



Sanchai Noichan (left) and Atippatai Suwan, award winners of the Asia Digital Art Awards 2011.
Photo courtesy of Ayudhya Allianz CP

Atippatai Suwan and Sanchai Noichan have a head full of imagination. And fortunately, they both have a good means to unleash their fantasies.

“Animated graphics involves imagination that does not just stay inside your head but it is visible on the screen. Yet it is not just motion graphics. For me, it is something that captures our soul, as well,” said Atippatai, 28, founder of Creative Max Studio, a computer graphics and animated feature production house.

“Animated graphics is moving art that is created to satisfy the need of the creator, the viewers or both,” added Sanchai Noichan, 21, a year-four student at the Faculty of Information Technology, King Mongkut’s Institute of Technology Ladkrabang.

Atippatai and Sanchai are amateur animators who won the top title from the Asia Digital Art Awards 2011 held in Japan. Established in Fukuoka, the competition welcomes contestants from countries in the Asia-Pacific region and aims at developing digital art and design and dispersing knowledge from Asia to the rest of the world.

The Asia Digital Art Awards, however, was not the first competition platform the pair showed off their skills to the public. Before being announced winners of the recent contest, Atippatai won the Excellence Prize at the 2007 Thailand Animation Contest organised by Ayudhya Allianz CP when he was a year-four student at Rajamangala



A scene from *Rising of the Bangkok Hero*.
Photo courtesy of Atippatai Suwan

University of Technology Thanyaburi's Faculty of Mass Communication Technology. Sanchai, on the other hand, won the Commendation Award and the Popular Vote Award from the same contest in 2009 and 2010 respectively.

According to Ayudhya Allianz CP's chief marketing management officer Patchara Taveechaiwattana, the Thailand Animation Contest was initiated in 2007 with an objective to encourage new-face animators to develop their creativity and upgrade Thailand's feature animation production in order to pave way for the future of the country's animation industry.

"We want the younger generations to gain more knowledge outside the classrooms. At the same time, we also want to encourage them to spend their leisure time wisely. This was the idea behind the initiation of the Thailand Animation Contest project," explained Patchara, adding that topics of the contest usually involve social issues to encourage youths to share their perspectives and come up with solutions for these social problems.

Following five consecutive years of the Thailand Animation Contest, Ayudhya Allianz CP recently joined hands with the National Electronics and Computer Technology Centre (Nectec) in setting up "Talent Development Programme for International Animation Contest", an advanced six-day training programme for 30 winners of the Thailand Animation Contest between 2007 and 2011.

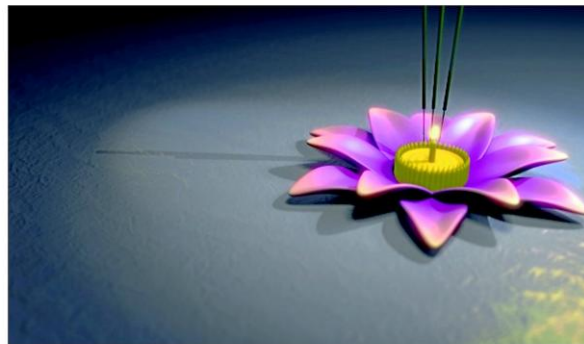
● Continued on page 9

● Continued from page 1

The training programme is aimed at prompting them for the production of more sophisticated creative works and for their participation in the Asia Digital Art Award. Prof Shigekazu Sakai from the Graduate School of Global Information and Telecommunication Studies, Waseda University, in Japan provided training for participants during the workshop.

Atippatai and Sanchai were two of the selected participants to join the advanced training session — and their perseverance eventually paid off. They defeated almost 1,000 other entries submitted to the Asia Digital Art Award from 10 different countries.

A native of Si Sa Ket, Atippatai won the Excellence Prize from the contest for his animated piece *Rising of the Bangkok Hero*. The work, he said, reflects Thai society that is full of crime and violence as seen on the front pages of newspapers on a daily basis. Atippatai



Still images from *Buddhist Elation*. Courtesy of Sanchai Noichan

therefore came up with a superhero who fights villains in the capital and regains peace and order for the people.

"I've loved superhero comics since I was a young boy," said the Excellence Prize winner about the inspiration for his work. "A superhero is a symbol of hope. And in a society where situations worsen, I think we all need a hero to fight the bad guys and lift the people's spirits back up."

A native of Phetchabun province, Sanchai won the Finalist Prize at the Asia Digital Art Award for his soundslide *Buddhist Elation*.

"I personally like anything that represents Thainess," said Sanchai. "And for me, Buddhism is one element of Thainess. Even though Buddhism can be found in many other countries around the world such as China, Japan and India, in my work, I wanted to portray my own interpretation of Buddhism in a Thai way."

When asked about his take on the computer graphics industry in Thailand, Atippatai was of the opinion that it has yet to gear towards the right direction.

Although several computer graphic production houses have been established, most of them adopt a working system from abroad. Another problem is that Thailand still lacks good material that can be transformed into great animated features.

"At a typical comics publishing house in Japan, each day there are hundreds of manuscripts sent in from writers. The company will then choose from those copies until they find ones that are good enough to be published as manga. And for animated features, the production house chooses again from these good published comics. This is how they get good material for production," Atippatai noted.

“ The key is to
find a balance
between technology
and imagination

SANCHAI NOICHAN

And according to Atippatai, the heart of animated features is not all about good drawings, nice colours and all that but rather it is all about interesting stories that can draw attention from the audience and glue them to the television no matter how beautiful the drawings.

"Famous animated cartoons such as the *Dragon Ball* series or *Doraemon* is very popular among audiences worldwide not because of their drawings. Just like other fans of these cartoons, I watch them because the stories are fun and interesting. So for Thai animators to create good animated features, I think they need to spend a lot more time thinking about the plots and storytelling. Technique is not the first priority," Atippatai added.

As a year-four student who spends most of his time on numerous coursework at university, Sanchai said that time and dedication are the most important ingredients when it comes to producing quality animated features.

"Thailand's educational system only puts emphasis on coursework. When I visited a university in Japan, I saw stu-

dents spending two years on one particular project. In Thailand, university students are assigned something like 10 projects per semester. The Thai education system has pros and cons. One good thing is that we are able to learn about many things. But the downside of such a system is the fact that we have no chance to go deep into each area or subject," commented Sanchai.

When asked whether the younger generations these days are too obsessed with technology, Sanchai said that technology is like a double-edged sword, and that it is vital to use it wisely. And to do so, his secret is to find a meeting point for technology and artistic sense. This then, according to him, can make the impossible possible.

"These days we are surrounded by technology everywhere we go. We cannot turn a blind eye to it. But of course, too much technology is not good. So I think the key is to find a balance between technology and imagination. And if we can find a good mix between these two, it can create something that is impossible to see in reality."

Bangkok Post

Bangkok Post
Circulation: 70,000
Ad Rate: 1,500

Section: Life/First Page

Date: Monday 14 May 2012

Volume: - **No:** -

Page(s): 1 (Center), 9

Col.Inch: 184.48 **Ad Value:** 276,720

PRValue (x3): 830,160

Clip: Full Color

Headline: WHEN IMAGINATION MEETS TECHNOLOGY

สรุปข่าว:

เนคเทค ร่วมกับ บมจ.อยุธยา อลิอันซ์ ซี.พี. ประกันชีวิต และมูลนิธิ ๕ ธันวาคมหาราช นำเยาวชนผู้ชนะเลิศโครงการ "ไทยแลนด์ เอนิเมชั่น คอนเทสต์" โดย อยุธยาออลิอันซ์ ซี.พี." ซึ่งถ้วยพระราชทานสมเด็จพระเทพรัตนราชสุดาฯ สยามบรมราชกุมารี หัวข้อ "คนรุ่นใหม่หัวใจรักโลก" ร่วมเดินทางไปศึกษางานด้านแอนิเมชัน ณ ประเทศญี่ปุ่นเป็นเวลา 6 วัน