

# Khun Narin Electric Phin Band "II"



It all started a couple years ago with the caption "MINDBLOWING PSYCHEDELIA FROM THAILAND" - the Youtube video that accompanied this headline on the Dangerous Minds Blog was exactly that. Here was a group of Thai musicians being filmed parading through a remote village hundreds of miles away from Bangkok playing some of the heaviest Psych known to mankind out of a crazy homemade soundsystem. Who were these men and how on earth was this not some unearthed archived footage from the '60s or '70s?! The Youtube clip quickly made its rounds amongst music enthusiasts leaving many in the Western hemisphere to question who this group of contemporary Thai villagers (loosely named Khun Narin's Electric Phin Band) was.

Six months after that first encounter with Khun Narin's Electric Phin Band, a Los Angeles music producer named Josh Marcy used Facebook and some unlikely interpreters at his local Thai restaurant to get in contact with the group's leader and namesake Khun Narin (also known simply as "Rin"). Rin eventually warmed to the idea of having Marcy come visit and record the group in their small village outside the city of Lom Sak, in the valley of mountains that form a rough border between Thailand's North and Northeast. The result of that initial encounter was 2014's eponymous LP, 40 minutes of hypnotizing psychedelia filled with heavy drum breaks that sounds like something RZA would sample for a Quentin Tarantino film.

The music they play is called phin prayuk. The first word refers to the lead instrument, a 3-stringed lute known as the phin. The phin player, uses a string of Boss effects pedals, including a phaser, distortion and digital delay to get his sound. He also builds his own instruments, installing Fender pickups into hand-carved hardwood bodies, with elaborate mythical serpents adorning the headstock. The band takes pride in their custom PA system, as well as an imposing tower of 8 loudspeaker horns atop a huge bass cabinet. Khun Narin's Electric Phin Band's membership is always in rotation and spans several generations, from high school kids to men well into their 60s. A standard engagement has the band setting up at the hosting household during the morning rituals, playing several low-key sets from the comfort of plastic lawn chairs occasionally working in a cover version of a foreign classic (The Cranberries 'Zombie' is a favorite) while the beer and whiskey flow freely. After a mid-day banquet, they start up the generator and lead a parade through the community to the local temple, picking up more and more parties along the way.

While the music was the first thing that engaged Marcy, this casual yet participatory playing environment connected him further with the band - so much so that he decided to travel back to Lom Sak in early 2015 to record more. As the band members rotate, the follow up to 2014's LP (simply titled II) introduces some new players including new phin players Aob and Bas, while retaining some members of the old guard. The thing that remains consistent with Khun Narin's Electric Phin Band is the authenticity of sound, which Marcy was able to capture again in LP2.

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"conjures up some mystical vibes in their indescribably beautiful psychedelia" - NEWSWEEK

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