



## Brad Choyt: Educator



Brad Choyt was born in New Hampshire in the northeast part of the United States. The youngest of four boys, he grew up in the woods and his childhood was immersed in the natural world. While he loved hiking and playing sports, Brad was also interested in a range of subjects and disciplines. Brad attended Phillips Exeter Academy, a rigorous New England boarding school, and then went on to Brown University where he majored in Art and Religious Studies. After college, he received a

fellowship to travel to Nepal, India and Tibet, where he studied traditional Tibetan *thang-ka* painting. Brad then returned to the US where he enrolled in the Master of Fine Arts program at the University of Pennsylvania. After graduation, he began his career as a teacher and founder of non-profit organizations with missions in experimental education. Brad is currently the Director of Green School located on a beautiful eight-hectare campus in Sibang Kaja, 15 minutes south of Ubud.

### **How extensively have you traveled?**

I've lived in India, Nepal, Tibet and the Middle East, and have traveled throughout Europe and the Americas. Much of the travel I've done has been backpacking to off-the-beaten-track places where culture has been less homogenized by Western influences.

### **When was your first trip to Indonesia?**

I had studied the art and traditions of Indonesia in several college courses, and had long wanted to visit this country. I came here in July 2007 for the first time during my interview for the directorship of Green School. Last November my wife and two children joined me here. I have been to Jakarta and to Yogja and to other parts of Java, but so far my busy schedule has meant I've needed to focus most of my time and attention in Bali. Just after Christmas, however, I traveled to Borobudur with my son, a trip we both very much enjoyed.

### **How did you come to work for the Green School in Bali?**

I first became aware of Green School when I met John and Cynthia Hardy, the school's founders, through a mutual friend in New York and quickly grew fascinated with their vision for this amazing school.

### **What do you think of the island and the people of Bali?**

It has been truly a delight to get to know the people of Bali. They have been incredibly welcoming and supportive of myself and my family as well as the school. Without their help, the school will not have been possible.

### **How is your family adapting to Bali?**

My wife is an author (who will take part in the Ubud Writer's Festival) and she has loved working on new fiction here. My eight-year-old son is excited to be in Year 3 of Green School, and my daughter is growing up bilingually, blending in beautifully to life on the island.

### **Do you have a personal teaching philosophy?**

All of my work in schools has been oriented toward making classrooms and assignments as educationally exciting as possible. I've always strongly emphasized experiential education; that is, education that stresses linking learning to life. A long hike through the Himalayas can be a hundred times more enlightening than a semester spent indoors reading books about the culture you would encounter along the way.

### **Does the school have any distinctive features it offers to students or parents?**

Green School is 100% committed to offering students a rigorous holistic curriculum in a sustainable context. We want our students to develop the skills they will need to solve the increasingly complex problems our world is now facing. Our campus, which will feature attractive facilities and classrooms built almost entirely of bamboo and other renewable resources, offers students a truly unique and powerful environment for education in the 21st century. We expect students to develop competence not just as thinkers, but as visionaries, artists and athletes. In addition, we will offer students the opportunity, in our Learning Village, to acquire hands-on experience under the supervision of professionals and teachers, with real-life projects and businesses. And by next September, we will be Bali's first boarding school.

### **Can you give examples of hands-on experiences the students are encouraged to participate in?**

In our second year, we expect to have several businesses on campus as part of our Learning Village. These may include a publishing house, a chocolate factory and a ceramics workshop. We expect that students will contribute to the way these businesses are run, not only gaining motivation to learn but also important skills that can be applied to real world situations.

### **Tuition and price-wise, is Green School competitive?**

Our tuition and fees are less expensive than other international schools here in Bali. We are also dedicated to providing a significant amount of financial aid to families that can not afford the tuition, particularly Indonesian students who would greatly benefit from a good education.

### **Could you give specific examples of the programs and classes to which your Balinese neighbors are invited in order to help their communities?**

We recently inaugurated the 1st Annual Mepantigan Championship here at the School. Mepantigan is a form of traditional martial arts that includes Balinese music, dance, and drama. People in our community were welcome to attend and we will be offering classes in this martial art form for all of our students.

### **Where may interested readers learn more about the school?**

Check out our web site [www.GreenSchool.org](http://www.GreenSchool.org) or pay a visit to the school by first emailing us at [info@greenschool.org](mailto:info@greenschool.org) or calling 62 361 469 875.

For anyone interested in being considered for *Siapa*, please contact: [<pakbill2003@yahoo.com>](mailto:pakbill2003@yahoo.com)

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