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| **Pongdam, Prayat (1934 — 2014)** |
| **[Enter any *variant forms* of your headword – OPTIONAL]** |
| [Enter an **abstract** for your article] |
| Deemed a National Artist in 1998, Prayat Pongdam was a Thai printmaker. Pongdam’s studies in painting began while working with Dr. Silpa Bhirasri. Pongdam continued his education at the Academia Di Belle Arti Di Roma in Italy in 1961. Upon returning to Thailand, he regularly created paintings and prints, and was among the first group of Thai artist to introduce printmaking techniques to the public. He was declared an artist of distinction for his printmaking in 1981, and was awarded the title ‘Academico Onorario Classe Incisione’ from the Italian government through the L’Accademia Florentina delle Arte del Disegno. His artworks explored ideas of nature, ways of life, and the Thai rural spirit through simple human and animal symbols expressing themes of warmth, affection, and love. Usually foregrounding his paintings with animal subjects, heis backgrounds consisted of landscapes such as temples, churches, vihara, heritage sites, local villages, fields of rice, gardens, and forests. His compositions were usually symmetrical, reflecting the balance of life styles and peaceful feelings. Prayat harmonised these themes and techniques within the unique character of his woodcut techniques. Using line, colour, and composition, Prayat blended plainness, purity and sincerity with nature, religion, and the folk cultures of rural societies.  Image: rooster.jpg  Figure 1 Prayat Pongdam, *The Morning*, 1981, woodcut, 60 x 80 cm, Collection of Experty Holding Co., Ltd.  http://www.rama9art.org/artisan/6decade/work/decade4/w4\_35.jpg  Prayat is known for his use of animal figures. His works frequently featured animals relating to rural Thai existence, including horses, cats, birds, hens, geckos, bats, and owls. His animal characters display a range of emotions or characteristics including happiness, enjoyment, or horror as they move or gaze at the viewer. In his later period, Prayat projected human characteristics onto his animal subjects, placing them in the relationships of a close family. Most of his artworks are set at dawn, evening, and/or twilight. Using rollers with various soft and dark colours, Prayat created atmospheres of soft sunlight on a dark sky.  The animal figures in his prints also frequently reflect the peace and warmth of family, including this mutual sympathy as symbolic of Thai tradition. In addition, Prayat always brings some symbols of Thai traditional identity into his work, including folk costumes, architectural structures, Thai traditional patterns, daily equipment, water jars, and northern weaving clothes. He also uses golden leaves collage onto his printmaking to reflect the character of Eastern art. |
| Further reading:  (Hi-Class Magazine)  (Phongdam)  (Mukdamanee) |