

THE FIRST

**ASIA-PACIFIC**  
**OF CONTEMPORARY ART**  
**TRIENNIAL**

BRISBANE AUSTRALIA 1993

**QUEENSLAND ART GALLERY**

# ARAYA RASDJARMREARNSOOK

Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook was born in 1957 in Trad, Thailand. She studied at the College of Fine Art, Bangkok in the mid 1970s and later specialised in printmaking at Silpakorn University, graduating with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in 1980 and a Master of Fine Arts in 1986. Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook was an art instructor at the College of Fine Art from 1981 to 1987 during which time she participated in an artist's seminar program in Japan. She was appointed to the Faculty of Fine Arts at Chiang Mai University in 1987 where she continues to teach. A further period of postgraduate study in graphic art was undertaken in the period 1988–90 at the Hochschule für Bildende Kunst, Braunschweig, Germany.

Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook held her first solo exhibition in 1987 at the National Gallery, Bangkok and others have followed in both Thailand and Germany. The artist has participated in group shows including several National Exhibition of Arts events staged in Bangkok where she was awarded prizes for her print imagery, and the '2nd International Women's Exhibition' organised by the International Women's Festival, Bangkok, 1992.

One of the few women in Thailand to have gained a comparable professional status to her male counterparts, Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook began her career specialising in the graphic arts. Intaglio printing was the artist's particular forte and her etchings often conveyed one or several illuminated figures (women) emerging from deep shadow. Large, densely textured paintings of 1991 and 1992 were low-keyed in tone and organised in a grid format. Several were overlaid with text, which was intentionally obscure. This abstract work was poetic and sensual, suggestive of subtle shifts in mood and emotion. The Australian artist Joan Grounds responded to these strong, introspective statements in the catalogue to the artist's solo exhibition at the National Gallery, Bangkok, 1992:

When we come to this work, we have a sense of the possible artistic works and creative past and present whose names are evoked as companions on the solitary journey every artist takes when she or he makes a work.

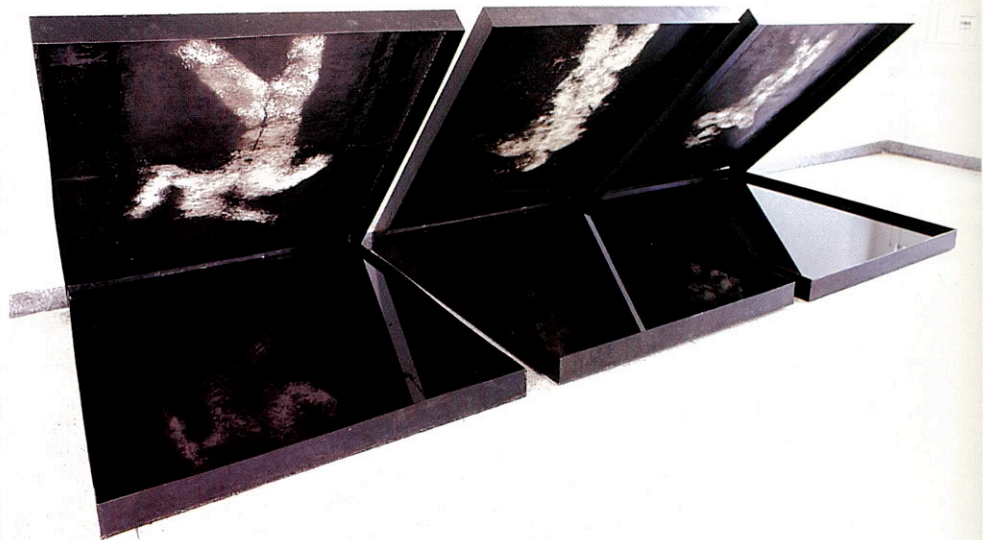
Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook's two related works, *Girl says, 'There is always the night time'* and *Three boxes of men and their reflections*, demonstrate her departure from imagery which is confined to a single plane.

Top  
**Three boxes of men and their reflections** 1993  
Installation comprising metal boxes, etchings, motor oil

92x360x140cm  
Collection: The artist

Bottom  
**Girl says, 'There is always the night time'** 1993  
Installation comprising metal boat, motor oil, cloth and 'sa' paper, hair,

resin hands  
350x720x60cm  
Collection: The artist



Her installations investigate the notion of opposing states in cultural awareness and the marginalised position of women in many sectors of society.

On *Girl says, 'There is always the night time'* Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook comments:

I can now see the roles of my mother and my grandmother more clearly within the family and I regret that I never asked them whether they could ever make their own decisions and choices... This work uses memories of former women's roles and can be seen as a statement towards the future — a symbolic female body hanging up high, upside down, reflecting its shadow in a large boat that travels along black waters.

On *Three boxes of men and their reflections* she comments:

This was created in the summer of 1993: black metal boxes, open, each consisting of two opposites, divided by a line that separates the box from its cover. It is the line between people in an open space and their shadows... between

the fighters and the losers; it's the line where one decides whether to live or die ... or, in a Buddhist way, it's the dividing line between knowledge and ignorance, between deliverance and attachment; no matter what, the important thing is 'why' we are living.

Anne Kirker

