

HEAVY

NAWAPOL THAMRONG RATTANARIT

30.09–11.11.2023



© 2023 Nawapol Thamrongrattanarit, '9.1MB'.
Courtesy the Artist and BANGKOK CITYCITY GALLERY

HEAVY by filmmaker Nawapol Thamrongrattanarit reflects on the intangibility of digital media. The exhibition features over 120 large-scale framed photographs from a collection of over 50,000 images amassed over a decade.

The photographs chronicle Thamrongrattanarit's personal and filmmaking journeys, revealing a subconscious trend in his aesthetic choices through both his framing of each image and selections he has chosen to present. The title refers not only to the photos' physical sizes but the emotions they carry as well – underscoring the dichotomy between the emotional weight of his work and the non-physical nature of digital media.

Since 1997, Thamrongrattanarit has explored various storytelling mediums. With *HEAVY*, he underscores the tangible, allowing viewers to actively interact with the exhibits. As opposed to traditional exhibitions, attendees are encouraged to touch and move the photos. This immersive format evolves the narrative experience, turning passive viewership into active engagement.



© 2023 Nawapol Thamrongrattanarit, 'HEAVY'.
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HEAVY, artist statement

11 September

I have come to realize that for this exhibition, its weight lies in the process as much as in its final outcome, the photos being selected to exhibit. It is typical that when you deal with objects, they weigh, you need force, and when you use force, you become exhausted and start weighing up the why.

The act of sifting through and selecting images are the process that allow us to embark on a journey to our past, a journey that is tantamount of many terabytes of hard drives. While it may seem that 2 hard drives weigh 2 kilograms, and the weight of each digital image varies in its megabytes, it is when you have to curate 120 images from a collection of 50,000 that you begin to realize the weight carried in each image in the sense that has nothing to do with megabytes. Images carry weight because of their inherent meaning, aesthetic beauty, memory they encapsulate, and significance held for us and others.

A digital image which is like a genie in a confined bottle has a weighty path to secure its spot in an exhibition. The question at hand revolves around the degree of its substance and significance it must possess in order to be allowed among the limited selection of 120 - a selection that carries even greater weight as it marks the first official photo exhibition after many years of anticipation...adding even more weight.

While going through a staggering archive of 20,000 photos, a stark realization sets in: revisiting your own past takes an immense energy. Even within the comfort of your air-conditioned room, it is not easy to complete this task. The digital memories, initially perceived as weightless, suddenly become heavy when they are all piled up in front of you. After all, it is only through exploring these images that you can learn lessons they offer.

You can walk and enjoy the mass of these images. Feel free to look at them as an archeologist excavating my memory encompassing people in my life and places I visited. You can move them and apply some force so you can feel its weight. (It is light when you are interested in a particular image, and a bit heavy if you are not that interested.) For me, I look at them as a work man taking his rest after an excavation. This is the weight of our past that has been buried for a long time. Now it is being unearthed and stacked before you. There are many more that has not been dug up to display. Well, the confines of this gallery space cannot encapsulate that 2-kilograms hard drives.

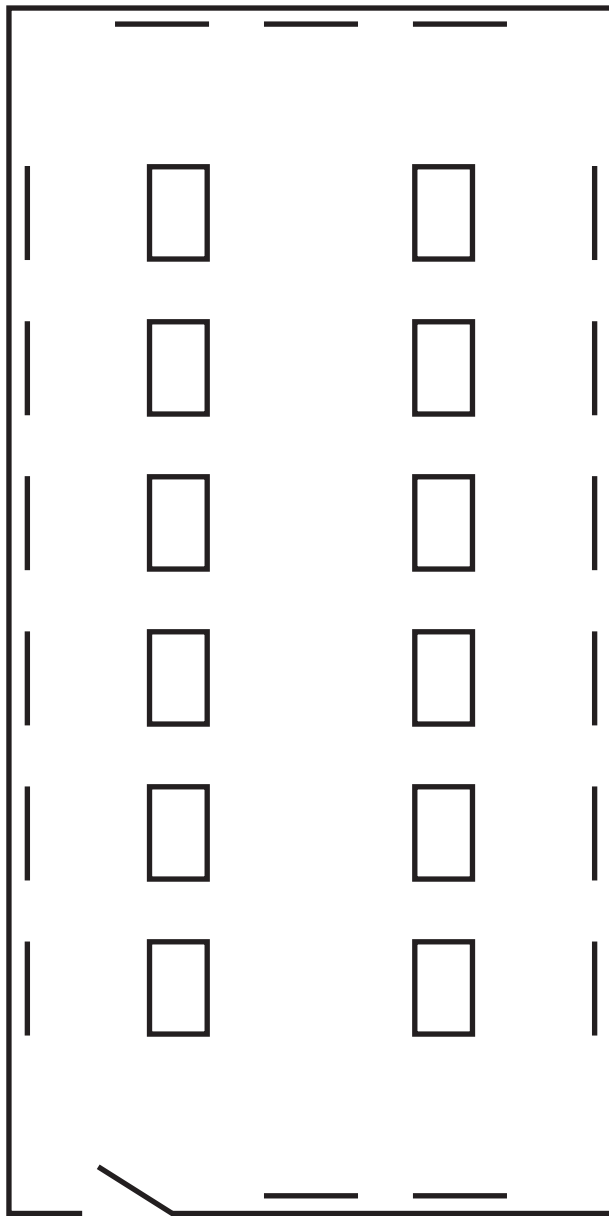
For me, this photo exhibition serves as a learning process offering insights into the weight of my past, my memory and my identity.

I am glad every single time I am invited to engage in an art project as art can create scenarios that do not occur in everyday lives prompting me to confront, question and ultimately learn and take something back to my daily routines.

Heavy matters can always change how we see things.

Nawapol Thamrongrattanarit

11 September



Nawapol Thamrongrattanarit, *HEAVY*, 2023, 137 Giclée print on resin coated photo paper; teak frame with plexiglass; 110 x 165 cm, 113.2 x 168.2 x 3.2 cm (each), 12 wooden plinth; 168.2 x 113.2 x 36 cm (each).

NAWAPOL THAMRONGRATTANARIT

Born in 1984, Bangkok, TH
Lives and works in Bangkok, TH

Nawapol Thamrongrattanarit is an intrepid storyteller working across a range of formats to engage audiences. He started making experimental short films and documentaries during his years in the Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University, gaining prominence as a film and advertising director. Expanding beyond films, documentaries, and music videos, his narratives have been expressed through photography as well as exhibitions. With a strong focus on experimentation, his unique narrative formats are complemented by a strong focus of drawing in audience interactions

36 (2012), the first film Thamrongrattanarit directed, wrote, funded, produced as well as distributed, won him the New Currents Award at the 17th Busan International Film Festival. His subsequent films, *MARY IS HAPPY*, *MARY IS HAPPY* (2013), *The Master* (2014), *Heart Attack* (2015), *Die Tomorrow* (2017), *BNK48: Girls don't cry* (2018), *Happy Old Year* (2019) and *Fast and Feel Love* (2022) serving to establish his significant audience base in Thailand, as well as at international film festivals such as the International Film Festival Rotterdam, Venice International Film Festival, amongst others. *Happy Old Year* was also the recipient of Best Film at the Osaka Asian Film Festival in 2020. His solo debut exhibition titled *i write you a lot*. premiered at BANGKOK CITYCITY GALLERY in 2016, and was followed by *second hand dialogue* in 2019.

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BANGKOK CITYCITY GALLERY

CONCEPT DESIGN: Nawapol Thamrongrattanarit

PRODUCTION: Bloom Pro Lab, Grob Yok Glong Co., Ltd.;

Teeravut Tandulyakul, Suticha Tamma, Tatiya Kramyim

INSTALLATION: Paraform Studio; Itsaret Sutthisiri,

Tonkao Kwannak, Narupon Piriyapittaya, Charintus

Sangroengrith, Attapon Hanskul

POSTER DESIGN: Win Shanokprasith

BANGKOK CITYCITY GALLERY: Op Sudasna,

Supamas Phahulo, Kritthathat Taveetanathada,

Setapa Prommolmard, Kantida Busaba,

Kamol Karn Kosolkarn, Kanteera Sanguantung,

Chollaphat Nuchthongmuang, Sirichart Jitrai,

Vichuda Pheungthong

Produced by BANGKOK CITYCITY GALLERY

Special thanks to Pacharin Surawatanapongs

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