

# โรงเรียน นานาชาติ

EP.  
01



## วิชาร้องเพลงไทย ของหนุ่มสวีเดนหัวใจลูกทุ่ง – โจนัส แอนเดอร์สัน

**T:** สวัสดีครับคุณผู้ฟัง ผมเต๋ สุมจัญ กลิ่นสุวรรณ และขอต้อนรับทุกท่านเข้าสู่โรงเรียนนานาชาติ รายการที่จะนำเสนอเรื่องราวของชาวต่างชาติที่มาอยู่และทำงานในประเทศไทย โดยนอกจากวิชาความรู้และเคล็ดลับต่างๆ รวมถึงแรงบันดาลใจจากพวกเขา เราจะได้เรียนรู้ภาษาอังกฤษและฝึกฟังสำเนียงภาษาอังกฤษที่หลากหลายจากทั่วโลกอีกด้วยนะครับ โรงเรียนนานาชาติเอพิโสดนี้เราได้โอกาสพูดคุยกับชาวต่างชาติที่หลงรักประเทศไทย รวมถึงหลงรักแนวเพลงแบบไทยๆ เขาคนนี้ทั้งหน้าตาและเสียงเพลงคนไทยคุ้นหูคุ้นตาเป็นอย่างดี ค่อนข้างมา 20 กว่าปีเห็นจะได้ แต่สิ่งที่เราอาจจะไม่คุ้นก็คือเสียงพูดภาษาอังกฤษของเขาคนนี้นั่นเอง ขอต้อนรับแขกรับเชิญของเราในวันนี้ เจ้าของฉายาฝรั่งหัวใจไทย หรือฝรั่งหัวใจลูกทุ่ง คุณโจนัส แอนเดอร์สัน

สวัสดีครับพี่โจนัส

**J:** สวัสดีครับ ขออนุญาตแก้ไขตั้งแต่ต้นรายการเลยนะครับ ไม่ใช่แขกรับเชิญครับ ฝรั่งรับเชิญครับ

**T:** โอ้โฮ โอเค โดนไปหนึ่งดอก โจนัส 1 สุมจัญ 0 นะครับ

เชื่อว่าคุณผู้ฟังฟังมาถึงจุดนี้แล้วคงจะร้องเอ๊ะเหมือนกับที่ทีมงาน a day podcast ถามก่อนหน้านี้ว่า เคยฟังพี่โจนัสพูดภาษาอังกฤษไหม ส่วนมากจะตอบว่าไม่ บางคนถึงกับถามว่าพี่โจนัสพูดไทยชัดขนาดนี้ พูดภาษาอังกฤษได้จริงหรือเขาเป็นฝรั่งนะครับ

So, let's prove that fact by getting this show running in English, Shall we พี่โจนัส?

**J:** OK Good morning, Good afternoon, Good evening, Good night wherever you are. Yes, I do speak English.

**T:** Of course, you do

**J:** Verified.

**T:** Thank you for coming to โรงเรียนนานาชาติ

First question, พี่โจนัส How do we pronounce your name in Swedish?

**J:** OK in Swedish, Jonas is actually a very common name especially around the time when I was born, in the 70s, but in Swedish, it's ยูนาซ

**T:** ยูนาซ แอนเดอร์สัน?

**J:** ยูนาซ อานเดอร์ชวาน

**T:** อานเดอร์ชวานด้วย? อันนี้ความรู้ใหม่ นะครับ ทุกวันนี้เวลาคนเดินสวนพี่โจนัส เรียกยูนาซๆ Do you turn around?

**J:** If I'm in Sweden and people call me ยูนาซ Yes, I would obviously respond to that.

**T:** But not in Thailand?

**J:** I've never heard it here. People call me โจนัส That's what I'm used to.

**T:** โอ้ แจ๋วๆ Before this show is over, we're surely gonna ask you about your trick in learning and becoming so fluent in the Thai language. Perhaps the audience may adapt that same method in learning English as well.

**J:** I hope that would be a small little trick, or a key or something for everyone to adapt to use in their learning of English.

**T:** OK cool, so first things first, you were born in Sweden before moving to Thailand at the age of nine, right? So, what was life like before moving here?

**J:** Well, actually it's a bit hazy, the memories, because I was very small. Sweden is a very typically Northern European country, so it's very clean, it's very organized, it's sometimes a bit boring. But, especially at that time, it was a very safe country, so kids could just walk to school.

The couple of years that I was in Sweden in school, I would walk to school every day. Once I got back, I was just on my own, even though I am thinking back I was only seven years old.

The world has changed a lot, but back then there was no sense that it was unsafe or anything like that, so biking around with my younger brother and with friends and playing until my parents came back and it was dinner time. It was a different experience in that sense and I don't even think that's the way life is in Europe nowadays. I think things have changed a lot today.

A lot of development, a lot of danger that's come in to society and all of the countries all around the world.

**T:** Right. If I were to ask you, what would be your most vivid memory of Sweden?

**J:** Actually, my most vivid memory from Sweden is not a very happy one. The things that really have an impact are the things you remember.

My most vivid memory of Sweden is two accidents that I had one time when I was hit by a car.

**T:** You just said Sweden was safe?

**J:** Yes, but I was not safe.

**T:** So, the entire country was safe except for you.

**J:** Except me, yes. It was not the fault of the driver,

but it was the fault of over eager little boy who ran ahead of the walk and don't walk sign.

Actually, my eyesight is quite bad. I'm shortsighted, you can see I'm wearing glasses today. I think part of the road we crossed has a green man. The other part has a red man, but I didn't bother looking at that. I just kept going.

**T:** So you're shortsighted and colour-blind as well?

**J:** Maybe so at the time. I don't know.

So, unfortunately, I got hit by a car.

**T:** I'm sorry about that.

**J:** That was a memory that left quite an impression. I think I'm a little bit clumsy maybe ชุ่มชาม a bit prone to accidents.

But other than that, I have very fond memories of my grandmother. In Swedish, we call her ฟาร์มุล which means father's mother like in Thai. They actually separate it in Swedish.

In English, it's all grandma and grams.

**T:** So, what's ยาย in Swedish?

**J:** It's มุลล์ มุลล์

**T:** So, your great grandmother would be มุลล์ มุลล์ มุลล์?

**J:** Actually, they use กัมมาลล์ มุลล์มุลล์. กัมมา means old. So old มุลล์มุลล์. They don't use มุลล์ มุลล์ มุลล์

**T:** Ok cool!

So, that was in Sweden, right? You still have family there, in Sweden?

**J:** Yes, around the time I was about 19, my parents and the rest of my siblings moved back to Sweden, so they're all there. The rest of my family are all there except two of my brothers are working in Norway which is a kind of same thing.

**T:** You visit them quite often or you video call nowadays?

**J:** Well, thankfully the Internet has made communication a lot easier. I do try to get back to visit fairly, regularly.

In fact, my plans currently are a little bit up in the air because I was planning for the first time, to go back to Sweden for Christmas because usually Christmas is always a very busy time. As an artist you have a lot of shows around New Year's, so it was never possible to go. But I've always thought it's a very traditional thing to experience, so I gotta go back to Sweden for Christmas. This was the year that was supposed to happen and now Covid happened and I guess we'll see. We'll see what happens with that.

**T:** Looking forward to that as well huh?

So, what made you and your family come to Thailand in the first place?

**J:** My parents had another family they knew that had moved to Thailand.

My parents are in the charity field of work. They do charity work and there was another family in the field that had come to Thailand and I don't think that they were really thinking of Thailand, but this other family gave a very good report. Back then, things were done by mail, by post.

It's a thing. There's an envelope.

**T:** You've gotta lick stamp and all.

**J:** You've gotta buy the stamp and stick it in the mailbox. It was a thing back then.

They were saying "hey you should come out this way for a visit at first if you like and see what it's like," So, we came back in the early 80s. They fell in love with Thailand and we stayed.

**T:** It was โคโรนา right? At that time.

**J:** Early on we moved up to โคโรนา, yes. So, they were here for 10 years two of my brothers were born in Thailand actually. Everyone was very fond of it. They still are. They feel that Thailand is still part of them in some ways.

**T:** So, you were a nine years old European boy coming all the way to Thailand. What was your earliest memory about Thailand?

**J:** My very first memory was a very impactful memory of hot, hot, hot. Hot and humid as soon as we stepped out of the plane onto that step, the ladder going down onto the tarmac, it was just like woah! Ok, this is a whole new experience of hot that I've never had, but then that day, it was very exciting for a little boy because we felt this intense heat. And then, there was a massive thunderstorm. It was like rain and thunder and it was just like very exciting, but it was so unique that it was raining cats and dogs, as we say in English, but it wasn't cold! It was just nice, just fresh and cool. We thought hey this is great, cause in Sweden, rain always comes with cold. So, it's quite cold when it rains even if it's a summer time. Then, I really had a very warm feeling of welcome from Thai people from very early on.

After arriving here and walking around in the neighbourhood, I'd always like to explore, walk around. People would just invite me in, talk to me, the little white boy. I was like a Martian or something, I guess.

**T:** But of course, at the time you couldn't speak Thai.

**J:** No, it was just like sign language and just sort of somehow making each other understood.

**T:** So they'd be like โยโย่ ฝรั่ง มาமா ?

**J:** Yeah, "hey you, hey you, come, come."

**T:** And you went in their house?

**J:** Yeah, I wasn't afraid of anybody. I remember and this is

so vivid. I went into one person's house and they had like a mountain of rambutans or เงาะ. And this was such a weird creature of a fruit that I've never seen before.

**T:** Ok no เงาะ in Sweden?

**J:** There's no เงาะ in Sweden. Nowadays I suppose you could probably find some. Back then, what's this hairy red thing? You know I was like "you can eat that?"

And this home owner, this neighbour, she's like "hey, taste, taste." I don't know how we made each other understood or how we communicated. I can't remember that, but I remember the เงาะ being so tasty. I just sat there just like munching away on all of her เงาะ

**T:** Good job, she didn't have durian huh?

**J:** Yeah exactly, I think I must have eaten about a kilo of เงาะ, and she was there, trying to tell me what it was called and I was like เงาะ? จั้ว? จั้ว? Because in English or Swedish, we never start a word with an -ng or ง.งู sound.

**T:** It's more like a [nasal sound](#)?

You have words like sing where the ending consonant is a ง.งู sound, but we never start a word with that. So, it's like จั้วว จอจอ

**T:** So it was a bit งงๆ for you

**J:** It was pretty งงๆ but from that day I learned how to say ง.งู and เงาะ

**T:** Apart from that, apart from the weather, the climate, the fruit, was there a big culture shock for you as well?

**J:** Actually, that's the thing. It wasn't a culture shock at all. To me, it was just one big fun adventure. I remember that there was a neighbour that had a pool. They just let us swim in their pool. Another neighbour took us on a ตึกตึก to the

local market to have ก๋วยเตี๋ยว That was the first time I rode in a ตึกตึก, the first time I used chopsticks.

I've never tried them back in Sweden before, so it was like so many new colorful, flavorful adventures. I never felt any culture shock, but I did sometimes feel little bit like an alien, like I was so different.

I look so different. I felt like, I could feel that everyone was looking at me. I can feel that people wanted to touch the hair on my arm and pinch my cheeks and touched the blonde hair on my head, but it wasn't a bad feeling. It was just a little bit like you're the zoo animal or something that everyone wants to look at and of course, that's natural.

**T:** But you don't feel offended?

**J:** No, no. I didn't feel offended because even if there was a sense that I was kind of a weird stranger, but they're so warm and friendly. They're so full of smiles and laughing.

They're trying to teach you things and tell you things that any feeling of offence or anything like that just completely goes away, very quickly.

**T:** How about nowadays? There're a lot of foreigners especially Europeans or [Caucasians](#) who feel very offended when Thai people call them ผรั่ง, are you one of them?

**J:** No, absolutely. I've always just considered that's what you call us. That's what you call the white people, ผรั่ง. To me, there's not an offence in it because it's not a slur it's not a racial slur.

**T:** So ที่โจนัส living and growing up in Thailand, which school did you go to? How were you educated?

**J:** This was a challenge for my family because as soon as we came here within a couple months we moved up to โคราช as we said, and I think at the time there were at the most two international schools. Frankly, we could never have

afforded to go to those schools anyway, which were mostly for diplomats and so on.

But fortunately for us, my mother is actually a teacher. She only just retired from teaching very recently. She's 69 now. So, as a teacher, of course, she was very determined to make sure that we can have a good education despite a very unique circumstance that we were in. So, she researched and actually that's the part of the reason we switched to English as she actually found a **correspondence course** from the US and bought a whole series of books and everything from the US and have them shipped into Thailand and taught us.

So, nowadays you call that homeschooling, back then that wasn't even a term. Back then, they called it distance learning or correspondence course, **เรียนทางไกล**. So, my education has been homeschooling.

**T:** Your classmate would be your two brothers.

**J:** Yeah, my brother and my sister

**T:** So, what was the first Thai word that you've learned? **เงาะ** was it?

**J:** No, **เงาะ** would have been in the top five actually. The first one, of course, was **สวัสดีครับ**

In fact, I had some **ฝรั่ง** friends and they were trying to teach the other **ฝรั่ง** friends. They were very few **ฝรั่ง** back then, but the small group of **ฝรั่ง** that we knew made a little song of some start-up phrases.

**T:** Ok, you still remember that song?

**J:** Yeah I remember it.

**T:** Can we hear it?

**J:** **สวัสดีครับ ชาวต่างชาติ สวัสดี สวัสดี ชาวต่างชาติ สวัสดีครับ**

You can probably tell that was written by non-Thais because they didn't put the proper tones in the melody. So, **สวัสดีครับ** is right, but **ชาวต่างชาติครับ** is no longer right.

**T:** Otherwise, you have to be **สุทธิชัย หยุ่น** or something like that.

**J:** Yes, maybe something like that.

**T:** So when and how **พี่โจนัส** did you become so fluent in Thai?

**J:** It was very organic. It was just a very natural process. By nature, I'm quite social. I have quite a private side to me, but once I'm with people, I'm very interactive. I don't stay in a corner. I'm not quiet. I love interacting. I love engaging with people and it seems like you're just forced to do it. You've got to jump out there and start talking, and it's very hard to answer when did I learn to speak Thai or how long did it take me. I would say after about two years, I felt quite comfortable, but I didn't have a very big vocabulary. So I could do that all the regular stuff; go to the market buy, things, buy food.

**T:** Daily routine?

**J:** So, I didn't have a deep understanding or a lot of big words, but I could make myself understood and I could communicate very fluently.

**T:** What's the most difficult Thai word that you've accomplished?

**J:** The most difficult Thai word? Well, that's a big one. Well, the most difficult time words to speak are **ราชาศัพท์**

**T:** What's **ราชาศัพท์** in English?

**J:** **ราชาศัพท์** I guess you would call it Royal language. There's no such thing in English, as you know, so we don't have a context for that. But **ราชาศัพท์** is very difficult.

I remember that I had to be an MC in an event and I had to explain about one of king Rama the ninth's Royal compositions. And of course, it's full of all kinds of ราชาศัพท์ words, so it's very stressful for me. And even back before I was an artist, there was one time in event, as a volunteer, I was assisting the Red Cross and สมเด็จพระเทพฯ Her Royal Highness Princess Sirindhorn was going to be at the event, so I had to do like a drill session, like a training session of how to refer to her, to relate to her, to talk to her. And it was very very stressful.

**T:** But it's a great experience?

**J:** Yeah I mean it's enriching, you know because after that you can say the words and you start to understand the terminology and the idea. So, I don't regret it at all because these things, they enrich you.

**T:** So growing up in โคราซ, I assume that you are more fluent in the อีสาน **dialect** than the central Thai?

**J:** Actually, it seems that people didn't go that far with me. They figured "OK if you can do Thai, then that's pretty good already." So, I'd stick to Thai, baby steps. I started doing a bit of practice in อีสาน much later on. But I guess because โคราซ is a big city, it's still not in the deep part of อีสาน or north east of town, so they actually speak ภาษาโคราซ anyway.

And not really อีสาน that much, so I picked up a bit of อีสาน but much later. When I started singing and learning อีสาน songs is when I learn a lot more.

**T:** I see. This may sound like a funny question, but I still gotta ask you. Are you still fluent in the Swedish language?

**J:** Well, here's where it goes in terms of the ranking of my language abilities.

**T:** Let's hear it.

**J:** Number one is English because I switched, actually our whole family switch to English very early on, when we move to Thailand just because there weren't enough Swedes around. Just to find a ฟร้ง was hard enough.

**T:** So, you speak English within your family?

**J:** Yes, especially at that time. Since my parents and the rest of my siblings moved back to Sweden. They have since switched back to Swedish. But I've been here this whole time, so I never really did the transition back with the rest of them. So I usually still speak English with my family, my immediate family.

So, number one is English. Number two actually แขงตัดหน้าไปแล้วคือภาษาไทย. Thai has now **dethroned** Swedish from my language ability.

But I do speak Swedish. I think you can call it fluent. It's just that the vocabulary has become a bit hazy.

**T:** A bit rusty, maybe?

**J:** Yeah, it's very rusty. I don't use Swedish that much.

**T:** You think of a Swedish friend or maybe your grandmother. Do you dream of her and speak to her in Swedish?

**J:** In my dreams, it's situational. If it's a Swedish situation, yes, then I've got to do the Swedish things. It'll be just like real life. I might struggle with some terms or some vocabularies. But I will switch into Swedish in the dreams, yes.

**T:** Speaking of the Swedish language, how do Swedish people pronounce these following words?

**J:** Okay.

**T:** คนไทยเรียกอีเกีย คนสวีเดนเรียกอะไรครับ

**J:** คนไทยถูกแล้วครับ เพราะมันเป็นคือ อีเคียะ

**T:** Ok, so the American say ไอเคีย, that's wrong?

**J:** That's actually wrong and in fact that Thai people correct me when I say อีเคีย because I've always called it อีเคีย. I mean that's my language, right? "No, isn't it ไอเคีย?" Dude! It's Swedish. I'm Swedish. No! It's อีเคีย man.

**T:** Ok, so อันนี้คนไทยถูก 'อีเคีย'

**J:** ถูกแล้ว

**T:** How about H&M?

**J:** H&M in Swedish is ฮั้วเอ็ม

**T:** Where's the 'and'?

**J:** They drop it.

**T:** ฮั้ว is 'H' and เอ็ม is 'M'.

**J:** But if you want to say 'and' in Swedish. It's อัก. ฮั้วอัก เอ็ม but in colloquial speaking they just dropped the 'and', and just say ฮั้วเอ็ม. The name comes from Hennes & Mauritz. It's two names. I guess they're designers.

**T:** I see. Volvo?

**J:** Volvo is วอลโว่

**T:** Ok, that's easy. How about this one, Spotify?

**J:** Spotify is a very anglicised word. I think it came from English more than Swedish. And there's no Swedish variant. It's just, Spotify is Spotify.

**T:** Some of my friends who are British, they go เสปี้อะอิฟา, or something like that.

**J:** Swedes are very connected. They're very internet savvy, so they're actually generally speaking. It's rare to find one that doesn't speak English. And they are very, you know, with such connectivity on the internet and all that. They've actually adopted a lot more English words into Swedish speech. Some of them switch English words into Swedish pronunciation. But some of them just keep English words in the English translation. Spotify is a Swedish start-up, but I've only ever heard it as Spotify.

**T:** Ok, cool. Now moving on from the language part of things to your singing career. How do you become a singer?

**J:** Well, I've always had that knack for singing, love for singing. And I sang from a very early age. In fact, as a family, my father played guitar and we would sing just not anything professional, just like for fun. So, it was kind of a seed planted from very early on. It was just a natural bent for me, a natural talent. I started learning a lot of songs. In fact, as a teenager, I learned some Thai pop songs. My first song was ด้วยรักและผูกพัน by พี่เบิร์ด ธงชัย

**T:** Oh, he must be so proud of that fact.

**J:** I hope, a little inaccessible. But yes, that was my first Thai song. And from that time, I learned a few Thai songs.

For me, the start in music was actually as a charity initiative. I attended a performing arts course with a group of friends. Actually we were trained by someone from the U.S., a dance and performing arts teacher from New York. After that, we formed a group. It's like a multi-performance group primarily for charity initiatives. And actually the most active project we had was in schools. It was an anti-narcotics program. We used songs, dances, skits, performances and games to teach people of our same generation really about the dangers of drugs and to try to motivate them to stay away from drugs. Because the drug problem was quite severe at that time.

This gave us a lot of flying time or ชั่วโมงบิน as you call it in Thai. It was a lot of experience in a non-professional capacity, but in a lot of practice, a lot of real-world scenarios.

So, it created a real foundation for performing for me. And actually that sort of charity base performing provided us with an opportunity to make a little bit of money, by performing it during various events. At that time, it started becoming a very big trend for big companies to arrange elaborate events. So, we got hired to perform at a lot of different New Year's and various parties and so on.

And it was because of that, I was discovered by the host of the ดีลิบ or At 10. พิธีทิวส์ actually was at a countdown event at The Royal Bangkok Sports Club. At that time, we had started to adopt a few ลูกทุ่ง songs into our repertoire, which was a gimmick, a novelty thing.

For me, ลูกทุ่ง itself was almost an accident because a certain event that was hiring us to perform actually requested a song from the มนต์รักลูกทุ่ง TV series. It was very very big at that time. He said "could you please sing this song?" I was like "Well, we don't really do ลูกทุ่ง. It's not really our thing. It's quite challenging. It's not an easy genre to sing." But they said "No no, it's a perfect fit for this event. We need this song." So, I said ok. **Pedal to the Metal** got down there in the grind and we found ourselves a karaoke video of the song.

**T:** What song was that?

**J:** The song was สัญญาที่ถอนลา because it was a farewell event. They were saying farewell to a retiring official, so they wanted that song. And at that time when the ละคร was super famous and all that, สัญญาที่ถอนลา has to be it!

So, it was actually with Christy, Christy Gibson as a duet. It was just a sensational response, like an amazing reaction that we've never had before. We had a lot of screaming and cheering crowds happen to that point especially when

we did shows in schools. That day was just something completely magical. It was just this connect that we never had before. It kind of lit a light bulb, a little bit like "this is something we need to try to explore a bit further."

And actually the second song was also a bit forced, also from an event. And after that, I just started learning a few ลูกทุ่ง songs.

And then, at this countdown event on New Year's Eve, where คุณวิทวัส was there, he called me over and said "Hey, have you ever been on TV?" And I actually had to be honest I didn't know who he was!

Of course, any artist would be like "Wow, this is my big moment!" But I didn't really have that deep connection with the entertainment industry in Thailand. So, I didn't even know. I was like "yeah, great."

**T:** Yeah, great. What's your name, by the way?

**J:** Sure, I could fit in my schedule for you.

**T:** So you went on his show?

**J:** Yeah, actually I totally forgot and the team from his program didn't contact us until six months later. I guess they just slaughtered us into the idea pool.

Six months later, they called us up and said "ok!" By then, we had a few more songs. So, I went on the show and it was like an overnight sensation. Suddenly, everyone recognised me. It was just very surreal to me. Once the show was aired, I was like "Whoa, How does everyone know me, now?"

But that launched ลูกทุ่ง career for me. After that, there were different record labels contacting me and I was quite hesitant. Actually at first, I had a kind of a negative impression of the entertainment industry.



**T:** Why is that?

**J:** I don't know. If you felt fake to me and felt insincere. For us, music has always been very grounded, very purposeful, the real genuine purpose. I didn't want to just be a guy on stage purely for entertainment. But what I discovered through mentoring of Thai trainers and so on was that this is actually a very powerful opportunity to be a sounding board for Thai culture as the white guy who sings ลูกทุ่ง.

And it actually ended up being a very meaningful thing and very much along the lines of what I would like to do with music. That is not just to entertain or sing a song and make people laugh. That's part of it, but there's gonna be some bases of quality communication and substance. That needs to be something that communicated, doing at communicating but actually what you're saying.

And with ลูกทุ่ง that was totally clear because it could express very effectively what I felt. My genuine appreciation for Thailand and my genuine appreciation for the Thai culture, the Thai people. It was like painting a picture of what Thainess is.

**T:** What is Thainess?

**J:** To me, Thainess is really about the people, the human element.

I think that you can have cultural elements and they're always going to be slightly coloured in different ways, but there's a lot of bleed over with culture, like you'll find that even Thai food, there's influences from Chinese food, Indian Food. Thai have this amazing ability to make it their own and unique and better than the originals, like to the point where the original kind of fades away and Thai becomes the new standard. I think that grows across a lot of cultural boundaries like with music too, and dance. In Thai dance, in the real core of it, you'll find Indian influences, you'll find Malay influences. Of course, there's their own unique

aspect. But overtime these things blend. You can, of course, appreciate any culture because it's like richness, it's identity.

But for me, what makes Thai culture stand apart and being special and unique is the human element and that is this charm and this authenticity, this genuineness that you find in Thais.

Like you talk about Thailand, the land of smiles, but a smile can be super fake. But in Thailand it's not. It feels like it comes out from inside. Especially in entertainment, you got to put on your smile like that, immediately, right? But when Thais smile and when they laugh, it's just from the inside. It's real. And when they treat you, when they welcome you, when they take you around. It never feels like it's something forced, or they feel kind of obliged to do it, they have to do it.

It comes from inside. They feel the joy in that. That's why it's very hard for anyone to properly compete with Thai-levels of service because no matter how much training you have, you can't train yourself into something real that's from the inside. You have to actually embrace that from the internal level.

**T:** Right. Now, the first time you heard a ลูกทุ่ง song, let's go back a bit, how did that make you feel? What was your initial reaction to เพลงลูกทุ่ง?

**J:** Well, to me ลูกทุ่ง was a little foreign to me, but the real bridge for me with ลูกทุ่ง was พุ่มพวง ดวงจันทร์. When I was a teenager พุ่มพวง was like a massive icon.

And she, of course, is famous and known as an icon in ลูกทุ่ง specifically, but there's so much joy and so much rhythm and happiness and colour in her music. It's kind of like it breaks down any barriers and walls.

**T:** And at the time, you weren't as fluent in Thai as you are today?

**J:** No I wasn't, for sure. And I don't know if I got the meaning of the lyrics at a very deep level. Certainly, I wouldn't know any **idiosyncrasies** or idioms in it, but it was just fun. It felt like Thailand in music.

**T:** Do you write your own songs?

**J:** For Thai, this is a beast I haven't really conquered yet. I've done a bit. In fact, after my first album, my first solo album, I wanted to do a "my story" song. Something that expressed myself. It's very typical to ลูกทุ่ง to have เพลงชีวิต. It's not เพลงเพื่อชีวิต but เพลงชีวิตของศิลปิน from the artist, so I wanted to do that and so I jumped in and went ahead and composed a song that was released in my fourth album. No, wait, in my third album. It's called **อยากเป็นคนไทย**. I want to be Thai is the name of this song and actually I played on the farang term a little bit not, again, because I'm offended by the term, but just as a way of communicating that feeling. So, the song went **อย่าเรียกฝรั่งได้ไหมขวัญตา**. So, it's basically supposed to be a very sweet ลูกทุ่ง a personal song.

I have just shied away from seriously getting into writing my own songs in Thai. I've written a lot more in English, but in Thai not so much because I feel like it's a bit sacred. It's a very elevated form of art that requires a lot of levels of understanding. Songwriting in Thai is extremely limited by the rules of Thai pronunciation.

**T:** Not the grammar?

**J:** No, pronunciation because of tones. Like we talked about that little song. You can't do that in a song or you're gonna look a little bit weird unless it's for a humour element like ตลกใจ could be ok, like a คำอุทาน in a song. But you wouldn't make that the main framework of your song writing. So, for me to comply with those rules which I would definitely want to do. And also to make the song a very deep form of communication, I feel like I prefer to leave that to the experts to the masters. And I feel very honored already just to be able to communicate those songs and those messages.

**T:** The song you've mentioned 'อยากเป็นคนไทย' do you really wanna **อยากเป็นคนไทย**? How is it different from your status now living and working in Thailand?

**J:** Well, I mean I am privileged to have much of my life, be very Thai, but to be honest, yes, I very much would like to be Thai. I would like to have a **บัตรประชาชนไทย** which I haven't been able to get yet. I would genuinely. By saying **อยากเป็นคนไทย** it doesn't mean I don't want to be Swedish. I don't think that they cancel each other out. I think that we can be multiple nationalities, but I would like to have the validation of actually being Thai very much.

**T:** So you can vote or vote-out some politicians that you dislike?

**J:** Let's just start with buying property first, before we go into politics. It could be nice to be able to own some land in Thailand. I consider Thailand my home. But as a non-Thai, you don't have the right to own land. It would be nice. You can do it in some sense but it's not really, authentically, genuinely owning the land.

**T:** Or maybe marry a Thai and have her own the land?

**J:** Yeah, but I mean that would be, maybe a process, but it still wouldn't fully be that sense of ownership personally. It's not really the land but it's a bit...

**T:** It's a feeling.

**J:** Yeah, it's a sense.

**T:** Now, songs from different cultures and different countries reflect that society. What do ลูกทุ่ง songs reflect?

**J:** Actually it's interesting because the handle that people use to refer to Thai ลูกทุ่ง is Thai country (music). And of course, country is a big genre itself. In the US, it's a massive industry. And ลูกทุ่ง is nothing like country western, but there is a place where they meet and that is that country music tends to be very simple in its meaning, very

attainable and you're very relatable and I think that's very much the way that ลูกทุ่ง can be described.

ลูกทุ่ง as a musical form is a fusion of a lot of ancient or local folks style of music. That gives it a certain depth in music.

But in the messages of ลูกทุ่ง, what's cool about it is that it's not dressed up. It's not pompous or distant. It's very relatable. It talks about your real life, everyday things, the stuff you got to face and love, or in hardship and happiness whatever it is.

I love the fact that ลูกทุ่ง just says what it says. It doesn't have to dress it up.

**T:** The genuinity?

**J:** Yeah, it's very authentic in the messages.

**T:** Do you sing in other languages? Have you ever tried putting Swedish language you're your songs?

**J:** I've sung some Swedish folk songs for events. When I started my career as a ลูกทุ่ง artist in Thailand, there was a very big excitement among the Swedish community at the time. They were very proud to have a Swede, and very typical looking blonde Swede upon stage doing Thai music. So, there were a number of events, and in fact, there was a lot of coverage in Swedish media.

Thais may not know that all of the main news outlets in Swedish covered me at some point in some ways.

**T:** Hey, look at โจนัส!

**J:** ยูนาส!

**T:** Hey, look at ยูนาส! He's famous in Thailand.

**J:** From the very beginning there are a lot of locals stringers, local media people for Swedish news outlets that covered

me and put me in their newspapers, but one of the events that I'm extremely proud of it is actually being able to be the first singer of ลูกทุ่ง, I believe. I can't imagine there would be any other to actually perform ลูกทุ่ง live, with dancers on Swedish TV, on a morning show in Sweden.

I think that your only way to compare it to a Thai program would be เรื่องเล่าเช้านี้ So, if you want to do entertainment in a breakfast show, then เรื่องเล่าเช้านี้ is the Holy Grail, right? And this is the Swedish equivalent of that.

**T:** Wow!

**J:** I had to get up at 4am and be on set and practice and set up the instruments and everything. I'm very proud to have brought Thai ลูกทุ่ง music onto live Swedish television with Thai dancers, actually.

**T:** So you all flew over there for this event?

**J:** It was actually a promotion for an event that was held at the oldest theatre in Sweden. An over 150-year-old theatre which more recently has been shifting over to a lot of cultural acts and Swedes actually are very fond of Thailand. They love Thailand.

In the normal situation, hundreds of thousands of Swedes come to Thailand every year. So yeah, at that event I sang a Swedish song, but I've never mixed a Swedish with Thai songs, but I have done that in English. I actually translated a very challenging song ยอยศพระลล into English, and recorded it for a school in แพร์ province which is where the legend of พระลล comes from.

**T:** Can we hear it?

**J:** Goodness, I can't remember it now. I couldn't remember it, no. But actually, ยอยศพระลล is a song that most singers would really avoid covering because ชินกร ไกรลาส sang it so incredibly well. But it's kinda like no one wanted to touch it, but then this one school teacher wanted to inspire her students to learn English in a unique way. So, she actually

did a draft of the translation of the story of the song ยอยศพระลออ into English. It was a good translation as a translation, but it wasn't a song, so I had to take it and it took hours, it was days of work trying to fit the English words into all of those.

**T:** So the rhyme and all?

**J:** The rhyme and also mostly the intonation and fitting it in, so it doesn't sound weird.

That was quite a challenge for me. Then, I get a chance to go up to เพชร and sing it with a local Thai band called สละสลวยซิ่ง in เพชร province and performed it up there. It was quite amazing. And actually because of that, my mentor, my teacher, in ลุกฟุ้ง decided for me to sing the Thai version of ยอยศพระลออ in my second album.

**T:** Wow, makes perfect sense.

**J:** That's a big and interesting experience. I've totally lost that. It's a sad loss. I don't know where to find it.

**T:** Now, your folks decided to move back to Sweden, but you chose to stay. Why was that?

**J:** It might've been a combination of teenage rebellion and independence and just feeling very at home here. I was kind of like well I don't wanna uproot. I don't wanna leave. I find this to be my home. I feel at home here and I think the biggest reason at the time was because I was very active in a lot of activities at the time. I was actually studying sound engineering at the time as a course in like an elective course and I was doing the performing art thing and we were starting up our group and it was just a lot going on that I was very excited about, so I didn't even consider leaving actually.

**T:** So, you were left alone, pretty much?

**J:** Actually, my next brother, who was two years younger

than me, he stayed on at first as well for a couple of years after they left. He wanted to stay as well as probably a hundred percent teenage rebellion in his case. No disrespect to my brother, possibly.

**T:** So, what is that "one thing" that you love most about Thailand?

**J:** To recap on that, I have to just put it on the people, the authenticity. So, the thing I love the most about Thailand, I would never say there's one thing I love about Thailand because there's a plethora of things I love about Thailand. There's a multitude of things about Thailand.

But if I have to pick one it's definitely going to be the people. That sincere hospitality they have that genuine love for people and care for people, I think it plays out in the entire society now. Of course, you've got political movements you got this. But at the end, I really believe in the Thai culture to hold true and stay true in Thailand.

At the end of the day, when there's a crisis, Thais get together to help each other out they support one another, and they get that job done together. They're not a disunited people. They are united people and I think that's a beautiful thing. It's why. It's such a sensation that so many people are in love with Thailand and want to visit Thailand and come back and tourism and everything. It's so powerful here because it's an experience that you don't find elsewhere.

**T:** Right, Now, on the other hand if you could fix one thing in this country, what would you like to see to be fixed?

**J:** Traffic!

**T:** And it's not just Bangkok anymore, you know. Lots of big cities, it's starting to get elsewhere...

**J:** No complaints. It's a big city, there's a lot of cars.

It's hard to fix. If I could fix it, I would, yes.

Traffic is a simple one. Of course, you can have your arguments on social issues and political issues or whatever. But I just feel, I am not going to weigh in on that, it's not my job to try to analyse how political issues can be fixed. The fact of the matter is that it's a global thing. Everywhere, it doesn't matter where you are there are going to be political issues. Unless it's a straight up dictatorship and so it's on its own form of political issues.

So, I think that there's gonna be problems everywhere. It's not about the problems. It's about how you approach those problems and so I'll stay simple.

**T:** Of all these years living in Thailand, what is the most important lesson that you've learnt?

**J:** For me, I feel like part of my identity is social work. Part of my identity is charity work and I find that a very big aspect of Thainess of ใจบุญ. It has a very big influence on that. It really influenced me at a deep level. I think that culture spreads into Thailand. I've been in Thailand when the tsunami happened.

**T:** Yeah, 2004.

**J:** And the response to that, everyone getting behind it, helping out. I've been in Thailand when big floods happened in Bangkok and elsewhere in other provinces.

And every time there's a crisis Thais get together and get behind it, even with Covid. I feel like there's a sense of unity that makes Thailand stand apart and I think that's an amazing lesson to learn.

**T:** Right, a great example for, pretty much, the world.

**J:** Let's face it, Thailand is the example right now as far as handling the COVID-19 crisis.

**T:** ไม่น่าเชื่อจะครับกับการพูดคุยกับนักร้องในดวงใจของผม คนหนึ่งอย่างพี่โจนัส จะทำให้ผมได้มุมมองที่เกี่ยวกับคนคนหนึ่ง สังคมสังคมหนึ่ง เกี่ยวกับประเทศ เกี่ยวกับภาษาหนึ่ง ก็คือ ไทยเรานี่แหละ ทำให้มีมุมมองที่เกิดขึ้นได้ นี่ไม่ใช่ครั้งแรกที่ผมได้คุยกับพี่โจนัส เราคุยกันครั้งแรกในรายการ *English Breakfast* รายการสอนภาษาอังกฤษของผมก่อนหน้านี้ แต่ตอนนั้นด้วยความที่เราเน้นตลก เน้นฮา แต่ในโรงเรียนนานาชาติ จากสิ่งที่เราได้พูดคุยกันตรงนี้ สิ่งที่เราได้ในมุมมองในแง่คิด ในมิติที่พี่โจนัสได้สะท้อนความเป็นไทยทั้งหมดนี้ เชื่อเหลือเกินว่าเราได้เรียนรู้อะไรหลายๆ อย่างจากผู้ชายคนนี้

## VOCABULARIES

nasal sound  
เสียงนาสิก

alien  
มนุษย์ต่างดาว, คนต่างดาว

caucasians  
คนผิวขาว (ที่คนไทยเรียก “ฝรั่ง”)

correspondencecourse  
การเรียนทางจดหมาย, เรียนทางไกล ซึ่งพัฒนาต่อมาเป็นไอเอ็มเอสยู

dialect  
ภาษาถิ่น

dethrone  
ขับออกจากบัลลังก์, ขึ้นแข่งหน้า, ปลดออกจากตำแหน่ง

savvy  
ฉลาด, ถนัด, เข้าใจ

flying time, flight hours  
ชั่วโมงบิน, ประสบการณ์

pedal to the metal (phrase)  
เพื่อสื่อว่าจะรีบอย่างกำลังถูกเร่งรัดให้เกิดขึ้นเร็วที่สุด

teenage rebellion  
ความดื้อ, ต่อต้านพ่อแม่ของวัยรุ่น

idiosyncrasy  
รูปแบบเฉพาะ: ส่วนวนหรือลักษณะเฉพาะ