

Half-Truth  
Sutee Kunavichayanont

## Half-Truth : Sutee Kunavichayanont

Sutee graduated in 1989 from the Faculty of Painting, Sculpture and Graphic Arts, Silpakorn University, and obtained his Masters of Visual Arts from the University of Sydney, Australia. Currently, he is an Assistant Professor in Art Theory at The Silpakorn University in Bangkok. He writes about art, and has published in 2003 'Jak Siam Kaw Su Thai Mai' (From Old Siam to New Thai), and co-edited in 2005-2006 'Death Before Dying: The Return of Montien Boonma' together with Apinan Poshyananda. He has co-curated in 2005 the Thai Pavilion of the 51st Venice Biennale the works of Montien Boonma and Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook. In 2008, Sutee curated the Thai section of the ShContemporary Art, Shanghai, and co-curated Traces of Siamese Smile: Art+Faith+Politics+Love at the Bangkok Art & Culture Centre. As long ago as 1983, won the Top Award in Painting in The Fourth Children's Art Exhibition of Thailand, and won the Nation Youth Bureau Award for Outstanding Young Artist in the Painting Category. In 1989, he was honoured in the The Friendship Programme for the 21st Century, Japan, and won in the printing category, The Contemporary Art Competition in Thailand. Same year, he won too The Silpa Bhirasri Creativity Grant from the Silpakorn University Art Centre, and The Misiem Yipinsoi Grant from the Faculty of Painting, Sculpture and Graphic Arts. In 2006, he won the Red Art Award 2, from the Pridi Banomyong Institute.

Sutee's body of work spans decades, belying his relatively young age. With countless shows in Thailand, he has shown too throughout the world, as far and wide as US and Australia. Apart from exhibitions in public and private spaces of renown, he has taken part in headline Biennales such as in Liverpool - UK, Busan - Korea, and Triennales in Fukuoka - Japan and Queensland - Australia. His works can be found in private collections around the world, as well as in public institutions like LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore, the Singapore Art Museum, Singapore, the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Japan, the H&F Collection, Amsterdam, the Queensland Art Gallery, Australia and the Mori Art Museum, Tokyo.

In this show, Sutee deals with some recurring themes that have engaged him as an artist in the last 20 or so years: society, culture, environment, nationalism, identity, conceptions, truth, Faith. There are evident parallels to his iconic show at Tadu Contemporary Art in '98 entitled after a popular Thai saying Rain drops, Pig Shit Running, and Stereotype Thailand at the 100 Tonson Gallery in '05. However, to paraphrase Sutee, the rhythm of the works, are refreshed and reworked, and with that a fresh and updated narrative is delivered, and carry in their current incarnations new meanings and possibilities. The medium of the works range from gold leaf and paint on canvas, to laser-cut metal sheets and larger scale neon light works. He continues to engender questions about the state of society and the held assumptions, beliefs and values that we take for granted. While it is true that one needs a certain amount of cultural capital to enjoy the symbols and their meanings, it is also remarkable how these works easily transcend cultural and national boundaries, and are seen as universal, despite their ostensible Thainess.

We find Sutee's voice as an artist resounding as strongly as he has ever done, in his body of works hitherto singular and razor sharp, and in Half-Truth, with added elegance and wit, that comes from an artist at the peak of his abilities. The works resonate and engage the viewer in an incisive yet gentle manner: Despite the glaring neons, this isn't screaming for the rooftops but something rather more cerebral, like a quiet conversation that just got a touch louder, clearer and more lingering since the last decade. Contemporary art, for all its modern day ills, pretension and paranoia finds here an antidote that is refreshing and enriching, The search for perfect art continues in Sutee, and it is in his journey for truth, we find Art. And not by half.

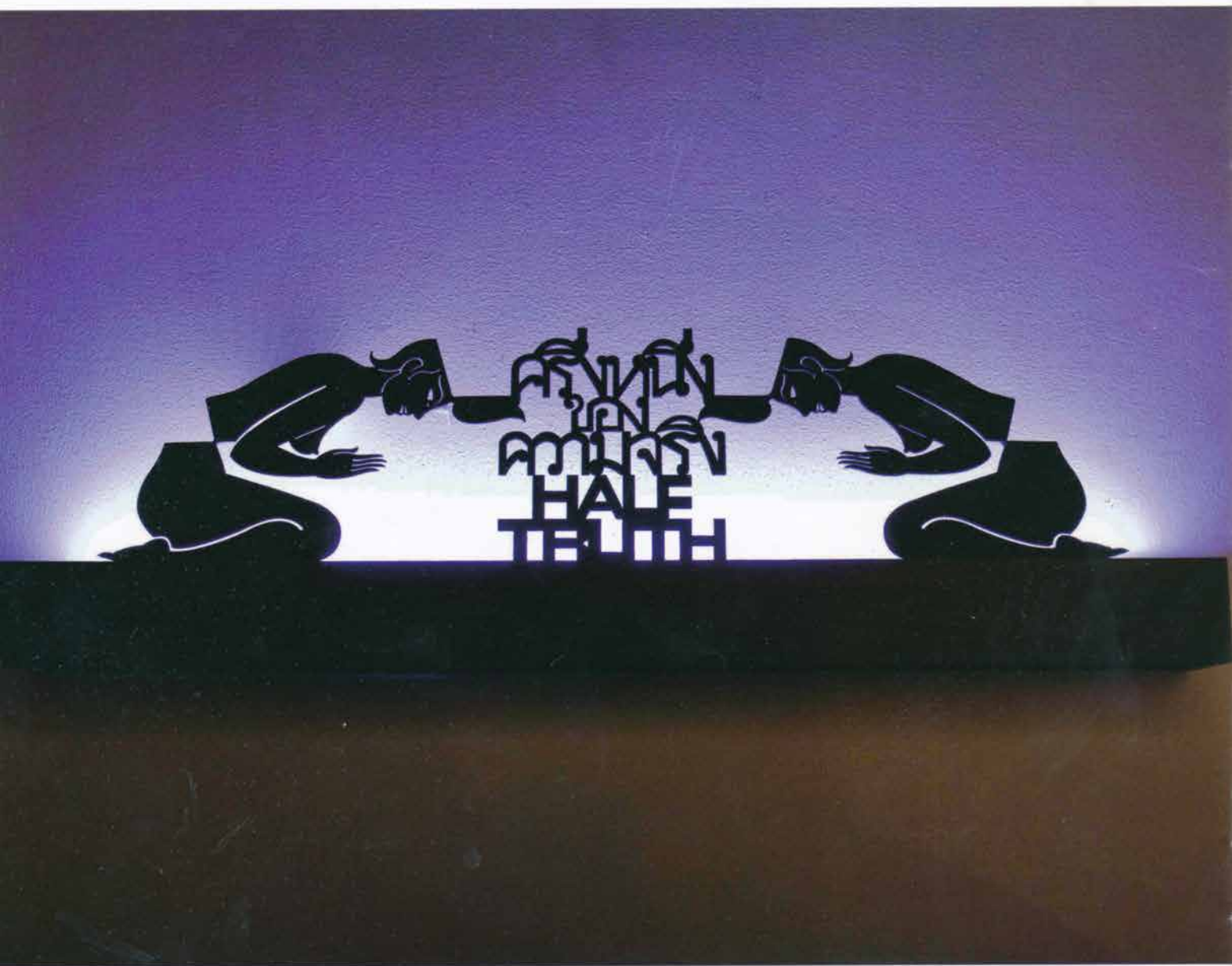
Jorge Smith  
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Flashing / Meditating  
ชื่อผลงาน แสงสีแห่งสมาธิ  
2009  
LED light and metal  
diameter: 50 cm



Half Truth

ชื่อผลงาน ครึ่งหนึ่งของความจริง  
2009

metal sheet, laser cut, teak, LED light  
10.5 x 35 x 115.5 cm

## ครึ่งหนึ่งของความจริง

หากสิ่งใดมีความจริงอยู่เพียงครึ่งหนึ่ง  
แล้วอีกครึ่งจะเป็นอะไร?

ความจริงครึ่งหนึ่ง แท้จริงแล้วก็คือครึ่งหนึ่ง-  
ของความหลง?

หากความจริงถูกแบ่งครึ่ง ครึ่งหนึ่งคือจริงแท้  
อีกครึ่งคือความจริงเทียม?

ครึ่งหนึ่งคือความจริง อีกครึ่งคือความงาม?  
หรือครึ่งหนึ่งคือความจริง อีกครึ่งคือความดี?

ในศิลปะ ครึ่งหนึ่งคือความจริง อีกครึ่งคือความนึกเห็น  
การตีความและอารมณ์ความรู้สึก

หากชีวิตคือความจริง ศิลปะก็คือลีลาของความจริง

หากศิลปะคือครึ่งหนึ่งของความจริง

ลีลาการเล่า ลีลาการให้เสนอ

การเลือกเล่า และเลือกตัด คือ สุกษมตของศิลปะ

สุธี คุณาวิชยานนท์

๒๒ พฤศจิกายน ๒๕๕๒

If something is half true, what would the other half be?

Is a half-truth half-deception?

If truth is divided into 2 halves and one is true, would the other be false?

One half is the truth, could the other be beauty?

Or one half is the truth, the other is virtue?

In art, half is the truth and the rest is just opinion, interpretation and emotion.

If life is truth, art would be the rhythm of truth.

If there is only half truth in art, the rhythm of story telling, presentation and selection completes the truth.



The Elegant Fascism (2010)

ชื่อผลงาน เฝด็จการชาตินิยมอันแสนอ่อนช้อย (ปี 2553)

2010

acrylic

62 x 91 cm

The Elegant Terrorist 2009  
ชื่อผลงาน ผู้ก่อการร้ายที่แสนอ่อนช้อย ปี 2552  
2009  
metal sheet, laser cut  
diameter 88 cm





Elephant Up-Down  
ชื่อผลงาน ช่าง ล้ม-ลุก  
2009  
neon light and wood  
diameter 150 cm





The Elegant Middle Finger (Gold and Black)

ชื่อผลงาน นิ้วกลางอันแสนอ่อนช้อย (ทองและดำ) 12 x 54 x 54 cm

The Elegant Middle Finger (Oval)

ชื่อผลงาน นิ้วกลางอันแสนอ่อนช้อย (วงรี) 8 x 54 x 54 cm

The Elegant Middle Finger (Circle)

ชื่อผลงาน นิ้วกลางอันแสนอ่อนช้อย (วงกลม) 10 x 55 x 60 cm

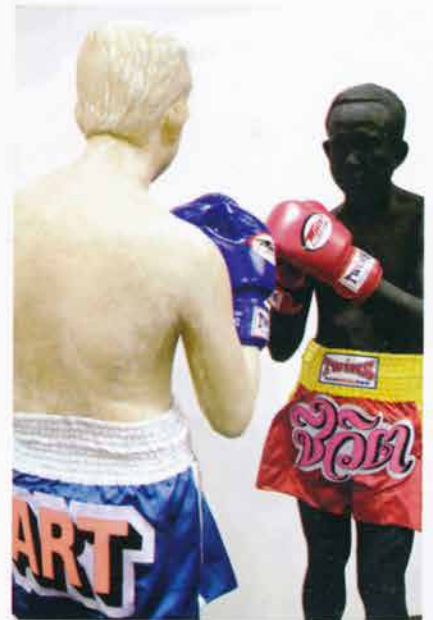
2010

paint, gold leaf



Thai Tiger  
ชื่อผลงาน เลือไทย  
2009  
neon light and wood  
diameter 150 cm

Life Versus Art  
ชื่อผลงาน ชีวิต VS ศิลปะ  
2009-2010  
resin, cloth  
life size





Double Eternal Banality 2009  
ชื่อผลงาน ความซ้ำซากอันเป็นนิรันดร์คู่ 2552  
2009  
metal sheet, laser cut  
55 x 177.5 cm



The Elegant Middle Finger (Circle / Cycle)

ชื่อผลงาน นิ้วกลางอันแสนอ่อนช้อย (วงกลม / วงจร)

2009

metal sheet, laser cut

diameter 91.5 cm



Wai (Thai Man)  
ชื่อผลงาน ไทย (ชายไทย)  
2009  
neon light and wood  
100 x 134 cm



Thai Woman and a Middle Finger

ชื่อผลงาน หญิงไทยกับนิ้วกลาง

2010

paint, gold leaf

12 x 54 x 54 cm



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