

Extraordinary drawing abilities singled out a youth as an artist with potential, and that potential was soon realised, as **Khetsirin Pholdhampalit** reports



Art for art's sake

Fua Haripitak was not just a versatile artist. Sure, he could draw, paint and sculpt, but it's his life-long contributions to preserving classical Thai art and teaching a younger generation to share this interest that makes his contribution unique.

Professor Silpa Bhirasri, acknowledged as the father of modern Thai art and also Fua's

adviser, once wrote in a catalogue of Fua's 1959 solo show: "This young student was most anxious to learn and he did so with intense seriousness. What compelled me to admire him was his exceptionally remarkable drawing abilities. As drawing is the grammar of art, I was sure that one day this young man would become a real artist."

The professor was right. In Fua's case, "real" meant that he shunned popularity.

Fua is highly recognised for his pioneering role in Thailand's modern art. His landscapes and portraits developed, employing numerous styles from realism, impressionism to expressionism and cubism. His strong slashing colours capture so well the mood of the moment.

His talents won him many awards and honours.

He was recognised as the artist of distinction in painting at the 1957 National Exhibition of Art, received an honorary doctoral degree in fine arts from Silpakorn University in 1980, and won the national artist award in 1985.

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