



THE SPLENDOR OF YAO TEXTILES

A Multi-media Presentation
By Victoria Vorreiter

Saturday, 11 November 2023



The Yao ethnic collective represents a diverse multiplicity of Mien and Mun subgroups, which likely originated in the mountains of Northeast China. Over the following millennia they migrated in a southerly trajectory along the great rivers of Asia, spreading throughout central and eastern China before further fanning out among the foothills and lowlands of the Golden Triangle - northern Vietnam, Laos, and Thailand.

Since the first ancestors, the Yao have kept their history and culture alive through magnificent oral, literary, and artistic traditions. Among these, clothing fabrication and silver-smithing are as exceptional as they are distinctive. Whether worn for everyday tasks, cycles-of-life events, festive celebrations, or sacred rites, Yao attire reveals the unique and timeless identity of the Yao people.

At the same time their richly adorned garments - robes, tunics, and trousers, bags, sashes, belts, and headdresses, as well as the intricate shimmering silver jewelry that embellishes them - shine a spotlight on the consummate skills of the master Yao crafts-women and - men who meticulously, lovingly create them.

Victoria Vorreiter's life in music has taken several forms in search of the heart response to melody and rhythm. Trained as a violinist who performed professionally in orchestras, Victoria specialized in the Suzuki Method, inspiring young people through the Mother Tongue principle, in essence, through 'oral tradition.' This led to teaching positions in England, France, and the US, and speaking engagements around the world.

Victoria then turned her eye to documenting world music. Following her first film, *The Music of Morocco and the Cycles of Life*, in 2002, she moved to Chiang Mai to preserve the ancestral music and culture of the ethnic groups in Laos, Myanmar, and Thailand. Two decades of documenting in remote mountain villages has given rise to the Songs of Memory archive, a sweeping body of work that includes books (*Songs of Memory* and *Hmong Songs of Memory*), photos, films, recordings, collections of musical instruments and textiles, and multi-media exhibitions.

The Songs vision evolves now as Victoria launches Cultural Crossroads Asia, a dynamic center of ancestral culture whose mission is to preserve the tangible traditions of the past while sustaining the intangible arts and wisdom by engaging indigenous village youth to lead it into the future. www.TribalMusicAsia.com www.CulturalCrossroadsAsia.org

Venue: The Siam Society
Under Royal Patronage
131 Asoke Montri Rd (Sukhumvit 21)
4th floor Lecture Room

Time: 10:00 am

Thai Textile Society Members: B300 Non-members: B400

For information and reservation contact bkk.tts@gmail.com



Victoria and Kim Mun Lantien Sha Girls, Laos