

A large, dense tree with a person climbing. The tree has thick, dark branches and a thick canopy of green leaves. A person is visible climbing one of the branches on the left side of the frame. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day, with some light filtering through the leaves.

JOANUA: THE NOTHINGNESS & SANOOK DEE MUSEUM

ARAYA RASDJARMREARNSOOK

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FOREWORD

TYLER ROLLINS

Tyler Rollins Fine Art is pleased to present *Jaonua: The Nothingness & Sanook Dee Museum*, an exhibition of two new video works by Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook, taking place from June 1 – July 28, 2017. Araya is one of Southeast Asia's most respected and internationally active contemporary artists, and for the past thirty years, her video, installation, and graphic works have been regularly shown in museums and biennials around the world, including the Venice Biennale (2005), Documenta (2012), and a retrospective exhibition at the Sculpture Center in New York (2015). Her latest exhibition centers on *Jaonua: The Nothingness* (2016), a five-channel video installation commissioned for the 2016-17 Singapore Biennale and now making its international debut in an expanded format. It is shown alongside *Sanook Dee Museum* (2017), a single-channel video exhibited for the first time.

Born in Trad, Thailand, in 1957, Araya received fine art degrees from Silpakorn University in Bangkok in 1986 and from Hochschule für Bildende Künste Braunschweig in 1990 and 1994. Her etchings and aquatints of the late 1980s, and her sculptures and installations of the early and mid-1990s, set up themes – death, the body, and women's experience – that have endured throughout her career. Since the late 1990s, video has been the primary medium of her artistic practice. Still deeply influenced by her earlier sculptural installation work, her videos are imbued with a strong physicality, with a close focus on bodies, often positioned in semi-abstract environments, their aura extending outward into the viewer's own space. These videos typically imply the presence of an audience that is both observing the action and ceremonially participating in it. They reference traditions of village storytelling, which create continuities between the present and the past, the everyday world and the world of spirits and of legend. Her videos have a meditative, ritualistic quality, inflected by Thai Buddhism, and, like many of humanity's important rituals, they are often centered on the idea of communication between different realms: between the living and the dead, the insane and "normal" people, humans and animals, the worlds of art and "real life."

Jaonua: The Nothingness is in many respects a seminal work in Araya's oeuvre, weaving together thematic strands from throughout her career into a powerfully integrated whole. It is perhaps her most complex video installation to date, with five intertwined video narratives projected onto various objects – including a bed, window, and rug – evoking a highly charged domestic environment in which dreams and reality seem to meld. It is a meditation on what she calls "the inseparable entanglement of things/lives/subjects." Motifs, even actual video clips, taken from her earlier work, are incorporated into a series of almost surreal narrative fragments informed by Buddhist teachings relating to the nature of suffering, attachment, and karma, alongside musings on Western philosophy of Being. A montage of visual motifs coalesces into a powerful vision of the cycle of life, exploring the nature of attachment in its many forms – whether to sex or eating, to rigid philosophical systems, or even to the sensuality of the art work.

The nature of the work of art, and our relationship to it, are probed further in *Sanook Dee Museum*, a video that continues themes developed in two of Araya's most acclaimed series, *Two Planets* (2008) and *Village and Elsewhere* (2011), in which she placed framed reproductions of iconic Western paintings in rural villages, markets, and Buddhist temples in Thailand, and filmed groups of farmers discussing the artworks, sometimes along with Buddhist monks. With the new video, she brings these participants into a museum, setting the stage for highly animated discussions. All the videos in these related series create a meeting point between apparent oppositions: high art and everyday life; the personal and private spheres; elite and mass culture; art and commerce; East and West. While issues of class and cultural differences, exoticization of the "other," etc., are invoked, these videos also convey a sense of curiosity, humor, and joy that emphasize a common humanity.



VIEW OF THE EXHIBITION AT TYLER ROLLINS FINE ART



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JAONUA: THE NOTHINGNESS

2016

five channel video installation, bed, rug, window frame, and picture frame
35 min.

edition of 3

five channel video: edition of 5



SANOOK DEE MUSEUM

2017

single channel video

36:56 min.

edition of 7



JAONUA: THE NOTHINGNESS

2016

digital print

31 x 47 inches (79 x 119.5 cm)

edition of 7



AMUSEMENT IN SANOOK DEE MUSUEM

2017

digital print

31 x 47 inches (79 x 119.5 cm)

edition of 7



FOUR MONKS WITH THREE LADIES IN SANOOK DEE MUSEUM

2017

digital print

31 x 47 inches (79 x 119.5 cm)

edition of 7



NOVICES EATING POTATO CHIPS IN SANOOK DEE MUSEUM

2017

digital print

31 x 47 inches (95 x 155 cm)

edition of 7

ARAYA RASDJARMREARNSOOK

SELECTED BIOGRAPHY

Born 1957 in Trad, Thailand. Lives and works in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

EDUCATION

- 1994 Meisterschuelerin, Hochschule Fuer Bildende Kuenste Braunschweig, Germany.
1990 Diplom Fuer Bildende Kuenste, Hochschule Fuer Bildende Kuenste Braunschweig, Germany.
1986 MFA, Silpakorn University, Bangkok, Thailand.

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2017 *Jaonua: The Nothingness & Sanook Dee Museum*, Tyler Rollins Fine Art, New York, NY, USA.
2015 *Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook*, Sculpture Center, New York, NY, USA.
2014 *Niranam*, Tyler Rollins Fine Art, New York, NY, USA.
2014 *Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook – The Village and Elsewhere*, University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia.
Storytellers of the Town, 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, Sydney, Australia.
2013 *Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook: Recent Video Works*, Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO, USA.
2012 *The Endless Renaissance: Six Solo Artist Projects*, Bass Museum of Art, Miami Beach, FL, USA.
Two Planets, Walters Museum, Baltimore, MD, USA.
Two Planets/Village and Elsewhere, Tyler Rollins Fine Art, New York, NY, USA.
2003 *Lament, Tensta Konsthall*, Stockholm, Sweden.
2002 *Why Is It Poetry Rather than Awareness?*, National Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand.
1999 *At Nightfall Candles Are Lighted*, Contemporary Art Museum, Chiang Mai and Chulalongkorn University Art Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand.
1998 *Lament of Desire*, Artpace, San Antonio, Texas, USA, and the Faculty of Fine Art Gallery, Chiang Mai, Thailand.
1995 *Lustful Attachment*, National Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand.
1994 *Water Is Never Still*, National Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand.
1992 *Stories in Room*, National Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand.
1990 *Printmaking and Drawing*, Atelier Forsthaus, Gifhorn, Germany.
1990 *Printmaking*, Vereins und Westbank, Hanover, Germany.
1987 *Small Graphic*, Goethe Institute, Bangkok, Thailand.
Graphic Notes, National Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand.

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2017 SUNSHOWER: *Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia 1980s to Now*, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan.
PyeongChang Biennale, *The Five Moons: Return of the Nameless and Unknown*, Gangneung Green City Experience Center, South Korea.
2016 *In & Out of Context*, Asia Society Museum, New York, NY, USA.
Singapore Biennale, *An Atlas of Mirrors*, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore.
2015 *East Asia Feminism: FANTasia*, Seoul Museum of Art, Seoul, Korea.
2014 *Inside*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris France.
The Roving Eye, ARTER Space for Art, Istanbul, Turkey.
Past Traditions/New Voices in Asian Art, Hofstra University Museum, Hemstead, NY, USA.
No Country: Contemporary Art for South and Southeast Asia, Asia Society Hong Kong Center, Hong Kong.
Thai Charisma, Bangkok Art and Culture Center, Bangkok, Thailand.
DIRGE: Reflections on (Life and) Death, Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland, Cleveland, OH, USA.
2013 *No Country: Contemporary Art for South and Southeast Asia*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY, USA.

- California Pacific Triennial, Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, CA, USA.
Dojima River Biennial, Dojima River Forum, Osaka, Japan.
Asian Art Biennial, National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Taiwan.
The Floating Eternity Project, Para Site, Hong Kong.
Lunch with Olympia, Yale University School of Art, New Haven, CT, USA.
2012 dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel, Germany.
Thai Transience, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore.
Phantoms of Asia: Contemporary Awakens the Past, Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA, USA.
Beyond Geography, Art Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
2011 *The Global Contemporary. Art Worlds After 1989*, Zentrum fuer Kunst und Medientechnologie, Karlsruhe, Germany.
MDE11: Teaching and learning: Places of knowledge in art, Medellin, Colombia.
Video: An Art: A History 1965 – 2010, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore.
Kaza Ana/ Air Hole: Another Form of Conceptualism from Asia, National Museum of Art, Osaka, Japan.
Speech Objects, Musée de l'objet, Blois, France.
Changwon Asian Art Festival, Gyeongnam, South Korea.
Roving Eye, SKMU Sørlandets Kunstmuseum, Kristiansand, Norway.
2010 5th International Video Art Biennial in Israel, Center for Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv, Israel.
1st Ural Industrial Biennale of Contemporary Art, National Center for Contemporary Arts, Ekaterinburg, Russia.
AND Writers, 1st Nanjing Biennial, Jiangsu Provincial Art Museum, Nanjing, China.
Realism in Asian Art, The National Art Gallery, Singapore.
17th Biennale of Sydney, Australia.
2009 *Unreal Asia*, the 55th International Short Film Festival Oberhausen, Germany.
Incheon Women Artists Biennale South Korea.
2008 *Dreaming/Sleeping*, Passage de Retz gallery, Paris, France and The Petach Tikva Museum of Art, Petach Tikva, Israel.
2007 *Six Feet Under: Autopsy of our relation to the dead*, Deutsches Hygiene-Museum Dresden, Dresden, Germany.
Thermocline of Art, Zentrum fuer Kunst und Medientechnologie, Karlsruhe, Germany.
Thresholds of Tolerance, ANU The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.
Wind from the East: Perspectives on Asian Contemporary Art, Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki, Finland
2006 *Dirty Yoga*, The 2006 Taipei Biennial, Taipei, Taiwan.
Six Feet Under, Fine Arts Museum Berne, Berne, Switzerland.
Trace Root: Unfolding Asian Stories, 6th Gwangju Biennale, Gwangju, South Korea.
2005 51st Venice Biennale, Thai Pavilion. Venice, Italy.
The Pantagruel Syndrome, Castello di Rivoli, Turin, Italy.
Spaces and Shadows, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, Germany.
54th Carnegie International, Pittsburgh, PA, USA.
Insomnia, Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, UK.
2003 *Poetic Justice*, 8th International Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul, Turkey.
Time after Time, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, CA, USA.
2002 *EV+A 2002*, Limerick, Ireland.
2001 *ARS 01: Unfolding Perspectives*, Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki, Finland.
2000 *Global Scents of Thailand*, Edsvik Museum, Sweden.
1996 *Jurassic Technologies Revenant*, 10th Biennial of Sydney, Sydney, Australia.

Traditions/Tensions: Contemporary Art in Asia, Asia
Society and Queens Museum, New York, NY, USA.

1995 1st Johannesburg Biennial, South Africa.

1993 1st Asia-Pacific Triennial, Brisbane, Australia.

SELECTED PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

M+, Hong Kong.

Asia Society, New York, NY, USA.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY, USA.

Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton, MA, USA.

Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, CA, USA.

Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki, Finland.

National Museum, Osaka, Japan.

Singapore Art Museum, Singapore.

H+F Collection, Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

Thai Farmers Bank PCL, Thailand.

Mori Art Museum, Roppongi Hills, Japan.

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ARAYA RASDJARMREARNSOOK

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AT TYLER ROLLINS FINE ART

529 WEST 20 STREET, 10W

NEW YORK, NY 10011

TEL. + 1 212 229 9100

FAX. +1 212 229 9104

INFO@TRFINEART.COM

WWW.TRFINEART.COM

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