

RealtyWorld

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All in a working day by Chumpol Apisuk.

Inherent in his work, entitled *All in a working day*, Chumpol explains, is the concept of work as a repetitive process. "It's how people work everyday. A typist types from morning to afternoon and dishwashers only wash dishes."

So to illustrate this point, the artist repeated his performance. At the beginning, he climbed up the ladder to open up the cage, climbed into the cage and worked with the newspapers while a tape recording of engine sounds was played to create a working atmosphere.

After he finished, he climbed up the ladder again to take down the cage, climbed down to light a candle, and let it burn until the engine sounds stopped. Then he began the whole process again.

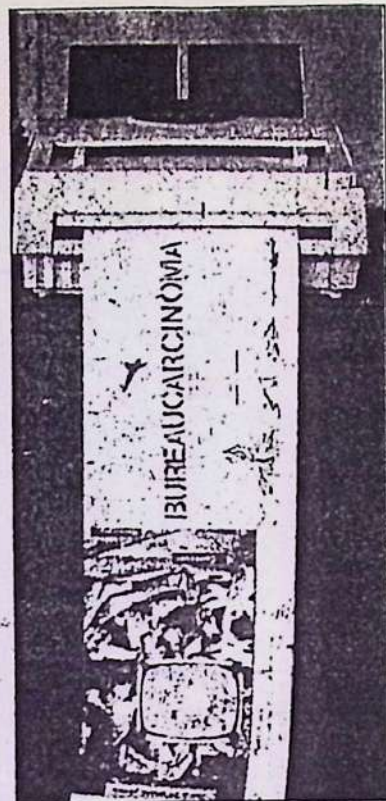
An inquiring mind is required to decipher the "codes" in Chumpol's work and understand its underlying meaning. He says his work also incorporates the concept of social change from an agricultural society to an industrialised one, using *bai laan* (dried palm fronds used for writing in the old days) and handmade candles as symbols to create a stark contrast with the modern images of newspapers and rubber gloves.

"When we work, we sometimes have a goal of our own, but it's not that simple. Our work also concerns others. We employ newspapers as a means of communication, but with this kind of communication we distance ourselves in a way." Chumpol also copied parts of the headlines onto the *bai laan*, with such slogans as "Leadership Problems" and "Don't Join the Coup" visible.

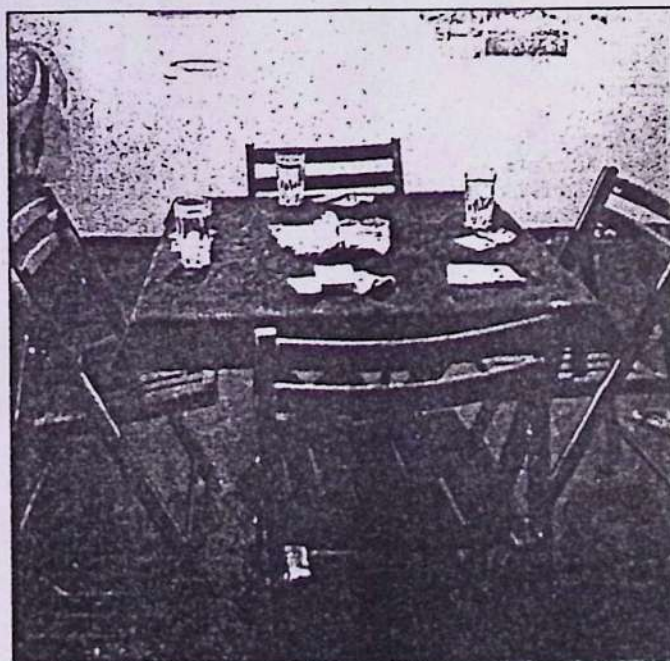
A similarly inquiring mind is required to understand the works of Puwadol Chaikuna, who calls his work, simply, "?".

"I talk about the hazards in labourers' lives as a kind of risk, like gambling. When a worker goes to his factory, his life is in the hands of the dealer in a card game. And in most cases, the dealers are tricky in order to make the most of the situation, letting others pay the price for their own benefits," explains the 31-year-old artist.

The "price" referred to in his performance-installation is illustrated through the various degrees of suffering and injury that



Below right: The International Fax-art event, running parallel to ToxiCity.



The minimally-titled "?" by Puwadol Chaikuna.



A part of *Where are they dead?* by Paisarn Plienbangchang.

labourers face.

On a small dining table Puwadol placed cards and dice in glasses full of water. Hanging above the table is a mobile of dried pieces of pork pierced with needles and a syringe.

Puwadol also climbed up and down the stairs carrying big boxes of condoms until he perspired. Then he used a card to curb out his sweat, put it in ice-cube maker with a dice and froze it before putting the ice cube in the glass.

There are not many clues to help one decipher Paisarn Plienbangchang's performance, *Where are they dead?* if one was not there to witness his performance. The remains of his work are four pieces of white rectangular cloth mixed with earth-tone colours of brown and crimson.

There is a piece of cloth placed in each corner of the display room, with a bowl filled with coloured water near the cloth and a *krathong* (banana-leaf plate) with some offerings on it.

The title of the work is not grammatically correct, but the writer-artist says he prefers to have the word "they" in the form of an object, the one who is always subjected to an action.

Paisal, who performed on the second day of the event, explains that each piece of cloth represents *tung*, a northern-style flag displayed as a decoration in all Northern ceremonies.

"I walked to and from each *tung* while reciting my poem, soaked my feet and hands in the coloured

water, and stamped on the *tung* to make the colours mix. It's sort of abstract," says Paisal, 33.

"Red represents death and loss, and black stands for toxic waste and pollution, while brown symbolises nature. All are mixed together, making the white cloth dirty. It's like the problems and disasters that happen again and again. And no one can solve it."

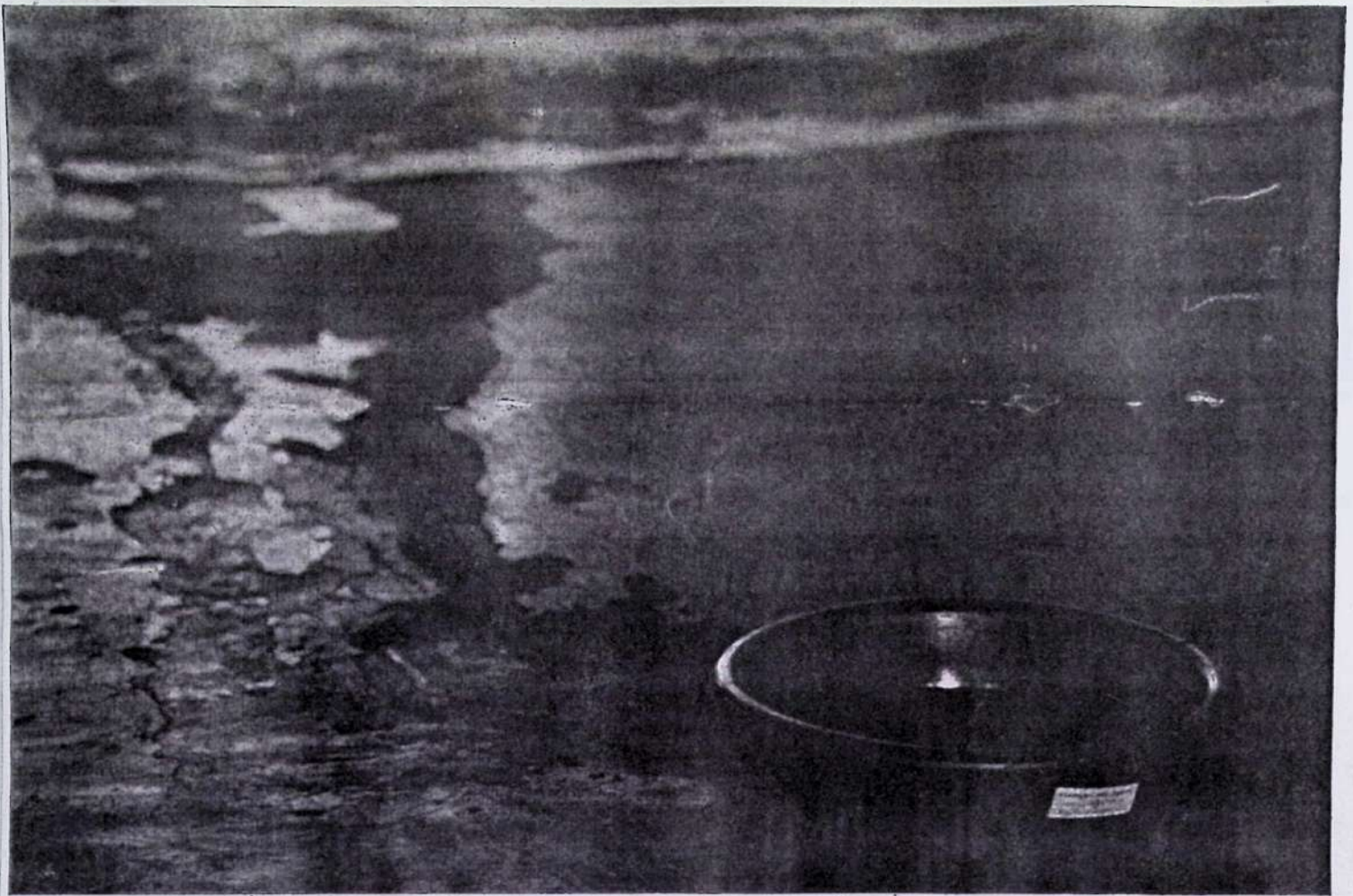
Writer Jittima Pholsawaek contributed to the event through words. She typed what was happening as she sat at the exhibition

from 1-7 p.m. on three pages of paper. The result is an absurd stream-of-consciousness text in which the writer puts anything that pops into her mind on paper — her feelings, people's conversation, and thoughts on the destruction of the environment and people's lives.

The fax documents received from the public will be compiled for distribution to participating organisations and artists, and a copy will be given to the Labour Museum.

□ *ToxiCity* is on view through today. On May 8, the participants will also join the activities commemorating the Kader incident. A merit-making ceremony will be held from 9-11 a.m. at the former Kader factory site in Nakhon Pathom.

On May 10 from 1-4 p.m., there will be a seminar entitled "The Anniversary of the Kader Tragedy: the Progress of Safety Measures in Thai Factories" at the Royal Hotel on Ratchadamnoen Road. The public is welcome.



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