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| Isrowuthakul, Santi (1945--) |
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| Santi Isrowuthakul is an artist and activist who participated in the Artists’ Front of Thailand (AFT) (1974-1976). Born in Bangkok, Santi graduated with a master’s degree in Fine Art in 1975 from the Art Institute of Chicago, USA. While studying in Chicago he participated in several exhibitions and workshops, in which he created public mural paintings and mixed-media works. When he returned to Thailand in 1975, he used arts and cultural activities to encourage the student-led peoples’ movement, taking part in group exhibitions including The Bangkok Dice Group (1976) and The Tao Group (1976). He used simple materials including toilet paper, newspapers, wood, and marble to produce collages, and site-specific works aimed at provoking the viewer. Santi’s work reflects a radical ideology, which developed as a result of the country’s communist insurgency, the development of political consciousness among artists, and a growing interest in Socialist Realism, giving birth to works that satirised politicians, culture, and society. In 1976, Santi was elected chairman of the AFT, and co-organised an art exhibition around the Pramane ground (Sanam Luang) area to support the student-led movement against American military bases in Thailand during the Vietnam War. The AFT, under Santi’s leadership, created several politically motivated cultural and arts activities before the coup d’état on 6 October 1976. He lives and works as a freelance artist in Bangkok. |
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