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Author: Phatarawadee Phataranawik

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RIVERSIDE RETROSPECTIVE

# NAVIN BY THE NUMBERS



Thailand's busiest concept artist spreads out a dizzying map of his empire

By Phatarawadee Phataranawik

DAILY XPRESS

Until August 10 we've got one of those uncommon chances to see the kinetic Navin Rawanchaikul pause in his relentless mission to bless the common man with art.

He's come in for a landing with a retrospective at the River Promenade condominium. He probably had to: Navin has just produced an enormous single-edition magazine called "Navin's Sala" that, at 416 pages, outdoes the heftiest fashion bible you've ever tried to pick up.



'Curatorman'

The 37-year-old looks back at half a lifetime – a taxi that he turned into a mobile art gallery, the old-fashioned movie billboards and comic books reborn as fine art, and the traditional *pha khao ma* rebranded as chic fashion – including a bikini.

Perhaps most ambitious of all, there was Navin's bid to get in touch with everyone else in the world who's named Navin – the Navin "diaspora" reunited as the Navin Party, complete with its own newspaper.

"Navin's Sala" has as its cover story "Long Heart", a fiction in

XTRA

## SLOW BOAT TO NAVIN WORLD

>> The exhibition at the River Promenade is open daily from 10 to 6. Call (02) 861 1971. You can get there by boat from the Hotel Shuttle Boats Pier at Taksin Bridge.

>> Tomorrow *Daily Xpress* will be featuring Navin's *pha khao ma* collection on the Shopping page.



'Navin Party'

words and glorious, fashion-spread photos about a couple in romantic trouble. Fellow artist Michael Shaowanasai co-stars, as do Navin and his art, which is set out on a beach as colourful props.

Elsewhere there are articles and graphics contributed by 30-odd artists, curators, critics and collectors, all showing how art can engage society and help bring about change.

Navin frets about "how artists are often pushed to manipulate their identities into art commodities". His "Curatorman"

series laments the power that curators wield at international art festivals, while "Art (M)art" offers a Monopoly-style game, the sarcastic object of which is to become the king of the art world.

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DAILY XPRESS/NAVIN PARTHI

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