MATS AND PILLOWS AND VESSELS

PINAREE SANPITAK
FOREWORD

TYLER ROLLINS
*Mats and Pillows and Vessels* (April 13 – May 20, 2017), Pinaree Sanpitak’s fourth solo exhibition with the gallery, has two distinct but interrelated parts. *The Vessels* comprises the first overview of more than twenty years of her works on paper, culminating in a new series of drawings, *In the Jars*. Exhibited for the first time, the installation *The Mats and The Pillows* was conceived in conjunction with *The Roof*, a large-scale, hanging fabric installation, commissioned by Arts Brookfield, on view at the Brookfield Place Winter Garden in Battery Park City from April 19 – July 5.

Pinaree is one of the most compelling and respected Thai artists of her generation, and her work can be counted among the most powerful explorations of women’s experience in all of Southeast Asia. Her primary inspiration over the past twenty-five years has been the female body, distilled to its most basic forms and imbued with an ethereal spirituality. Her work is informed by a quiet minimalism that reflects her training in Japan. Often called a feminist or Buddhist artist, she resists such easy categorizations, preferring to let her work speak to each viewer directly, to the heart and soul, with the most basic language of form, color, and texture. Pinaree works in a wide variety of media – ranging from painting, sculpture, installation, textiles, ceramics, and glass, to performance and culinary arts – but some of her most intimate, subtle work is done on paper, often small in scale.

The exhibition presents a selection of works on paper that traces the evolution of the body and vessel motifs in her oeuvre, particularly the abstracted female torso and breast. For many years, and certainly since the birth of her son in 1993, a central focus of her work has been the female breast, which she relates both to imagery from the natural world, such as clouds and plants, and to the iconic forms of the Buddhist stupa (shrine) and offering bowl. Representative works are featured from several of her major series, including *Breast Works* (1994), *Confident Bodies* (1997-8), *Womanly Bodies* (1999), *Breast Stupas* (2002), *Breast Fruits* (2005-6), *Breasts and Clouds* (2007-8), and *Quietly Floating* (2010). A key work from her *Vessels and Mounds* series, *120 Vessels* (2000-1), is exhibited here in a partial installation. Each abstracted vessel motif was drawn with three long drips from a lit candle, as part of a meditative practice. The vessel motif takes on new forms with *In the Jars* (2017), a series of graphite drawings based on a group of terracotta jars Pinaree designed in homage to traditional Thai water storage pots and the sense of nurture, receptivity, and security they evoke. Each functions as a portrait of a particular form and mood.

This selection of works on paper, with its bodies and vessels, is in dialogue with *The Mats and The Pillows*, an installation in which visitors are invited to sit on an array of traditional, natural fiber mats and pillows, incorporating their own bodies into the artwork, grounded and at rest. Pinaree relates that the installation “takes off from a Thai expression, ‘one mat one pillow,’ referring to immigrants, mainly Chinese, coming to the country with nothing and hoping to pursue a new life. My ancestors also came to Thailand this way.” Pinaree gathered mats from different parts of Thailand, along with one from her own home, arranging them in an overlapping collage, so that instead of demarcating individual territories they create a communal space in which boundaries are broken down. “I lay them out as a site to share, to pause, to stay, to exchange,” she explains. “There should always be space for all, for hope and opportunities.” Scattered cushions allow visitors the opportunity to make themselves comfortable however they see fit. The installation evokes a sense of home, a nurturing, secure, intimate space. *The Roof*, its counterpart across town, also creates a sense of comfort and solace. A composition of translucent fabric canopies collaged among the towering palm trees in the Winter Garden’s expansive public space, it provides a temporary sanctuary, inserting a shared “roof over the head.”
Mats and Pillows and Vessels

PINAREE SANPITAK
One of the four basic necessities of life is a place to live, to sleep. The installation *The Mats and The Pillows* takes off from a Thai expression, “one mat one pillow,” referring to immigrants, mainly Chinese, coming to the country with nothing and hoping to pursue a new life. My ancestors also came to Thailand this way.

These common, local reed mats are made during the off rice-planting season as a source of extra income and in some areas have been developed and promoted as a sustainable product of the village. They are used in the fields, in the garden, on the floors in the house, as a table, as a bed, as a way of welcoming, greeting. They are versatile. The installation gathers local Thai mats from different regions, an antique Chinese bamboo mat, and a rattan mat from my own home. I lay them out as a site to share, to pause, to stay, to exchange. There should always be space for all, for hope and opportunities.

*The Mats and The Pillows* was conceived together with *The Roof*, an installation to be exhibited concurrently in New York City at The Winter Garden, Brookfield Place. There, instead of a space to lie upon, there will be translucent canopies collaged up among the palm trees, inserting a “roof over the head.” Fragile, temporary, warm. It may not be a secured cover but perhaps can create a sense of comfort and solace. A shared “roof.”

The works on paper of *The Vessels* are selections of new drawings from the series *In the Jars* (2016-17), along with earlier works on paper reflecting the range of my works based on the body and the vessel. They have journeyed through as "bodies" of the tangible and intangible. Physical and mental. The container and the void. At times grounded, at times emotional. Laying your “bodies” on the mats and pillows, the body dialogues continue.

Pinaree Sanpitak
February 2017
VIEW OF THE EXHIBITION AT TYLER ROLLINS FINE ART
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IN THE JARS SERIES

2016-2017
pencil on Mohachi paper
22 x 22 in. (56 x 56 cm) each
120 VESSELS

2000-2001
candle wax, charcoal on paper
120 sheets, each 12 x 15 ¾ in. [30 x 40 cm]
THE MATS AND THE PILLOWS

2017
reed, pandanus, bamboo and rattan mats, Kapok filled “kid” pillows
dimensions variable; as installed 309 x 264 in. (785 x 670.5 cm)
GOLD BREAST

1995-1996
gold leaf, pastel, charcoal on paper
12 x 18 in. (30.5 x 46 cm)
THE EGG
1995-1996
pastel on paper
14 ¼ x 20 in. (36 x 51 cm)

THE BODY 1
1995-1996
pastel on paper
14 ¼ x 20 in. (36 x 51 cm)

THE BODY 2
1997-1998
charcoal, pastel on paper
20 x 14 ¼ in. (51 x 36 cm)
WOMANLY BODIES 1
1999-2000
pastel, pencil on paper
20 x 14 in. (51 x 36 cm)

WOMANLY BODIES 2
1999-2000
pastel on paper
20 x 14 in. (51 x 36 cm)

WOMANLY BODIES 3
1999-2000
pastel on paper
20 x 14 in. (51 x 36 cm)

WOMANLY BODIES 4
1999-2000
pastel on paper
25 ½ x 19 ½ in. (49.5 x 65 cm)
THE MOUND 1
2000-2001
charcoal on paper
17 x 14 in. (43 x 36 cm)

THE MOUND 2
2000-2001
acrylic, charcoal on paper
17 x 14 in. (43 x 36 cm)
THE MOUND 3

2000-2001
charcoal on paper
29 ¾ x 22 ¼ in. (75.5 x 56.5 cm)
THE BODY 3
2000-2001
charcoal, pastel on paper
17 x 14 in. (43 x 36 cm)

THE BODY 4
2000-2001
candle wax, charcoal on paper
16 ½ x 23 ¼ in. (42 x 59 cm)
THE VESSEL 1
2000-2001
acrylic, pastel on paper
8 ¼ x 11 ¾ in. (21 x 30 cm)

THE VESSEL 2
2000-2001
monoprint, pastel on paper
8 x 11 in. (20 x 28 cm)
THE VESSEL 3
2000-2001
acrylic, pastel, pencil on paper
9 ½ x 12 ¼ in. (24 x 31 cm)

THE VESSEL 4
2000-2001
gold leaf, charcoal on paper
11 x 12 in. (28 x 30 cm)
THE VESSEL 5

2000-2001
acrylic, pastel, pencil on paper
22 ¼ x 30 ¼ in. (56.5 x 77 cm)
OFFERING VESSEL

2002-2003
monoprint
11 x 14 in. (28 x 35.5 cm)

THE VESSEL 6

2000-2001
charcoal, pastel on paper
27 ¼ x 54 in. (69 x 137 cm)
**BREAST FRUITS**

2005-2006  
charcoal, pencil on paper  
24 x 18 in. (61 x 45 cm)

**BREASTS AND CLOUDS**

2013-2014  
pencil, pastel on Mohachi  
22 x 22 in. (56 x 56 cm)
THE ROOF

PINAREE SANPITAK
One of the four basic necessities of life is a place to live, to sleep. The Roof is a composition of translucent canopies collaged up among the palm trees, inserting a “roof over the head.” Fragile, temporary, warm. It may not be a secured cover but perhaps can create a sense of comfort and solace. At the least, a temporary, surreal sanctuary.

When I first visited the Winter Garden two years ago, I was so intrigued with the palm trees. They have become more than just a decorative element of the building. As tropical vegetation thriving in the midst of a northern hemispheric, concrete-and-steel environment, they embody the processes of exchange, intersection, and coexistence. An example for us all. Instead of just placing objects in the atrium, I wanted to “collaborate” with the palms, the people, and the space as a whole.

Being above or under or viewed from afar, I hope The Roof creates a living movement performance of “bodies.” A shared “roof.”

The Roof was conceived along with The Mats and The Pillows (2017), at Tyler Rollins Fine Art, where I place reed mats and local pillows on the floor, occupying almost half the gallery space. The project takes off from a Thai expression, “one mat one pillow,” referring to immigrants, mainly Chinese, coming to the country with nothing and hoping to pursue a new life. My ancestors also settled in Thailand this way. I lay them out as a site to share, to pause, to stay, to exchange. There should always be space for all, for hope and opportunities.

Pinaree Sanpitak
February 2017
THE ROOF

2017
raw silk, glass fiber, spunbond non-woven fabric, wires, hooks, chains, steel tubes.
PINAREE SANPITAK
SELECTED BIOGRAPHY

Born 1961 in Bangkok, Thailand. Lives and works in Bangkok

EDUCATION
1986 BFA in Visual Arts and Communication Design, School of Fine Arts and Design, University of Tsukuba, Ibaraki, Japan.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2017 *Mats and Pillows and Vessels*, Tyler Rollins Fine Art, New York, NY, USA.
2015 *Ma-lai*, Tyler Rollins Fine Art, New York, NY, USA.
2014 *Anything Can Break*, Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, OH, USA.
2013 *Hanging by a Thread*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Los Angeles, CA, USA.
2012 *Temporary Insanity*, The Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, VA, USA.
2011 *Body Borders*, The Art Center at Chulalongkorn University, H Gallery, and 100 Tonson Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand.
2007 *Breasts and Clouds*, 100 Tonson Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand.
2002 *Offering Vessels*, Salina Art Center, Salina, KS, USA.
### 1987  *An Exhibition of Photographs and Collages by Pinaree Sanpitak*, Books & Beer, Bangkok, Thailand.

### GROUP EXHIBITIONS

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Exhibition Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td><em>All Matterings of Mind: Transcendent Imagery From the Contemporary Collection</em>, Nasher Museum of Art</td>
<td>at Duke University, Durham, NC, USA.</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Converging Voices: Gender and Identity</em>, Hofstra University Museum, Hempstead, NY, USA.</td>
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<td><em>Sugar Spin: You, Me, Art and Everything</em>, Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane,</td>
<td>Australia.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Farewell: The Art Center’s Acknowledgments 1995-2016</em>, The Art Center, Chulalongkorn University</td>
<td>Bangkok, Thailand.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Utopias and Heterotopias: Wuzhen International Contemporary Art Exhibition Anything Can Break</em>, Xiushui</td>
<td>Corridor Opera Theater, Wuzhen, China.</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>First Look: Collecting Contemporary at the Asian</em>, The Asian Art Museum, San Francisco, CA, USA.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td><em>Open Sea</em>, Musée d’art contemporain de Lyon, Lyon, France.</td>
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<td><em>InSight: Contemporary Sensory Works, Anything Can Break</em>, Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, OH, USA.</td>
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<td><em>Sensorium 360°</em>, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore.</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Traces of Siamese Smile: Art+Faith+Politics+Love</em>, Bangkok Art and Culture Center, Bangkok, Thailand.</td>
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<td><em>Incheon Stupa Cookery with Bo.Lan Restaurant</em>, Bangkok, Thailand [March 26-27-28].</td>
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<td><em>Virtues of the Kingdom</em>, Bangkok Art and Culture Center, Bangkok, Thailand.</td>
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<td>2008</td>
<td><em>From Surface to Origin</em>, Gallery Soul Flower, Bangkok, Thailand.</td>
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<td><em>Ethics of Encounters</em>, Gallery Soul Flower, Bangkok, Thailand.</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Breast Stupa Cookery with Higashiya and Le Bain</em>, Le Bain, Tokyo, Japan.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td><em>Breast Stupa Cookery / Artery Exhibition Opening</em>, SMU Singapore Management University, Singapore.</td>
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<td><em>Tout à Fait Thai : Thai Art Festival Paris 2006</em>, Mairie du 6 e, St. Sulpice, Paris, France.</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Breast Stupa Cookery / Soi Project / Thai Art Festival Paris</em>, Mairie du 6 e, St. Sulpice and</td>
<td>Restuarant Le Trois, Paris, France.</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Little More Sweet Not Too Sour</em>, 100 Tonson Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand.</td>
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</table>
Pink Bras Alert! / Breast Stupa Cookery, Charity in an A-B-C Cup - Fund raising campaign for The Queen's Sirikit Centre for Breast Cancer, Bangkok, Thailand, The Sukhothai Hotel Ballroom, Bangkok, Thailand.

2005 Thai Festival, Auditorium Parco Della Musica, Rome, Italy.

600 Images / 60 Artists / 6 Curators / 6 Cities, Bangkok / Berlin / London / Los Angeles / Manila / Saigon.


Soi Project / Yokohama Triennale 2005, Yokohama, Japan.


Breast Stupa Cookery / Pic-Nic in the Room, Jardin de Bagatelle, Kawazu / Urasenke Tea Ceremony / Art-U Room, Tokyo, Japan.

Breast Stupa Cookery / Lotus Arts de Vivre – WPO Offsite Event, Oriental Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand.

2003 Next Move – Contemporary Art from Thailand, Earl Lu Gallery, La Salle-Sia College of the Arts, Singapore.

The Spirit of Asian Contemporary Art, University Library Gallery, California State University, Sacramento, CA, USA.

2002 36 Ideas from Asia – Contemporary South-East Asian Art, Singapore Art Museum European Touring Exhibition.


The 2nd Women's Art Festival, East Asian Women and Herstories, Women's History Exhibition Hall, Seoul Women's Community Center, Seoul, South Korea.

2001 A Shriek from an Invisible Box, The Meguro Museum, Tokyo, Japan.

AsiaArt 2001/Labyrinths - Asian Contemporary Art – Biennale d'Arte Contemporanea, Contemporary Art Museum of Genoa, Italy.


Euro Visions, Art Gallery of the Faculty of Painting, Sculpture and Graphic Arts, Silpakorn University, Bangkok, Thailand.


Alter Ego - Thai - EU Contemporary Art Project, Art Gallery of the Faculty of Painting, Sculpture and Graphic Arts, Silpakorn University, Bangkok, Thailand.

Womanifesto 2, Saranrom Park, Bangkok, Thailand.

Festival der Geister / Asian Spirit and Ghost Festival, Kunsthaus Tacheles, Berlin, Germany.

"Beyond the Future" The Third Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia.


1997 Womanifesto, Baan Chao Phraya & Concrete House, Bangkok, Thailand.


1996 The Spiritual and the Social, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia.


Huay Khwang Maga-City Project, Demolition site, Rachadaphisek Rd., Bangkok, Thailand.

Kradaad : Contemporary Thai Works on Paper, Texas Tech University, Department of Art, Texas, USA Touring Exhibition.

Weather Report, A touring group project initiated by Rienke Enghardt.


Confess and Conceal, 11 insights from contemporary Australia and Southeast Asia, AGWA Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth and toured in Southeast Asia.

Shutter Talk, Dialogue Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand.


Through Her Eyes: An Exhibition by 6 Women Artists, Dialogue Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand.
1991  *Art and Environment*, The Gallery of the Faculty of Painting, Sculpture and Graphic Arts, Silpakorn University, Bangkok, Thailand.

*Recent Works by Chatchai Puipia & Pinaree Sanpitak*, The National Gallery, Chao Fa Rd., Bangkok, Thailand.


1986  *Via Tsukuba (3)*, AXIS Gallery, Roppongi, Tokyo, Japan.

**AWARDS**

2007  Silpatorn Awards 2007

**RESIDENCY PROGRAMS**

2014  Guest Artist Pavilion Project (GAPP), Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, OH, USA.

2009  Lenzi-Morisot Foundation, Chateau de la Roche Jacquelin, Daumeray, France.

2008  Lucas Artists Programs, Montalvo Arts Center, Saratoga, CA, USA.

2003  Pacific Bridge Residency Program, Oakland, CA, USA.

2001  Headlands Center for the Arts, Sausalito, CA, USA.


1999  Printmaking Workshop - Northern Editions, Northern Territory University (NTU) Darwin, Australia

**PUBLIC COLLECTIONS**

Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA, USA.

Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, OH, USA.

The Asian Art Museum, San Francisco, CA, USA.

Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Durham, NC, USA.

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Seattle, WA, USA.

Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia.

Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, Japan.

Seinan Gakuin University, Fukuoka, Japan.

Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Fukuoka, Japan.

Earl Lu Gallery, La Salle – SIA College of the Arts, Singapore.

Singapore Art Museum, Singapore.

Lenzi-Morisot Foundation, Singapore – France.

Bangkok University, Bangkok, Thailand.

Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand.

Misiem Yipintsoi Sculpture Garden, Thailand.

Ministry of Culture, Thailand.

The Queen’s Sirikit Centre for Breast Cancer, Bangkok, Thailand.

Vehbi Koc Foundation, Istanbul, Turkey

ILHAM Art Gallery, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation, Sydney, Australia.