

ГIVE MORE

THAN

YOU TAKE

Pratchaya Phinthong

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Give more than you take

Donne plus que tu prends

5.12.2010 – 19.02.2011

Opening on Sunday December

5th at 1pm

Pratchaya Phinthong is an alchemist of economic value and social functions. In the work of this Thai artist, born in 1974, financial fluctuations, media alarmism, and the world labor market are transferred into matter as it transforms from solid to liquid to gaseous states, and then back again. Perhaps, however, it would be better to describe Pratchaya Phinthong as a trader who operates according to a logic opposite to that of profit, and who deals in cultural and value systems, trafficking in everyday meanings, hopes, and troubles. Phinthong accepts the perpetual transformation of forms and politics, of existence and daily life, poetically transferring the metaphor of fluctuation in currency values to various areas of human action. But if we start out from the premise that economic value is the most abstract of forces known to humanity – and, at the same time, the most concrete and painfully influential – then it becomes easier to understand the dialectics of materialization and dematerialization upon which Phinthong's artistic practice is founded.

In his second solo exhibition at the Parisian gallery gb agency in 2009, the artist showed two works springing from this dialectic and based on a reciprocal relationship of disappearance and accumulation. The first, titled 2017 (2009), was presented as a wall painting. For the piece, Phinthong downloaded a text from a website devoted to conspiracy theory, and then transferred it onto the gallery's wall using an ink that was destined to vanish over time. The words of the text oscillated between paranoid reflections, the prediction of a catastrophic future, and religious delusion, in a confused account of an imminent and inevitable end of the world resulting from a collision between the Earth and a heavenly body. Just like spoofs in the media, once their place has been taken by a more compelling, idiotic, or tragic piece of news, the text was destined to gradually disappear as the ink was gradually absorbed into the wall.

Conversely, the pile of banknotes that formed the second work on display (What I learned I no longer know; the little I still know, I guessed, 2009) grew over the weeks. This small heap of banknotes – a floor sculpture measuring one square meter, set directly on the ground – was made by stacking wads of Zimbabwean dollars, a currency that over the years has undergone such hyperinflation that it has been shut out of the international currency market. Exchanging the sum of five thousand euros for its equivalent in Zimbabwean dollars and using them to create a minimal form out of nearly worthless paper, Phinthong erected an anti-monument to financial growth, creating a black hole into which the symbolic violence and arbitrariness of value itself could be collapsed.

If capitalism has been the ideology of the endless and exponential transformation of nature and materials by humanity, today's dominant neoliberal ideology seems to have taken the boundlessness of this act of transformation into an extreme realm of abstraction and immateriality, an extra-national territory that answers only to its own laws – just as in the best tradition of abstract art – where capital is revealed for what it is: a hypertrophied and imponderable force.

Time, as the main gradient of this form of alchemy, in which politics, imagination, paradox, and reality merge, appears at the heart of the most ambitious project carried out so far by the artist, Give more than you take (ongoing). The project will be at the center of his solo exhibition, organized in collaboration with the CAC Brétigny, where it will open in December 2010, and the GAMEC in Bergamo, to which it will travel in June 2011. Phinthong's work is generally based on the artist's personal experience of reality – in the form of travel, process and exchange – which is then pared to the bone in a space of poetic imagination. In this project, his representation of that

experience becomes more complex, embracing an extension over time that includes the process preceding the exhibition and that unfolds into the realms of global economics and everyday life. After learning from local and international media that a large number of Thai peasants travel to Sweden in the summer to pick wild berries, facing exploitative work conditions and pay so low that many do not even earn enough to pay off their original airline ticket to Sweden, the artist decided to spend a month and a half living and working alongside the workers in the Swedish part of Lapland. But what might sound like the fundamentals of an ordinary journalistic exposé instead serves as the starting point of a project that presents the exchange of money and workforce, and the market of individual stories and collective hopes, as part of a process of transformation, sublimation, and formalization. At the end of each work day, Phinthong calculated the weight of strawberries he had managed to pick. In turn, he asked the director of the CAC Brétigny, Pierre Bal-Blanc, to collect an equivalent weight in useless objects, destined to be forgotten or thrown away, and pile them in the exhibition rooms.

Ultimately, a total of nearly six hundred kilos of castoff things accumulated. Between the two loci of the project, a dialectic was established between the functional character of individual labor, which vanishes into the vortex of profit, and the alienation of use in the form of a graveyard of objects that have lost their function. We are confronted, on the one hand, with those the dissolution of laborers' identity in work, and on the other, with a heap of things that have been saved from dissolution, in a gesture that attempts to symbolically compensate for the loss inhering in the former.

But there is another form of disappearance at play here: that of the artist as a composer of forms. Phinthong asked the curators of both exhibitions to decide for themselves how to display the objects collected over many days, arranging them in the space as they wish, without consulting him. While this might appear to be an act of negation and deprecation, in actuality Phinthong is confronting us with yet another transposition: not just of materials and symbolic functions, as we have just seen, but of responsibility – from the artist to the curator – which subtracts from these objects their value as mementos, testimonies, or fetishes in order to set them free in the space of the viewer's experience.

This gesture of deferring the artist's role and responsibility is matched in the exhibitions by an additional gesture of spatial displacement and direct appropriation on the part of the artist. One night, Pratchaya Phinthong dismantled a control tower used to oversee the work of the pickers and sent it to Brétigny where, once again, the responsibility rested with Bal-Blanc to determine its place in the exhibition. The control tower, erected in Brétigny, will resemble a stage set inside of which the multitudes of anonymous workers move like the extras in an epic of invisibility, control, and possession. An epic, recorded in minimal and immaterial form through the images that appear in this report, makes up the third and last work in the exhibition, a website that will exist only in the interval between the two phases of the installation in Brétigny and GAMEc, and will vanish afterward. But, just as with the ink of the text of 2017, which disappears from sight as it seeps into the architecture, the virtual space of this website will be inscribed in the memory of the Internet as a remnant even after it is no longer available for consultation. There it will remain, like a ghost in the search engines, in the continually rewritten memory of the world.

Alessandro Rabottini

(Translation from italian to english by Joanna Fiduccia
to be published in Kaléidoscope magazine, issue 9, Winter 2010-11.)

Pratchaya Phinthong

Give more than you take
Donne plus que tu prends

5.12.2010 – 19.02.2011

Curators Pierre Bal-Blanc / Alessandro Rabottini

Coproduction
CAC Bretigny/Gamec Bergamo (June 2011)
With support of gb agency Paris &
Iaspis Stockholm
www.gamec.it/www.cacbretigny.com

CAC Brétigny
Centre d'art contemporain de Brétigny
Espace Jules Verne, rue Henri Douard
91220 Brétigny-sur-Orge France
info@cacbretigny.com
www.cacbretigny.com



GIVE MORE
THAN
YOU TAKE
PRACTICE
PHINTHONG
CAC
BÉTONSALON

Next:

Seminar 12 Gestures : Pratchaya Phinthong, Tuesday, December 7 at 7pm
at Kadist - Office, 19bis rue des Trois Frères, 75008 Paris.
www.kadist.org - www.betonsalon.net

This seminar is the result of a discussion between the PUBLIC SCHOOL, which opened at Bétonsalon in September 2009 and a project initiated by the Kadist Art Foundation's philanthropic and artistic branches bringing together an artist and an NGO. Conceived as a series of interventions programmed over one year, this seminar focuses on artistic practices developed in a close relationship with a context, a community and question what we call « social practice » in the field of art.

Pratchaya Phinthong

Born in 1974
Live and work in Bangkok, Thaïlande.

Solo exhibitons (selection)

2011

"Give More Than You Take", GAMEC, Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Bergamo, Bergamo.

2010

"Give More Than You Take", CAC Brétigny, Centre d'art contemporain de Brétigny.
Bangkok University Gallery, Bangkok.

2009

"What I learned, I no longer know; the little I still know, I guessed", gb agency, Paris.

2007

"if i dig a very deep hole", gb agency, Paris.

2005

"Missing Objects", Chula Art Museum, Bangkok.

Group exhibitions (selection)

2011

Geste serpentine et autres prophéties, FRAC Lorraine, Metz.

2010

FIAC, gb agency, Paris.

SUNDAY, gb agency, London.

"L'exposition lunatique", Kadist Art Foundation, Paris.

"The Living Currency", Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw and 6th Berlin Biennale.

for Contemporary Art, Berlin. Coproduciton CAC Brétigny (cur. Pierre Bal-Blanc).

"Permanent Mimesis", an Exhibition on Realism and Simulation, GAM, Torino.

"La Panique du noyau", Galerie de l'ESAB, Brest.

"Fax and Move on Asia", Para/Site Art Space, Hong Kong.

"Fair Use: Information Piracy and Creative Commons in Contemporary Art and Design",
Columbia College Glass Curtain Gallery, Chicago.

2009

"Nord, Nord-Ouest", gb agency, Paris.

"Paper Works", NICC, Antwerpen.

"Paper Exhibition", Artists Space, New York.

"Rooms", Osage Gallery, Hong Kong.

2008

"The More Things Change", The 5th Bangkok Experimental Film Festival, Bangkok.

"AS YET UNNAMED", About Café, Bangkok.

"Reversibility", The Fair Gallery, Frieze, London.

6th Busan Biennale, Busan, South Korea.

"Cinematic Panorama", gb agency, Paris

"Art Aid", Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok.

2007

Fiac, gb agency, Cour carrée du Louvre, Paris.

"Out door project", Douves du Louvre, gb agency, Fiac, Paris.

"Eternal Frame, Imagining a future at the end of the world", RedCat gallery, L.A.

"The more things change", 5th Bangkok Experimental Film Festival, Bangkok.

2006

"Melting place", Bangkok University Gallery, Bangkok, Thaïlande.

"Belief", 1st Singapore Biennial.

"Platform", Queen's gallery, Bangkok.

2005

"Petites Compositions entre amis", Séquence 3, gb agency, Paris.

"Just do it", Lentos Museum, Autriche.

"We love Amerika", Gallery Jan Winkelmann, Berlin

2004

"Here and Now", Foundation AARA, About Café, Bangkok.

"Rendez-vous 2004", Musée d'Art Contemporain, Lyon.

"Do you Believe in Reality", Taipei Biennial, Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taiwan.

Residences

2009-10

CAC Brétigny, Centre d'art contemporain de Brétigny.

2008

JENESYS Programme for emerging artists, Tokyo.

IASPIS, Konstnärnsnämnden, Stockholm.



Pratchaya Phinthong

"Give more than you take" 2010

domain name : www.givemorethanyoutake.net & www.donneplusquetuprends.net

type : artwork by Pratchaya Phinthong

technical: html with php & ajax, with data base mysql

equipment : safari, google chrome

delivery date: December 5 2010

type of exploitation : free access

duration of exploitation : 1 year

graphic design : Vier5

development : Stephan Zetzsche

Coproduction CAC Brétigny / Gamec Bergamo, 2010

Courtesy gb agency, Paris

"Societies have progressed insofar as they themselves, their sub-groups and individuals, have learnt to stabilise their exchanges, give, receive and, finally, return. At the beginning, it was essential to learn to lay the spears aside. Then it was possible to exchange goods and people, not only between clans, but also between tribes and between nations and –above all- between individuals. Only then did people learn how to create mutual interests, giving mutual satisfaction, and, in the end, to defend them without having to resort to arms. Thus the clan, the tribe, and peoples have learnt –and thus tomorrow, in our civilised world, classes and nations and also individuals need to learn- how to oppose and to give to one another without sacrificing themselves to one another." Marcel Mauss, *The Gift*, 1925

Pratchaya Phinthong was invited by CAC Brétigny and GAMEC in Bergamo to do a two-month residency in Paris to realise his project; instead he chose to spend the time in Swedish Lapland rather than in the French cultural capital. The works made during this Northern residency distance themselves not only from any material link with this wilderness but also from any formal rapport born out of this personal experience since he delegates their display to the exhibition curators in the physical spaces and to the graphic designers Achim Reichert and Marco Fiedler (Vier5) in the virtual space.

"Give more than you take" is the title of both expositions in Brétigny and in Bergamo; it is also the name given to the website that archives all the visual material the artist has produced during his Northern stay. For him, the project consisted in managing to be recruited by a firm in Bangkok specialised in exporting workforce for the seasonal harvest of polar berries spread over vast forests, at a time when an unprecedented crisis had broken out in Thai and Swedish press. During the previous season, 200 Thai pickers had gone on strike to protest against the terrible conditions imposed on season workers. Exploited by unscrupulous intermediaries and local firms completely indifferent to workers' rights, the Asian pickers are repeatedly subjected, season after season, to the ruthless rules of capitalism in this virgin territory.

Successively in both exhibitions, "tod tee sweden mend thung mor-chit" is produced according to the amount of kilos of wild berries picked daily by the artist, transmitted by sms to the curators who then gather the same weight in objects and disposable items available in their actual vicinity. In the same way, the website givemorethanyoutake.net is conceived by the designers and programmers according to the files forwarded by the artist. The amounts in kilo-octets corresponding to the download of fixed and animated images guide the internet user to wander rather like what the Thai workers experienced when subjected to the primitive conditions of the polar forest.

It will only be possible to consult this artwork on the web in the period between the two exhibitions at CAC in Brétigny and GAMEC in Bergamo, after which it is destined to disappear. A ghost of the website embedded in the memory of the network will be the only remains of this work once it is taken offline. With this work and those shown in the exhibition, Pratchaya Phinthong excavates archaic signs at the basis of our society of global exchange to underline the threat of massacre and sacrifice that is returning at the heart of the most sophisticated market systems when the balance between the gift and the return gift is not respected.

"The primitive symbolic process does not know of free gift, it only knows of challenge and reciprocity of exchanges. When that is broken, precisely by the unilateral possibility of the gift (which assumes stocking value and transferring it only in one direction), the actual symbolic value is dead and power appears: this will then unravel in the economic set up of the contract. (...) Nothing is ever without a counterpart, not in the contractual sense, but in the sense that the exchange process is inexorably reversible." (Jean Baudrillard, *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, 1976)

CAC BRETIGNY – Centre d'art contemporain de Brétigny - www.cacbretigny.com

**PRATCHAYA
PHINTHONG**

Pratchaya Phinthong
"tod tee sweden mend thung mor-chit" 2010
Variable objects arranged by Pierre Bal-Blanc
506 kg variable dimensions
Coproduction CAC Brétigny – Gamec Bergamo 2010
Courtesy gb agency Paris

The title of this piece is a phonetic translation from Thai to a karaoke language that enables anyone who doesn't speak this language to pronounce the sentences. For several years, the artist Pratchaya Phinthong has developed a body of work based on the processes of translation, conversion and transcription. He generally associates this principal to the material or immaterial movement of goods or people.

In the case of this work, if observed at the exhibition stage, the result of the artist's process takes the form of a sculpture composed of a mass of objects and various materials that have nothing to do with Thailand where the artist resides but belongs instead to the environment where it is exhibited.

The artist was invited by CAC Brétigny to do a two-month residency in Paris to put in place his project; in fact he decided to spend this time in Swedish Lapland rather than in the heart of the French culture capital. The sculpture that signals this Nordic residency not only avoids any material link to that wilderness, but also any formal rapport born from this personal experience by delegating its display in the space to the exhibition curator.

The project of the artist's residency in Swedish Lapland consisted in him managing to be recruited by a firm in Bangkok specialised in exporting workforce for the seasonal harvest of polar berries spread over vast forests, at a time when an unprecedented crisis had broken out in Thai and Swedish press. During the previous season, 200 Thai pickers had gone on strike to protest against the terrible conditions imposed on season workers. Exploited by unscrupulous intermediaries and local firms completely indifferent to workers' rights, the Asian pickers are repeatedly subjected, season after season, to the ruthless rules of capitalism in this virgin territory.

This food and human trade is the product of a deviation of the "Allemansrätten", particular to Swedish law. Its initial virtue is to allow everyone to walk in public and private natural spaces, giving anyone the possibility to pick wild flowers or berries. This right was accompanied by the responsibilities linked to the protection of nature and wildlife as well as the property owners; it is summarised by the Swedes in these terms: "Do not disturb – Do not destroy". What with the globalized market and the growing demand for organic goods, the industry chain of local traders and workforce providers managed to corrupt a law that transcends notions of property and favours freedom.

In "tod tee sweden mend thung mor-chit", Pratchaya Phinthong not only translates the experience of this community of immigrants at work but also exposes the consequences. Enrolling with the Thai workforce in a cold jungle subjected to the competition and cruel free market variations, he chose to transmit the information by sms (rather like stock exchange reports) in the form of the quantity of kilos of berries picked daily. Calculated in kilos, the total of the quantities received by the exhibition curator then determines, according to the artists' wishes, the weight of the second-hand objects and materials assembled at the same speed.

"tod tee sweden mend thung mor-chit" translates the lament peppered with insults of a uprooted Thai picker and finds an echo in that of the visitor who is kept at a distance from the facts, confused in front of this presented waste.

In this artwork where the artist once again has recourse to someone's mediation, the curator is in charge of displaying the objects and, in turn, after the opening of the exhibition, he proposes to delegate this role to the visitors during the exhibition.

CAC BRÉTIGNY – Centre d'art contemporain de Brétigny - www.cacbretigny.com

PRATCHAYA PHINTHONG

Pratchaya Phinthong
"allemansträtten" 2010
Wood arranged by Pierre Bal-Blanc
Coproduction CAC Brétigny, 2010
Courtesy gb agency, Paris

"Allemansträtten" (The Right of Public Access) is a law civil right specific to Sweden which allows anyone to walk in public or private natural spaces, on the only condition that they respect the landscape and wildlife. Thai workers are subject to competition for seasonal harvesting and cruel variations in the free market; Pratchaya Phinthong associated himself with them to highlight the crisis of any social model at the time of workforce globalization.

The emergence of a growing demand for organic products in Western countries has led to the creation of a globalized market and the development of an industrial chain involving local traders and workforce suppliers. Originally aimed at the inhabitants, the "Allemansträtten" has the virtue of transcending the notion of ownership to promote freedom of movement and bucolic activity on the territory. Redirected by local exponential traders to benefit the industrialization of natural resources, the "Allemansträtten" is becoming the logistical base that is turning the wilderness into a factory. The consequence of this diversion by traders is to perpetuate conflicts with a workforce subject to work regimes akin to the beginnings of the industrial era, and overcome any resistance from the workers by the deletion of the limits of the factory. Occupying or blocking the gates or doors of a workplace was previously used as leverage for the workers' demands. Scattered over the vast Northern territory, misled Thai farmers wander around under the embarrassed supervision of the Swedish authorities, in search of resources that will enable them to access the exit back to their country. This artwork borrows the title of the article of lawname of the right of access and thus perpetuates a practice of physical and symbolic movement. By appropriating one of the watchtowers built by hunters which punctuate the Lapland landscape, the artist transforms its function allowing to watch wild prey to that of observing the fruit pickers.

Sweden is known for its social welfare system and, at the same time, its companies are considered leaders on the market for physical and electronic security systems. Gunnebo, a company founded in the 18th century, is now one of the largest global companies specialised in systems to control space and people. Commenting on the theft of objects from the primitive Swedish scene, the precarious wooden tower allows the concealment and conquest of the forest by eyes and arms, Pratchaya Phinthong takes the moral in reverse to reveal the outlaw social treatment inflicted on his countrymen.

The watchtower was disassembled with the help of the nomadic community of pickers one night, placed on a pallet, and sent from Lapland to CAC Brétigny by successive modes of transport. As in "tod tee sweden mend thung mor-chit", the presentation of materials is left up to the curator who decided to delegate to a carpenter the task of rebuilding the object by referring to photographs taken by the artist in Lapland.

CAC BRÉTIGNY – Centre d'art contemporain de Brétigny - www.cacbretigny.com

PRATCHAYA PHINTHONG

Pratchaya Phinthong 'gives more than you take'

Press release

CAC Brétigny dec.2010 ja.2011

Opening December 5.2010

info@cacbretigny.com

Hello pierre, i hope u are fine, i am sorry i have not been contacting u recently because i've been settled up myself to society here at the camp which i already been here a week, been picking berries from early morning till dawn everyday. It's really hard job but amazingly fun. I am in a group of ten people in a small bus, starts 4am till 7pm and back to sell picked berries everyday. Anyway i feel really good and been working out some ideas which I can later tell u, but there is no internet here at the camp, i could have chance to ask at the camp owner's office once a week or so. But if u do send me email please also notice me by sms. Please kindly contact me via mobile phone. And i will send u numbers of sms for everyday kilo of berries i pick. I am sorry again to leave u this early message. Hug. Pratchaya

Hi pierre, how are u? Have ever receive g previous sms from? Hope u find. Pratchaya

Bonjour !!! I am reassured to hear from you and happy that you enjoy your new job. It sounds quite hard but the early morning light in the north should be nice.

What are your plan tell me what I can do for you and how much I have to pay attention for each kilo of berries ;0) bises Pierre

Bonjour! I considering the kilos transform to a piece which corresponding to what my everyday practice (as)with the workers toward the idea of what it so-called 'allemanrätten' about common right of human in sweden that u allow to walk through others property, land,forest pick mushrooms berries etc..Also camping as long as u don' harm people and nature. I want to invite u to take part of dialogue. I'd like to ask u to organize a collection of useless Useless objects, waste,recycle or leftover items, cardboards packages from supermarket if u wish, etc in respectively corresponding to great amount of kilos i've picked at the end. You are freely to (re)arrange them during the period of the exhibition. Another piece i am chasing is to steal a shooting hidden tower in a deep forest, as it will be taken out pieces and u are free to organize them as well. Please kindly let me know how u feel. Xxpratchaya

12.08.(8kg) 13-10kg 14-16kg 15-14kg 16-0kg 17-31kg 18-18kg 19-11kg 20-13kg 21-2kg. Pratchaya

Well received your message and strongly interested to start the dialogue. Ready to collect with the team the amount of useless objects soon as we received from you The dailly quantity. We start with the first list.

We Will first store the matériel in a corner of the exhibition Space even if there is a show. Then I understand that we have to display for the show and ré arrange but in following wich paraeter?

Concerning the tower do we have to preview a transport from The land to us ?

I have got a mes from jonatan do you need The camera?

Take care and good work Pierre

Thank you for your collaboration, i am happy you interest in the project, regarding the tower i will send them to iaspis and there would be arranged with you to paris later. I don't need camera just more that time i thought they might have good one toborrow. And today is 11kg. Xxpratchaya

Great then so much you work so much we have to :)

Hi p. I do need iaspis to buy me a harrdisk for every day archive. Could u please manage payment with jonatan?Xxpratchaya

I contact jonatan on tuesday and let you know p

News: a bear killed a thai worker , he was found several parts of body yesterday. It happened 50km away from my camp. Kg: 15 today. Pratchaya

20kg

Wilde experiment!! Beware but you know the Tiger...
Sounds scary! 11kg

19kg
4kg

33kg
Yesterday i got again 33kg.

27kg

4kg

0 kg

Today is 35 kg not 0 kg. Sorry for the earlier message. Pratchaya

I have sent you an email tokay with questions about
Opening dates Title of The show and pièces text statement for press release as well
as Alessandro Rabottini proposal to join the project
are you able to get or should i send by SMS
Take care Pierre
Or do we make a phone meeting tell me when i call on this number?

You can call me anytime, i will try to check email today. What if i can manage to
send the tower from this village to you? Is it better than pass by iaspis? Nice
that alessandro join the project. Hug pp

Yesterday 14 kg, it was hectic we have to move immidiately to another camp.I then
forget to send you the kg.Pp

**Hi pierre, i will not be able to check email for at least 4days, new place
is quite remote,anyway u could please start to work on the text. There is
no statement, my activity is to get materials for u to compose. Anyway here
are titles, show title: 'give more than you take' and the kg piece's title:
'tod tee sweden mend thung mor-chit',2010 variable objects arrange by
pierre bal blance. The tower's title: 'allfmansrätten',2010, wood arrange
by pierre bal b**

Is vier5 designer still working with you? How u think if i send them all
raw photos and videos, and invite them to take part on making a temporary
website apart frow cac main one? Would it be nice to return exposed
realities that i found here to virsual public access and arrange by a
design team.Best. Pp

17kg

29kg

25kg

15kg

21kg

Yesterday 36kg, there is no transport company in this village,only i could ask a
guy at the camp to drive me and the woods back to stockholm and it costs about 350
euro, please let me know if u are okay with this ohterwise i ask iaspis to organize
picking later but i don't know how much. Best.Pp

Yes do Like that it is safer, we will give you back The 350, we contact jonotan to
organise The transport from Stockholm when are you living ?

I leave the camp on 12th to stockholm and then 15th to bkk. I wait also to see if
jonatan get a better price or more easy way. And i will decide with jonatan. Btw he
will not be at the office on 13th. Best.Pp

Yesterday was 29 kg.

Yesterday was my last day i got 33kg.

Pratchaya Phinthong

Give more than you take
Donne plus que tu prends

CAC Brétigny
5.12.2010 – 19.02.2011

Curators
Pierre Bal-Blanc / Alessandro Rabottini

Coproduction
CAC Brétigny / Gamec Bergamo
With the support of
gb agency Paris & Iaspis Stockholm

Exhibition : GAMEC
Galleria d'Arte Moderna et Contemporanea di Bergamo
June 2011
www.gamec.it



Informations

Exhibition opened from Tuesday to Saturday 2-6pm
Closed during Christmas holidays from Dec. 20th to Jan. 3rd 2011

For the opening on Sunday, December 5th 2010 at 1pm (brunch)
Free shuttle from Paris, Théâtre du Châtelet at 12 pm.
Information +33 (0)1 6085 2076. Reservation : resa@cacbretigny.com

Press - Views available on demand.
Contact : Delphine Goutes - Tel +33 (0)1 6085 2078 / dg@cacbretigny.com

Visits and workshops (1 hour to 4 hours) on appointment.
Contact : Julien Duc-Maugé / Tel +33 (0)1 85 2079 / publics@cacbretigny.com

Access in RER C (suburb trains) from Paris:
Direction Dourdan, Etampes, Stop Brétigny.
Trains ELBA, DUBA, DEBA, ELAC.

By car :

From Paris: A6 direction Lyon, exit Viry-Châtillon, Fleury-Merogis,
then Brétigny Centre.

From Evry: francilienne direction Versailles,
exit 39B, dir. Brétigny.

From Versailles: Francilienne direction Evry,
exit Brétigny Centre.



CAC Brétigny
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www.cacbretigny.com

Documentation

Pratchaya Phinthong

"Give more than you take"

(Donne plus que tu prends)

CAC Brétigny, 2010



➔ **nature, recreation & sports**

Allemansrätten

The Right of Public Access (Allemansrätten) is unique and the most important base for recreation in Sweden, providing the possibility for each and everyone to visit somebody else's land, to take a bath in and to travel by boat on somebody else's waters, and to pick the wild flowers, mushrooms, berries.

It is your responsibility to have knowledge about the rules concerning the Right of Public Access!

You have the right:

- to take a walk, a bicycle, go horse riding, or to go skiing on all land not cultivated, and on such land that can not be damaged by your visit, this provided You do not cause any damage to crops, forest plantations and fences.
However, You are **not** entitled to cross or stay on a private plot without permission. The plot, which is not always hedged or fenced in, is the area closest to a dwelling house.
- to take a walk, a bicycle, go horse riding, or to go skiing on private roads. Motor vehicles may be used if the owner has not forbidden such traffic.
- to pick wild flowers (excluding those protected by law), berries, mushrooms, fallen cones, acorns and beechnuts on land that is not a building site, a garden or a plantation, to bathe or go by boat on most natural watercourses.
- to take water from **lakes and springs**.
- to put up a tent, or park your caravan, or trailer, for twenty-four hours. For a longer stay You have to have the permission of the owner.
- You may make a fire, as long as You do not cause any damage, however there are restrictions during periods of drought when there is immediate liability for a **forest** fire. You may use fallen branches and or twigs as fire wood. Never light a fire on bare rocks as they will crack and split, resulting in ugly irreparable scars.
- to bring Your dog and let it loose as long as You have full control. Restrictions are listed in local statutes and regulations.

You are prohibited:

- to cause damage to, and/or pollute the land.
- to ride on a motor vehicle on private property, so that damage may be caused, or on a private road, when the owner has forbidden such a state. Restricted areas are also gardens, cultivated sites, or, constructions made by the owner.
- to breach branches and twigs, to take the birch, bark, leaves, bass, acorns, nuts or resin from growing trees and bushes.
- to pick wild flowers protected by law.
- to park a caravan or trailer in such a place where the land could be damaged.
- to make fire so that the environment could be damaged or endangered.
- to let dogs run freely on private hunting-grounds.

Pickers Reap the Fruits of their Labour

As berry harvesting season begins next month, Northeasterners will flock to Swedish forests in droves for a chance to make money while their rice paddies grow at home

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Picking wild berries in Sweden is a popular job for Thai workers from northeastern provinces. As the three-month berry picking season in the Scandinavian country starts next month, many northeastern workers are again preparing to travel there as berry pickers.



TAKING HIS PICK: Sura Korn-et, a resident of Ban Siam Pakmor who worked as a berry picker in Sweden for more than 10 years, poses with his berry picking baskets. PHOTO: THAPANAN THONGSAPHIRUN

The work is popular among workers in Chaiyaphum, Nakhon Ratchasima, Khon Kaen, Buri Ram, Maha Sarakham, Udon Thani and Surin province.

Most workers pay more than 100,000 baht on travel and living expenses during their stay.

The berry picking season also fits in well with their paddy farming obligations at home. Most berry pickers are paddy farmers. They usually begin growing rice on their fields in June.

While waiting for their rice to grow, they will take on other jobs to earn extra money.

Many will leave their villages to work before returning to harvest their paddy five to six months later.

Wild berries in Sweden yield fruit from July to September.

Berry pickers, mostly workers from overseas, will pick berries from public berry forests throughout the country and sell that produce to local firms.

A source from a job placement business said several firms were advertising in northeastern provinces for seasonal workers to travel to Sweden to work as berry pickers.

Pramuan Moowiset and Sura Korn-et, residents of Ban Siam Pakmor village in tambon Khok Kung, Chaiyaphum's Kaengkrhor district, were the first two residents of Ban Siam Pakmor to have travelled to work as berry pickers in Sweden.

Both their families now have comfortable houses, six-wheeled trucks worth more than 800,000 baht and more than 50 rai of land.

The two families pick berries in Sweden every year. With their experience, each family returns home with more than 100,000 baht.

Mr Pramuan said most Thai berry pickers are persuaded to go to Sweden by Thai women who had married Swedish nationals.

They enter Sweden with tourist visas, but spend their two or three months there as berry pickers.

Ten years ago, a round-trip ticket to Sweden cost 38,000 baht while living expenses in the country were low.

Berry pickers now pay between 77,000 and 120,000 baht for travel and living expenses have also increased.

Mr Sura said berry pickers must be in strong physical health. The amount they earn depends on how many wild berries they pick, and what they fetch.

However, Mr Sura said the number of areas where wild berries are available in Sweden has shrunk.

In the past, Mr Sura said he could find wild berries 10-20km away from a town centre. In the past few years, he has had to drive 100-400km to find a berry forest.

New berry pickers might be discouraged by the distance, but experienced ones are willing to drive further to find a berry forest because they understand environmental changes in each area, Mr Sura said.

The number of berry pickers in Sweden keeps rising every year. They come from Thailand, China, Russia and Poland.

"Thai pickers are the smartest, though. We pick more berries because we're diligent and persistent," Mr Sura said.

Mr Sura's wife, Wilailak, who worked side by side with her husband as a berry picker, said pickers need to work harder as competition increases due to the rising influx of labourers.

Sometimes, pickers have to wake up as early as 2am to reach a berry forest before other groups. They may not return to their living quarters until after 9pm.

Most members of the group are relatives and close friends who are disciplined and do not take advantage of other group members, said Mrs Wilailak.

As the new berry picking season approaches, the berry picking group from Ban Siam Pakmor is preparing for their next mission to Sweden.

The men are making and repairing berry picking baskets, while the women are preparing processed northeastern foods such as fried processed beef and pork, chili paste, processed fermented fish and instant noodles to take with them.

The berry picking groups leave Thailand for Sweden in June, said the job placement source.

This year, Thai berry pickers will arrive in Sweden later than usual because the Swedish government has imposed measures to protect Thai workers from exploitative job placement firms after berry pickers lodged complaints with the Thai government last year.

This is the first of a two-part series on Thai labourers working as berry pickers in Sweden.

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Labourers have bone to pick with agencies

Berry harvesters say they are blacklisted for taking action over poor treatment

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Job placement agents authorised to send workers to Sweden to pick wild berries have blacklisted about 200 people who complained last year about "unfair" work contracts.

The complaints are being investigated by the Department of Special Investigation and pending action by the Labour Court.

The complaints concern three companies: Siam Royal Service Group Co, Sin Sunshine Co and TS Law & Business Co.

A staff member from one of the three confirmed that the companies had agreed not to recruit any of the workers that had brought the action against them.

The companies are worried the workers might damage the companies' reputation, said the source who requested anonymity.

However, one of the workers who took legal action against the three job placement firms said they only wanted to have their problems brought out in the open.

The worker said pickers were charged a lot of money to secure their jobs and had to shoulder high living costs while in Sweden.

The workers' move had been lauded by the Swedish authorities as a brave act to reveal "the inconvenient truth" of Thai workers who were taken advantage of, said a worker who declined to be named.

He said workers just wanted to improve their work benefits but they had been blacklisted after complaining.

Khammai Panchamroon, 40, another berry picker from Chaiyaphum who filed a lawsuit against a job placement company that sent him to Sweden last year, said he decided to return home early because there were fewer berries to pick and more pickers competing for the crop.

He said he realised he would not be able to earn enough money to cover his living costs in Sweden if he and his wife had stayed.

Official figures show the number of Thai workers travelling to Sweden for berry picking jobs last year doubled over 2008 to 3,500.

Mr Khammai said he is still struggling to repay about 4,000 baht every month since he returned from Sweden last year. He and his wife borrowed 200,000 baht for the trip.

The average travel cost for each berry picking trip - including visa fees and other related expenses - is about 100,000 baht a person.

"My wife and I want to give it a try again and hope to make enough money to pay off the old debts from last year's trip," Mr Khammai said. He said he would like the government to limit the number of berry pickers to avoid the problems of last year.

Last year's dispute between the Thai berry pickers and their employers has prompted the Swedish government and related agencies to come up with measures aimed at protecting berry picking workers from unfair working conditions.

Thai job placement agents authorised to hire Thai berry pickers to work in Sweden will be required in the coming harvesting season to adopt a minimum wage insurance regulation. The companies will have to take responsibility for ensuring hired workers can earn at least 70,000 baht a month, otherwise they will have to pay them compensation.

The minimum wage insurance will cover a period of three months but if the workers fail to pick enough berries, they will not be eligible to receive the compensation.

It is also required to be stated clearly in a work contract that berry pickers will be responsible for their own living costs while working in Sweden.

The Thai work contracts will be subjected to thorough checks by the Swedish Trade Union Confederation.

The berry-picking work contracts must be submitted for verification by the confederation before workers can apply for a visa with the Swedish embassy in Bangkok, said Suphat Kukhun, deputy director-general of the Department of Employment.

If workers pick more berries than they are required, employers will have to pay them extra based on the market price of the fruit.

The new employment regulation also requires employers to allow the pickers to have two days off a week and work only eight hours a day with a one-hour break.

Chongrak Intharamat, a potential berry picker from Nakhon Ratchasima, said the regulation is impractical because in practice the workers will want to work as many hours a day as they can to make sure they earn enough money.

Still, the minimum amount of berries one worker will be required to pick a day could become a problem if it is set too high, he said.

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Khammai Panchamroon, 40, one of about 200 workers who have filed lawsuits against job placement companies which send people to Sweden to work as berry pickers over "unfair" work contracts, says he has been blacklisted by the firms. THAPANAN THONGSAPHIRUN

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Laponie : le modèle suédois mis à mal

Esclavagisme, trafic d'êtres humains, les pires attributs ont écorné l'image du secteur de la cueillette des baies en Laponie suédoise, qui tente depuis quelques années de chasser l'odeur de soufre qui l'entoure. Des pratiques à

l'opposé du «modèle suédois».

Depuis que les Suédois trouvent trop mal payé et trop difficile de ramasser eux-mêmes durant l'automne les mûres polaires, myrtilles et airelles qui parsèment leurs immenses forêts, des milliers de travailleurs saisonniers étrangers, des pays de l'Est et surtout d'Asie, ont pris le relais. Mais cette année, les promesses des baies n'ont pas été tenues. Une vague de froid tardive et un manque de pluie expliqueraient leur rareté. Mais aussi les multiples tensions qui troublent depuis des semaines la forêt suédoise, mettant en exergue le flou qui entoure cette branche dans un pays autrement réglé à l'extrême.

A la mi-août une centaine de cueilleurs vietnamiens se sont ainsi mis en grève – une première – afin de protester contre les mauvaises ressources en baies dans les forêts suédoises, où les envoient courir des sociétés intérimaires originaires de leur pays, qui retiennent en général une somme fixe pour le logis, la nourriture, la location de voitures, l'essence, sans compter le billet d'avion. La police est intervenue, à la demande de la compagnie suédoise qui achète les baies et dénie toute responsabilité sur les conditions d'emploi des cueilleurs. Dix d'entre eux sont repartis aussitôt au Vietnam.

Grève de la faim

A Luleå, 200 ramasseurs thaïlandais se sont mis en grève fin août au moment où le ministre thaïlandais du marché du travail était venu faire une visite en Laponie. Le ministre a rencontré ses compatriotes mécontents qui ont finalement été rapatriés en bus vers Stockholm avant de repartir en Thaïlande en avion. *« Des intermédiaires thaïlandais disent aux paysans qu'ils vont se faire beaucoup d'argent, raconte Håkan Olsson, directeur des affaires sociales de la commune de Jokkmokk, qui a dû prendre en charge plusieurs cueilleurs lésés. Alors les gens empruntent ou hypothèquent leur maison ».* Mais sur place, pas de salaire garanti. Souvent, les compagnies intérimaires ne garantissent aucune protection légale. Et les cueilleurs sont payés en fonction du nombre de kilos ramassés, selon un prix variable. Or cette année, rien ne va. *« Cela crée une énorme frustration et de la peur chez ces gens qui se sont endettés pour parcourir la moitié de la planète, dit Håkan Olsson. Le problème est que personne ne veut prendre ses responsabilités, ni les autorités thaïlandaises, ni les suédoises. C'est le cueilleur qui prend tous les risques. C'est une honte quand je pense à la façon dont tant de Suédois sont si bien reçus en Thaïlande ».*

Loin du « modèle suédois »

Les grossistes suédois importent de la main d'œuvre pour que le secteur survive, mais si les Suédois acceptent sans trop se poser de questions que les chaussures soient fabriquées dans des conditions douteuses en Asie, loin de leurs yeux, cela devient plus inacceptable quand ces travailleurs viennent chez eux faire un travail à des conditions si différentes de celles en vigueur en Suède. Et beaucoup de Suédois réagissent depuis des semaines dans la presse contre cette situation.

Les compagnies suédoises qui achètent les baies sont souvent les mêmes qui fournissent véhicules, logements et repas aux cueilleurs. Alors qu'elles rejettent la faute sur les compagnies intérimaires thaïlandaises ou chinoises, elles sont accusées de double langage, profitant largement des bas salaires et du flou qui caractérise ce secteur.

Harcelé de questions, le ministre suédois conservateur du marché du travail, Sven Otto Littorin, a reproché à LO, la principale confédération syndicale suédoise, de ne pas s'occuper des ramasseurs de baies étrangers. De fait, les syndicats suédois, par ailleurs si puissants, n'ont pas semblé intéressés. Injuste, répliquent les syndicats : depuis 2007, les cueilleurs ont été dispensés par le gouvernement des règles en vigueur pour les travailleurs étrangers en Suède au prétexte qu'ils sont employés par des compagnies intérimaires étrangères. LO réclame que les cueilleurs aient droit eux aussi à un salaire minimum et a décidé de prendre les choses en main.

Olivier Truc à Stockholm (Suède)

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