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**Pratchaya Phinthong**

**A whole from a different half, 2018**

Drawing installation

Charcoal, coal, Medium silver gel

283 x 577 cm

Unique

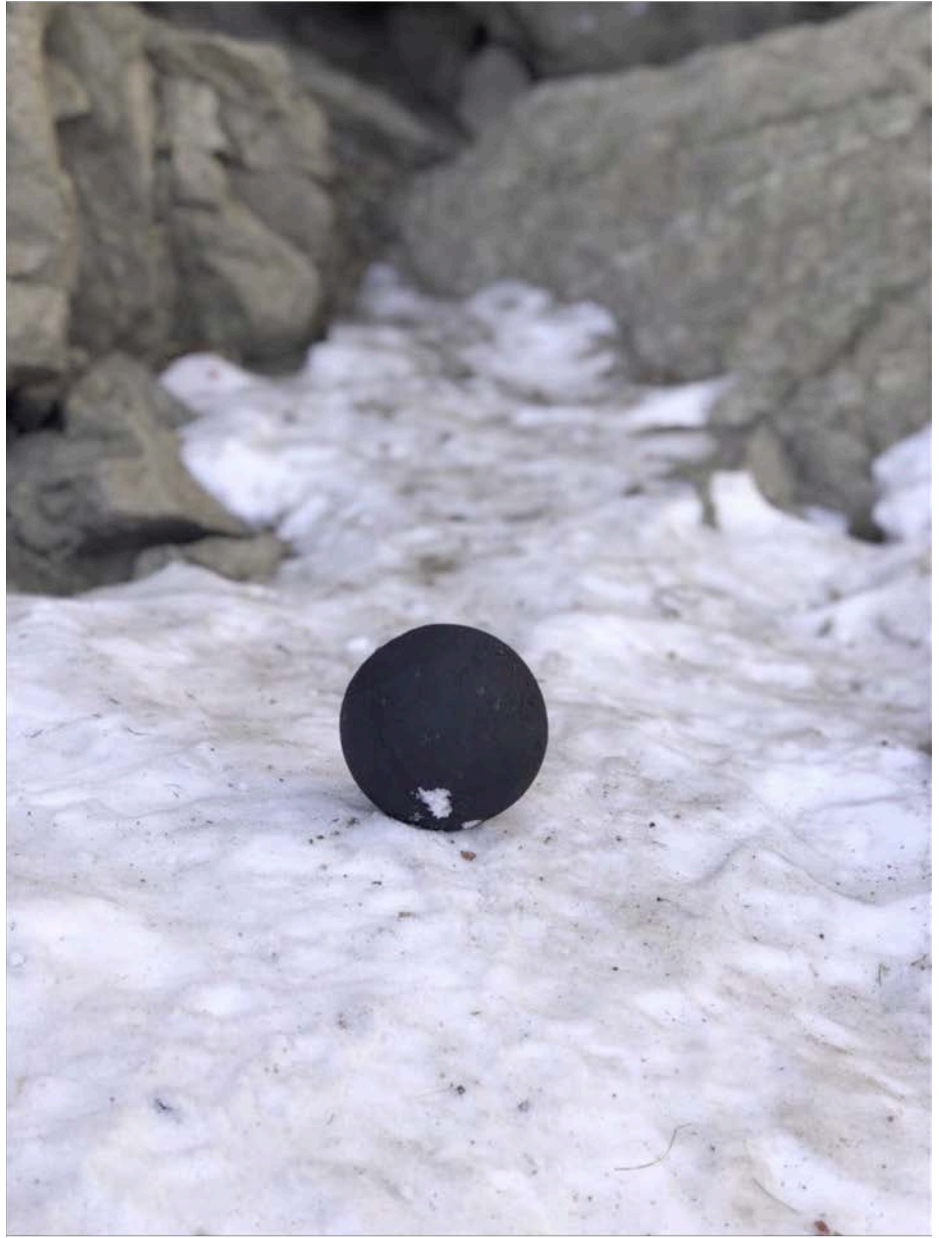
The idea of journey resonates and remains relevant in Pratchaya Phinthong's oeuvre. It is the mean by which experiences/materials are accumulated, measured, formulated and transmitted into the realm of art. Each journey defines sequences of his artistic operation, which can be interpreted as correspondences between diverse entities. The algorithm of his operation bases on movement and tension between divergent realities, processing an ensemble of narrative devices.

*A whole from a different half* starts with inquiry to regenerate his past works, notably “One of Them”, 2012, which has led him on a journey to Tövkhön Monastery, one of the oldest Buddhist pilgrimage site in Mongolia, on the sacred hill of Shireet Ulaan in Övörkhongai Province. Within the monastery, there is Ekhiin Agui, translated as “Mother’s Womb Cave”, a sacred place used as a support for meditation leading to spiritual rebirth. By crawling in narrow cavity, once reaching the inner chamber, one has to sit in the cavity, then turns over clockwise and crawls out. These movements symbolise gestation and birth. It is believed that anyone who performs will have a great fecundity.

Phinthong appointed the Mother’s Womb Cave as the site for his regenerating operation. Inside the chamber, he deposited Yttrium sphere, the object from the piece “One of Them”. Yttrium, a rare earth mineral necessary for manufacturing hi-tech gadgets such as flat screen TVs, smartphones and hybrid cars, was destined to return to its origin where it was sourced. Despite of its previous form that aimed at interaction between economic and politic realities, the deposit of “One of Them” inside the Mother’s Womb Cave can be regarded as symbolic gesture of resurrection. By placing it at a mystic site, he integrated his work with another realm that rooted in the pilgrimage, if not spiritual, tradition.

*A whole from a different half* is a wall drawing depicting an image of the entrance to Mother’s Womb Cave at Tövkhön Monastery. Coal and charcoal Phinthong brought back from Mongolian capital - Ulaanbaatar were used as mediums. Whilst being there during his transits, he encountered the extreme air pollution, Thousands of households had to burn low-quality coal to cope with the winter temperature. Phinthong thoughtfully transmitted experiences of his recent journey by gathering each encounter into a whole, a mise-en-scène. It narrates the tension between the image of sacred place, where his artistic creation was left behind, and the substances that polluted Ulaanbaatar.





One of them, 2012