

# MOST EXPENSIVE PAINTING BY ELEPHANTS

## Jo's travel diary

19 February 2005  
Chiang Mai, Thailand

Wow! An amazing day today! I've just come back from the Maesa Elephant Camp near Chiang Mai.

I was expecting to help the staff wash the elephants, and maybe even ride on one, but when I arrived I found the elephants were attempting a Guinness World Record for painting! So, in the end, I spent the day watching animals creating art instead.

There were eight elephant artists (yes, real elephants), all doing real painting. It was fascinating. They held the paintbrushes with their trunks and took short breaks every hour. It took them six hours to finish painting two canvases. Afterwards, the elephants' canvases were joined together to form one big painting.

The finished painting was called *Cold Wind, Swirling Mist, Charming Lanna I* and was bought by Ms Panit Warin, a Thai woman who lives in California, USA. She paid 1.5 million baht for it. That's more than £20,000! It was the most expensive painting by elephants ever.

She donated one half of the painting to the Thai Government and let the Elephant Camp keep the other half for display in the camp's own gallery.

The elephants seemed to really like painting. I just wish I could afford to buy one too!





## ON YOUR MARKS

- Where did Jo visit on 19 February 2005?
- In what way was Jo's day 'amazing'?
- Why do you think Ms Panit Warin let the camp have one half of the painting in their gallery?



## GET SET

- Where is the elephant camp?
- Why do you think the elephants needed to take short breaks?
- What record was achieved at the camp?



## GO FOR GOLD!

- What happened after the elephants had finished painting the two canvases?
- How did Jo feel about not being able to wash or ride the elephants?
- Why do you think Jo wished she could afford to buy one of the paintings?



## BEYOND THE RECORD

What do you think the purpose of the elephant camp is? Discuss with a partner and then make a list of all your ideas.