

Painters' Pursuit Rama IX Art Museum Foundation

วิจิตรกร

Rama IX Art Museum Foundation

Painters' Pursuit
Rama IX Art Museum Foundation
วิ ติ จิ ต ร ก ร

อภิสิทธิ์พรพรพรพร

นอศิลป์มา
15-7-40



Painters' Pursuit

วิ ธี จิตรกร

June 7th - July 31st, 1997

at Tadu Contemporary Art, Bangkok

วันที่ 7 มิถุนายน - 31 กรกฎาคม 2540

หอศิลป์ตาดู, กรุงเทพฯ

Rama IX Art Museum Foundation

An art exhibition by

Chalit Nakpawan

Damrong Jaru-on-urai

Thanet Awsinsiri

Pardus Hutangura

นิทรรศการผลงานศิลปะโดย

ชลิต นาคพะวัน

ดำรงค์ จารุอรุไร

ธเนศ อ่าวสินธุ์ศิริ

ปริทรรศ หุตางกูร

Acknowledgments

I do believe that a good art gallery needs to have a distinctive character or a style of its own. However, like an infant who has just taken his first step, it takes time before he can run with confidence. At Tadu, we have been very fortunate in a sense that throughout our pregnancy and infancy many people have been putting a lot of effort in and made the last two exhibitions successful.

Now we are in our third exhibition and yes, I am beginning to see that we are developing quite an avant-garde style which is unique among the galleries in Bangkok. I'd like to thank our staff and the people who help us in giving Tadu a chance. Whether or not we achieve our objectives, remain to be seen in years to come.

useum Foundation

A note of thanks to *Vichoke Mukdamanee* who, with his insight, wrote a very informative introduction to this exhibition.

Without the artists who participated, this exhibition would not have been possible. Thank you.

Wanit Mekdhanasarn

Painters' Path : To Hell Or To Heaven

Vichoke Mukdamanee

Painters 2000

Many groups of Thai artists are exploring various media these days as a way to get their artistic expressions across. As a result, Thai society is beginning to recognise art exhibitions as effective brain-feeding activities.

News about art exhibitions is spreading through all the social classes - as can be seen by today's magazines, newspapers and radio programmes. Even television programmes invite artists into the studio to captivate television viewers. They give these artists the opportunity to demonstrate their drawing and colouring techniques, often accompanied with live music. The result of such changes is that more and more Thai artists are being brought to the public's attention.

In this age of globalisation, critics view Thai artists as distinguished persons full of self-esteem and self-confidence. They claim that painting and staying at home is no way for an artist to survive nowadays. So, basically, such media exposure is necessary for success.

But is this fair on the artists? I have discussed this "necessity" with a number of artists, both junior and senior, and we have always come to the same conclusion; namely no two artists are the same. Some artists do not necessarily want to be in the public eyes, whereas others thrive on it.

However, one thing that does come to mind is that we should ask some art scholars to analyse the situation, and carry out more research into these conclusions. For the benefit of future Thai modern art historians, it should be determined whether current Thai society has stimulated the imagination of artists or whether the creativity was there already.

As for today's current art circle, please allow me to touch another area. As mentioned at the beginning, Thai artists are currently enjoying the freedom to experiment with different forms, styles and media. Apart from colouring on canvas, they are also using other materials, audio and visual effects, as well as applying dance, music and performance art. This has gone so far, that even cooking and teaching cultural classes to foreigners are considered works of art by today's art world.

And what about Navin Lawanchaikul who recently turned a taxi into a mobile art gallery. Such variety is neither wrong nor taboo. Each is an individual experiment by any one artist and what it achieves depends on the viewers. But what we can do is to observe how far this trend will continue.

Meanwhile, there will still be those "conservative" artists who prefer to keep on working at home. Only a real struggle will get their work on public view.

Visual Descriptive And Narrative

The programmes for Thanet Awsinsiri's exhibitions at the Silom Art Space had extensive notes. This art lecturer from Bangkok University wrote:

I paint pictures of many subjects, men and women. I paint pictures of landscapes, scenery and houses... To paint the pictures of human-beings, I found my works are full of lust, sin and consciousness, desire and self-restraint.

However, I preferred to appreciate this extremely-descriptive messages by viewing his paintings, and once in front of the exhibits, my imagination ran wild.

Thanet has had three solo exhibitions, in 1993, 1995 and 1996. All three included programmes containing good three or four line descriptions of each piece. Meanwhile, Paretas Hutanggura, another young artist, is keen on his exhibition titles. His 1995 show was entitled "Facing Alien" and his 1996 show "Chalong Huajai Tuen". Both sound like the titles of short story pocket books.

Rama IX Art Museum Foundation

Reading the exhibition programmes was like reading well-illustrated text books full of interesting stories. In the programme for "Facing the Alien", Paretas wrote,

Although the world looks borderless now with the dominance of Information technology culture mix with the globalisation trend. No matter what it looks like, handsome, beautiful, sissy or ugly, no matter what its sex is, we have to accept it as we are facing it.

The meaning of the word 'alien' by dictionary means the subjects from overseas or foreign countries while the meaning interpreted by a popular sci-fi film series means disgusting and dreadful subjects from the other planets.

Sometimes, I feel I am facing both kinds of subjects mentioned above. They are the subjects that both two meanings of the word 'alien' combined and metamorphosed. They are creeping to replace the feeling of being bored toward contemporary Thai society without identity.

Then, I feel that breast and hips of foreign super-models now feed my mind. My desire is increased more by modern furniture pieces, and my consciousness gradually turns to believe in consumerism, luxurious life, modern excitement and super-human. Then my lifestyle is fully dominated by my modern desire part.

In his programme for "Chalong Huajai Tuen", there was a short story entitled "Moe Plien Hau" (Head Changing Surgeon) for art buffs to absorb.

Chalit Nakpawan is better known as an actor in horror films, as well as a scriptwriter. However, at one of his recent exhibitions at the British Council, Chalit the artist wrote the following, impressive statement;

My paintings are like a big mirror reflecting inside feeling, they are paintings full of complicated and various colours, having quick, contrasting and tender brushstrokes staying in the free space. Their visual dimensions bring about the borderless movement. They are from my inspiration toward child paintings,

living, impressions on past to present life and visual logic, I feel I can freely float without being framed by any rules.

I work from my feeling as a common man. To produce art works make me investigate and contemplate goodness, bad, appropriation, unbalance, and other significant feeling inside.

Then there is **Damrong Jaru-on-urai**, an alumni of Chiangmai University, who spent two years in Sydney, Australia. He left a message at his 1996 solo exhibition at the Place of Art Gallery that read,

I am just a fragment of the world which has its life for millions years, I realise the danger, which now pervade spirit of all lives and creatures in this world. I just hope that my effort to bring some ignored materials to be made as art works can convince all creatures in this world to see their own status. Men would not different from animals unless good heart.

Men do all for men.

Men do all to destroy men.

These four artists have much experience and have displayed their works many times. They are all painters with literary skills which means their wordings are captivating. In 1997, what will their paintings make us think of?

To Hell Or To Heaven

The first painter to bring us visions of the dark side of real life that we all should be aware of was **Paretas Hutanggura**. He pointed out social urban problems that needed spiritual advocacy; highlighting social abuse and the way people are taken advantage of in modern society. In his pictures of beautiful modernised civilisation, there are always hidden elements of decadence. The artist criticises society for failing to see the suffering and source of social problems. Images are continually repeated, becoming monotonous, but hidden within is the picture's riddle-like content.

Strong brushstrokes are used by the painter to get across specific feelings to the audience. The dark world presented by Paretas is filled with sufferings and chaos. Will we fall into this decadence or escape? Will we learn to help others? And if so, how will we help?

Rama IX Art Museum Foundation

The work of **Thanet Aawsinsiri** speaks less loudly, but viewers can still become exhausted by its dominating content. To interpret many of his highly-descriptive works takes time.

The content of work in this exhibition is different from his previous three solo shows. The artist has used the female form as a motif for his "co-existing between nature and life" message. Human will-power, he maintains, originates from love and mutual spiritual support. Thanet's human figures have different movements in different environments. Previous paintings express the artist's thoughts of past experiences. His human figures show a litany of internal problems, sufferings and heavy burdens which cannot be carried.

But in this new set of work, he gives the human figures a miss and uses animals as symbols instead; including dogs, crocodiles and elephants. I particularly liked the painting featuring a crocodile figure crawling on the ground beneath a heart-shaped moon. The dark atmosphere of this picture brings to mind an oasis of relaxation in a life surrounded by tension. It also gives a sense of looking for a passage to heaven. Although the Moon looks too pale a white, it radiates the artist's presentation of supreme happiness.

In stark contrast to Thanet, the world of **Chalit Nakpawan** looks colourful. In Chalit's paintings entitled *The Scent of Her*, *Poems from My Garden* and *Red Answer*, he takes us venturing into new lands. Not necessarily heavenly, they are funny and joyful, unknown places.

I thought back to Chalit's previous works which were full of trees, plants, flowers, leaves and tiny animals. But this time around, Chalit expands the scale of this pictures, making an imaginary world that is broader and more exciting. Most radical change is the emergence of small, sophisticated, abstract figures.

Chalit's colouring technique, in accordance with the rules of perspective, start from the background. Tempera is mixed with gesso to colour the second stage and then details are added as the artist wishes in the final

stage, completing the picture. This gives his pictures a rhythm and a sense of never-ending movement. All this means the dream worlds conjured from the imagination of Chalit are wildly exuberant.

The pieces by Damrong Jaru-on-urai in the exhibition join the other progressive work he has completed in the past decade. Here are differing dimensions of colour and resins combined in harmony.

Space is the concept behind this set which can sit happily alongside most of his other work. But what I see different here from the artist is the statement describing his *Space* concept. "Consumerism and development in current Thai society has resulted in new lives which are moulded by spiritless materialism. The value of the beauty of life is going to decline", the artist states.

After viewing Damrong's work entitled *Stars*, I optimistically believe in the existence of a way-out for us all. The dream of human beings living in harmony in a brave new world is possible after all.

The painting oozes with feelings of love, appreciation and contentment. This new heaven may not be recognisable to current generations unfamiliar with traditional Thai ways, but it is an accessible heaven.

In viewing the works by all four artists, one had the chance to compare and contrast their various styles. An audience can study the concepts, know the background, and the movement and improvement of each artist's creativity. What should happen next is for the artists to listen to the opinions of the viewers and to observe their comments.

If works of art are to be like lifestyles, food and politics the chance to see, to criticise and to listen should push fine art matters more within the reach of the general public. Artists should not be magicians who produce incomprehensible paintings. The age of personal appreciation and art for art's sake is over.

What has to be started is an artistic movement of seeing, listening and speaking.

Rama IX Art Museum Foundation

Rama IX Art Museum Foundation

วิจิตรกร : ไปลงนรกหรือจะขึ้นสวรรค์
วิโชค มุกดามณี

จิตรกรยุค 2000

อาจกล่าวได้ว่าในปัจจุบันขณะที่กลุ่มศิลปินไทยหลาย ๆ กลุ่ม เริ่มหันเหเข้าสื่อหลากหลาย ในการสร้างสรรค์งานศิลปะ สังคมไทยที่เริ่มตอบรับการจัดแสดงงานศิลปกรรมว่า เป็น กิจกรรมอันพึงกระทำและเป็นเรื่องส่งเสริมพุทธปัญญาให้แก่ฆราวาสนุชนชาติ

ข้าพเจ้าจากการจัดแสดงศิลปกรรมกระจายสู่สังคมทุกระดับชั้น เห็นได้จากข่าวในหนังสือ นิตยสาร หนังสือพิมพ์รายวัน รายงานข่าววิทยุ แม้กระทั่งในภาพข่าวโทรทัศน์ก็ให้ความสำคัญแก่การแสดงงานศิลปกรรมมากขึ้น ทั้งข่าวรายงานการเปิดการแสดง มีการถ่ายภาพพิธีเปิดและผลงานศิลปะมาให้ชมกัน และในบางรายการถึงกับเชื้อเชิญศิลปินมา แสดงฝีมือ ปลุกเร้าอารมณ์ความรู้สึกกัน ด้วยบรรยากาศแปลก ๆ ด้วยการบรรยายอุปาสี เส้าเสียงเพลงก็มี

ผลพวงจากสิ่งเหล่านี้กำลังชักนำเหล่าจิตรกรศิลปินไทย ให้เป็นที่น่าสนใจและถูกจับตามองจากสังคม มีบรรดานักวิเคราะห์วิจารณ์หลาย ๆ กลุ่ม มองภาพศิลปินไทยในยุคโลกาภิวัตน์นี้ว่าเป็น กลุ่มบุคคลที่โดดเด่นมีลักษณะพิเศษ มีความมั่นใจในตัวเอง และพูดจาเสนอความคิดเห็น และนักวิจารณ์บางท่านกล่าวว่า การจะเป็นศิลปินคนวาดภาพที่ดีนั้น ถ้าवादอยู่ที่บ้านคนเดียวคงจะไม่รอด ต้องออกมาพูดแสดงตัวให้สังคมรู้จัก ถึงจะปรอด

ผมเคยได้พูดคุยกับเหล่าบรรดาศิลปินน้อยใหญ่ ทั้งประเภทชอบพูดและไม่ชอบพูด มีข้อสรุปออกมาว่า ในการแสดงออกต่อสังคมภายนอกเรื่องตัวใครเป็นอย่างไร ก็ควรเป็นอย่างนั้น และทางใครที่ทางมัน จะให้บุคลิกภาพของคนเหมือนกันนั้นคงจะยาก ก็เลยเกิดเป็นข้อคิดขึ้นในใจว่า ความเป็นจริงในเรื่องงานศิลปกรรมนั้น คงต้องให้ผู้ที่เป็นนักวิชาการวงการศิลปะจริงๆ มาวิเคราะห์วิจารณ์งานสร้างสรรค์ เพื่อสรุปข้อมูลเป็นรากฐานต่อไปในประวัติศาสตร์ของวงการศิลปกรรมไทยว่า สังคมสร้างจินตนาการและก่อให้เกิดรูปแบบกับศิลปิน หรือศิลปินชักนำสังคมให้เห็นพ้องกับทัศนะที่นำเสนอ