny Tan, with NTU Asst. Prof. Scott Hessels & lecturer Jan-Christoph Daniel.



The crane team filming with the Canon XL-H1 & 70-200mm EF lens



Tibetan vultures putting on a great show



The mastiff team in action with the Canon XL-H1



Chile the Mastiff - How Man's most famous dog



Wong How Man being interviewed at the mastiff kennels

Prof Isaac Kerlow, Founding Dean of the School of ADM, said:

"NTU's School of ADM is proud to be chosen by Canon Singapore to create films that will raise public support & awareness of How Man's conservation efforts. In a time when environmental issues are very crucial, the students will have rare access to one of the most remote & visually stunning projects on the planet."

Not only were the students able to provide a service to CERS by filming two of their projects, but the expedition also provided them with an extraordinary & unique learning experience that: pushed them out of their comfort zones; allowed them to embrace new working methods & gave them a real taste of the demanding reality of documentary film production.

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Students on location at the Napahai reserve, Zhongdian, with cranes in the background



Cranes in flight

The 2007 Filming Expedition, sponsored by Canon Singapore, run in association with Nanyang Technological University's School of Art, Design & Media, & Wildlife Asia.



Canon seeks to preserve the natural environment with a host of environmentally friendly research & manufacturing policies, which reduce waste & preserve the environment. The filmmaking expedition, organized by Canon's Johnny Ng & funded entirely by Canon Singapore, expands on that philosophy by using Canon cameras to make films that will help advance conservation issues & introduce the next generation of Singaporean filmmakers to the possibilities of digital cinema.



Prayer flags on a mountain pass



Our team attract interest from local children



The Canon XL-H1 in action with Canon 70-200 mm EF lens

Throughout the ten-day shoot, the students filmed with Canon XL-H1 HDV cameras, which were accompanied by a range of excellent Canon EF zoom & telephoto lenses, thus enabling them to get the all-important close-ups!

At night work continued - viewing rushes on Final Cut Pro running on their Apple MacBook Pro's. This enabled the students an excellent opportunity to assess the day's shoot & plan for the following day.



Students reviewing rushes on location on Apple's Final Cut Pro

All-in-all the filming expedition was a great success - and despite the gruelling schedule and tough conditions the students are already asking about further filming opportunities!

The students will spend the next couple of months editing the films, with premiere screenings pencilled in for March.

A central tenet to Wildlife Asia's mission is to inspire new Asian conservation & environmental filmmakers, & we couldn't have asked for a better start to what will be an ongoing commitment to motivate a new breed of filmmakers in Singapore & beyond. And of course we have to thank Johnny Ng & Canon Singapore for showing the vision and commitment to make this all possible!

Thanks also to Wong How Man & the superb staff at CERS for making us so welcome, & for providing such great logistic support. And a very well done to the students of NTU for doing such a great job.

Stay tuned for more-such projects in the future!



Chris Dickinson being interviewed about the initiative by Channel News Asia



Boo under the spotlight with Channel News Asia



Group photo. From left: Danny, Joseph, Ellen, Felice, Boo, Johnny, Scott, Chris, Jan, Kenny.