

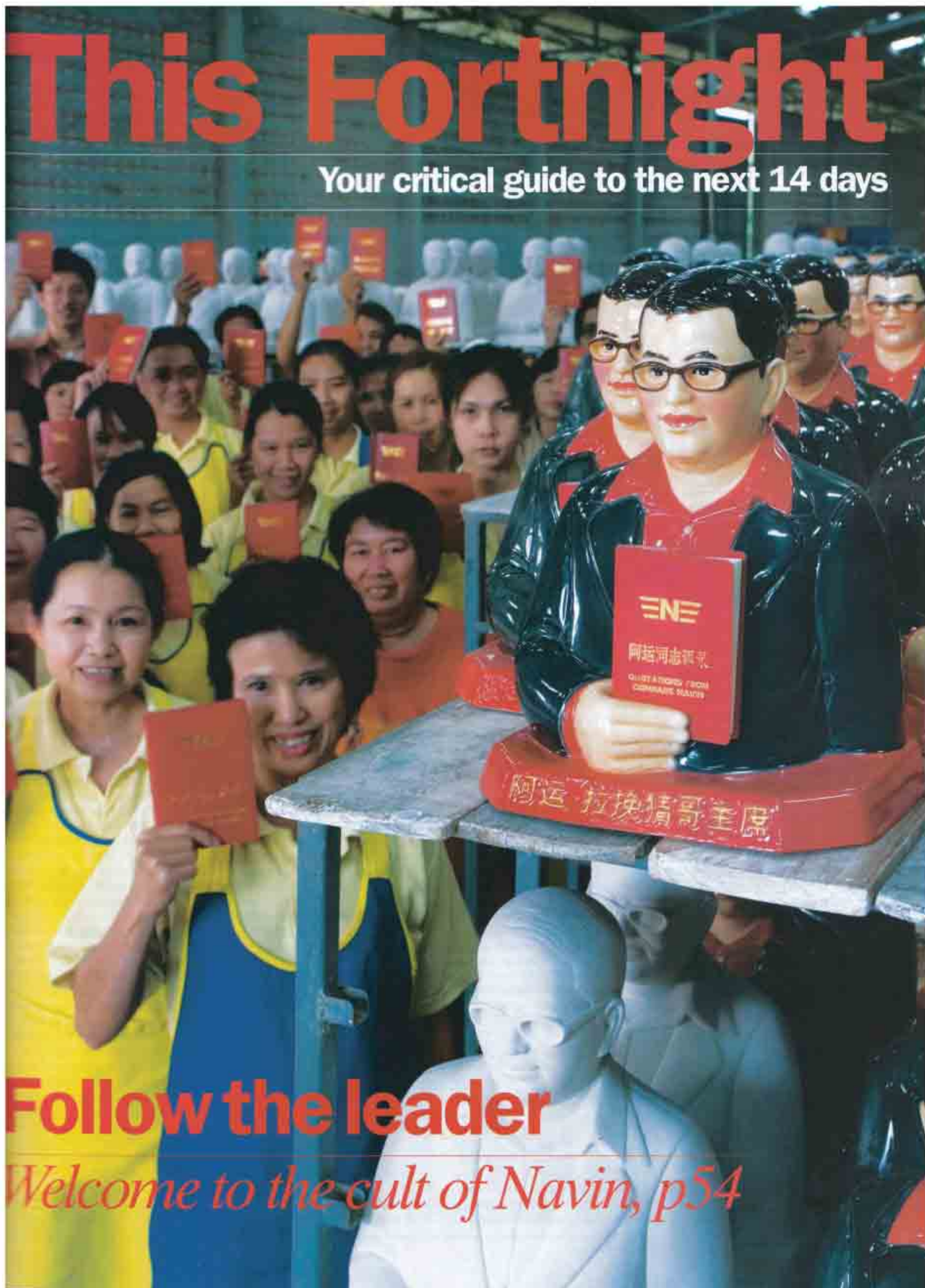
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This Fortnight

Your critical guide to the next 14 days

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Welcome to the cult of Navin, p54

Time Out, July 16 - 29, 2008

Art

The Navin revolution



Art

Free spirit Navin Rawanchaikul likes to create outside the box

Multi-ethnic and multi-talented, Navin Rawanchaikul defies classification, writes **Clare Morin**

In the globalising art world, Navin Rawanchaikul represents the transcendence of geographical boundaries. Here is a Chang Mai-born artist of Hindu-Punjabi Pakistani heritage, who now has a Japanese wife (and permanent residence in Japan). His art, therefore, is all about finding communities.

The Thai-based artist is drawing global acclaim for his humorous, cross-cultural art projects. For his first local exhibition at Tang Contemporary Art, the artist decided to use iconic Hong Kong films as the starting point.

Navinscope: Dim Sum Rider features paintings and a billboard that parody scenes from Hong Kong movies. However, in the place of film stars, Navin has painted in people from the Hong Kong art community. "I'm painting now," says the artist over a mobile phone from Bangkok. "I have more than 50 people in this painting, from gallery [owners] to friends of my friends, collectors and critics. I know there are not so many people in the art scene in Hong Kong, but I would like to find the communities." Indeed, those going to the opening on Thursday 17 might actually see themselves.

Such interactive elements are

Navin's hallmark. He first attracted the interest of regional curators in 1995 when he worked with a Bangkok cabbie to create the Navin Gallery Bangkok, a mobile gallery space in a taxi. In 2001, at the invitation of New York's PS1 Contemporary Art Center and the Public Art Fund, he brought the concept to New Yorkers. *I Love Taxi* was an expansive exhibition that included setting up 'taxi cafes' in Madison Square Park and producing his own comic books based on real

"He painted himself as Chairman Navin and created the Navin Party"

interviews with the city's cab drivers. Then he took on China.

In Beijing's Tang Contemporary Art gallery, the artist exhibited paintings that satirised both Chairman Mao's propaganda posters and trends in contemporary Chinese art by painting himself as Chairman Navin. He also created a fictitious Navin Party (check it out at www.navinparty.com). As the site amusingly explains, "Founded by a lonely artist in search of connection and community in 2006, the Navin Party seeks to make a space for Navins in this hectic, increasingly fragmented world." The artist even took to the streets to hand out free copies of a little

red book entitled *Navin's Quotations* – until he got nabbed by the police and was held in custody until a curator arrived to free him.

The premise of the Hong Kong show is to explore the concept of our cultural gatherings, in the spirit of meeting over food. "When I looked at Hong Kong, I saw that food is very important," he explains. "There is also the international side; the international art market is there. So I brought them together: food culture and capitalism."

Audiences will be given the opportunity to meet the enigmatic artist at a talk he will give at the Kee Club on Wednesday 16, organised by the Asia Art Archive. There will be a screening of the film project *Navins of Bollywood*, a musical that parodies Indian movies, with Navin, of course, in the lead. He'll also be screening a commercial film commissioned by Volvo, which he made in Hong Kong in 2005. The work was based on his original Taxi Gallery concept. "It's very experimental. I drove the car with my colleague for three nights. We talked with people in the car. It was produced in Hong Kong, made in Hong Kong, but never shown in Hong Kong. It's going to be a fun talk." We wouldn't expect anything less from the world of Navin. *Navinscope: Dim Sum Rider* opens Thu 17 at Tang Contemporary Art, B/F, Hollywood Centre, 233 Hollywood Rd, Sheung Wan, 2544 9918; www.tangcontemporary.com. Artist Talk: Wed 16, 6.30pm-8pm. For reservations contact info@aaa.org.hk.

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Shanghai Street Artspace

G/F, 404 Shanghai St, Yau Ma Tei, 2770 2157; www.ssa007.org Tue-Sun 1pm-8pm, closed Mon and public holidays

* **Orchestration II: Images of Hong Kong Old Shops** Documentary photographer Simon Go joins the talented illustrator Stella So in capturing the city's most traditional shops. This exhibition is very well located amid the old-fashioned shops of Shanghai Street. Until Sun 20.

Tang Contemporary Art

Basement, Hollywood Centre, 233 Hollywood Rd, Sheung Wan, 2544 9918; www.tangcontemporary.com Tue-Sat 10.30am-6.30pm, Sun 2pm-6.30pm.

* **Dim Sum Rider** Through a multi-disciplinary body of artworks, Thai-based artist Navin Rawanchaikul employs Hong Kong's iconic food and film culture to convey the sense of a cultural gathering. Until Aug 8. *See Feature.*

The Chinese University of Hong Kong Art Museum

The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Sha Tin, 2609 7416; www.theartofcuhk.com Daily 10am-5pm.

Art of CUHK This Fine Arts grad show features grads, post-grads and undergrads, as well as an exchange exhibition between CUHK and the University of Virginia, USA. This is your last chance to check out the emerging talent. Until Thu 17.

Heavenly Steeds: Horses in Chinese Art An exhibition focusing on all forms of horse in Chinese art, ranging from bronze seals of the Warring States, sancai horses of the Tang Dynasty and paintings from the late Ming to the Qing and modern China. Until Feb.

University Museum and Art Gallery

The University of Hong Kong, 94 Bonham Rd, Pok Fu Lam, 2241 5500; www.hku.hk/hkumag Mon-Sat 9.30am-late, Sun 1pm-6pm

Alchemy in Blue: Ancient Jun Ware from the Yip Collection Chinese ceramics from the famed Jun kiln are being exhibited, including everyday wares, and ceremonial pieces from the Song to the Yuan dynasties. Until Oct 12.

* **The Volland Suite** It's your last chance to see this exhibition of Pablo Picasso's famed set of 100 intaglio prints. Until Wed 20.

Videotage

Cattle Depot Artist's Village, 63 Ma Tau Kok Rd, To Kwa Wan, 2573 1869; www.videotage.org.hk Mon-Fri 11am-6pm, closed public holidays

* **History Will Repeat Itself** As part of the large exhibition organised by the Goethe Institut, two works are exhibited at Videotage including Kerry Tribe's 2-channel video installation 'Here & Elsewhere' and Liu Wei's DVD 'A Day To Remember'. Until Sun 27. *See Review.*

YY9 Gallery

83-85 Sing Woo Rd, Happy Valley, 2574 3370; www.2bsquare.com Mon-Sat 10am-7pm

* **To Serenity** The YY9 Gallery relocates to this new location and opens with an edgy exhibition of ceramic works that transform violence into beauty, by Chris Ho. Until Sat 19.

Other spaces

Current

Academy of Visual Arts, Baptist University, 51 Kwun Tong Rd, Kowloon, 2353 5170; <http://va.hkbu.edu.hk> Mon-Sat 10am-6pm

* The Baptist University's Academy of Visual Arts' graduation show in the beautiful setting of historic colonial buildings. This is a striking exhibition with some emerging talents. Until Sun 20.

History Will Repeat Itself

Exhibition Hall, Hong Kong Film Archive, 50 Lei King Rd, Sai Wan Ho, 2739 2139, Fri-Wed 10am-8pm, closed Thu.

* This is the largest part of the exhibition that is taking over three venues. Sit back on the bean bags and watch the video works on show. Until Sun 20. *See Review.*



Word up Zhao Shaoruo at Hanart

Kluubb

Kluubb, 14/F, 367 Hennessy Rd, Wan Chai, 6601 8732; <http://folktellers.tk> Sat 26, 2-10pm; Sun 27, 2-8pm

* **Folktales From Many Lands** An arts collective in the Hennessy Road arts hub presents a very interesting show. Earlier this year, 50 curious passengers were led around the Hong Kong for a day of art, music and performances. The journey is retold through photographs, videos and artifacts from participants. Pop by for the following events: Performance by Brown Note Collective: Sat 26, 8pm. Artist talk: Sat 26, 4pm; Special Guest Talk: Sun 27, 4pm.

Art



NAVINS SCOPE

present s

Dim Sum Rider

starring •

Navin Rawanchaikul



唐人當代藝術中心精心呈獻

阿運飯局：點心風雲

日期：2008年7月17日 - 8月6日

Date: July 17 - August 6, 2008

首影派對：2008年7月17日，星期四，下午6時30分

Premiere Party: Thursday, July 17 2008, 6.30 pm

Curator: Josef Ng

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