

FLOWERS GALLERY

JAKKAI SIRIBUTR

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9 January – 8 February, 2025
Private View: 8 January, 6-8pm
Artist Talk: 9 January

Flowers Gallery is pleased to present the work of acclaimed Thai artist Jakkai Siributr.

Recognised for his intricately handmade tapestries, Jakkai Siributr's quilts and installations deliver powerful responses to contemporary and historical societal issues in Thailand. Siributr examines unofficial narratives excluded from historical Thai accounts and explores the intersections of individual and regional histories. He creates a nuanced tension between his subject matter, ongoing conflicts fueled by nationalistic discrimination against marginalised groups, and the visual appeal of his chosen medium and materials. Siributr's exhibition at Flowers Gallery will also coincide with his first institutional UK exhibition, *There's no Place*, taking place at The Whitworth.

In response to the COVID-19 global pandemic that emerged in 2020, Siributr created a series of textile artworks, including *Yellow Fever*, *White Plague*, and *Black Death*, which address the acts of racism and discrimination exposed by the pandemic. During this period, Siributr utilised his art to support individuals who faced job losses due to the crisis.



Jakkai Siributr, *IDP Story Cloth* (Set of 4), 2016, Hand embroidery, 290 x 150 cm

MM20 is assembled by stitching together uniforms gathered from service industry workers in Thailand, reflecting the artist's sentiments towards authorities' handling of the pandemic.

Thailand, largely dependent on tourism, experienced extended periods of economic stagnation, and the resulting widespread unemployment brought financial, physical, and psychological uncertainty. Uniforms from various tourism professions, rendered obsolete, were collected through monetary exchange as a way to assist those most economically impacted.

Siributr explains that his work focuses on unheard voices and issues that are rarely discussed, as reflected in *IDP Story Cloth* (International Displaced Persons). This hand-embroidered installation addresses the plight of ethnic minority groups in Myanmar who migrate to Thailand to escape conflict in their homeland. The piece pays homage to these migrants through a sensory and immersive tapestry inspired by the story cloth embroidery of the Hmong Laos people, who emigrated to the United States in the 1970s. Their story cloth often depicts scenes of village life as well as their journey to escape the conflicts in their own country. *IDP Story Cloth* is currently exhibited at the 15th *Gwangju Biennale* at the Thailand Pavilion, until 1 December 2024.

Jakkai Siributr: There's no Place runs at The Whitworth until 16 March 2025.

Artist Biography

Jakkai Siributr (b. 1969) lives and works in Bangkok, Thailand, and is one of Southeast Asia's leading contemporary artists working primarily in the textile medium. He is known for his intricately handmade tapestries, quilts and installations, which convey powerful responses to contemporary and historical societal issues in Thailand.

Jakkai Siributr studied Textile and Fine Arts at Indiana University, Bloomington, USA; and Printed Textile Design, at Philadelphia University, USA. He has exhibited widely, with notable exhibitions including *Exploring the Cosmos: The Stupa as a Buddhist Symbol*, Asian Civilizations Museum, Singapore (2013); *Phantoms of Asia: Contemporary Awakens the Past*, Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, California, USA; *Link Tradition and Future*, (2012); and the *2nd Chongqing Biennale for Young Artists*, The Art Museum of Sichuan Fine Art Institute, Chongqing, China (2011). His works are in the public collections of the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Art, Taiwan; Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, USA; Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Seattle, USA; Vehbi Koc Foundation, Istanbul, Turkey; and the Asian Civilisations Museum, Singapore.

Artist Talk: 9 January

Specialist talk presenting recently-published *Power, Politics and the Street: Contemporary Art in Southeast Asia after 1970*, followed by artist Jakkai Siributr in conversation with author Dr. Iola Lenzi.



Jakkai Siributr, *White Plague*, 2021, Found beads and embroidery, 202 x 195 cm



Jakkai Siributr, *Black Death*, 2021, Thread, beads and embroidery, 197 x 196 cm

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