**Damrong Wong Uparaj (1936-2002)**

Born in Chiang Rai, Thailand, Wong Uparaj studied Fine Arts at Silpakorn University. On completion of his degree in 1964 he received a British Council grant to study at the Slade School, London in 1964, and was later awarded a Rockefeller scholarship for a MA in Fine Arts at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, which he completed in 1969. Always interested in international art practices Wong Uparaj travelled in Europe, India, Japan and Australia, though Thailand was always his primary inspiration. Wong Uparaj ‘s works were fundamentally underpinned by his Buddhist beliefs and studying Buddhism helped him find peace in life and work. Following early experimentations with abstraction and Impressionism, he settled into a distinct realist style, creating rural and urban scenes from his own imagination that focused on a simple, almost idealised view of what life could be. There is a consistent sense of serenity and stillness in his compositions. This is balanced cleverly with his use of colour, such as the inclusion of large areas of yellow, green or blue in a number of works that, while bold, skilfully enhances the aura of calm. Wong Upararaj was a highly respected artist, working across a variety of mediums including tempera, acrylic, wood-cut, pastel, watercolour, oil and drawing. His works are well represented in public and private collections internationally.

**References and further reading**

Dardarananda, Sivaporn, (1996) *Golden Jubilee Art Exhibition. 50 Years of Thai Art*, Bangkok: Rama IX Art Museum Foundation.

Poshyananda, Apinan, (1992) *Modern Art in Thailand. Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*  Singapore: Oxford University Press