





Tony Eitharong and Jeff League, *Untitled*, 2010,
phototransfer, encaustic, watercolor, wood and action
figure

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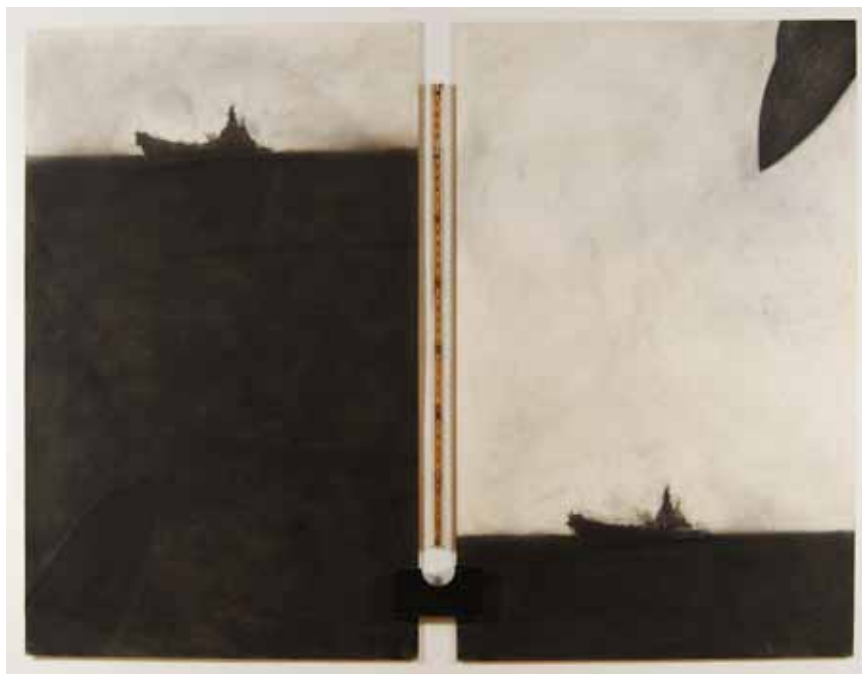
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Ummarid “Tony” Eitharong

Orlando, Fla.

Born in Bangkok, Thailand, in 1952, Ummarid “Tony” Eitharong has made Orlando his home since 1978. For more than 25 years, Eitharong has been an artist of distinction, recognized across the state for his bold and courageous body of work. His early drawings and printmaking efforts explored photorealism with an exceptionally strong graphic nature. The quality permeates all of the artist’s work. The theme of war and conflict has become a dominant theme over the years with particular emphasis placed on military iconography. When this subject is infused with compelling graphic overtones, obscure found objects, text and old photographic references, a gripping artwork results.



High Tide, Low Tide, 2008, mixed media with collage, paint and objects

Jeff League

Winter Park, Fla.

Jeff League’s work explores the possibilities of photos on canvas. His recent work is in the rare medium of encaustic (bee’s wax and resin, with or without pigment) a medium originally used by the ancient Egyptians and Greeks. He uses an involved process to cultivate distinctive visual compositions, built upon layers of expanding and saturated pigments, dreamlike textures, and haunting silhouettes. With this, he is exploring painting, surface texture and size that he could not in his previous black and white and Polaroid photography. Drawing inspiration from archetypal imagery with mythical references, he uses crows in many of his pieces, alluding to their role as messengers in Greek mythology. League’s crows are messengers to the modern audience, telling us – warning us – about what we are doing to the environment. He keeps the imagery simple with abstract color painting or ancient maps in the background and archetypal imagery in the forefront.



Global Migration, 2009, phototransfer, encaustic, map and watercolor



Tony Eitharong and Jeff League, *Untitled*, 2010, phototransfer, encaustic, watercolor, concrete, rebar and wood

Acknowledgments

By Daniel E. Stetson, Executive Director

Throughout its 44-year history, Polk Museum of Art has been fortunate to work with many artists from a variety of backgrounds and artistic styles. The relationships we cultivate with these artists are usually long lasting and continue to develop as new ideas and projects emerge. These relationships proved crucial to the success of *Visual Unity 2*.

In 2009, the Morean Arts Center in St. Petersburg worked with artist Rocky Bridges to organize the exhibition *Visual Unity*. The idea behind the exhibition was to organize artists into teams and ask them to work together to create two new artworks to exhibit, a new collaborative approach to the traditional creative and curatorial processes. Following the success of *Visual Unity*, Bridges approached me with the idea for Polk Museum of Art to help organize a similar invitational group exhibition but on a larger scale. Not only was the exhibition's concept appealing, but it would be a great opportunity for the Museum to reconnect with artists from around the state of Florida and be introduced to additional artists whose works were new to our audience.

To some, the premise behind *Visual Unity 2* may seem simple. Yet, this idea was new and exciting territory for Polk Museum of Art. Generally, artists are primarily creative individuals, not teams; although artists tend to flock together, their collaborations usually only make it as far as the drawing board and are often in the name of inspiration. The rarity of these collaborative efforts is only emphasized when the intended result is a museum exhibition. Furthermore, the idea for a museum to exhibit artworks previously unseen, especially when created collab-

oratively by artists for a specific exhibition, revises the traditional curatorial process by not allowing the Museum the usual luxury of picking specific works to exhibit and adds the potential of surprise to the exhibition process.

We began the process of organizing this exhibition by compiling a list of potential artists we could invite to participate. In January 2010, we were joined by the Museum's new Curator of Art, Adam Justice, and began the arduous tasks of not only forming an initial list of artists but also deciding how to divide the chosen artists into possible teams. The final list of 19 confirmed artists was eventually divided into nine teams, with one team comprising three artists. These teams were organized based on a creative mix of media and style in order to promote a diverse body of work for the exhibition. Artists were contacted and given the information for their partners, and then it was up to the artists to communicate and plan their collaborations.

An exhibition of this caliber relies on the combined forces of many people and organizations. I would like to thank Rocky Bridges for first approaching me with this idea and then working closely with the Museum throughout the curatorial process to see this project into fruition. I also thank all of the participating artists for their time and talents. Without their creativity, courage and devotion to the project, this exhibition could not be possible. I would also like to mention and thank the National Endowment for the Arts, which acknowledged the importance of this project and awarded the Museum a grant that provided the additional funds necessary to make this exhibition and its related educational programs possible.





Installation views of the Dorothy Jenkins Gallery

[kuh-lab-uh-rey-shuh n]

By Adam Justice, Curator of Art

Collaboration means compromise. It can also mean association and coexistence. History has proven that by experimenting collaboratively, artists can either build a reciprocating relationship or become segregated rivals. But the potential toxicity of an unbalanced mixture of personality and ideas in an artists' studio can often be remedied by its own nature; although two vehicles of creativity may forcefully collide, they will likely reconstruct one another into new and unexpected engines.

Collaboration is not a rare occurrence in the art world. If not for cooperation between artists, dealers, collectors, curators, critics and museum administrators, much of art history would never have been made. Perhaps the rarest form of collaboration to develop throughout art history, however, has been that of artist working with artist behind the closed doors of the studio. Although artists have always convened with their like-minded contemporaries as a soundboard for ideas or sources for constructive criticism, rarely have they carried these relationships into their respective studios as opportunities to work cohesively on a project. In other words, artists have usually sought the company of other artists for philosophical discourse or mentoring rather than as potential creative partners. Nonetheless, as with most disciplines, making and exhibiting art has evolved into a sort of joint business venture, a territory of ideas and creative genius, which can be handled just as commonly in artists' studios as in the back rooms of galleries. Modern artists have increasingly become more willing to allow their studios to be a social as well as a creative space, a place which has traditionally not been co-occupied comfortably by constituents. And despite pockets of competitive nonsense these days, it is often not surprising to read of two or more contemporary artists combining their efforts to form creative collaborations inside studios and even in the more public exhibition arena. This type of collaboration, formed solely according to the artists' terms, is often openly accepted and positively charged. That said, it is perhaps less likely to see a museum or gallery initiate and organize a controlled communal environment between two artists, and then wait to exhibit what has been produced.

For *Visual Unity 2*, we intentionally placed regional artists in the position of studio partner. Whereas most of these participating artists have been aware of each other and may have even exhibited with one another, they have never worked so closely as to produce collaborative artworks for exhibition. In 2010, the Morean Arts Center in St. Petersburg partnered with artist Rocky Bridges to host a new format of exhibition where regional artists worked in pairs to create new works of art. This year, assisted again by Bridges, Polk Museum of Art selected 19 individual

and diverse artists, divided them into nine teams, and asked them to work together in the studio. This exhibition showcases the results of these artist collaborations.

Artists included in the exhibition are: Rocky Bridges (Tarpon Springs, Fla.), Jill Cannady (Deland, Fla.), Richard Currier (Micco, Fla.), Edouard Duval-Carrié (Miami, Fla.), Monica Eastman (Plant City, Fla.), Ummarid "Tony" Eitharong (Orlando, Fla.), Susan Gott (Tampa, Fla.), Steven S. Gregory (Tampa, Fla.), Kirk ke Wang (Tampa, Fla.), Jeff League (Winter Park, Fla.), Monica Londoño (Sarasota, Fla.), Tim Ludwig (Deland, Fla.), Duncan McClellan (St. Petersburg, Fla.), Carol Mickett (St. Petersburg, Fla.), Leslie Neumann (Aripeka, Fla.), Tony Savoie (Orlando, Fla.), Robert Stackhouse (St. Petersburg, Fla.), Lucia Taxdal (Winter Haven, Fla.) and Theo Wujcik (Tampa, Fla.).



Leslie Neumann and Lucia Taxdal, *Topside*, 2010, felt, bottle caps, tin cans, encaustic and paint



Kirk ke Wang and Theo Wujcik, *BK Jade*, 2010, acrylic on canvas

Exhibition Checklist

1. Rocky Bridges (Tarpon Springs, FL)
Sequenced Grace, 2010
Mixed media
2. Edouard Duval-Carrié (Miami, FL)
La Cour Miraculee du Dagbo Hou Non, 1995
Mixed media
PMoA Permanent Collection
3. Rocky Bridges and Edouard Duval-Carrié
Brain Storm, 2010
Mixed media
4. Rocky Bridges and Edouard Duval-Carrié
Majestic Interlude No. 1, 2010
Majestic Interlude No. 2, 2010
Majestic Interlude No. 3, 2010
Mixed media
5. Jill Cannady (Deland, FL)
Big Dog: NMB, 1997
Oilbar on panel with fabric collage
6. Tim Ludwig (Deland, FL)
Pitcher with Heliconia /Iron Cross, 2010
Wheel thrown, altered earthenware and encaustic
7. Jill Cannady and Tim Ludwig
Lidded Florida Water Vessel, 2010
Wheel thrown, altered earthenware, acrylic and encaustic
8. Jill Cannady and Tim Ludwig
Rabbit Platter, 2010
Wheel thrown, altered earthenware and encaustic
9. Richard Currier (Micco, FL)
Pound of Flesh, 2008
Oil on panel
10. Tony Savoie (Orlando, FL)
Empyre Logo, 2009
Mixed media with collage, paint and objects
Courtesy of S&S Gallery and Archives
11. Richard Currier and Tony Savoie
Monster, 2010
Oil on panel and mixed media
12. Monica Eastman (Plant City, FL)
Thorny Cock, 2010
Mixed media
13. Monica Londoño (Plant City, FL)
Broken Thread, 2010
Thread
14. Monica Eastman and Monica Londoño
Binding, 2010
Mixed media
15. Monica Eastman and Monica Londoño
Unity, 2010
Mixed media
16. Tony Eitharong (Orlando, FL)
High Tide, Low Tide, 2008
Mixed media with collage, paint and objects
17. Jeff League (Winter Park, FL)
Global Migration, 2009
Phototransfer, encaustic, map and watercolor
18. Tony Eitharong and Jeff League
Untitled, 2010
Phototransfer, encaustic, watercolor, wood and action figure
19. Tony Eitharong and Jeff League
Untitled, 2010
Phototransfer, encaustic, watercolor, concrete, rebar and wood
20. Susan Gott (Tampa, FL)
Tribal Elder, 2010
Cast glass, hand-made glass inclusions, glass enamels and gold leaf with steel concrete base
21. Steven S. Gregory (Tampa, FL)
Pinkie's Place, 2010
Framed limited edition print
22. Susan Gott and Steven Gregory
This Is Not a Window-Body, 2010
Backlight photo in window frame box
23. Susan Gott and Steven Gregory
This Is Not a Window-Soul, 2010
Poured glass and photo in window frame box
24. Kirk ke Wang (Tampa, FL)
Womens Made in China, 2010
Acrylic on canvas
25. Theo Wujcik (Tampa, FL)
Asians in My Soup, 2010
Acrylic on canvas
26. Kirk ke Wang and Theo Wujcik
BK Jade, 2010
Acrylic on canvas
27. Kirk ke Wang and Theo Wujcik
Power, 2010
Acrylic on canvas
28. Duncan McClellan (St. Petersburg, FL)
Alchemist's Dream, 2010
Hand blown glass vase
29. Carol Mickett and Robert Stackhouse (St. Petersburg, FL)
Currency, 2010
Watercolor, acrylic, and ink on paper mounted on canvas
30. Duncan McClellan, Carol Mickett and Robert Stackhouse
Icon Dance, 2010
Sand-carved, hand-blown glass
31. Duncan McClellan, Carol Mickett and Robert Stackhouse
Asteroid Plate, 2010
Sand-carved, hand-blown glass
32. Leslie Neumann (Aripeka, FL)
Sovereign, 2010
Oil and encaustic painting on panel
33. Lucia Taxdal (Winter Haven, FL)
Outrageous Secrets, 2010
Felt, steel, and found objects
34. Leslie Neumann and Lucia Taxdal
Topside, 2010
Felt, tin cans, encaustic, and paint
35. Leslie Neumann and Lucia Taxdal
Deepwater, 2010
Oil and encaustic painting with bottle caps

All works on loan from the artists unless otherwise noted.



Duncan McClellan, Carol Mickett and Robert Stackhouse, *Icon Dance*, 2010, sand-carved, hand-blown glass



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