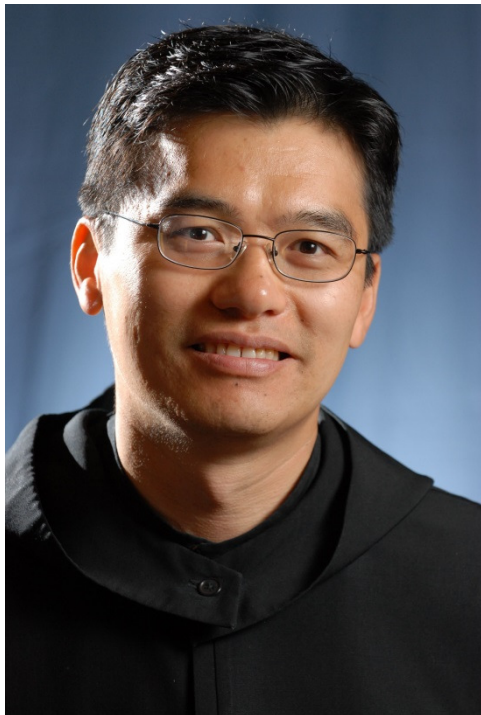


Mr. Cuong Simon Phan (also known as Brother Simon-Hòa Phan)



He was born in Vietnam and came to the U.S. at the age of ten with his family (both parents and 6 siblings) and the first wave of VN refugees at the end of the Vietnam War in 1975. He is a monk of the Benedictine monastery of Saint John's Abbey for 20 years and currently a filmmaker and Associate Professor of Visual Arts at Saint John's University, Collegeville, MN. He received his bachelor's degree in Philosophy and in Religious Studies, a B.F.A in Painting and a M.F.A in Film/ Video.

Cuong's Proudest Achievements

He directed and produced the documentary film "Mother Tongue, Fatherland" on Vietnamese Amerasians, those born of American servicemen and Vietnamese women during the Vietnam War. The film was screened at various film festivals such as those in Los Angeles, Chicago, Minneapolis, Washington D.C., Dallas, and broadcast on Vietnamese cable channel SBTN and Twin Cities Public Television. He is a recipient of the Artist Initiative Grant from the Minnesota Arts Board and is currently working on a upcoming gallery show with video installation depicting a unique view of a Catholic monk in central Minnesota.

Words of Wisdom

I am proud of my heritage, of what is good and beautiful about the people, culture, and history of Vietnam, but I also accept the sad and not-so-beautiful aspects. They all are part of me, and they made me the person I am today and continue to form me.

I use art to celebrate my heritage. I hope that my drawings, paintings, and films inform and inspire those who take time to look at them, especially young people of Vietnamese heritage, so that they in turn may be inspired to use their own gifts and talents to tell their own stories.