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Bangkok Bangkok: De Markten, KunstenFESTIVALdesArts in Brussel



When 7 - 27 May 2005
Where De Markten, Brussel

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Opening: 7 May 2005, 6pm

'Bangkok, Bangkok' is an exhibition which sketches out the contours of an incomplete and imperfect city. The Asian metropolis is known as a gateway or transit zone for travellers in South East Asia, but Bangkok is rarely their end destination. Eight Thai artists brought together in Brussels are using cinema, photography and video either live or online to evoke the decline and renaissance of this international city, with humour and sarcasm. The artists will each be giving their personal vision of the many changes that have disfigured Bangkok but celebrating its chaotic charm at the same time.

Thailand began to suffer from economical turbulence since the mid 1990s. Its urban landscape changed drastically due to economic breakdown. Urban ghosts emerged and remained as incurable scars of the city. A "self-organized" city dreamed up by William Lim, a Singaporean architect, as a post-modern city, Bangkok takes its charm from its chaotic disorganisation, its accessibility to both local and overseas visitors. Rarely a destination in itself for visitors, Bangkok enjoys its status as a gateway, and a transit zone for those who want to mooch around the Southeast Asian Countries. The city lacks of completeness and perfection. We all have something to complain about, from the sewer system and the streets, to the sky train and the authority that runs it.

'Bangkok, Bangkok' is an attempt to introduce contemporary art by Bangkok-based artists whose work deals with this city, people, lifestyle, mentality, from various approaches. As citizens of this city, and witnesses to its fast paced growth, collapse, and revival, young artists portray their point of view towards such changes. They investigate the urban condition and lifestyles in the city and its surrounding area through photography, video and film imbued with humour, satire and critique. They also seek proximity and interaction with Brussels audiences by working with local people.

The exhibition consists of two parts: urban landscape and cultural landscape. In the section on urban landscape, images of Bangkok from the economic crisis to the present day will be represented by photography in Manit Sriwanichpoom's *Dream Interruptus* and in his publication, *Bangkok in Black and White*. Mani, who began his career as a photojournalist, has always been interested in social and political issues at both local and international level. This series is one of his most important if obscure works, though it is overshadowed by his famous *Pink Man* photographic series. For its part, Vanchit Jibby Yunibandhu's video work shows us images of the city from different viewpoints. About Bangkok that I think I know deals with her personal experience with the city whilst also embodying an attempt to re-orientate herself after the rapid changes of the last ten years. In stark contrast to Vanchit's work, in 'If there is no corruption' Wit Pimkanchanapong creates a pseudo-Bangkok Metropolitan subway system to pour critique and satire on the existing system and its mass transport infrastructure in this megacity, as well as its urban planning, and administration. Kamol Phaosavasdi, on the other hand, explores Bangkok urban situation differently. He juxtaposes rush hour of

Bangkok by using video installation with other real time ambient of his exhibition in Bangkok, 'Here and Now', with the recreated fluxes of unknown scripts. In his 'techno temple', Kamol juxtaposed the time based video of three images, turning Bangkok chaotic atmosphere into a temple.

Kornkrit Jianpinidnan, a young fashion photographer, will present a wide range of portraits of Bangkok's younger generation, both Bangkokian and expatriates, in their most intimate moments. Kornkrit asked them to call him up when they were ready to be photographed. The idea was to capture the point of transition between the public and the private, as decided by each individual, and to highlight the sense of alienation. Prapon Kumjim will work with Brussels audiences to complete their projects, which they began in Bangkok. Prapon Kumjim is a lens-based artist who explores his nomadic experience and our media-centred society in an attempt to blur the divide between art and film. As part of his cultural interaction project, he will ask people from Brussels to take pictures of their everyday activities. Prapon will finally re-photograph and edit these as in a storyboard format. Thasnai, on the other hand, approaches the community in a different way. As an artist actively taking part in a social, anthropological and research-based project, his works explore cultural misinterpretation and its idiosyncrasy, creating an interesting dialogue between the different cities in the world and their perception of Thailand. The project in Brussels will address the idea of cultural translation and their perception of each nation/ narration from multi-cultural background.

To sum up with both part of the show, Vasan Sittikhet, a social oriented artist, and performance artist, will perform the puppet show parodying the political situation in Thailand. This project will be an interesting metaphor for audience, to rethink about what's really going on behind the land of smiles.

Shadow Show by Vassan Sittikhet:
7 May 2005, 6pm
8 May 2005, 1pm, 3pm and 5pm

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Website: <http://www.kfda.be/front/projectdetail.action?projectid=7412&id=331>

Opening Hours:
Tuesday - Sunday, 12noon - 6pm

Artist/s Manit SRIWANICHPOOM(มานิต ศรีวานิชภูมิ)
Wit PIMKANCHANAPONG(วิชญ์ พิมพ์กาญจนพงศ์)
Thasnai SETHASEREE
Prapon KUMJIM(ประพล คำจิ้ม)
Jibby YUNIBANDHU
Kornkrit JIANPINIDNAN(กรกฤช เจียรพินิจนันท์)
Kamol PHASAVASDI(กมล เผ่าสวัสดิ์)
Vasan SITTHIKET(วสันต์ สิทธิเขตต์)

Curator/s Gridthiya GAWEEWONG(กฤติยา กาวีวงศ์)
(Group) Project 304

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