

Saran Yen Panya's Conceptual Gin  
Recipe Book

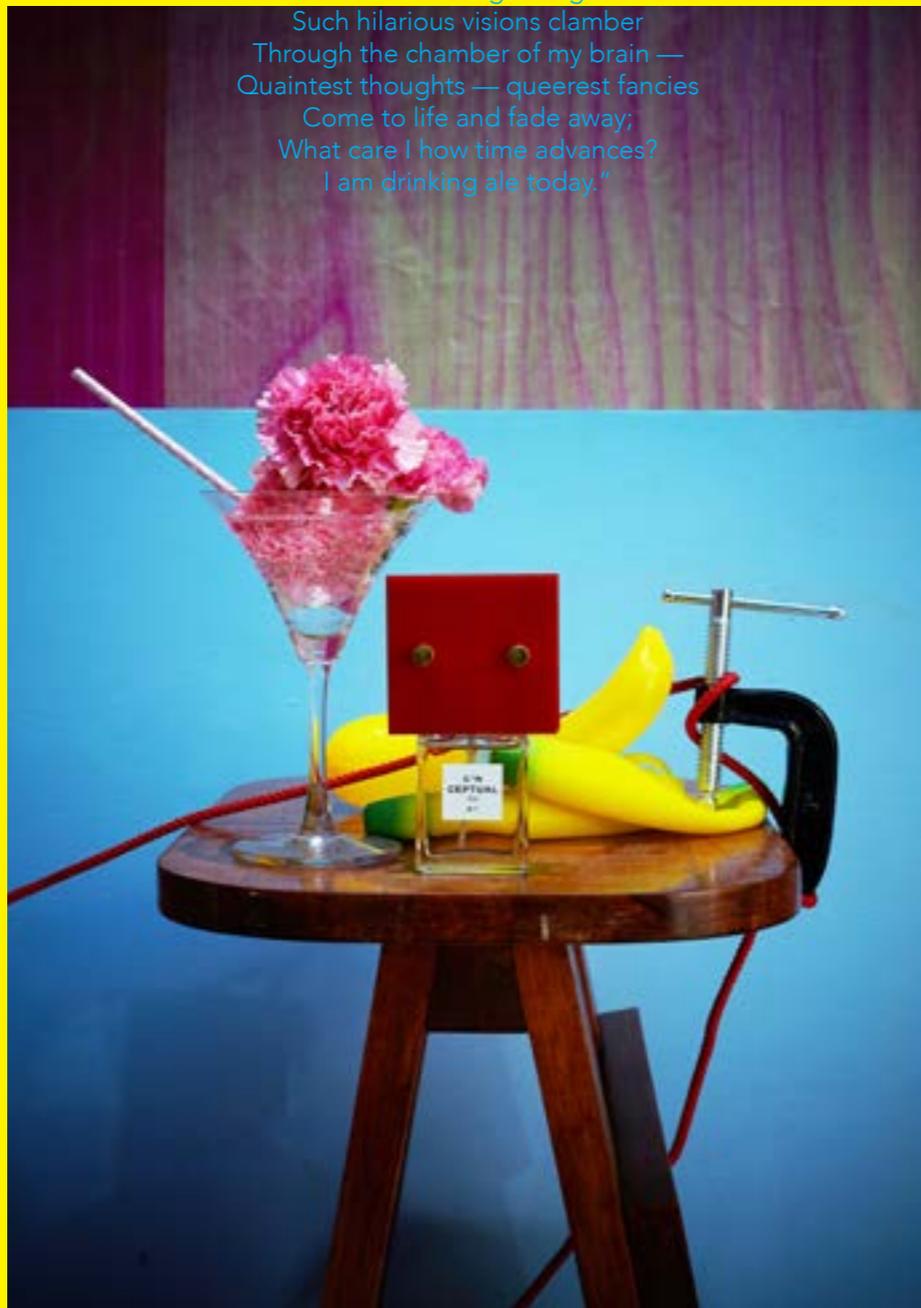


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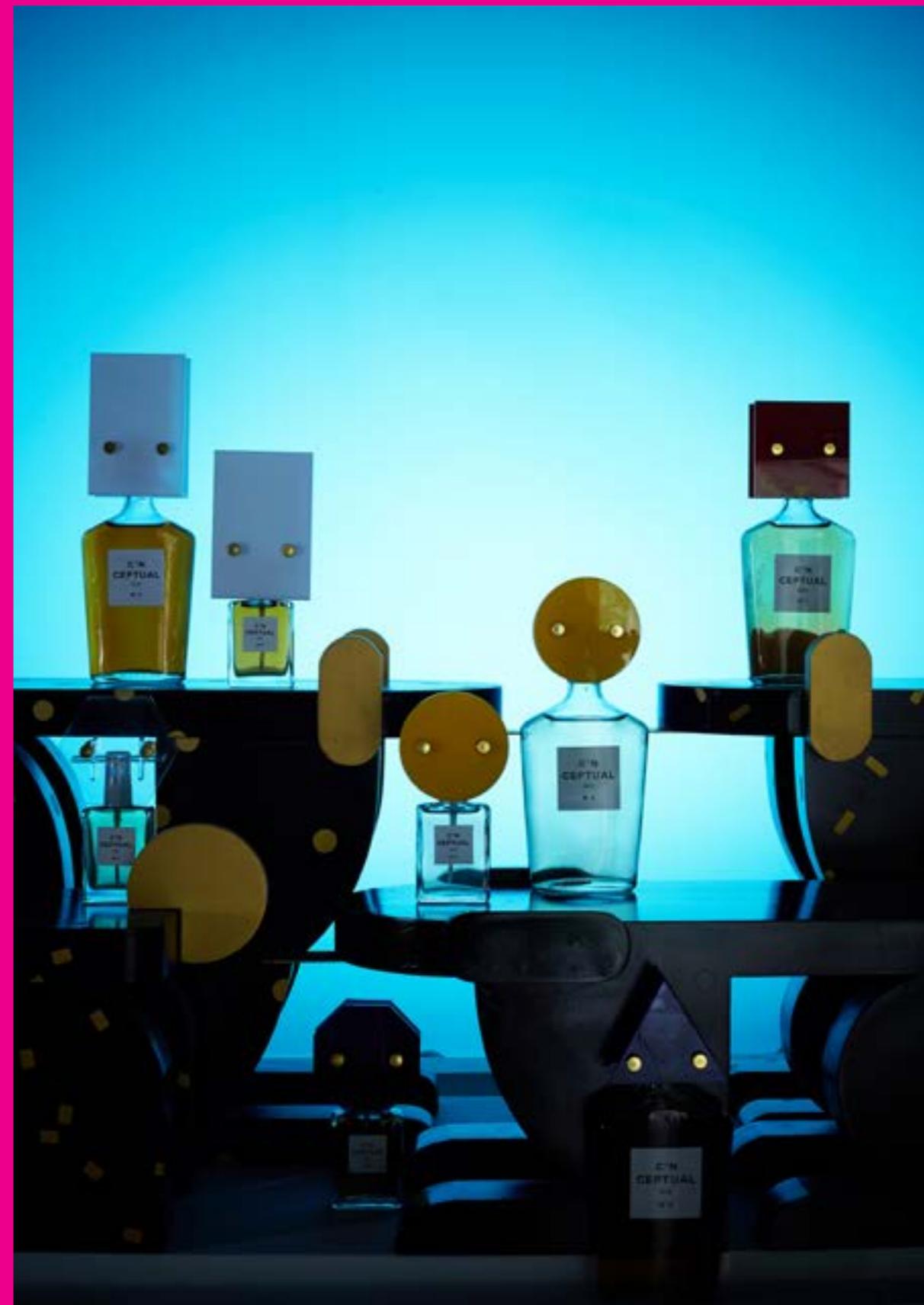
SARAN's

Discography of 56thStudio  
Past - Present

"Fill with mingled cream and amber,  
I will drain that glass again.  
Such hilarious visions clamber  
Through the chamber of my brain —  
Quaintest thoughts — queerest fancies  
Come to life and fade away;  
What care I how time advances?  
I am drinking ale today."



Edgar Allan Poe





## Sensory & Stories

Saran's Conceptual Gin is a mixture of a personal diary and cocktail recipes that allows you to experience, smell and select seven gins infused and customised by Saran Yen Panya, designer and co-founder of 56thStudio.

Turning his own near death experience as a-heavy-drinker-turned-heavily-ill-patient into peculiar blends, Saran treats his gins as a perfume-like medium and rehabilitation. He can't drink; therefore, he smells. And he tells his stories via scents. Very much like customisable perfumes, participants can play around with these aromatic gins and create endless cocktail recipes of their own.

Saran's Conceptual Gin is not only an open-platform for communicating personal experiences through scents, it also challenges you to perceive stories using alternative senses and imagination.

For a start ---

### BASIC HOME MADE GIN

750 ml. of good quality White Spirit,  
2 tbs. of Juniper Berries,  
1 tsp. of Coriander Seeds,  
2 pods of Cardamom,  
2 tsp. of Peppercorns,  
1 stick of Cinnamon,  
A small piece of dried Orange Peel,  
A small piece of dried Lemon Peel

Infused all ingredients together in a pasteurized container. Let it sit for 2-3 weeks at room temperature. Keep away from sunlight. Strain out.



Narrator of strange stories; Saran Yen Panya co-founded 56thStudio with his studio partner Napawan after earning his degree in "Storytelling" from Konstfack University in Sweden and together they have been exploring visual communication in expanded mediums for many years. Expressing everything from political view, social commentary to societal issue, 56thStudio makes things in response to those subjects. Mosts are in the forms of installations, visual designs, and object designs and that's why people regard the Studio as the quirky storyteller.



# The Turning Point

Once in a not too distant past, I was a heavy drinker. So heavy that almost every bar in inner Sukhumvit could consider me their 'regular'. I could easily name three places to sneak off to on Monday night when most bars took their much needed break. Drinking more than ten glasses of cocktail on Wednesday night would have absolutely zero effect on me. I could wake up early the next day, hit the gym and even ace a presentation in the afternoon.

But then there were those incidents I couldn't explain away. There were times I couldn't remember what happened the night before or why I woke up wounded on the bathroom floor. But I kept telling myself, "Nah, you're OK. You're not an alcoholic. Your life is fine. You are just enjoying your drinks and the work-hard-play-hard lifestyle, the way all young city folks do".

I was finally hospitalised. The doctor told me that if I don't change the way I live right away, I will soon be dead.

Dead... It's such a simple word we all use so much to dramatically express our exasperation with life or work. The word has never packed such powerful meaning until that day.

## No 1

### DARK, SMOKEY & WOODY

750 ml. of good quality White Spirit,  
40 g. Honey Caramel Black Tea,  
5 pieces of Mace,  
10 pods of Cardamom,  
1.5 tbs. of crushed Sichuan Pepper,  
2 tbs. of Juniper

.....  
"No. 1 captures the spirit of fast urban life, metallic quality of the bank note, the smell of cigarette in a small jazz bar, warm fluorescent light and neon sign."



# Bargaining with Death

**A**m I really dying? Death has never been so close to me. And I have yet to truly experience the life I want to live.

I realised then that I just couldn't die right now. Yes, I have a good job with good payroll, some success and a few prized possessions. But when death tabbed me gently on my shoulder, I knew those were not my ultimate life goals.

I began to ask myself what I really wanted in life; "Saran, if you had only one month, a year or just a few years left in life, what would make you most happy?" The only image I could vividly imagine was of myself in a small house somewhere in the countryside. Surrounded by lots of trees and a small lotus pond, I would be spending my precious time with those I love. The image calmed me down somewhat. I felt like waiting for death might be bearable after all.

## No 2

### GREEN & GRASSY

750 ml. of good quality White Spirit,  
 45 g. of dried Pandanus,  
 30 g. of dried Lemongrass,  
 10 pods of Green Cardamom,  
 1 tsp. Coriander seeds,  
 1 tsp. Black Pepper,  
 2 tbs. of Juniper,  
 A small piece of dried Orange Peel,  
 A small piece of dried Lemon Peel

*"No 2 Captures the spirit of peaceful rural bunker, a weekend getaway, greenery, a garden in a backyard, a drop of rain dancing on a lotus leaf."*



Try making ---

### HARLEM

1.5 oz. of No. 1 Gin,  
 1 tbs. Pineapple Juice,  
 A few chunks Of Canned Pineapple,  
 A few drops of Maraschino Bitters

Combine with ice; shake well, strain and add ice.

Try making ---

### GIN FIZZ

3 oz. of No. 2 Gin,  
 1.5 oz. Lemon juice,  
 3/4 oz. Lime juice,  
 1 tbs. Powdered Sugar,  
 Club Soda

Combine (except club soda) with ice; shake well, strain add ice and then club soda.





# Black Hole

It took me months to take in the fact that my health is in a fragile state. Even now, I'm not sure if I am fully at ease with the fact still. All I know is, if I still want to wake up tomorrow, I must not drink. No more cocktails, wine, other alcoholic drinks or even coffee. Goodbye my love.

It was not such a big sacrifice but it did made me doubt whether my life was really worth going through all the trouble. Judging from the digits in my bank account, my mediocre success and poor relationships with almost everyone in my life, I did not find that many spectacular reasons for me to continue taking all the pills.

Negative thoughts circled and pulled me in like a black hole. It devoured me once or twice a day. Next thing I knew, I was designing my own funeral garland with a handful of sleeping pills placed on my bedside table.

A conversation with my dark side became a daily ritual. It replaced my daily pilgrimage to the bars. The voice in my head kept saying; "End it now, it's easier. Just go have all those cocktails you love so much." But there was also something that kept pulling me out of it. I wasn't sure what it was exactly. But I knew I still wanted to wake up tomorrow, go squeeze myself onto a skytrain and continue doing things I love.



## No 3

### WOODY, FRUITY & SWEET

750 ml. of good quality White Spirit,  
 90 g. of Black Tea with Lychee,  
 2 Cinnamon sticks,  
 A small piece of dried orange peel,  
 5 pods of Nutmeg,  
 4 pieces of Bael Fruit,  
 10 pods of Cardamom,  
 2 tbs. of Juniper .....

"No 3 Captures the spirit of sinful lust. Dark and sultry energy. It's a scent of a wooden cabinet filled with many secrets."



Try making ---  
**NEGRONI**

1.5 oz. of No.3 Gin,  
 3/4 oz. Campari,  
 3/4 oz. Sweet Vermouth

Combine with ice; shake, strain add ice.  
 Top with a twist of lemon plus the peel.



## Cravings

---

**M**adonna once said, "In life, there is no real safety except for self belief."

I started to crave drinking again. In retrospect, those nights I spent at the bar were happy times. I had fun and never questioned my life or my true purpose for living. The hardest choice I had to make was should my next drink be whiskey-based or gin-based?

I don't blame liquor and I certainly don't want to blame myself for my decaying body. Nevertheless, I still enjoy the air I breathe. It seems like being competent in my creative career is the only thing I can firmly hold on to.

I guess I haven't lost that 'self-belief' just yet. The craving for a good gin is still there but I also crave living just as much.

One day, I decided to get rid of all the liquors in my minibar. I accidentally opened a bottle of rare gin from the Netherlands I bought a long time ago. The aroma transported me to a fresh botanical garden somewhere in my mind. I just couldn't bring myself to throw the bottle out. Even though I couldn't drink it, this would make a really good gin and tonic or a Negroni. Keeping that bottle of gin just to catch a whiff every once in a while was good enough for me.

## No 4

### SWEET & FLORAL

---

750 ml. of good quality White Spirit,  
50 g. of Jasmine Oolong Tea,  
3 tbs. of Dried Chrysanthemum,  
3 tbs. of Dried Chamomile,  
10 pods of Green Cardamom,  
2 tbs. of Juniper

.....  
"No 4 Captures the spirit of sweet memories, tenderness, warm hugs and fresh laundry. It's a feeling of short-lived happiness that cannot be explained."



## New Obsession

I notice that since I became ill I tend to let more bullshits slide; at the same time, I'm also nicer to people around me. I guess that's what you do automatically when you realise the end is not that far away. You spend your limited energy only on things and people that are worthwhile.

Stealing a whiff of my liquors every time I felt the urge to drink has become my new obsession. I enjoyed the thoughts of not drinking but using just their aromas to transport me somewhere. My imagination ran wild as I thought about mixing those liquors for my favourite cocktails. Next thing I knew, my cupboard was filled with bottles after bottles of my own home-infused gins. Remember, I only smell. I don't drink. So I treated these gins as custom-blended perfumes.

Peculiar home-infused gins became my self-therapy. Using no distiller just simple glass jars, junipers, and different herbs, I enjoyed modifying standard gin into a collection of meaningful scents.

## No 5

### HERBAL & SPICY

750 ml. of good quality White Spirit,  
50 g. of dried Ginger,  
2 tbs. of crushed Black Peppercorn,  
3 pieces of Mace,  
30 g. of White Tea,  
7 pods of Cardamom,  
2 tbs. of Juniper

.....  
"No 5 Captures the spirit of burning passion, aspiration and ambition."

### Try making --- PERFECT MARTINI

1.5 oz. of No. 4 Gin,  
2 tps. Dry Vermouth,  
2 tps. Sweet Vermouth

Combine with ice; shake well. Strain straight up. Decorate with olive and jasmine.



### Try making --- ENGLISH MULE

1.5 oz. of No 5 Gin,  
3 oz. Green Ginger Wine,  
2.5 oz Orange Juice,  
Club Soda,  
A Chunk of Dried Ginger

Combine with ice; (except club soda and dried ginger) shake well. Strain into glass; add ice and club soda. Stir gently. Decorated with dried ginger.





# Escapism

If the way I infuse my gins were like perfume blending, the base note would be juniper and coriander seed while selected botanicals and herbs are top and middle notes.

That black hole that has been surrounding me get smaller and smaller when I'm passionate about creating something. I felt less like a sick man and life seems to have a little more purpose and focus.

Liquors aren't always the bad guy as long as you are the one in control and not the other way around. Once you learn to drink responsibly, you will learn to enjoy exploring the sophisticated tastes, aromas and creativities hidden in every glass. Life is also the same way.

## No 6

### POWDERY & FLORAL

750 ml. of good quality White Spirit,  
60 g. of Ylang Ylang Candle Scented  
White Mulberry Tea from TICHAA,  
5 pieces of Clove,  
7 pods of Cardamom,  
2 tbs. of Juniper

"No 6 Captures the spirit of inner peace. Pastoral scenes. Going back home and sharing mundane conversations on a dinner table with family members"



Must have in your minibar ---

### Saran's Choices

- Bobby's Schiedam Dry Gin --- Unforgettable notes of Thai Basil and Earl Grey!?
- Monkey 47 --- It's Woody, Spicy, Fruity and Herbal. It's everything!
- Filliers Pine Tree Blossom --- Rich, Earthy and Fresh as a Pine.
- Hendrick's Gin --- Cucumber and Rose notes are forever.
- Glorious Gin Breuckelen --- A combination of Ginger, Rosemary and Grapefruit.
- Iron Balls --- Tropical couture created by Ashley Sutton.
- Sip Smith London Dry --- Peppery but beautifully balanced with Citrus Palate.
- Eden Mill Love --- A flower garden grown in your mouth.
- FEW American Gin --- Mesmerizing touch of Lemon Peel and Vanilla.



Try making ---  
**FIFTY FIFTY**

1.5 oz. of No 6 Gin,  
1.5 oz of Dry Vermouth

Combine with ice; shake well.



# The Morning After

**B**ritish playwright, Joseph Addison once wrote, "A person can live about forty days without food, about three days without water, about eight minutes without air, but only for one second without hope."

I discovered that hope is my reason for living. It's not the 'great hope for all mankind' type but the small hopes for the little, ordinary things in daily life. I hope that I get to wake up tomorrow, smell the sunshine and green grass in the backyard. I also hope to continue having meaningful conversations with those I love, sharing laughters, shredding tears, be inspired, and getting a warm hug every now and then.

Of course, I cannot go back to my old happy drinker self, but I know for a fact that as long as I keep my reason my living, my self belief and hope close to me, I can still happily exist on earth.

No, I cannot go back to be the same person. I can only be a better version of myself from now on.



## No 7

### EARTHY & RUSTIC

750 ml. of good quality White Spirit,  
 40 g. of Roasted Rice,  
 30 g. of White Tea,  
 2 pieces of Star Anise,  
 2 pieces of Clove  
 4 pieces of Mace,  
 10 pods of Green Cardamom,  
 2 tbs. of Juniper

.....  
 "No 7 Captures the spirit of  
 fundamental joy, familiar dialogues,  
 and earthiness."



Try making ---  
**PEGU CLUB**

.....  
 1.5 oz. of No 7 Gin,  
 1 tbs. Orange Curacao,  
 1 tsp. Lime Juice,  
 1-2 dashes Angostura and Orange Bitter  
 .....

Combine with ice; shake.  
 Strain straight up.



Can't get any Woodier ---  
**DIRTY OLD PAL**

1.5 oz. of No. 1 Gin or No. 3 Gin  
or the two mixed together,  
3/4 oz. Campari,  
1/2 oz. Sweet Vermouth

Pour all ingredient into a cocktail shaker  
half filled with cracked ice. Shake well.  
Strain into a chilled martini glass, garnish  
with an olive and serve.

Stolen from Bar Basso ---

**DESIGN WEEK**

1 oz. of Any Number of Gin,  
1.5 oz. Dry Sparkling Wine,  
1 oz. Campari,  
3/4 oz. Sweet Vermouth,  
Orange Twist, for garnish

Stir Wine, Campari, Vermouth and gin  
in an ice-filled shaker. Strain into an  
old-fashioned glass filled with fresh ice;  
garnish with orange twist.

Dirtier than Classic ---

**DIRTY MARTINI**

3 oz. of Any Number of Gin,  
1/2 oz. Olive Juice,  
1 oz. Dry Vermouth

Pour all ingredient into a cocktail shaker  
half filled with cracked ice. Shake well.  
Strain into a chilled martini glass, garnish  
with an olive and serve.

Negroni's younger cousin ---

**APEROL NEGRONI**

2 oz. of No. 2 Gin,  
1 oz. of Lillet Blanc,  
1 oz. of Aperol,  
Small Grapefruit slice or twist for garnish

To serve on the rocks, stir Aperol, Lillet  
Blanc, and gin with ice in an old fash-  
ioned glass, then garnish with grapefruit  
slice and serve. To serve up, stir Aperol,  
Lillet Blanc, and gin with ice in a mixing  
glass, then strain into a chilled cocktail  
glass and garnish with grapefruit twist.

*Boulevardier without bourbon ---*



Sweet but with Parental Advisory ---  
**E-DOK**

2 oz. of No. 4 Gin,  
1/2 oz. of Peach Liqueur,  
1 oz. of Rose Syrup,  
1/2 oz. of Lemon Juice,  
3 drops of Lavender Bitters,  
Peach Slice and Rose petals for garnish

Shake with ice, strain and serve with a  
peach slice and some rose petals.

Better than Botanist ---

**UNDERDOG**

2 oz. of No. 2 Gin mixed with No.5 Gin,  
3/4 oz. of Elderflower Liqueur,  
1 oz. of Lemon Juice,  
2 pieces of Salted Plum,  
Ginger Ale

Shake the gin with elderflower liqueur,  
lemon juice and salted plum. Pour into  
a rocks glass filled with ice. Top with  
ginger ale.

Gayer Version of Vesper ---

**JANE BOND**

1.5 oz. of No. 4 Gin or No. 6 Gin,  
1 oz. of Vodka,  
1/2 oz. of Lillet Blanc,  
Lemon Peel

Stir gin, vodka, and Lillet Blanc in an ice-  
filled mixing glass until very cold, about  
30 seconds. Strain cocktail through a  
Hawthorne strainer or a slotted spoon  
into a martini glass. Twist lemon peel  
over drink to express oils; discard.  
Garnish with a lemon twist.



The Mary Chapman Ripped off ---

**VERY THAI**

2 oz. of No. 2 Gin or No. 5 Gin,  
1 red or green Thai chile,  
1 oz. Cocchi Americano,  
1 stalk Lemongrass

Make a lengthwise slit in chile, but do  
not cut all the way through (chile should  
remain intact). Rub the rim of a coupe  
glass with inside of chile and drop chile  
into glass.

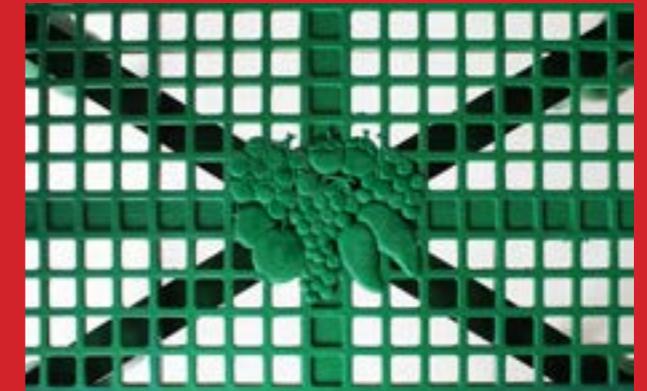
Lightly smash lemongrass with the back  
of a chef's knife until split slightly and  
fragrant. Combine gin and Cocchi in a  
pint glass or cocktail shaker, fill with ice,  
and stir with lemongrass stalk until out-  
side of glass is frosty, about 30 seconds.  
Remove lemongrass; discard. Strain  
drink into prepared glass with chile.

Love it or Hate it ---

**CELERY TONIC**

2 oz. of No. 2 gin or No. 4 Gin,  
1 Celery Stalk, chopped,  
1 tbs. Sugar,  
1 oz. Fresh Lemon Juice,  
Lemon twist, for serving

Muddle celery with sugar and lemon  
juice in a cocktail shaker, 1 minute. Add  
gin, fill shaker with ice, and shake until  
outside of shaker is frosty, about 30  
seconds. Strain into a rocks glass filled  
with ice and garnish with a lemon twist.



Summer Whore ---

**CUCUMBER-GIN SPRITZ**

4 oz. of No. 2 Gin or No. 4 Gin,  
2 oz. of Simple Syrup,  
4 oz. of dry Prosecco,  
Club soda

Muddle cucumber slices in a cocktail  
shaker, then add gin and simple syrup  
and fill shaker with ice. Cover and shake  
vigorously until outside of shaker is  
frosty, about 30 seconds. Strain mixture  
into 4 ice-filled rocks glasses or large  
wine glasses. Top each with 4 oz.  
Prosecco and a splash of club soda.  
Gently stir together; garnish each with 3  
cucumber ribbons.



Ghetto Boulevardier ---

**CHEAP ASS ELITES**

2 oz. of No. 1 Gin mixed with No. 7 Gin  
or No 3 Gin mixed with No. 5 Gin,  
3/4 oz. Campari,  
3/4 oz. Sweet Vermouth,  
Orange peel, for garnish,

Stir gin, Campari and Vermouth in an  
ice-filled shaker. Strain into cocktail glass  
filled with fresh ices. Flame the orange  
peel on top of the drink; squeez the  
peel side toward the cocktail to express  
the oil; drop peel into cocktail.



# Interview with HABITUS Magazine

#22 (Australia)

**B**angkok is an intriguing melting pot of culture and industry, craft and mass manufacture, tradition and humour. Nicky Lobo talks to 56thSTUDIO, who use a dash of all of these in their socially aware furniture and products.

There are many quirky design studios in Thailand. With an anti-establishment approach, their skill has been to utilize design as tool to comment on social and political issues. Although often done in humorous, non-offensive way, sometimes it means their products are only shown outside the country.

*“We cannot exhibit them here in Thailand if we still want our heads on our shoulders,” Jokes Saran Yen Panya of 56thStudio.*

He’s referring in particular to the Studio’s new lounge titled What happens in Buddhism stays in Buddhism, which responds to a recent scandal about a Thai monk who was found spending donation money on personal items, amongst a host of more serious allegations. The lounge aims to criticize traditional institutions which revered in Thailand, such as religion and the government --- and so was displayed in Berlin during illustrative Festival in September, rather than their home country.

Some of 56thStudio’s design are more lighthearted, yet still comment on serious issues, such as Cheap Ass Elites chair. It combines a low symbol – plastic – with a high symbol – a traditionally expensive form – making a statement about the nature of social class distinctions, and portraying the designer’s view that “Looking up to those who own expensive chairs and just a stupid as looking down to those with plastic chairs.”

Whether funny or serious, most of the studio’s products begins a s casual conversations between saran and his studio partner, Napawan Tuangkitkul. The two met during their undergraduate study at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok where they “found the craft of designing architecture strictly boring.”

Since then, they’ve become close friends and studio partners, although they both have other projects on the go as well – Napawan runs a family business in Textile and Wall decoration , and Saran also works as an art & creative director for several companies, as well as teaching himself the important art of cocktail design ---

*“It’s very similar to the craft of design,”he says, “not every recipe works on the first batch.”*

For those Risk Takers ---  
**EGG AND ABSINTHE**

1.5 oz. of Absinthe,  
0.5 oz of No. 7 Gin,  
1 Egg White,  
Add sugar to taste.

Shake with ice; pour over shaved ice and serve.



Feminine Night ---  
**FLORADORA**

2 oz. of No. 3 Gin mixed with No. 4 Gin,  
2 oz. of Lime Juice,  
1 tsp. Sugar Syrup,  
1 tbs. Grenedine,  
Club Soda

Shake with ice; pour over shaved ice and serve.



Fresher than Fresh ---  
**MONKEY GLAND**

2 oz. of No. 2 Gin mixed with No. 4 Gin,  
1 tbs. Orange Juice,  
A few drops Benedictine,  
A few drops Grenedine

Combine with ice; shake well. Strain and add ice.



Fizzy and Snobbish ---  
**CHAMPAGNE BAYOU**

2 oz. of No. 2 Gin mixed with No. 5 Gin,  
2 tbs. of Sugar Syrup,  
1 tsp. of Lemon Juice,  
Champagne



Combine the Gin, syrup, and juice with ice; shake well. Strain, add ice and fill the glass with champagne. \*Flovored Brandy can be used instead of Gin.

The source of continual inspiration for 56thStudio is “conversation as a two-way communication that, in our case, leads to fruitful arguments, discussions or even healthy quarrels,” comment Saran. “Our process always starts from having something to say, and being very desperate to deliver the message, yet not knowing what it’s going to end up as,” he adds.

*They believe every object can be a tool for communication – not just a functional object or decoration. For Saran and Napawan, “Form follows Story” is the complete package.*

*“It’s like dating a super pretty guy/ girl with brains, profound thoughts and a complicated self-made background” is Saran’s analogy. In other words, it’s design with narrative and certain purpose.*

It has now been two years that the duo has been working under the moniker 56thStudio – bestowed on them by fortune teller and they have already attracted international attention. Cheap Ass Elites was showcased in the Konstfack University (Sweden) exhibition titled ‘Design for a liquid society’ in Spazio Rossana Orlandi, arguably the most creative of the satellite spaces that make up Salone Internazionale del Mobile. They have also exhibited in Italy, Paris, and most recently Berlin.

They international appeal may be partly due to the fact that Saran and Napawan called their

products ‘Neo-ethnic’, taking on a variety of influences and histories, which resonates with so many people today.

*“Growing up in Bangkok, a city with a big clash of different cultures, we are naturally influenced by things that were meticulously done in the past, the contrast of prestigious heritages, vernacular design languages, exotic crafts and street cultures,” Saran shares.*

“Updating these topics and introducing them to new audiences and younger generations gives us great pleasure.”

“People seem to respond to it better than acting as serious academic activists,” says Saran of the Studio’s habit of commenting on serious taboos in whimsical or humorous ways. But there’s still a lot of work to be done in their opinion. They believe that the Thai Creative industry needs proper regulation to make the most of the talent that is already there, otherwise individuals run the risk of remaining undiscovered if they are not connected to the inner ‘circle or creative mafia’. “My favourite Thai illustrator is now living in the north and making a living by being a barusta instead,” rues Saran.

It is clear that talent and vision is to be found in Thailand – in abundance. Like the best of their Asian, Australian, European and American Contemporaries, they practise design as a form not just artistic expression, but also social and cultural expression. But the Thai industry needs to be unified for it to make a real impact.

*In the meantime, 56thStudio will continue to tell their stories so long as there are “issues which give us an itch to say something back to the society,” Saran says.*

And they needn’t worry – we’ll be listening.



# Interview with KYOORIUS Magazine

(India)

**Q:** How has being based in Thailand influenced your work? What are the best and worst aspects of working in Thailand?

**A:** Thailand is a country full of contradiction and Thais are slightly hypocrite if you ask me. I personally find that inspiring and fun to play around with. 56thStudio jokes around a lot of taboos and points out a lot of quirks in our society via our object design. The best aspect of being here is definitely the craftsmanship and resources for creating all kinds of things. We are surrounded by many skillful crafters that allows us to work with all kinds of mediums. The worse part is probably the fact that design scene here is not yet very much as active as I would love it to be. We have more shopping malls than art or design museum and that doesn't seem to be changing anytime soon.

**Q:** How would you describe the design industry in Thailand today?

**A:** Just like any other industry, it is run by a mafia. People in the forefront of this business are not always the most talented one, but definitely well connected. I am not saying it in a bitter way since I also believe in creating connection as a designer. However, I love to see those underdogs who create wonderful work get more exposure that they deserve. I think in a long run this would have elevate Thai design industry to another level.

**Q:** What are some stereotypes that you've encountered when talking to people about Thai culture or design?

**A:** Funny enough, I personally think that the so-called "Thai design" or "Thai Style" doesn't even have a solid vocabulary of its own. Which to me is a double-sided coin. On one hand, we are very free to express our Thai-ness in whichever way we feel like. On the other hand, what we created, unlike Japanese Design or Dutch Design, could end up having no unique character. But then again, I think it doesn't have to be the outer appearance that is very Thai but rather the approach and I think that's even more tangible. If you spend your time here for about a month, you'll understand the mindset and it would be very easy for you to pin point Thai ways of doing things."

**Q:** What aspects of Thai culture do you draw inspiration from? What are some examples of local design?

**A:** I get easily drawn to street culture and what's considered mundane. It probably have something to do with the fact that I myself grew up in a super mundane/ local environment as well, therefore, I always try to find some beauty in the not-so-posh contexts. The local design I am obsessing with right now would have to be portable-cart. Bangkok is basically street food heaven and we can put all kinds of things on wheels whether it's a fruit shop, a bar, or even an entire restaurant.

# Interview with SUPERFUTURE

(New York)

**Q:** Could you elaborate a little on your view of Bangkok's current creative scene? Has it changed much over the years? What interesting developments do you see?

## Things you should know about Gin\*

### Gin is for cocktails - not on its own.

You can drink tequila and mescal as shots, and vodka is served chilled with food in its native land. Bourbon, rye, and whiskey drinkers might add some ice or splash of water. Gin is meant to be mixed, however, as the botanicals (herbs, spices, etc.) come to life in cocktails and add complexity to the drink. This is why so many classic cocktails call for gin.

### A martini indeed means gin.

A martini consists of gin, dry vermouth and optional bitters.

### Gin is flavoured vodka.

The most usual production method for gin is to distill botanicals, such as juniper, coriander, citrus peel, cinnamon, almond or licorice, with neutral grain alcohol. Making gin is like flavouring vodka, except that botanicals are always natural. A skilled gin distiller knows how to balance the botanical flavors to make a quality product.

### London Dry Gin is not always from London

The four styles of gin (with very few exceptions) are London Dry Gin, New Style Gin, Plymouth Gin, and Genever.

London Dry is not necessarily made in London but the style was certainly popularized and centralized around Great Britain. Juniper and citrus notes dominate this style. It is the benchmark gin in mixing.

**A:** Thanks to the social medias, young designers in this Pinterest era are highly exposed to everything. For us that's also the double-sided coin. I think it is getting harder to find creative entrepreneurs, designers, makers, artists who are genuine about their crafts. (And by genuine we mean being committed to the originality of their creations, how they are made, not just for the glitz and glam, likes and followers.)

Yes, I have met many rich kids playing illustrators and fashion photographers. And yes, I have also met aspiring designers who works 2-3 jobs and spent half of their saving on creating their new collections or their career development. The later kind always get my full support.

**Q:** With the ongoing globalization, do you see the quality of Thai design being on a par with what's happening in leading design markets?

**A:** I certainly think so. Of course, there were times when "The Cool Thai designers" were heavily influenced by either Dutch or Japanese Design. Then suddenly, Kinfolk emerged and hipster designers are being treated as some sort of indie-celebrities.

Nevertheless, there are those hard-working, talented and passionate designers who are strong and solid to their creative missions and are slowly making the name for themselves in the international contexts. Most of the time, they are usually not the established-names in Thai Creative Scenes and I can only assumed they positively thrive on being the under-dog somehow.



Tough Life? ---

**SARAN's OLD-FASHIONED**

2 oz. of No. 1 Gin mixed with No. 3 Gin,  
1/2 piece of Sugar Cube,  
2 dashes of Angostura Bitters,  
2 dashes of Absinthe,  
1 slice of Orange Peel,  
1 slice of Lemon Peel,  
1 slice of Pineapple

Muddle sugar and bitters, add ice cube,  
then add the gin and decorate with fruit.

\*(Or try 1 oz. of No. 5 Gin + 1 oz. of  
No. 7 Gin for an even tougher taste.

## Interview with M.A.D Musuem (Singapore)

**Q:** Your own work is described as being fairly 'tongue-in-cheek' and forward in context. Could you talk a bit about your inspiration for the 'Cheap Ass Elites' series?

**A:** The idea is to blend those two parallel worlds, merging them in one design that could represent them both, the perfect chair for the deal society. Combining mass-produced household objects and plastic baskets with rich elements, the installation sarcastically illustrates and questions what society's indoctrination is really built on. This project is a critic on the gap between the rich and the poor, good taste and bad taste and social hierarchy in modern society."

I think it's quite ironic that these cheap baskets end up being put in a museum and many prestigious stores and that really reinforces the idea of the High and Low in the Art and Design world pretty well. I would be less of an impact seeing these baskets in their common contexts such as Markets and so on.

**Q:** You described that when it comes to developing a design that can be both communicative and functional, 'the form shall follow the story.' Could you please elaborate on this idea?

**A:** I think consumer nowadays not only "buy" the product just because it is functional or good-looking anymore. They also "purchase" the story behind the making. Whether it's an environmental issue, sociological issue ect. Whether its an Art piece or a mass produced design object, I do believe people have the right to own things for their own reasons according to their own views. Therefore I somehow think "telling a story is the new additional function."

*"I got easily drawn to Taboos, Social contradictions, Stupid Pop & Mainstream Cultures and we have plenty of that in Thailand. I find myself good at being sarcastic and making up sugar-coated criticisms."*

Therefore, we have the habit of commenting on serious taboos but in a light-headed, whimsical, humorous tone and that's where I normally poke at.

Simple but works everytime ---

**GIN WITH A WEDGE**

Pour 2 oz of any number of Gin into an old-fashioned glass; fill the glass with ice. Drop a thick orange slice into the glass; stir with well with the gin and ice to flavor the drink and frost the glass. Add a few dashes of Orange Bitter if you like it aromatic.



## Interview with 21\_21 Design Sight (Japan)

**Q:** It has been said that those who wander are not always lost, tell me about the Wandering Bartender, his character, his ambitions, aspirations?

**A:** In fact, the Wandering Bartender is me. I work fulltime as a designer almost 15 hours a day, 7 days a week. I desperately needed a non-design related hobby, and I found the art of mixology very creative and therapeutic. Let alone the fact that he might become an alcoholic, this bartender works very hard trying to balance the aspect of work and play. His dream is being able to combine his career as designer, art-director and part-time mixologist somehow in the future.

**Q:** What was your inspiration for the work? I'm imagining you stranded on a quiet street, waiting for a bus or friend and just wishing that a friendly face with cold cocktails in hand would wander by...

**A:** If you are a nine to five salary man like I am, you're probably very familiar with street food vendors nearby your office. At least that's where me and all my colleagues buy our meals from. Fruit sellers, key makers, noodle shops, steak on wheels, you name it. I am very impressed by how they operate and move around with just simple structures. As I fervent drinker myself, I can't help thinking how it would be to have a small bar that can just pop up anywhere stylishly, functional, compact and aesthetically not looking like those on Khaosan Road. So that's what I try to explore.

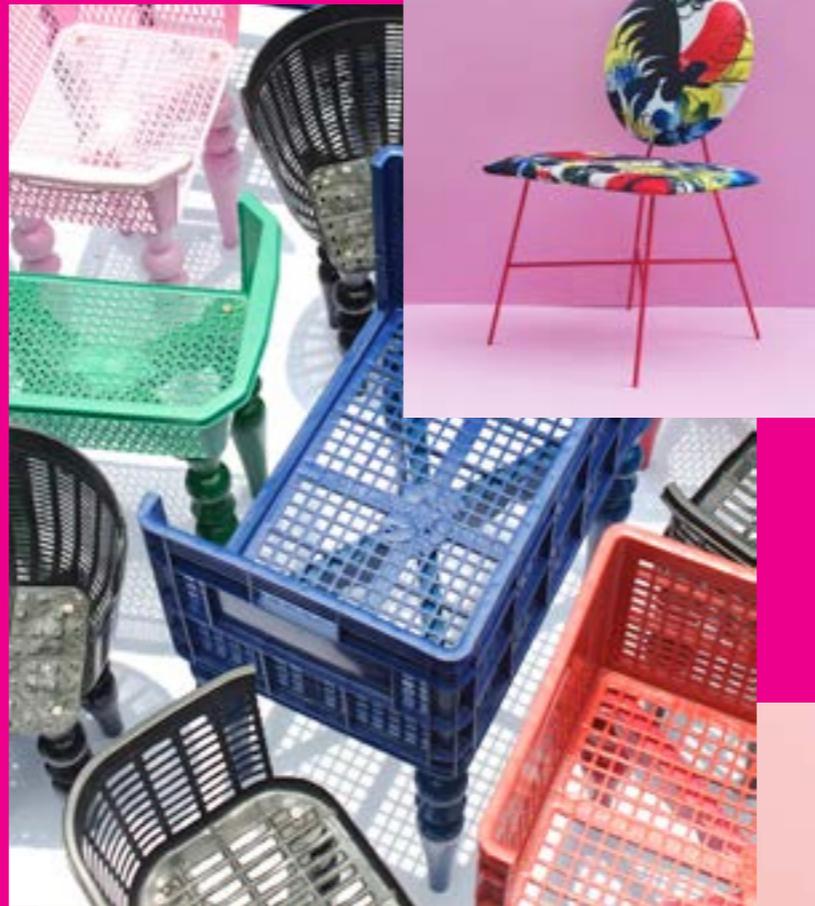
**Q:** In your opinion, what will the role of design in the future be and, as designers, how can we help to steer it in the right direction?

**A:** I think it is very important for creators, makers and designers to take in account problems in our society, whether it's societal issues, environmental issues or political issues. (The last being very apparent in Thailand at the moment)



*"We can definitely at least trying to emphasis "what is wrong and what can be solved" via our design processes."*

Yes I am saying that as a designer, it is important for us to have a strong point of view and be very alert of the current situation so that what we're trying to communicate in our design is clear and impactful.



**56th** Studio is a multidisciplinary design studio that works graphically three dimensional. We provide services for object design and visual styling that can be applied into various projects, from Storytelling, Visual identity, Visual merchandising, Branding, Set Design, Animation, Interior Design, or any space-related project.

In our studio, form follows story. Our aim is to explore objects that are not only functional but also communicative. Trying our best to combine fashion, furniture, graphic and textile altogether, we enjoy rummaging through a junkyard or a flea market to find weird and wonderful forms or underrated treasures.

Stylewise, we are luxe-personified yet kitschy, neo-ethnic, eclectically bold and youthful. 56thStudio proudly embraces pop and main-stream culture and often hijacks existing forms and makes a sarcastic commentary piece out of it.

Saran's Summer Favorite ---  
**COCO GIN**



Any number of Gin,  
Coconut

Open the fresh coconut and save the juice. Add one part gin for every two parts of coconut juice; stir and serve over ice.

**56th** Studio also runs a private gallery dedicated to Visual Designs such as Graphic Design, Illustration, Product Design, Furniture and everything sits in between. Combining a pop-up speakeasy with drinks tailored to the theme of each exhibition, the 45 sqm. attic function as not only an office to a multi-disciplinary design studio but also a bar, concept store and a meeting point for where established designers, upcoming artists and all the design lovers collide.

Based in the heart of Bangkok, the aim of the gallery is to promote young and upcoming designers and makers through carefully curated events. 56thStudio believes that graphic prints, Illustration and furniture, just like fine art, deserve a space where the crafts are appreciated.

56thStudio was awarded "Young Designer of The year" from several organizations including Wallpaper Magazine, Elle Decoration, Living Etc and PSFK & Art Thread whereas their creations have been shown world wide from Milan, Paris, Tokyo, Berlin, New York, to Stockholm. 56thStudio Private Gallery is also selected as one of Bangkok Best from Elle Men Thailand and is featured in Louis Vuitton Bangkok City Guide Book and also Wallpaper U.K City Guide.



"Alcohol may be man's worst enemy,  
but the bible says love your enemy."

Frank Sinatra



56thStudio

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