**Press Release**

**Have You Herd?**

**Anantara’s Elephant Parade Has Arrived in Bangkok!**

**Bangkok, December 1st, 2015:** Anantara Hotels, Resorts & Spas along with Elephant Parade® launched the world’s largest open air art exhibition - Elephant Parade Bangkok 2015 - in the heart of the Thai capital. The exhibition, featuring 88 brightly decorated elephant statues has been staged to honour the 88th birthday of H.M. King Bhumibol Adulyadej, the world’s longest reigning monarch.

The first Elephant Parade was held in [Rotterdam](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rotterdam), Netherlands, in 2007 and has since exhibited in many cities around the world including London, Singapore, Amsterdam, Milan and Hong Kong. Bangkok Elephant Parade 2015 is a first for Thailand and will be the only one for the capital.

The event was originally created after founder Marc Spits and his son Mike visited the Friends of the Asian Elephant hospital in Lampang northern Thailand, which treats sick and injured elephants. There they saw Mosha, a baby elephant who lost her leg after stepping on a landmine when she was only seven months old. She is fitted with a new prosthetic leg every year and must then learn to walk all over again. Mosha always features in each Elephant Parade exposition and will have a specially Thai themed painted prosthetic leg for the Bangkok Parade.

All 88 elephants showcased in Elephant Parade Bangkok are available for the public to bid for and own in an online auction and in February 2016 a final selection of elephants will be auctioned off by Christies at a gala dinner to be held at Anantara Siam Bangkok. Proceeds from both auctions will be donated to the Golden Triangle Asian Elephant Foundation who in turn will select strategic partners to drive forward key projects including building the first elephant clinic in Chiang Mai’s Mae Teang Valley, expanding their Positive Reinforcement Target Training Project to even more elephants and helping protect the wild elephants in Thailand’s National Parks.

“The more awareness that is raised on the plight of domestic and wild elephants in Thailand, the better the chances we have for their survival,” William E. Heinecke, Chairman and CEO of Minor International, the parent company of Anantara, Hotels Resorts & Spas, commented. “I can’t think of a better way to raise awareness and money than bringing the largest open air art exhibition in support of Asian Elephants to Bangkok.”

Famous supporters of Elephant Parade Bangkok include: Hangover 2 star Nirut Sirichanya; Fast and Furious 7 star Tony Jaa; Designer Paul Smith; World Number One DJ, Hardwell; Miss Thailand World, Sirinya Bishop; Artists Elizabeth Romhild, Elsie Evans; Sculptor Gavin Fifield and a wide range of Thai celebrities and artists.

“In my life I have spent a lot of quality time with elephants. I grew up in a mahout family and started my movie career with an elephant as a co-star,” said Fast and Furious 7 star and Elephant Parade Ambassador Tony Jaa. “I want to thank all the people and organisations who take the time and resources to ensure the safety of these intelligent creatures in Thailand and around the world.”

“I am so excited and honoured to be chosen to be one of the artists for the Elephant Parade. What a wonderful way to get people talking and taking action in elephant conservation,” actress and Elephant Parade Bangkok ambassador, Sirinya Bishop said. “The elephant is our country’s national animal and symbol, but somehow this once-revered and noble creature is now forced to beg for food on the busy and dangerous streets of the capital. I truly hope that this magnificent colourful pachyderm parade will raise the awareness and inspire us all to take more concrete steps to ensure their survival and wellbeing.”

To help raise more awareness and funds for elephant welfare and conservation projects, Anantara Hotels Resorts & Spas are giving Elephant Parade visitors the chance to win a seven day trip to Anantara's resorts in the Maldives and other exceptional prizes through an Instagram competition. The grand prize winner will enjoy the authentic luxuries of [Anantara Dhigu Maldives Resort](http://dhigu-maldives.anantara.com/) and [Anantara Veli Maldives Resort](http://veli-maldives.anantara.com/), other prizes include a four day stay at [Anantara Golden Triangle Elephant Camp & Resort](http://goldentriangle.anantara.com/) in Thailand and a 75-cm Elephant Parade statue of the winner’s choice from a selected range of designs.

For more information on Elephant Parade Bangkok 2015, plus the online auction and Instagram competition please visit [www.elephantparadebangkok.com](http://www.elephantparadebangkok.com)

The 1.5 metre elephants are on show from 1st – 18th December 2015 at the world-class luxury shopping centre, Siam Paragon; the herd will then move to Asiatique on the banks of the Chao Phraya River from 20th December 2015 – 11th January 2016 and finally Lumpini Park, in the heart of the city, from 18th – 29th January 2016.

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