

# OBLIVION

## ARIN RUNGJANG

28 October 2021 - 5 February 2022

Nova Contemporary is pleased to present the solo exhibition of Arin Rungjang, *Oblivion*, featuring site-specific works, bringing together video, installation, and paintings to bring form to the metaphysical existence of being and the state of nothingness as it relates to the inherent desires and freedoms of men. Through the memories of King Rama VI, the uncle miner, and himself, Arin Rungjang creates a space of becoming, reflecting the universality of the human's emotions, regardless of social identities; a situation for the encounter of equals.

The loss of his sister and the drastic limitations of individual freedom during the age of deprivation is the nexus behind Arin Rungjang's new series of works. These experiences drive Rungjang's desire to reconfigure, reframe, and re-establish the subject/object, space/time, material/immaterial, and the senses/perception. *Oblivion* is a search of self and the other, of the becoming, return, and its de-subjugation.

In *Oblivion*, Arin Rungjang deploys radical subjectivities, deliberates the nothingness, and sublimates the narratives. He expands his artistic practice of revisiting historical material, overlapping major and minor narratives across time, places, and language to tap the psychological aspects of humanity as history. To materialise the existence of being, Rungjang orchestrates *Oblivion* in making of a multi sensory discourse to ignite the non-optical senses: the smell of perfume of his late sister and the iron ores, natural earthy textures of the paintings, abstract form of the installation, and participatory sound initiated by viewers from the piano. He purposively silences the narratives to initiate the nothingness allowing viewers to be surrounded and evocative by their sensations and memories. The open-end structure in *Oblivion* enables the viewers to instill their interpretations, to reach the augment of the existence of the being. Through these apparatuses, Arin tries to negotiate space for the arbitrary/the otherness. In the end, the viewer experiences the self-becoming into a new self, the process of freedom, free from the past apparitions.

Arin Rungjang instruments an olfactory sensorium in *Oblivion* to conjoin the immateriality of memories and the materiality of objects: the letter of King Rama VI, the clothes of his sister, the metals, the paintings, and the piano. His objects, which can draw together distant events across time and space, are central to his ontological quest. They represent the archival presence of the absence/nothingness, the binary relationships between reality and memory, the residual and lost. In the installation and paintings, the concreteness of metal instantiates the abstraction of the desire to be human. The minimal video is Rungjang's literal act to

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provide temporality of his search for the truth of being, poetic yet unsettling. The violent intensity implicitly embeds in the works is imbued with the uncanny memories of King Rama VI, the uncle miner and artist himself, earthy, metallic, bitter, and sweet.

*Oblivion* phenomenologically constructs a medial sphere, like an invitation for viewers to enter Arin Rungjang's small-deal-in-big-details sovereign. In this sovereign, there are no answers but questions. In the end, what is left for the viewers are their interpretations. If an inversion of a thing is seen as a political act, Arin Rungjang's *Oblivion* will be one, the act in the hope of awaking a collective consciousness by stimulating the viewer's accustomed senses and minds, like a revolution within the self, to embrace the otherness.

The exhibition will showcase from October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021 – February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022 (free of charge). Gallery hours are Tuesday – Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Nova Contemporary, Rajdamri Rd. (BTS Rajdamri Exit 2). For additional information, please call +66 90 910 6863, Email: [Press@novacontemporary.com](mailto:Press@novacontemporary.com)

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## ARIN RUNGJANG

Arin Rungjang (b.1975) is a well-regarded Thai artist, who is well-known for deftly revisiting historical material, overlapping major and minor narratives across time, places, and language. He develops his unique artistic practice of using private events to investigate the political issues of the past. He represented Thailand at the 55th Venice Biennale (2013). His recent exhibitions include "Ravisara," DAAD Galerie, Berlin, Germany (2020); "Spectrosynthesis II - Exposure of Tolerance: LGBTQ in SEA," Bangkok Art and Cultural Centre, Bangkok, Thailand (2019); "Bengawan Solo," Portikus, Germany (2018); "12th Shanghai Biennale: Proregress", Shanghai, China (2018); "SUNSHOWER: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia 1980s to Now", Mori Art Museum and The National Art Center, Japan (2017); "Documenta 14", Kassel, Germany and Athens, Greece (2017); "Mongkut", Satellite 8 Programme, Maison d'Art Bernard Anthonioz, Paris and CAPC Musée d'art contemporain, Bordeaux, France (2015); "APB Foundation Signature Art Prize", Singapore Art Museum, Singapore (2014).