

T A T H I M K E O



Bedtime

WORDS BY HANNAH ROSE PRENDERGAST  
ARTWORK COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

The expression “*to have egg on one’s face*” means to look foolish or feel embarrassed. But what if that egg on your face was actually quite becoming? What if it belonged there? It’s not likely...unless you’re speaking about the work of artist Ta Thimkao.

Born in Nakhon Sawan, Thailand, in 1974 to a poor, rural farming family, Ta was lucky to attend school until the age of 12. Afterward, she worked in the rice fields for a year; the year after that, she was at a sweatshop in Bangkok; and by 14, she was driving around selling vegetables.

Suffice it to say, Ta didn’t have it easy, but she accepts that. “That was our life. There was little ambition to do anything else. I was always different from the rest of the people in my village. I just wanted to escape; I knew there was a different world out there. I just didn’t know where.”

BREAKING FREE FROM

Always a creative child, Ta would use the little money she did have on paper and pencils to draw. At 13, she came across an old art studio in Bangkok and fell in love with the “chaos and smell of paint.” She was hooked. One day, she would be an artist. She just needed to figure out how...

Fast forward to 2010, and Ta is in her mid-thirties: she begins to draw and paint incessantly. With no formal training until this point, she stocks up on art books and enrolls herself in some art classes. By 2012, she opened her first gallery in Ko Samui, an area with such a saturated art market, due to tourism, that she moved to Khanom in 2013 to concentrate on selling her art online, with an added bonus. “It’s very quiet, I can live on the beach, and I have a beautiful garden, which I can paint in, usually in the early morning before it gets too hot.”



Sleeping with the Puppies

HER SHELL

Finding success with online galleries including Fine Art Scene, Saatchi Art, and Art Finder, Ta’s work is held in private collections across 27 countries and being sold in over ten different countries.

Sourcing inspiration from childhood memories and the world around her, Ta has special interests in character development and portraying “a little of the night...coming from my dreams and imagination.” This, combined with her passion for color psychology, draws the viewer in and leaves them there, whether Ta is using oil on canvas, charcoal and pastels, watercolors, acrylic on wood, or pencil.





Egg Face

To say that Ta is a versatile artist is an understatement—creating modern, contemporary, and folk art that includes portraiture and figure drawing in its vast subject matter and explores periods of Impressionism, Expressionism, and Cubism with influences from Botticelli to Lowry and Magritte.

Probably some of Ta’s most intriguing work came after her “Goddess” series. The smell of cooking breakfast for her husband transported her back to her childhood lunch staple of fried egg; Ta had found a new subject. As her classmates’ comments, “You are what you eat,” echoed in her head, the “Egg Collection” was born.

Ta explains their significance, saying, “Eggs symbolise a turning point in my career; it was always in my mind that one day I would wake up from a dream, and I would be back to cleaning toilets, and now I don’t think like that anymore, and it’s thanks to my art, my Eggs.”

As fried egg can only have so many expressions, Ta likens it to the mask humans wear to obscure their feelings and emotions. Sharing her personal memories and observing universal truths, Ta Thimkaeo specializes in drawing a portrait of the world.



Monks walking for alms in the rain



Goddess and Zeus