

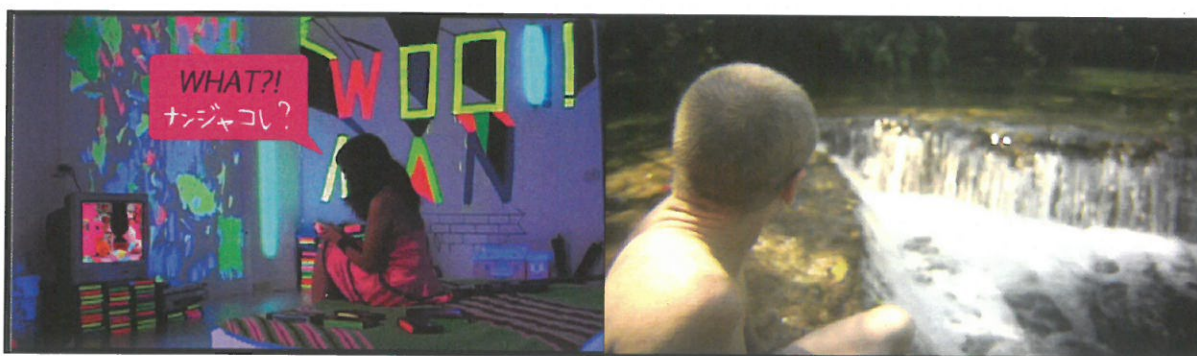
## MEDIA RELEASE

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14 June – 26 July 2008

**Lifeboat #2551 Contemporary Media Art from Thailand** curated by Michael Shaowanasai

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for program information, hi-res images or media interviews.



### LIFEBOAT #2551 CONTEMPORARY MEDIA ART FROM THAILAND

Curator: Michael Shaowanasai

MICHAEL SHAOWANASAI is internationally recognised as one of the leading multi-media and performance artists to emerge from the South-East Asian region over the last decade. Shaowanasai's works such as *The Adventures of Iron Pussy* (co-directed by Apichatpong Weerasetakul) and *The Artists of the Moments* have developed a cult status as well as international distinction in major festivals such as the Venice Biennale 2003 and Berlinale 54.

An active figure in the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender arts scene, his work has highlighted a number of social and cultural issues particular to his native country Thailand such as the sex industry and globalisation.

For his latest project at Gallery 4A, Shaowanasai will be curating an exhibition of 16 multimedia works which comment on the arts scene in Thailand at present. The project, entitled LIFEBOAT #2551, will feature the works of emerging and mid-career media artists who are key names within the Thai contemporary arts scene. This list includes artists such as MOMOKOMOTION, SAKARIN KRU-ON (exhibitor at *Dokumenta 12*), PHUTTIPHONG AROONPHENG, and TIN TIN COOPER. On the concept of the exhibition, Shaowanasai explains:

**"Contemporary Thai media artists are like passengers in a lifeboat. Stuck together in a small vessel, they must work together to stay afloat and at the same time, they are trying to outlive one another. While lost at sea, they are waving and screaming in order to get any kind of attention, hoping to be rescued. Some of them were fortunate and have been "scooped" by a passing European liner. The rest of them can only watch and hold on to what they have – their talents, their prides and their hopes."**

Somewhat outcast by their fellow artists for choosing an artistic medium which still struggles for recognition amongst the popular mass, this group of media artists decide to take the future into their own hands, and 'go for broke' at sea.

LIFEBOAT # 2551 highlights the new breed of South-East Asian artists who challenge the traditional way of seeing, creating and expressing their ideas. The exhibition will include one of Shaowanasai's own works.

**Michael Shaowanasai has resided in Bangkok, Thailand since 2001. Shaowanasai will be in Sydney, Australia between 10th and 20th of June and is available for interviews.**

#### RELATED EVENTS

Lifeboat #2551 Roundtable Discussion: Saturday, 14 June, 2pm

Curator's talk: Saturday, 21 June, 2pm

Images: (left to right) Momokomotion, still image from *Toy*, 2008. Courtesy the artist; Jakrawan Niltumrong, still image from *A Voyage of Foreteller*, 2006. Courtesy the artist.