

Project Pineapple

March 10, 2009 by dominiquelyons



PROJECT PINEAPPLE.
An Easy Ride through Indochina.

Lift the carpet.
Remove the bombies.
Repair the damage.

Hanoi 19th March 2009 –
HoChiMinh City 30th April 2009.

Dominique Lyons was born in Cardiff in 1984, the youngest of 7 children. Showing a keen interest in both photography and politics in her teens, she went on to graduate from University Falmouth of Art and Design in 2007 earning a BA(Hons) in Photography. Specialising in documentary, she directed her theoretical study to the subject of the powers of photography during the Vietnam War.

"I first became really passionate about photography when I was 14 and I saw Nick Ut's image of the Vietnamese girl fleeing her napalmed village naked. I had seen the image before but I don't think I ever looked closely enough. That image, along with all the other photographs that emerged from that time stirred international disgust about the events in Vietnam. It caused the collapse of America's home front. They helped stop a war. That's when I realised what a powerful tool photography could be"

In 2009, an estimated 76 million cluster bombs (bombies) remain from the 'carpet bombing' carried out during the Vietnam War. Unexploded ordnance litters acres of land in Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia, scattered like seeds, ready to explode. And they do. Every week.

Handicap International estimates that 98% of the victims have been civilians, 27% children. Children are attracted to them because they are often brightly coloured. Many look rather like toy pineapples.....more numerous and insidious than landmines.

On average, 10 children have died every month during the last 33 years.

On average 120 people a year die in Laos alone from unexploded ordnance

On 3rd December last year 94 countries, including 18 of the 26 NATO member nations, signed The Convention on Cluster Munitions. Otherwise known as the Oslo Treaty, the Convention seeks to ban cluster bombs and assist the victims.

“As Westerners we can make ourselves heard, the victims of these menacing weapons that are polluting the lands of Indochina don't have the opportunity to assert their inflicted injustices. It is our responsibility to pressure Governments to act and get these lands cleared. Children are dying. It is our responsibility to give them a voice.”

Project Pineapple (PP) is planning a peaceful event to publicize the issue of these unexploded ordnances (UXOs). Increased awareness will help to mobilize the support necessary to clean up the mess, support the victims and educate locals to know how to deal with what they find. It is hoped to add more signatories to the Treaty. It is hoped to give the people of Indochina a voice.

Project Pineapple will take the form of an 'Easy Ride' by motorbike enthusiasts. The riders will carry a pineapple from the starting point in Hanoi, Vietnam, through Laos and Cambodia, ending in Ho Chi Minh City. Stops will be made along the way, meeting with local charities, clearance companies and victims of the weapons.

“I will document the ride and all I see along the way. I will document the people, the land, the damage. So I invite you on this journey and I invite you to act, and help rid the world of these menacing weapons through the quest of Project Pineapple.”

Snapperstuff has sponsored Dominique with pouches and belt from the Think Tank Photo Skin range in order to help her access her camera gear easily and quickly while travelling by motor bike. The fully seam sealed rain covers will also help protect her equipment from the heavy rains.

You can follow Dominique's journey here: <http://dominiquelyons.wordpress.com/>

For further information: <http://www.geocities.com/project.pineapple/>

