

"Image, Symbol, Prayer"

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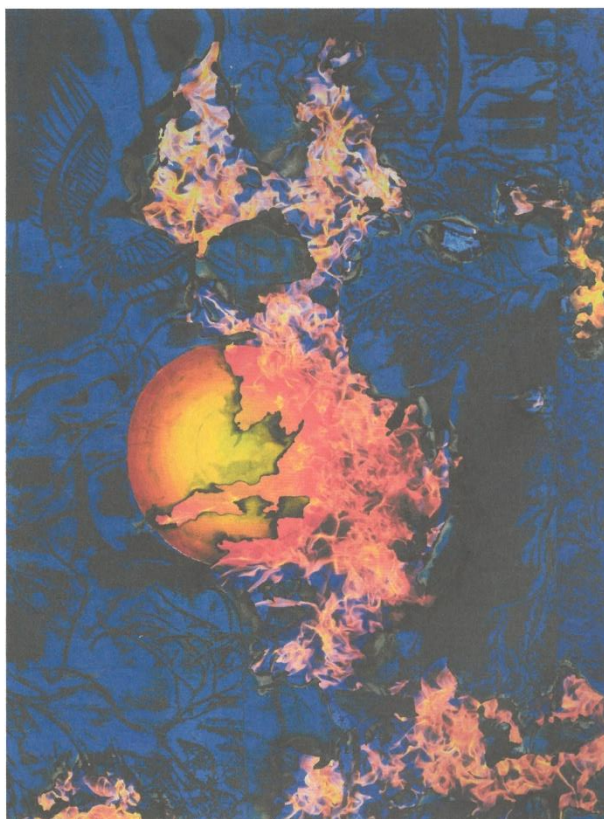


Korakrit Arunanondchai (b. 1986), 'You who wish to find prayers, look for it in the ashes', 2022, Metallic paint and acrylic polymer on bleached denim on inkjet print on canvas, 218.4x162.6cm, Courtesy of the artist and Kukje Gallery, Photo: Thappawut Parinyapariwat, Image provided by Kukje Gallery

“Image, Symbol, Prayer”

KUKJE GALLERY presents a special experience by exhibiting
“Image, Symbol, Prayer”, a solo exhibition by Thai artist Korakrit Arunanondchai.

editor HELENA



Korakrit Arunanondchai (b. 1986), 'The only thing that survives', 2022, Acrylic polymer on blue foil on bleached denim on inkjet print on canvas, 218.4x162.6cm, Courtesy of the artist and Kukje Gallery, Photo: Thappawut Parinyapariwat, Image provided by Kukje Gallery

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Born in 1986 in Bangkok, Thailand, Korakrit Arunanondchai received his BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2009 and his MFA from Columbia University in 2012. He now lives and works in Bangkok and New York.

His works are permanently collected by the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris; Tate Modern, London; Astrup Fearnley Museum, Oslo; Zabłudowicz Collection, London; Sifang Art Museum, Nanjing.

Arunanondchai is also co-founder and organizer of Ghost, an ongoing series of art and performance festivals in Bangkok. The artist has recently joined this year's ArtReview's Power 100 roster for the first time, ranking 88 on the list of the most influential figures in the art world as announced by the British arts magazine.

Working across a diverse range of mediums from video and performance to painting and installation, Arunanondchai interweaves an intricate codependency of forms to ask fundamental questions regarding existence and meaning, processed through the personal and the collective, life and death, and different belief systems.

In this first exhibition with the gallery, Arunanondchai's History Paintings surround the viewer on a floor made from compressed ash and clay. A prayer text is sculpted into the floor and reads:

'In the beginning there was discovery / New nightmares, to challenge sleep / The need to impose order unto chaos / We create this world through unanswered prayers. / There's a splendor beyond the upheaval / A nostalgia for unity / In the landscape of mourning / Give yourself to the

air, to what you cannot hold / The ghost possesses Nothing.'

Above the prayer that runs along the edge of the room are History Paintings and Void (sky painting). Begun in 2012, Arunanondchai's iconic series of History Paintings uses denim as its primary material, initially chosen because of its connection to a history of labor and Western forces of globalization. The artist bleaches and then builds upon layers of painting onto the denim, often using his body imprint and relief transfer technique that captures the texture of the earth. These surfaces become a stage for the fire to perform on and a material for it to consume. In these paintings, fire acts as both Arunanondchai's process and subject; an entanglement between form and content. When the painting is set on fire, Arunanondchai photographs the painting as it burns away. Once the fire is extinguished, remaining fragments of the paintings and their resultant ashes are assembled back together with a photographic documentation of the painting on fire, into an object that carries the image of its own making.

Intrigued by the term "medium specificity" in art and its association with spirit-mediums, Arunanondchai has long been fascinated by non-human forces and how they impact our political systems and shared reality. Related to this, fire and ash have been important materials in Arunanondchai's thinking and narrating of personal, social incidents. It is on this pyro-spiritual journey centered around ash—the remnant from the fire that burns everything into a ground of irreducible matter—that viewers are invited to survey the universal cycle of creation and de-creation. **N**



cooperation: KUKJE GALLERY(02 2 736 8449)

Korakrit Arunanondchai (b. 1986), 'Who will testify to the time when the world was ablaze?', 2022, Acrylic polymer on gold foil on bleached denim on inkjet print on canvas, 218.4×162.6cm, Courtesy of the artist and Kukje Gallery, Photo: Thappawut Parinyapariwat, Image provided by Kukje Gallery