



Made by Thai



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FOLLOWING PAGES

P.4-5 NAVIN RAWANCHAIKUL / LOST KINGDOM OF NAVIN, 2007 (DETAIL)

P.6-7 SIMON SCHWYZER, BANGKOK, 2018

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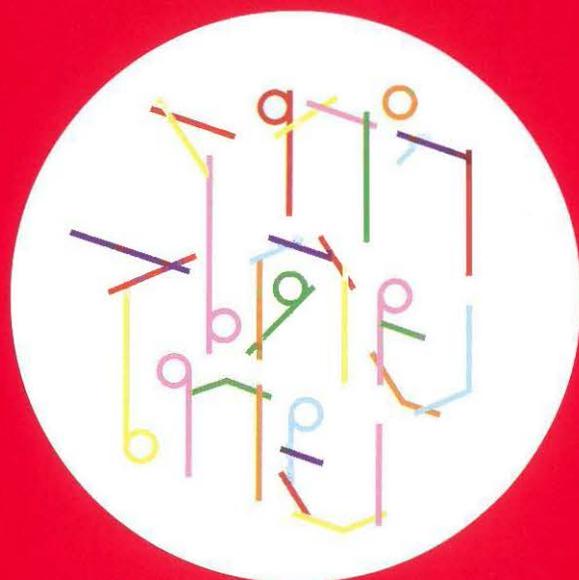
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Made by... Thai

OF CURIOSITY AND FRIENDSHIP

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SEEKING TO FIND THE ORIGINS OF A MY
NAVIN PARTY CADRE CALLS ON ADVENTU
GATHERING SWASHBUCKLERS AND VOYAGI
OF THE WORLD THEY RACE TO FIND THE LO

ตามรอยปริศนาของเหรียญเงินผ่านวินที่สาปสูญ
ไปกับสหายนวินแสผองเพื่อนจากทั่วพิณพิภพ



นำแสดงโดย นวพล และนางเอก ปะทะ เอนริโก นาวารรา และทีมงานอิมเมจเจอร์คิวรูกานพคัมมิช

& THE GANG Meet ENRICO NAVARRA & COMPANIONS

KING OF NAIN

SCREENPLAY BY NAVIN RAWANCHAIKUL & TYLER RUSSELL





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ดร. วิมลลักษณ์ ชูชาติ

DR. VIMOLLUCK CHUCHAT

DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE OFFICE OF CONTEMPORARY ART AND CULTURE

The contemporary art scene has been growing continuously in Thailand with lots of new generation artists creating interesting works. Many art museums and galleries have recently opened in several provinces. This year also marks the first ever Thai biennale, which will take place in Krabi, as well as the announcement of the first three Cities of Art: Chiang Rai, Krabi, and Korat. Amidst this exciting atmosphere of artistic creativity, it is thrilling news to have a collection of contemporary Thai artworks from many art spaces across the country published from the perspective of a French art dealer, under the banner *Made by Thai*.

Made by Thai is an invaluable and insightful collection of contemporary Thai art, which provides fascinating insights, from both Thai and foreign perspectives, into various contemporary Thai art practices including architecture, design, fashion, film, and music. It also communicates the thoughts and opinions of Thai artists on the creative process, together with those of people in the field of contemporary art.

The Office of Contemporary Art and Culture, an organization established to promote art and culture in Thailand, regards the creation of media and publications as a tool to help raise awareness of contemporary Thai art. The Office believes that *Made by Thai* will become an important tool to increase the visibility of contemporary Thai arts with global audiences, and to facilitate further exchanges of knowledge between players that will expand the perspective of people interested in art and culture.

The Office is sincerely grateful to all of the Thai artists who have shared their knowledge and insights. We are also grateful to our good friend and partner, the Embassy of France in Bangkok, for their tireless efforts in supporting contemporary arts.

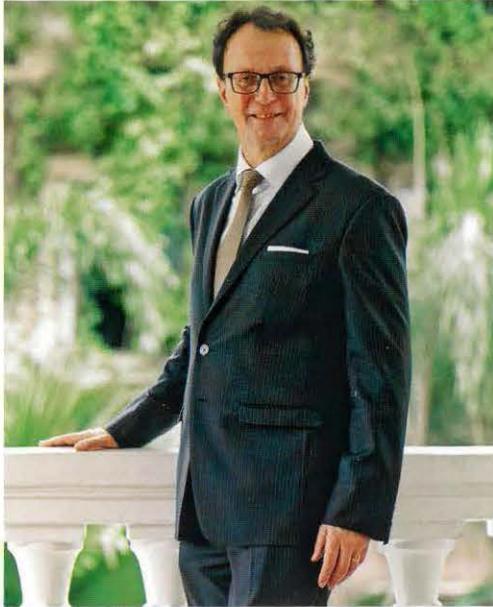


Ministry of Culture



OFFICE OF
CONTEMPORARY ART AND CULTURE





GILLES GARACHON
FORMER FRENCH AMBASSADOR IN THAILAND
05.2018, BANGKOK

In 2006, when my dear and talented friends Pascale and Laurent Aublin took the first steps towards creating this book with Enrico Navarra, the Thai art scene was just starting to come to life, and was trembling with intense creative diversity. Unfortunately, the Thai scene was almost unheard of outside of the Kingdom itself.

Now, 12 years later, the movement has evolved: the talent of Thai artists—their creativity, diversity, and singularity—is now widely recognized. An art biennale is about to be organized for the first time, and museums and galleries are flourishing. The MAIAM in Chiang Mai is a wonderful example of this. An increasing number of art lovers, collectors, and patrons are showing genuine interest in the arts. Powerful Thai businesses are integrating artistic dimensions into their strategies. Galleries, museums, and concert halls have begun to proliferate in malls, which is, in turn, generating renewed interest among public authorities.

But of course, the real subject of the book is the Thai artists themselves! They dazzle with their dynamism, diversity, and singularity, as heirs of a long history, a specific aesthetic, and the unique Thai artistic language. Influenced by Buddhism, animism, specific artistic standards and, above all, a very unique sense of paradox, they strongly express the aspirations of a country torn between tradition, a tendency to conformism, and the absolute necessity of opening doors to the future.

They are also the heirs of the digital revolution, which has met with tremendous success in this country. This interaction with the outside world is incomparable and has collided with Thai tradition, making for some highly creative results.

Only Francine Méoule and Christine Schreyer, with their knowledge, enthusiasm, and talent, could sense and convey to us this awakening of the Thai artistic scene. Let me express my heartfelt thanks to them, and of course to Enrico Navarra for his visionary support with this *invitation au voyage*, which has given us the opportunity to explore new territories of Thai artistic creation.

Welcome onboard!



LAURENT AUBLIN

FORMER FRENCH AMBASSADOR IN THAILAND

03.2008, BANGKOK

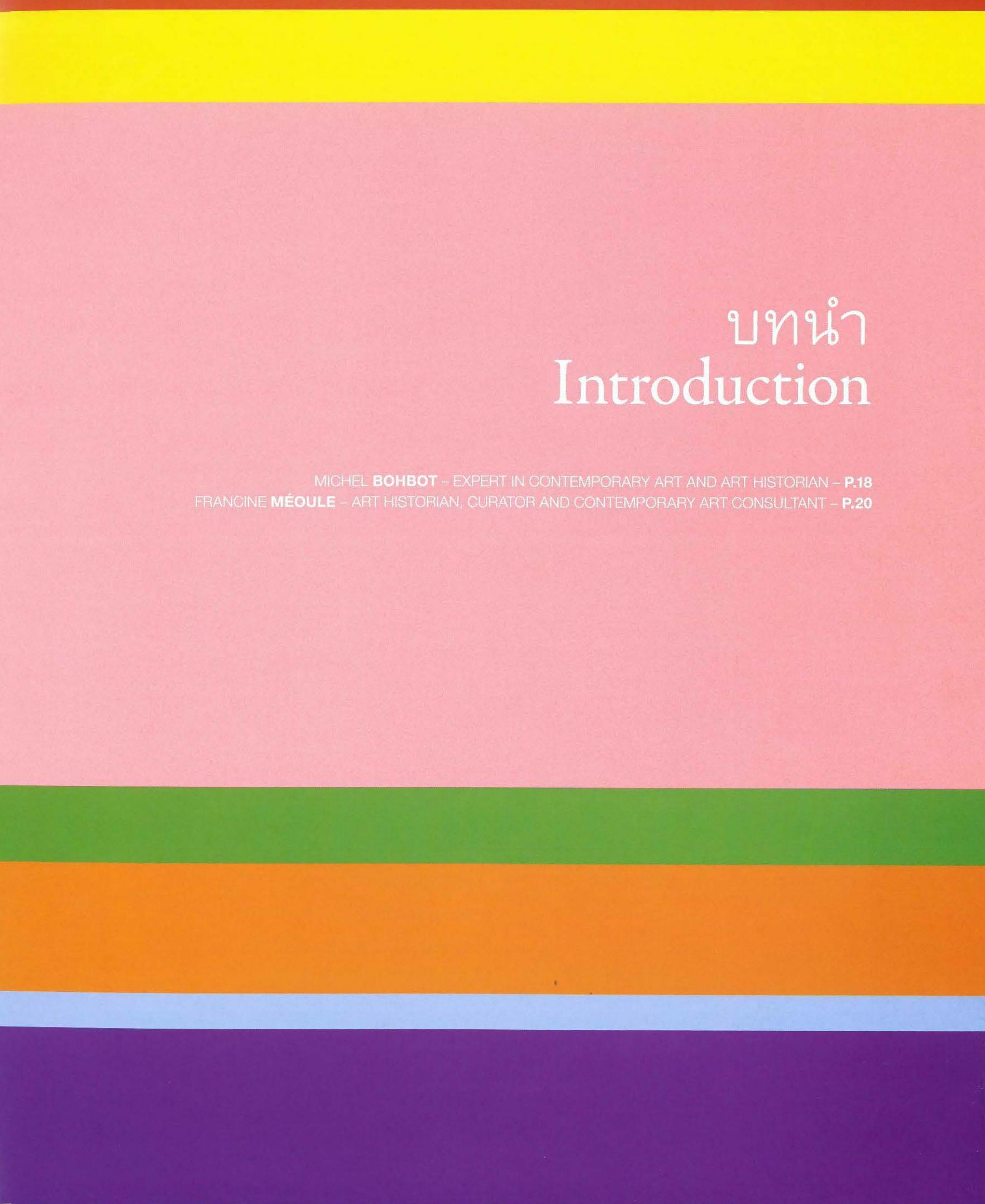
As the first book written about the contemporary art scene in Thailand, this volume will almost certainly become a landmark. It will allow for a wider appreciation of the vitality and originality of artistic creation in this country. For the first time, *Made by Thai* will bring together visual artists, collectors, and the various venues that light up the artistic landscape of Thailand.

This project was initiated by Enrico Navarra, who has long been aware of the powerful new currents emerging in contemporary art in Asia. In this way, *Made by Thai* follows on from *Made by Chinese*, *Made by Indians*, and *In the Arab World... Now*. His felicitous initiative is reward for all the efforts made in recent years by the Embassy, the Alliance Française, and enlightened collectors and enthusiasts to encourage young artists and to create partnerships with public institutions (particularly in Bangkok) and galleries, with the aim of giving prominence to this dynamic yet neglected scene.

At the 2004 launch of La Fête, the annual French festival in Thailand, it was decided that Thai artists should be invited systematically to take part in the event, and that it should be a place of lively and fruitful exchange with French artists. This interchange was brilliantly repeated in Paris in 2006, in particular during the Nuit Blanche and other events that formed the first festival of Thai art in France, Tout à fait thai.

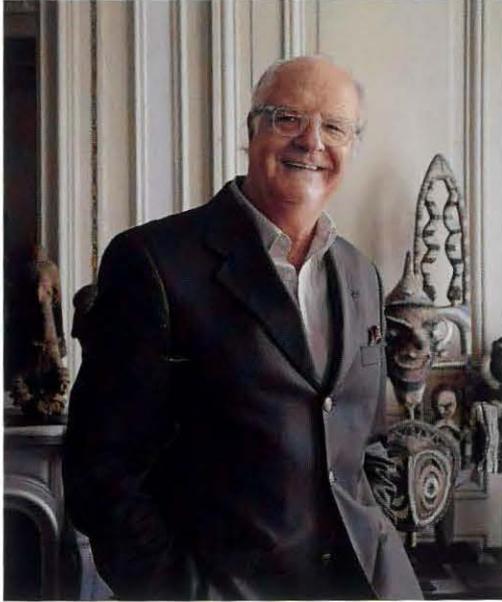
As the French cultural attaché in Bangkok, Francine Méoule has played a major role in initiating the dialogue with, and promotion of, Thai artists, and thus has all the necessary expertise for producing this book in collaboration with Christine Schreyer of the Galerie Enrico Navarra.

I am grateful to Enrico Navarra for giving us the opportunity to work on this project, and for having once again demonstrated his commitment to a friendship that was born on Hong Kong nearly 15 years ago from a common passion: the desire to promote a uniquely French concept of culture and the arts in Asia, at the heart of the world's most dynamic region.



บทนำ Introduction

MICHEL **BOHBOT** – EXPERT IN CONTEMPORARY ART AND ART HISTORIAN – P.18
FRANCINE **MÉOULE** – ART HISTORIAN, CURATOR AND CONTEMPORARY ART CONSULTANT – P.20



MICHEL BOHBOT

EXPERT IN CONTEMPORARY ART AND ART HISTORIAN
10.2018, PARIS

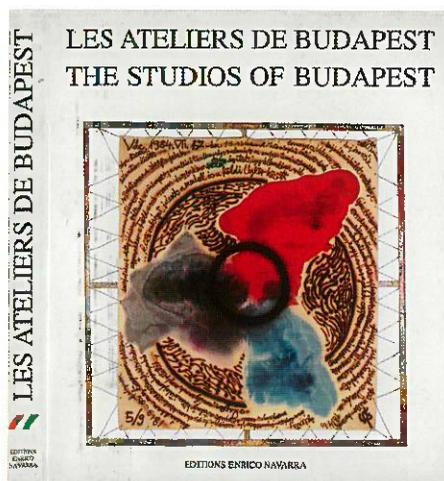
The 1977 *Ambroise Vollard Impresario* exhibition in New York, which showcased art publications, met with enormous success with collectors, merchants, artists, and institutions alike.

Without wanting to make comparisons, Enrico Navarra, whose success as a gallery-owner has been illustrated beyond any doubt, is equally exceptional in his role as a publisher. He has released hundreds of art books with passion, energy, and great humility, giving pride of place and total freedom to his chosen teams of experts.

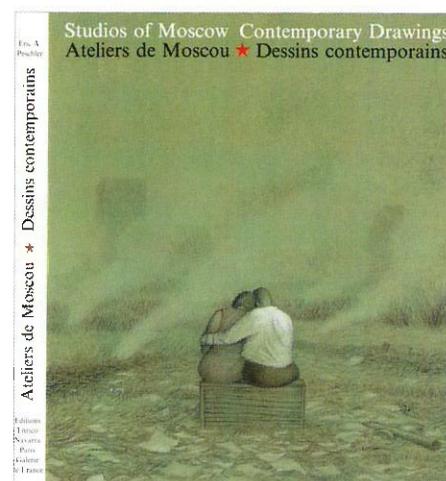
His unwavering commitment to the promotion and diffusion of art around the world stems from an insatiable curiosity, a passion for dialog, and a thirst for meeting new people. His driving need to learn and create, to "do things" as he would say, is matched only by his work ethic.

His most successful publication to date, one which marked a milestone in the world of art book publishing, was his monograph on Jean-Michel Basquiat. A first edition of 20,000 copies was printed, and many of these were given as gifts and distributed around the world. I can confirm that the same is true of every other art book he has published.

At the end of the 1980s, Enrico Navarra worked on a range of publishing projects including monographs, exhibition catalogs, and the *L'Autre Rive* collection, which was dedicated to a project on engravings and lithography that I had the honor of directing. It was around this time that he designed, financed, and published a new, extremely innovative series entitled *Les Ateliers de...* (*Workshops of...*), the goal of which was to take readers on a guided tour of contemporary artists' workshops all around the world, one capital city at a time. This entailed meeting and interviewing the artists, describing their workshops, and giving them an opportunity to talk about their current projects. We found this new series greatly inspiring; it was so original, so pertinent, and the possibilities it opened up for the future seemed endless... And so, the first volume, *Ateliers de Moscou* (*Workshops of Moscow*), edited by Meret and Ewald Graber, saw the light of day. It was soon followed by the second, *Ateliers de Budapest* (*Workshops of Budapest*), a work which, to this day, is still considered a benchmark publication and a turning point. The ensuing art market crisis should have brought the series to a premature end... but that would have been to



The Studios of Budapest, 1990
240 pages



Studios of Moscow
Contemporary Drawings, 1989
196 pages

overlook Enrico Navarra's fierce determination. As early as the year 2000, he launched a series of exhibitions on Chinese contemporary artists, and a book entitled *Made by Chinese*. A few years later, in the space of just a few short months between late 2006 and early 2007, he formed a team who worked with the gallery to organize the *L'Art à la plage* (*Art at the Beach*) exhibition, dedicated to Indian contemporary artists. The same team worked together to create *Made by Indians*, a 672-page book profiling contemporary India at the time of globalization, through interviews with artists, collectors, writers, designers, stylists, and others... Thus, the *Made by...* collection came into being, and has been a point of reference ever since. The series already includes six volumes on China (presented in three box sets); a two-volume second edition of *Made by Indians*; three volumes in a single box set dedicated to creativity in the Arab world, and another work in the same format on the Brazilian art scene. Between 6,000 and 7,000 copies of each book were printed as first editions, and in certain cases, expanded second editions were to follow.

The book you are now holding takes an initial look at the current state of affairs on the Thai art scene. It provides an almost exhaustive panorama of the country's artists, galleries, collectors, great art events, chefs, choreographers, dancers, DJs, and designers at a certain point in time. It was directed by Francine Méoule—whose connections and knowledge on the artists, atmosphere, and networks of the country have been indispensable—and Christine Schreyer, who worked on the very first books ever published by Enrico Navarra, and who represents the gallery on this project with her trademark sharpness of wit.

This extremely comprehensive and up-to-date work is a treasure trove of information, and will undoubtedly win the hearts of many—above and beyond exhibition and biennale curators, art collectors, museum directors, and other directly-concerned parties—in Thailand, certainly, but also throughout Asia, Europe, and the rest of the world.

As always, each new edition in the *Made by...* series inspires off-shoot projects with artists, curators, and collectors. Through their work in creating this synergy, the gallery has gained international recognition. This series, the genesis of which dates from the late 1980s, concurrently with the *Ateliers...* projects, is thriving now more than ever, and volumes on Korea and Japanese architecture are currently in the making.



FRANCINE MÉOULE

ART HISTORIAN, CURATOR

AND CONTEMPORARY ART CONSULTANT

PARIS, 10.2018

This new addition to the *Made by* collection is dedicated to the art scene in Thailand. As such, its cover features seven colors, one for each of the seven days of the week, which in Thai mythology, correspond to the seven planets. The selection of contemporary artists includes key figures, long-established on the international scene, as well as members of the young generation of 30-somethings, embraced by curators and galleries, whose works have recently been shown at international biennales. It was, however, difficult to include every artist, creator, and gallery who deserved a place in the book. The limited number of pages was one consideration, and the necessity to cover all creative fields, another. This also meant that we were unable to dedicate many pages to each individual artist, and yet despite this, each one has been represented through their work either in the introduction pages, in the essays, or in the pages on galleries, museums, and art collectors. Taken as a whole, we can therefore esteem that this edition gives us a true overview of Thailand's extremely diverse and creative art scene.

In September 1996, I took on the role of cultural attaché at the French embassy in Bangkok, a post that had just been created by French ambassador, Gérard Coste. He and I had worked together previously in Singapore for the French Festival, in collaboration with Jean Digne, director of the Association Française d'Action Artistique (AFAA). From the moment I set foot in Bangkok, I was swept up by its incredible energy—by the smiles, hospitality, and friendliness of the people—but I was also plunged into its extremes. Nightmarish for some, fascinating for others, Bangkok is a multilayered city, constantly racing headlong into frenzied urbanization, where nothing ever stops or is regulated, but where everything remains possible. This is due to the fact that from this inextricable swarm of colors and movement emerge great tolerance, sensitivity, and a zest for life, full of humor and optimism. Everything is juxtaposed and intertwined: the motorways, the over-ground metro system, the temples, the skyscrapers, and the huge billboards encouraging people to consume everything and anything imaginable.

As the ultimate urban melting pot, Bangkok successfully blends tradition with modernity, and royalty with military dictatorship. Founded in 1782, the city is a rare example of a metropolis that has never been colonized by the West. Often called the Venice of Asia, in reference to its canal network (called *khlongs*), Bangkok is also known as the City of Angels.



Spirit house
Bangkok, 2018



Traffic view
Bangkok City, 2018



Monk with tattoo
Bangkok, 2018

And so I arrived in 1996, at a time when Thailand was considered one of the five tigers of the Asian economy. Everything seemed possible and in the artistic sector, everything seemed to support this development. There was no infrastructure to speak of, but there was raw energy that led to the opening of new alternative spaces. This was closely related to the coming home of a number of young Thai professionals from their travels abroad: Klaomard Yipintsoi and her husband, photographer Nopadon Kaosam-ang, opened first a photo gallery, and then About Studio/About Café. Gridthiya Gaweewong founded Project 304, an alternative gallery, in collaboration with local artists.

About Studio/About Café was set up in the old warehouses of the Chinese quarter, and very quickly became a key venue within the art world. It is both an exhibition space and a venue for conferences, workshops, special DJed events, and concerts, bringing together the whole artistic community: artists, designers, filmmakers, and visiting curators. It was in About Studio—but also at the Project 304 gallery, university art centers, and workshops (which I attended with Édouard Mornaud, a great connoisseur of Thai contemporary art who was working with the Alliance Française)—that I met most of the artists and actors on the Thai art scene that have since been included in this book.

After the 1997 crisis, real estate investments became a thing of the past. The art center project was postponed. On the other hand, alternative and experimental spaces began to multiply, and despite a lack of government funding, many projects took shape on a national level, such as the Bangkok Experimental Film Festival (BEFF), a coproduction between Kick the Machine—the company of Apichatpong Weerasethakul—the Thai Film Foundation, and Project 304. The local art scene also unfurled in Chiang Mai with Uthit Atimana and Mit Jai Inn (Chiang Mai Social Installation), and in 1998, Rirkrit Tiravanija and Kamin Lertchaiprasert founded a project, The Land, in San Pa Tong—a district in the middle of the rice fields, close to Chiang Mai—which would go on to become a foundation: a collaborative project, a utopic artistic community, a place of varying experiments, a place of life and encounters, and an experimental laboratory where many artists—Thai and international (the Van Lieshout workshop, Tobias Rehberger, Philippe Parreno, and Superflex, among others)—would come together.

At that time, many European countries saw Thailand as a place with great potential for experimentation and freedom. The nation became a mandatory port of call for many international curators, such as Hans-Ulrich Obrist, Hou Hanru, and



Harit Srikhao
 The Indra Reincarnation, from Mt. Meru series, 2017
 140x111cm
 Photography



Dow Wasiksiri
 Conversations with the Past
 (It's plastic but trust me), 2012
 Photography
 60x45cm

David Elliott... The work of Thai artists was at last shown at international biennales in places like Sydney, Sao Paolo, and Lyon... but also in prestigious exhibitions such as Apinan Poshyananda's *Traditions/Tensions* in New York in 1997, and Hans Ulrich Obrist's and Hou Hanru's *Cities on the Move* in October 1999. The latter exhibition showcased the work of more than 80 artists and architectures from across the city of Bangkok.

In September 2000, as I was preparing to leave Thailand to take up a new post in Seoul, South Korea, the Thai contemporary art scene was on the rise. But one never truly leaves Thailand, and I myself have retained a deep attachment to the country, and regularly return. Thailand is a complex country with a strong spirit of independence, most likely on account of its history of assimilating and putting its own spin on overseas influences from China, India, Cambodia, and Europe. It's a syncretic culture, a melting pot, where all of these influences intermingle and weave their way through everyday life with spectacular fluidity. Many traditional and contemporary Thai arts still bear Buddhist and Hindu influences, including animistic beliefs found in popular culture, with their universe of mythical creatures, amulets, and rituals expressed through sacred, traditional tattoos, horoscope readings, and by worshipping the spirits of nature. The richness of contemporary Thai art is a direct product of this broad capacity to absorb these foreign influences, to assimilate and rewrite them by adding their own inspiration drawn from Buddhist philosophy, popular culture, everyday life, and socio-political realities. Whenever I'm back in Thailand, I'm an attentive observer of the movements of this art scene, active both in Bangkok (as evidenced, for example, by the opening of The Jim Thompson Art Center in 2003, and the BACC in 2008) and Chiang Mai in northern Thailand. Many artists and filmmakers choose to build their studios and homes in natural surroundings, a testament to the acutely-developed culture of collaboration and of staunch solidarity across generations.

And so when the Enrico Navarra Gallery, with whom I had become acquainted in Bangkok in 1996, approached me in January 2007 with a request to come to Bombay (where I had worked as a consultant for the book *Made by Indians*) to work on a book about the Thai art scene before his friend, Laurent Aublin, the French Ambassador in Bangkok, stepped down, I accepted with great enthusiasm. While some preparatory measures for the book were being laid down, projects between the Enrico Navarra Gallery and a group of Thai artists were getting underway. Although the first draft of the project had taken shape, the book could not be published at that time as certain economic and political circumstances were no longer favorable to such an investment.



Lek Kiatsirikajorn
Lost in paradise, 2012
Photography
Weerapat Srivichien From Ayutthaya Province,
Rama 9, Bangkok, 2012



Chatchai Pui-pia
Vetal Suite, Curiosities Unearthed, 2018
Exhibition view
Nova Contemporary



Sutee Kunavichayanont
Happy Soldiers (Male) 1 (detail), 2018
Inkjet on vinyl sheet
275,5x835,5cm



Mōntri Tæmsōmbat
Paraquat, 2018
Vinyl print, edition of 5
120x160cm

Then in 2017, a decade later, Gilles Garachon, French Ambassador to Thailand, mentioned the project to me when we crossed paths at MAIAM. Following this encounter, he proceeded to contact the Enrico Navarra Gallery to persuade them that the time to revisit that first draft, see it through, and publish the book had finally come. The circumstances were now in our favor as the Thai art scene had gained a new lease on life, with an ever-growing number of galleries and private museums, not to mention a corporate sector eager to support cultural projects and events involving contemporary art.

Today, as Lorenzo Rudolf, director of Art Stage Singapore and Jakarta, mentioned at the last Art Basel show in Hong Kong, the art market in Thailand has gathered considerable momentum, with the opening of new private museums as well as young, highly professional, avant-garde galleries, such as Bangkok CityCity, Tars, VER, and Nova Contemporary. Contemporary art events such as Galleries' Night, Bangkok Photo Festival, and the Ghost Festival have become more frequent. New spaces have also opened in Chiang Mai in northern Thailand, such as MAIAM Contemporary Art Center, and we have seen the inception of spaces in Khon Kaen in the northeast, and Pattani and Songkhla in the south.

Furthermore, for the first time, three biennales were scheduled to be held in Thailand between July 2018 and February 2019. The first, Bangkok Biennial, is an alternative "fringe" biennale that brings together many new galleries and alternative spaces both from Thailand and abroad. The second of the three is Bangkok Art Biennale, initiated and directed by Apinan Poshyananda on the theme "Beyond Bliss", featuring 75 artists from 33 countries. Last but not least, Thailand Biennale Krabi 2018, created by the Office of Contemporary Art and Culture, and curated by Jiehong Jiang on the theme of "The Edge of Wonderland", will showcase works by 57 artists from 25 countries with works displayed on-site around the city of Krabi and the surrounding region.

Today, this creative and entrepreneurial energy extends into all fields and across the entire country. Moreover, it is reshaping the public face of the capital in such disparate fields as architecture, graphic design, illustration, and street food... Bangkok is striving to become a new creative hub on both a local and an international scale. On the western bank of the Chao Phraya River, The Jam Factory, a former warehouse converted by Duangrit Bunnag, is home not only to Bunnag's own architecture firm (DBALP), but also to a gallery, a bookstore, a fashion and design boutique, as well



Kornkrit Jianpinidnan
Mountain wind/I Wish(serie), 2011
 Photography, lambda print on aluminum
 16x24cm



Michael Shaowanasai
Our lady-of-low-countries (seated circa), 2008
 Photography, Color digital print
 77x77cm

as a restaurant: The Never Ending Summer. Just opposite on the eastern bank, the rapidly evolving Charoen Krung neighborhood has been labelled the "creative district," and is home to the Thailand Creative and Design Center (venue to last February's spectacular Design Week), as well as Warehouse 30, also converted by Duangrit Bunnag, into a string of concept stores that are each a blend of fashion and design with in-house cafés and snack counters. These boutiques, galleries, restaurants, and jazz bars have all flocked here with enthusiasm. A further example can be found in Chinatown, which, known for its street food stalls (including Jay Fai, the first restaurant of its kind to earn a Michelin star), has also started to see galleries, cocktail bars, and restaurants crop up. The same phenomenon has gripped the Thonglor neighborhood, where the number of design spaces, co-working spaces, food halls, and cocktail bars has started to increase. Likewise, concerns for sustainable development, recycling, and green energy, have spurred architects and landscape architects to undertake an ever-growing number of new projects throughout all of Thailand.

Made by Thai thereby serves as a benchmark to provide insight into the contemporary Thai art scene as part of the international stage, while also conveying its inherent dynamism and diversity. To date, each new edition of the *Made by...* collection has served as a springboard for other related projects with the featured artists, creatives, curators, and collectors. These have ranged from new works, to monographs, and exhibitions; I sincerely hope that too will be the case here.

In conclusion, I would like to thank everyone who has been featured in the book, particularly the artists and creatives interviewed, and their assistants for their hospitality. I would also like to thank everybody who contributed to making this book happen: Gilles Garachon (French Ambassador to Thailand until August 2018) and his team; Apinan Poshyananda and Gridthiya Gaweewong for their critical essays; Pratarn Teeradada from *art4d* magazine, responsible for the architecture/design special; and our Thai patrons and sponsors, such as Vimolluck Chuchat (director general of OPAC at the French Ministry of Culture), Eric Bunnag Booth and Jean-Michel Beurdeley, as well as Piriya Vachajitpan. I would also like to thank Enrico Navarra; Christine Schreyer for joining me on this adventure; the talented photographers Simon Schwyzer, Valérie Sadoun, Gun Susangkarakan, Rafael Marinez, and finally, the whole team at the Navarra Gallery, in particular the graphic designer Arnold d'Alger and Julien Maeda.



Chatchai Puipia
Bending GaGa in Ayuthaya, 2007
Bronze
200x200x240cm