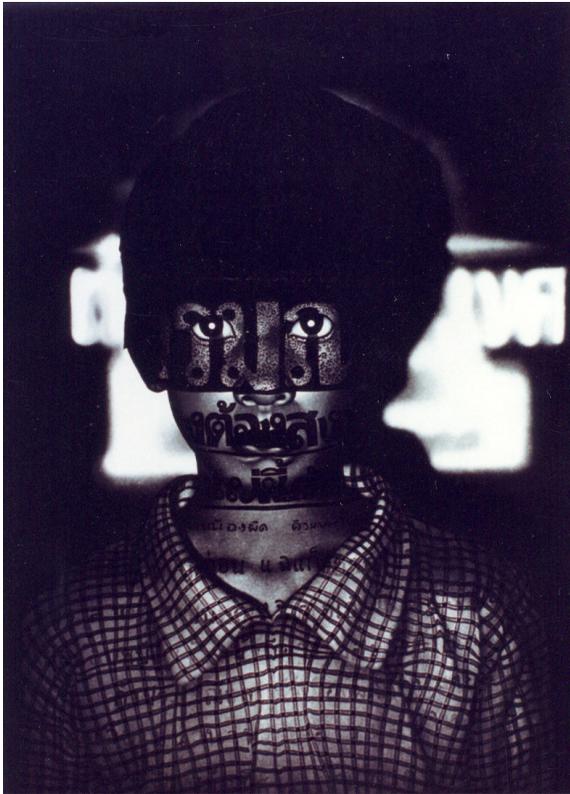


CULTURAL SNAPSHOTS

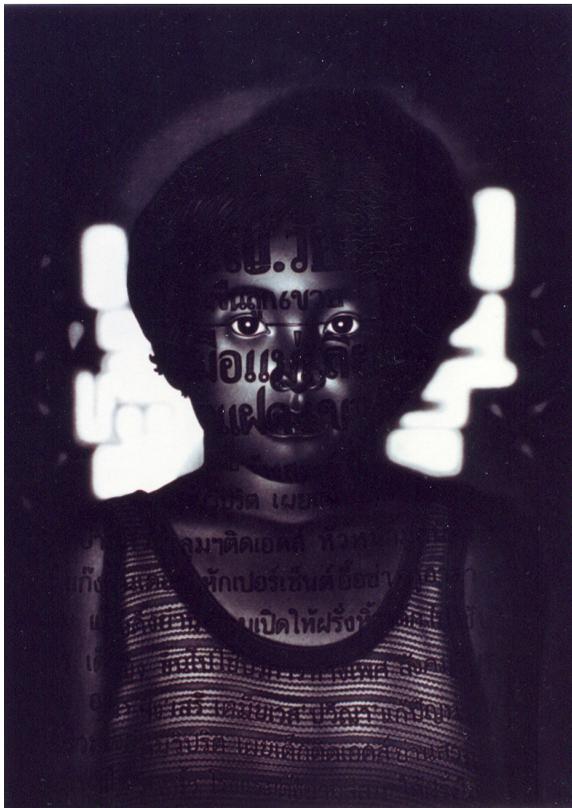
A Portrait of A Child - Social Victims

Vara Chaiyanitaya was born in 1967 in Suphanburi, Thailand and is now a teacher at the College of Fine Arts in Lad Krabang, Bangkok. He graduated a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Prints) in 1992 and later a Master of Fine Arts (Prints) in 2002 both from Silpakorn University. He has had many group and solo exhibitions in Thailand and abroad. His prints have won more than a dozen of awards from Asian and European countries.



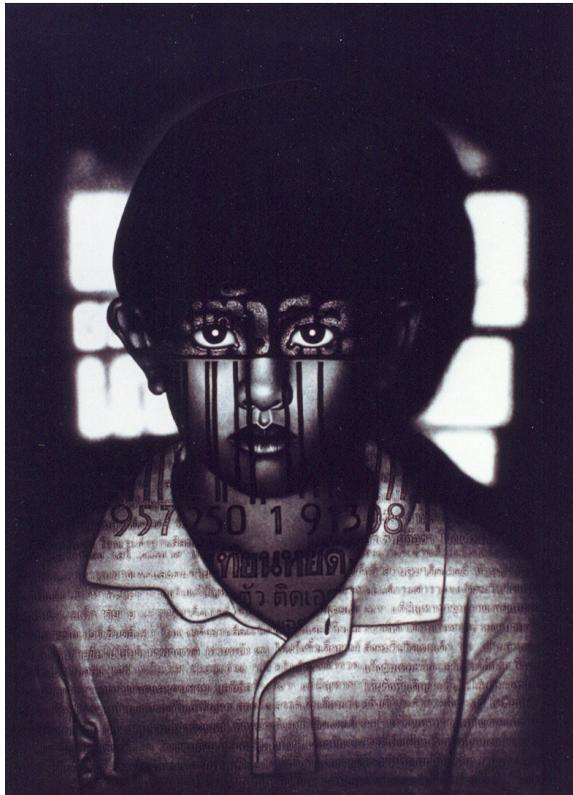
In Thai Society's attempt to adapt itself to the modern world, many social problems are emerging which are highly visible in the news media. We are continuously confronted with images of violent crimes. Among these crimes, child labour, sexual abuse to children, violence against children and child trafficking are very common.

One concern is how victims are portrayed. The news media sensationalizes the news for the sake of business competition. The more sensational the portrayal, the more interesting and deeper the treatment of the issue seems to be. However, the effect of this is that the innocent victims are being abused just as much by the media as the actual crimes themselves.

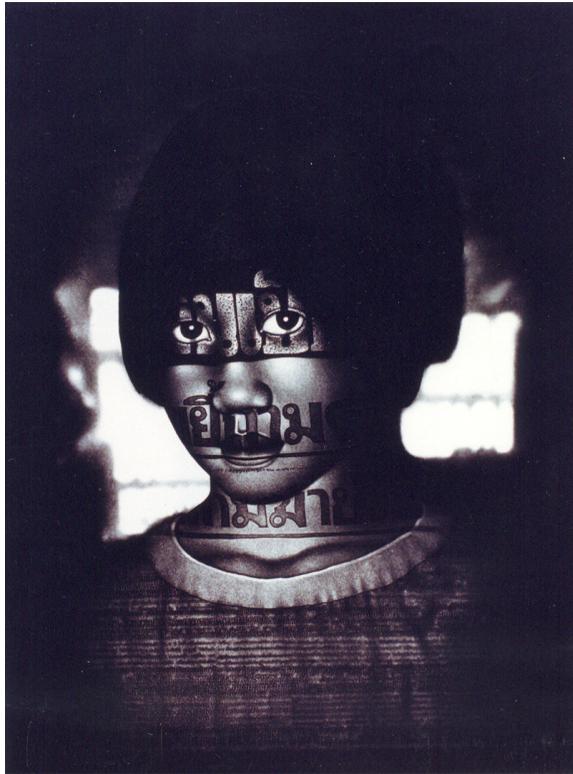


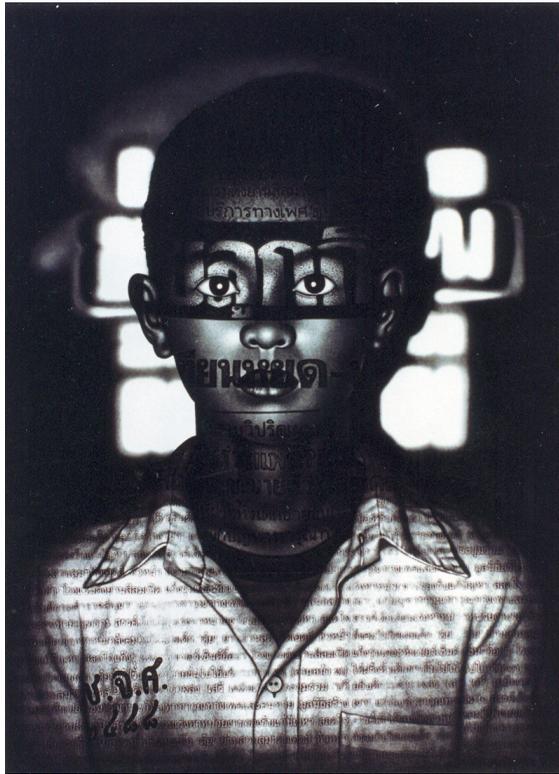
In the series of "Social Victims", the artist wishes to portray the pain and violence against children caused by contemporary society. He executes his artworks in a manner which reflects the presentation of the news media. The portraits of children in his prints are similar in pose (the half-length portrait) to that of photographs of victims generally taken by government offices, newspapers and the like.

Nonetheless, the artworks also allows a transcendence from the dark sensationalism to another level which allows the viewers to understand the problems without penetrating into the privacy of the innocent victims. The artist wishes to foster love, understanding and peace in society through the powerful black-and-white compositions and the multilayered tones of his artworks.



For nearly two decades, the artist has focused his attention on the theme of innocent victims in societies most confronted by the harsh realities of life and world. His art specializes in the techniques of etching and aquatint which allows him to play with detail, strong contrasts of light and shadow, and complex layers of Thai script and linear patterns juxtaposed over the human portrait. His signature is the way he accentuates the fixed, penetrating eyes of the subjects which is in contrast to the other more realistic details of the human figure. This is to emphasize the fact that the eyes of children who have been the victims of violence, changes forever. An array of paranoia, aggressiveness and fear now begin to find their expression. In some works, their mouth is also overwritten with words which obscure their own voice and accentuate the fact that the victimized children are too innocent to call for justice.





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