

**Barbara Wesolowska, Slade Artist in Residence at Bangkok University
February-April 2017, with support from Cass Art**



Lake, Oil on Canvas, 180x170cm, 2017
In the studio at the Bangkok University May 2017

Agnes Martin in her notebooks described inspiration as an ‘untroubled state of mind’, she wrote: ‘An inspiration is a happy moment that takes us by surprise. Some people are so startled by inspiration or a condition of inspiration, which is so different from day to day concerns that they think they are unique in having it. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Inspiration is there all the time, for anyone whose mind is not covered over by thoughts and concerns.’

Her words resonated with me strongly when after twelve hours’ journey I arrived at Suvarnabhumi Airport in Bangkok. It seemed as if I was transported to a very strange, unknown place. The city seemed an explosion of noise, speed and colors. Dramatic, almost futuristic architecture, with sky train lines cutting and fragmenting the urban landscape, distorting an idea or celestial and terrestrial, made me feel as if scale was something that could be endlessly stretched and played with.

Forced into a position of an observer, I honed my sensibility to the tender moments of beauty, cruelty or erotic tension that I witnessed while exploring the city during the day and at night. The colours, temperature and intensity of those moments, lent themselves to my paintings.

But the biggest change of all was what happened to my sense of time. I found myself enjoying the luxury of unlimited hours for thinking, reading and walking the streets. I truly thrived artistically by allowing all those experiences to enter my work.

As a young artist living in London, one has to constantly prove how well things are going and how up things are looking. The true experience however is more than that of cycling home at midnight from the freezing studio in the pouring rain. Often the painting I left in the studio, overworked or alternatively cowardly stuck in its first freshness, had to wait till the next day until I had finished earning money before I could come back to it, already tired.

But here I am in Bangkok, making a clay sculpture, it has to dry so I take it out into the sunshine and I sit on a stone step to look at it. It’s 4 pm; I listen to the crickets’ noise and watch the shadow of the sculpture move and a little nervous lizard approach.

After months and years of living on will power, the biggest joy of being an artist in residence, is the feeling that you are meant to be there. This fantastic dream became true, someone lovely was waiting to pick us up at the airport, there was an apartment, the studio, the exhibition and there was the time
Thanks very much Cass Art for your support.

Paul Thek said:

“I sometimes think, that there is nothing but time, that what you see and what you feel is what time looks like at the moment”¹

Yes.

¹ Chris Krauss, Aliens and Anorexia

Many thanks to Bangkok University, Cass Art and the Slade Transcultural Art Network (TAN) for this wonderful opportunity.



My works in the final exhibition, 'Sympathy Nervous', Bangkok May 2017



The opening of the final exhibition 'Sympathy Nervous', with the Dean of Fine Art at Bangkok University



The opening of the final exhibition 'Sympathy Nervous', with the faculty members at Bangkok University



The works in final exhibition 'Sympathy Nervous' at Bangkok University, Bangkok, May 2017





Snapshots of the studio and the Bangkok University campus



Work in progress, photographed in the Bangkok University outdoor canteen



Songkran is the Thai New Year's festival. The holiday is known for its water festival which is mostly celebrated by young people. Major streets are closed to traffic, and are used as arenas for water fights. Celebrants, young and old, participate in this tradition by splashing water on each other.



Streets of Bangkok



Bangkok Flower Market