

Imagining Social Revolution- a Theatre and Storytelling Performance on the Meaning of Home in Maesot

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Abstract

Alexander Horstmann reports from a series of workshops on performing arts and storytelling that Alexander has conducted with displaced Burmese youth and democracy activists at Joy House in Mae Sot, Northwestern Thailand, and from the narratives in which the participants have imagined and presented the social revolution in the performance "Our Home, our Place" on the meaning of home in the context of displacement and exile. Based on storytelling, the participants of my workshop took the performance into their own hands by writing a very

beautiful script about stories of memory, pain, and loss, about the talisman, and new beginnings at the community center Joy House- a place by Burmese for Burmese. My presentation is about the way that the new Myanmar Diaspora from the City imagines home and appropriates home, becoming an active agent and individual expressing emotions on the stage and leaving the victim/ refugee role and asserting Burmese identity. Performing allowed participants to be visible, gain dignity, and tell the story/ tragedy of Myanmar in a performative form. For a moment, participants were able to forget their insecure status in Thailand and create a public space.