



Li Chun-Sheng, *Untitled*, 1963, oil on canvas, 41.6 x 67.3 cm. Photograph: Courtesy of Taipei Fine Arts Museum.

ism, Action painting, and Chinese calligraphy, a style which was developed late in his life.

Also wielding an important influence was the mainland-born artist Shiy De-Jinn (1923–1981) who had studied with Lin Fengmian at the Hangzhou Arts School. During his travels in Europe and the United States in the early 1960s, Shiy absorbed the influences of Western avant-garde art which he then took to Taiwan.

The exhibition, which included ink paintings, woodblock prints, and mixed-media works, was a gentle, well-developed introduction in art historical terms to an extraordinary period of artistic development in Taiwan.

Maggie Pai

## THAILAND

### Jakkai Siributr at the Intercontinental Hotel

Prior to the opening of his first international solo exhibition at the National Arts Club in New York this July, Thai artist Jakkai Siributr gave his home audience a sneak preview of his most recent collection of fabric works. For this new series of 12 tapestries, under the title *Indigen*, Siributr continues with his experimen-

tation of the substance and parameters of fiber-based art.

Negating the more deliberated selection of commercial fabrics in previous works, Siributr is now drawing inspiration from old discarded cast-offs from a Bangkok silk factory. Gradually distancing himself from the idea of art works as meticulously crafted precious “one-off” tapestry designs, he has found methods and techniques that enable him to loosen up and become more expressive in his use of fabric and construction. Siributr calls his method a “process of layering.”

To attain this freedom of expression in his textile production, Siributr uses diverse dyeing and color combinations, and ways of cutting. He feels it is the fibers that infuse his pieces with individuality, through their texture, color and palpability. The surfaces are further enlivened by incorporating coarsely woven thread, plastic beads, pins, and tape, which accentuate the raggedy discarded veneer. The neglected temperament of the finished pieces work in part as a symbol for the futility of nostalgic living within the incessant flux of today’s world.



Jakkai Siributr, *Entwine*, 2004, fabric and paint on fabric, 150 x 150 cm.

Trying not to predetermine specific color themes, Siributr is making greater use of natural dyes, which he considers more muted and less predictable than synthetic dyes. Uncertainty is not an attribute typically embraced by those schooled in textile design, but Siributr feeds off such unpredictability. However, the alluring tangerine hues in *Glow* are far from muted. Under the well-positioned lighting of the Oasis room, the tactility of the fibers in the vertical rippling textures instill a particular vitality that is difficult to resist touching.

The artist is also reinterpreting standard fabric print patterns such as plaid and stripes, utilizing their rigid geometry both in the build up of surface form, as well as bringing rhythm and balance to the overall compositions. The subtle addition of paint to the woven surfaces through repeated silk-screening imbues the textiles with a more flowing, painterly sheen that is best reflected in his most recent creation *Entwine*.

Siributr’s early abstract compositions were sensory interpretations from memories of his extensive global escapades. Since the turn of the millennium, his art has assumed a more introverted, cerebral undercurrent as he ponders the immediate environment in which he immerses himself. Questioning individual identities and the roles we assume in society, conscious or otherwise, Siributr is searching for equilibrium among the uncertainties of our daily existence.

His earlier forays into such musings were better manifested through his more figurative acrylic paintings, while the painstaking, beautifully assembled textile pictures remained largely abstract and more contrived. Now Siributr is interpreting the physicality of the tapestries themselves as metaphor for his emotional landscape—the layering, interplay of color, textural juxtapositions, pattern—translating them as personal mood fluctuations, from turmoil to happiness.

Steven Pettifor