

ARTISTIC CONTRIBUTION

"246247596248914102516... And Then There Were None"

One-channel digital video installation, wood and brass sculpture, replica books and oil on canvas paintings, 2017

Arin Rungjang

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Introduction

Arin Rungjang's works revisit master-narratives through the agency of small events, dissolving objective distance through sensory and spatial investigations. Objects, which can draw together distant events across time and space, are central to these investigations. His particular interest lies in lesser-known aspects of Thai history and their intersection with the present in the sites and contexts of his practice. Here Rungjang presents documentation of a multimedia installation entitled *46247596248914102516... And then there were none* (2017), a work whose title incorporates codes used by the Thai government to refer to highly sensitive historical events, censored from public debate. The work was inspired by the artist's long-term questioning of Thailand's role as the only country in Southeast Asia to align with the Axis during the Second World War. During research, he stumbled on the fact that the last signature in Hitler's guest book was that of a Thai man, Prasat Chuthin. A memoir by this former Thai ambassador forms the departure point for Rungjang's subsequent film, which recounts Chuthin's personal memories of Hitler as a "real gentleman" and his later imprisonment in a Russian red army jail in Moscow, in juxtaposition with visual documentation showing the material process of the artist creating a brass replica of The Democracy Monument, erected in 1939 to commemorate the 1932 Siamese Revolution. This process involves casting brass from molding of a 3D print from a 3D scan of the monument *in situ*.

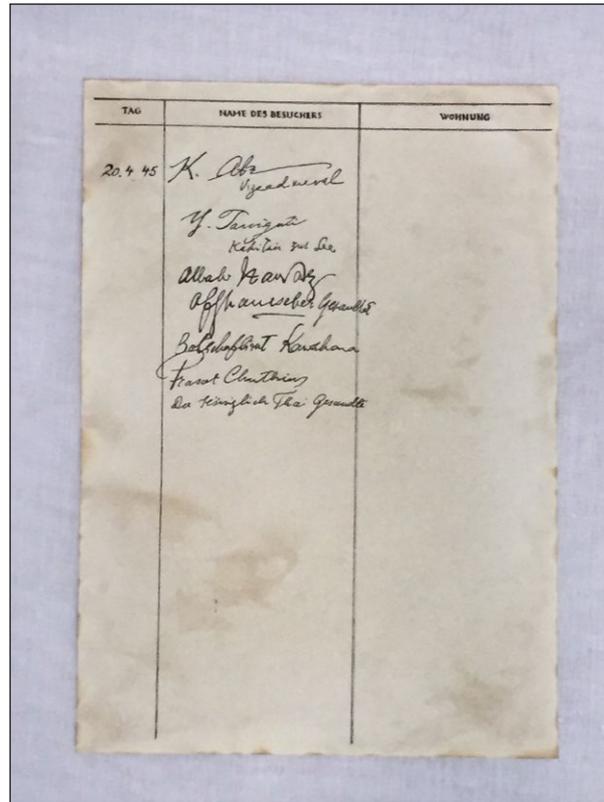
The Siamese Revolution was effectively a coup against King Prajadhipok, staged by a group of military and civil officers that would later become the ruling political party, The People's Party, changing the system of government in Siam (today's Thailand) from an absolute monarchy to a constitutional monarchy. A symbolic manifestation of military tyranny, the Monument thus signals fascism while ostensibly commemorating democracy. Its design is in turn overflowing with symbolism of numerological significance, recalled in Rungjang's title, which referred among other things to the People's Party's six principles of freedom, peace, education, equality, economy, and unity and the date of the coup. Presenting his replica of the Monument's base, *Soldiers Fighting for Democracy*, together with replicas of Hitler's guest book and Prasat Chuthin's memoir, as well as oil-painted portraits of the ambassador and his wife, Rungjang raises questions about Thai democracy, past and present.



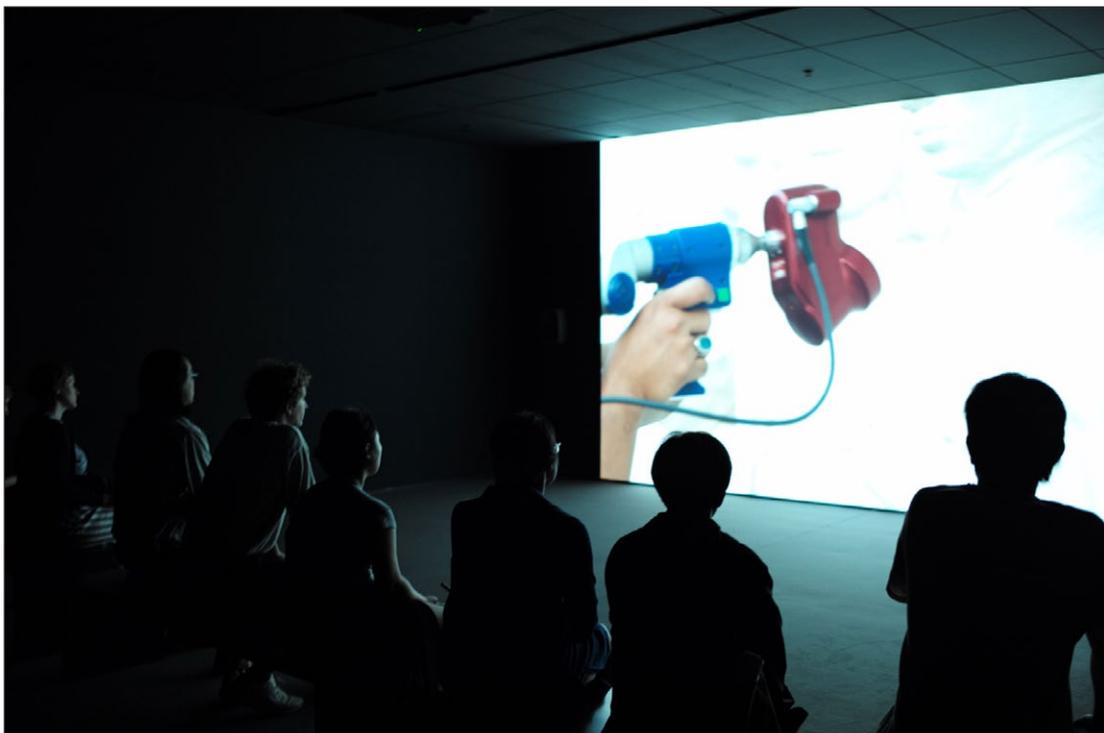
Installation view at documenta 14, Kassel, showing Arin Rungjang, *And then there were none* (Nao Chuthin) (2017) and *246247596248914102516... And then there were none* (Prasat Chuthin) (2017) (both oil on canvas), together with glass cases containing *246247596248914102516... And then there were none* (Replica of Hitler guestbook last page) (2017) and *246247596248914102516... And then there were none* (Prasat Chuthin book replica) (2017).



Arin Rungjang, *246247596248914102516... And then there were none* (Democracy Monument) (2017) Wood and brass sculpture.



Arin Rungjang, 246247596248914102516... And then there were none (Replica of Hitler's guestbook last page) (2017) Ink on paper.



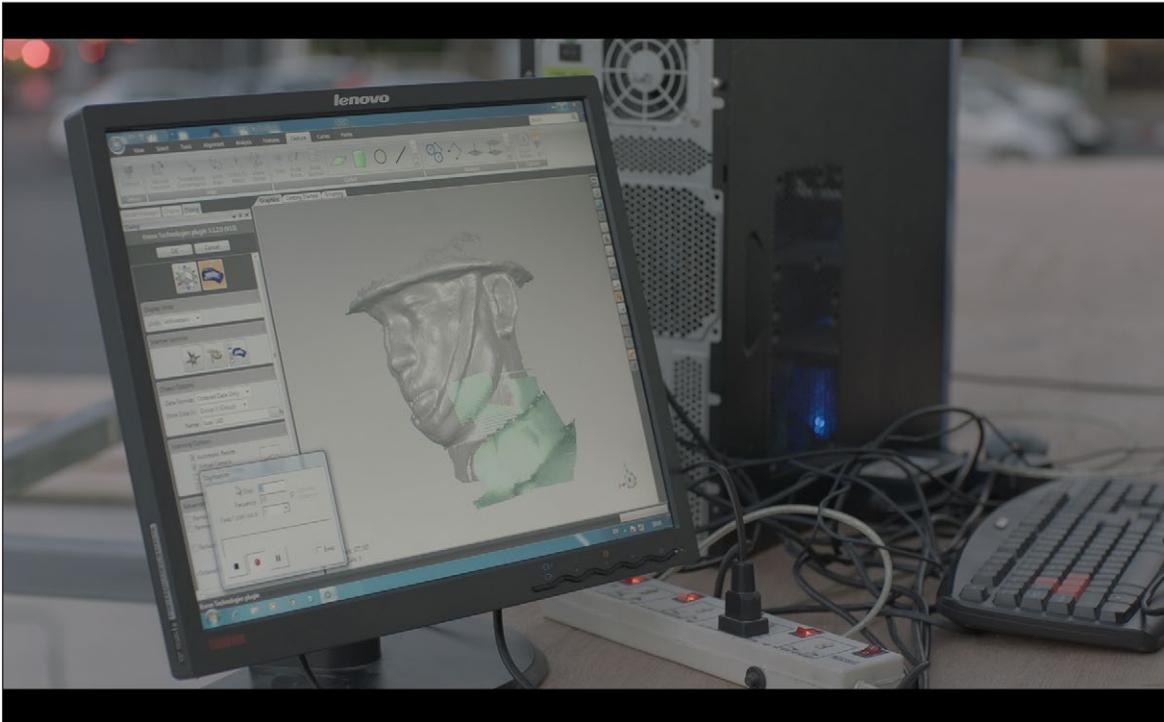
Arin Rungjang, 246247596248914102516... And then there were none (2017) One-channel digital video installation.



Arin Rungjang, 246247596248914102516... And then there were none (2017) Still, one-channel digital video, color, sound, 30 min.



Arin Rungjang, 246247596248914102516... And then there were none (2017) Still, one-channel digital video, color, sound, 30 min.



Arin Rungjang, 246247596248914102516... And then there were none (2017) Still, one-channel digital video, color, sound, 30 min.



Arin Rungjang, 246247596248914102516... And then there were none (2017) Still, one-channel digital video, color, sound, 30 min.



Arin Rungjang, 246247596248914102516... And then there were none (2017) Still, one-channel digital video, color, sound, 30 min.



Arin Rungjang, 246247596248914102516... And then there were none (2017) Still, one-channel digital video, color, sound, 30 min.

All works co-produced by documenta 14 together with the Ministry of Culture Thailand, DC Collection, and Miiam Contemporary Art Museum.

The video work 246247596248914102516... And then there were none (2017) can be viewed in full via the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rpkc3qyq3Fg&feature=youtu.be>.

Competing Interests

The artist has no competing interests to declare.

Artist Biography

Arin Rungjang (Bangkok, 1975) is an artist based in Bangkok. He represented Thailand at the 55th Venice Biennale (2013) and has participated in such international biennales as documenta 14 (2017), Kyoto International Festival of Contemporary Art (2015), 4th Asian Art Biennale, Taichung, Taiwan (2013), Art Gwangju (2013), 18th Sydney Biennale (2012), Shanghai Biennale (2012), Singapore Biennale (2011), Asia Art Triennial, Manchester (2011) and Guangzhou Triennial (2008). Solo exhibitions include, most recently, Remembrance (Ratanakiri) at Hard Hat, Geneva (2017), as well as The Making of Golden Teardrop at Jim Thompson Art Center, Bangkok (2015); Golden Teardrop at Siam Centre, Bangkok (2015); Mongkut at Jeu de Paume, Paris (2015) and CAPC Musée d'art Contemporain de Bordeaux, France (2014). Rungjang holds a BFA from the Silpakorn University, Bangkok. He has been a finalist for the APB Foundation Signature Art Prize, among other prestigious awards.

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