

NANYANG

A PRIVATE SELLING EXHIBITION





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PICTURING NANYANG: THE CULTURAL EFFECT OF THE CHINESE DIASPORA IN MALAYA

SARAH ABU BAKAR

Curate celebrates the best of Nanyang art in a unique show titled *Nanyang: A Private Selling Exhibition*, which showcases some of the finest masterpieces by pioneering Malaysian and Singaporean artists.

Nanyang or 'Southern Seas' is a term originally coined in the late 1920s by literary intelligentsia to indicate contemporary Chinese narratives written based on local subjects.

Prominent historian Wang Gungwu stated that "the word 'Nanyang', the 'Southern Ocean', is used as an equivalent of the more recent coinage, 'South-east Asia'. But there is an important difference. There is implied in the word 'Nanyang' territories which have been reached by sea, by the South China Sea, and consequently, the areas which specially concern the Nanyang Chinese have been the key coastal strips of mainland South-east Asia."

Cultural observer Kwok Kian Chow described that at the time, the Nanyang style was neither a representation of a "specific aesthetic paradigm" nor did it express the "notions of linguistic vernacularism (as in the May Fourth Movement), Social Realism or aestheticism". What and how could then be the best stance to illustrate this geographically focused style of painting that also represented a significant period in the development of art?

This exhibition is a survey of works by a selection of artists who had advocated the spirit of regionalism in depicting scenic landscapes of a new and faraway homeland and adoringly captured local essences by incorporating Chinese art with Western techniques. Aimed to highlight connections and coherence, this show will encourage viewers to develop their own understanding of the Nanyang style thus promoting continuity emotionally and culturally in preserving the history of our region. This exclusive exhibition also provides an opportunity for discerning collectors to acquire and possess a precious piece of history.

THE BEGINNING

The opening up of the treaty ports in China in the nineteenth century had profoundly affected the artistic landscape and art education of China. Artists were introduced to a greater array of Western artistic ideas and materials such as oil paint. With the collapse of the traditional art society, a new acceptance perceiving Western art as the ideal solution against the belief that Chinese art was "locked into a cycle of antiquated restrictions and guidelines" and had arrived at "a state of stagnation", had propelled the New Culture Movement in the mid 1910s.

In driving the modernisation process of the new Republic, education was identified as the key fundamental in need of transformation to support the new economy. An important figure tasked to expand and upgrade the curricula was Cai Yuanpei (1868 - 1940), the Republic's first Minister of Education. He believed that by integrating elements of Western and Chinese cultures and the inculcation of the two ideals will thenceforth shape the modern Chinese mind.

Modern art academies were established under Cai's active support for the reformation of artistic training system such as the Beijing Art School in 1918 and National Art Academy, Hangzhou in 1928. Modeled upon the European and Japanese art schools, the tertiary education system became the driving force of the artistic revolution in China. Other distinguished art schools in the cosmopolitan city of Shanghai were the Xin Hua School of Art, Shanghai Art University and the Shanghai School of Fine Arts.

By the mid to late 1920s, these schools had produced their first batch of graduates and many of whom had moved abroad to Western art centres such as Paris and London to pursue higher education. Upon returning to China from Europe, these artists would often stop over in Southeast Asia, particularly in Singapore, the centre of Malaya in search of new patrons among the Overseas Chinese communities and to exhibit their artworks. Singapore and Penang became significant distribution centres and market for Chinese art outside of China.





THE COMMUNITY

The increasing growth of the Overseas Chinese communities in Singapore and Malaya in the 1930s attracted artists and art educationists to settle permanently in Southeast Asia to contribute their talents towards developing the fledgling art scene. Many were born and were graduates and alumni of art academies in China, particularly from Shanghai Art University, the Shanghai School of Fine Arts and the Xin Hua School of Art. Among them were Chen Wen Hsi (1906 - 1991), Chuah Thean Teng (1912 - 2008), Lee Cheng Yong (1913 - 1974), Khaw Sia (1913 - 1984) and Kuo Ju Ping (1913 - 1966).

During the early years of the 1920s, a proliferation of small scale studios appeared in Singapore to provide basic training in art. The presence of art schools during the pre-war era have been identified as the Overseas Chinese Art Academy (Hua Qiao Art Academy) founded by Chen Bingzhen in 1922; Mei Gui Arts Academy in 1929 by Lin Youfei; the Nan Xing Specialized School for the Arts in 1931; and a few founded between 1937 and 1938 were Bai Lu Art Academy by Lin Junde; Jiang Xinhua's Xi Nan Art Academy; Xi Hu Art Academy by Deng Siyi and Chen Daju; and an art school founded by a Russian, Mengya Sigen Art Academy.

Another significant art school, the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA), was founded by Lim Hak Tai in 1938 in same Nanyang spirit to necessitate the art education of the Overseas Chinese community. The school ceased operations during World War II (1941 - 1945) and continued to open since 1946 until today. Instigated through a network of contacts from China, NAFA was initiated by the Overseas Chinese art communities in Singapore and Malaya and particularly by an Overseas Chinese businessman based in Singapore, Chen Juexiang. A former graduate of Jimei High School in Xianmen, China, Chen was also one of the founding members of the Jimei Overseas Students Association.

Lim Hak Tai was a former art teacher at Xianmen School of Art, a private art school established by artist Huang Suibi in 1918 which was later merged with another private school, Xianmen Private Academy for Drawing founded by Wang Yiyun and was renamed Xianmen Specialized School of Art in 1922. The school was forced to cease operations due to the outbreak of Sino-Japanese war in mid 1937. To avoid the escalating conflict, Lim and a number of his colleagues fled to Nanyang. While in transit in Singapore, Lim, as a former teacher of Jimei High in China met with Jimei Overseas Student Association representative Chen Juexiang and the discussions to promote Overseas Chinese education ensued.

In Penang, self-taught artist Yong Mun Sen (1896 - 1962), also known as the “Father of Malaysian Painting” formed the Penang Chinese Art Club in 1935 with fellow artist Lee Cheng Yong who was appointed president. He also initiated the formation of Society of Chinese Artists in Singapore the same year and held the position of vice president. He also founded an art studio in Penang. There are several records of the establishment of Yong’s art studio, Wei Guan Studio at Chulia Street Penang in 1922 and Tai Koon Art Studio, a photography studio located on the same street in the same year. The former was later changed to Mun Sen Gallery in 1930.

Lee Cheng Yong was a dedicated art teacher at Chung Ling High School in Penang while Chen Wen Hsi taught Chinese ink painting at NAFA in 1951 after establishing a successful career as an artist abroad. Both art educators were graduates of Xin Hua Art Academy in Shanghai. Another alumnus of the same school was Khaw Sia who had taken private classes under the great British watercolour painter Sir Russell Flint in London in 1933. Kuo Ju Ping studied at Pai Yuen Secondary School in China before attending Chung Ling High School in Penang and was later enrolled to NAFA. He was among the first batch of NAFA graduates in 1940 and upon graduation offered art classes to high schools in Penang which included Chung Ling, Union, Li Tek and Han Chiang. Chuah Thean Teng on the other had briefly received formal art training at Amoy Academy of Art in Fujian, China but was disrupted due to illness. After going through the hardships of war in Malaya in the 1940s and venturing into unsuccessful businesses, Chuah taught art at Han Chiang High School in Penang in the 1950s, followed by Chung Ling High School in the 1960s to earn a stable income.

What these artists had in common was their exposure in art education in China which promoted Western ideologies, their desire to cultivate art education and to contribute to the society, their migration to the region, and their passion coupled with talent to create art, which had inadvertently made their mark in the history of modern art.



Yong Mun Sen at work



NAFA celebrates its 40th anniversary

THE ROMANTICS

The concept of Nanyang style which was conceived by artists who emigrated from China (known as first generation) and those who were born in Malaya (second generation) whom were influenced by the pioneer artists is distinctive because of the circumstances that they endured. Besides adjusting to local conditions, their attempt to offer alternative visual solutions based on Western techniques and teachings and at the same time apply traditional modes reflect the challenges they face in their newfound land.

Distinguished art historian T.K. Sabapathy suggested that the locality of the thematic content of a Nanyang work aims to identify oneself in a current setting: "The subject matter of these themes are derived from the immediate surroundings of the artists...the "localness of the place" was consciously adopted as a *programme for activity*, manifesting an aesthetic position by all Nanyang artists."

The notion of 'Nanyang colour' - inherited from Nanyang Chinese Literature - derived from 'Nanyangnisation' by transmitting a literary concept promoted by intellectuals Dai Yinlang, Tchang Ju Chi and Chen Lianqing into a pictorial concept.

The aesthetic ideology of introducing works with 'Nanyang colour' into the literary sphere was advocated by prolific writer Zhang Jinyan who made "emotive appeals" to local writers in their writings: "We must try to describe our life in Nanyang, to describe it boldly. If we can do so, Nanyang literature will shine with dazzling splendour", as art critic and curator Seng Yu Jin stated in his research paper.

The Nanyang style hence comprised of "landscapes featuring villages (the Malay kampung), mosques, temples, rivers, still-life consisting of fruits, and domestic utensils" and "rituals, festivals and other forms of daily work" executed in infused techniques of Paris School of Art and Chinese ink and brush painting.







THE AESTHETICS

The artistic direction of NAFA was expressed through a series of objectives, envisioned by Lim Hak Tai as follows:

- Fusion of art of the East and West
- Integration of the cultures and cultural essences of the four races
- Development of the spirit of science and trends of modern thinking
- Expression of a local tropical flavour and the creation of a Nanyang art style
- Emphasis on the educational and social functions of fine art

There is a sixth manifesto (in no particular order) which was penned in Lim's foreword to a special issue catalogue titled *The Art of Young Malaysians* to celebrate the fifteenth graduating class of NAFA in 1955 which states:

- The reflection of the needs of the local (the Chinese term *benbang* is used here) people

Although these directives form the motivation of Nanyang art, not all students of NAFA necessarily represent the Nanyang style as their explorations in various themes are guided by each individual's stylistic preference.

The significance of NAFA during the first few years of inception as an artistic platform in shaping the aesthetics of an authentic Nanyang style was due to its close ties with the Society of Chinese Artists, whose exclusive membership in 1935 was only granted to the alumnus of the three prestigious academies in Shanghai, demonstrating symbolic and cultural capital.

Art historian and artist Redza Piyadasa described the choice of styles adopted by the immigrant Chinese artists as eclectic - borrowing and adapting Eastern and Western methods - to achieve individual expressive needs.

The complexity of Nanyang art and Nanyang style involves socio-political influences from the diasporic communities and migration in the region, modern Chinese philosophy, the Sino-Japanese war in China (1937 - 1945), literature, education, local condition, and other contributing factors. Thus, a truly unique movement was formed to correspond with the contemporary ideals.

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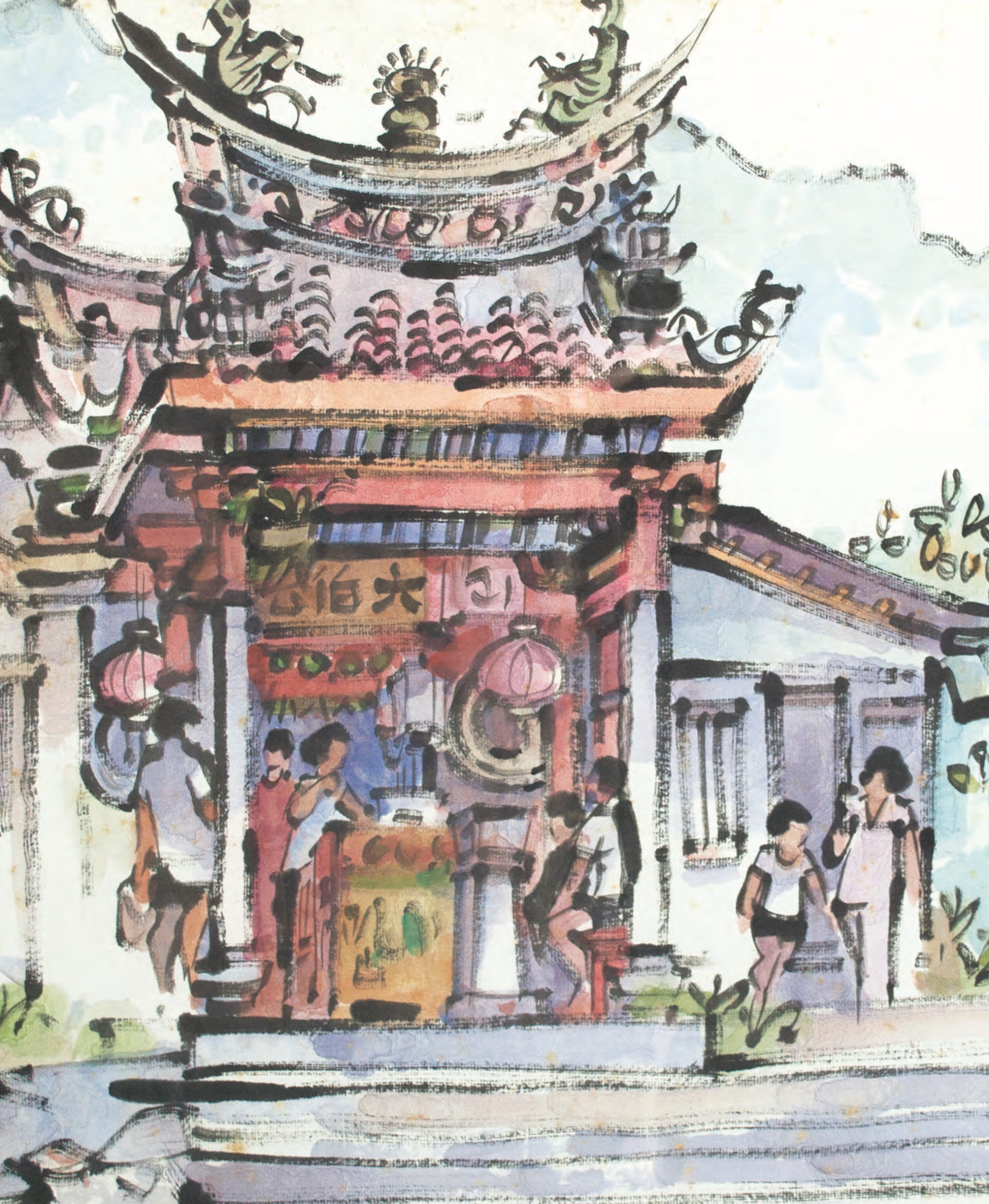
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放眼南洋：华裔移民在马来亚的文化影响

SARAH ABU BAKAR

译者：尹贞霓

“南洋”(Nanyang)或“南海”一词源于1920年代晚期，由当时的文人知识分子所创。为的是阐述当时华人的一些以南洋色彩为背景的书写。

著名历史学家——王赓武表示，“南洋”或“南海”和近代形成的“东南亚”一词一样通用，但其实两者有着重要的区别。“南洋”隐喻着用过南中国海可以抵达的国境。从而可以知道，南洋华人一直关心的焦点其实是东南亚大陆的沿海地带。

身为文化观察员的郭建超表示，“南洋风格”既不是代表特定的审美范例，也不表达白话文运动的概念（如五四运动）、社会现实主义或者唯美主义这任何一种风格。这次展示的作品代表了南洋艺术发展的重要时期，那么我们怎样才可以用最佳的视角，去透视这些注重地域性风格的画作？

这次的展销会罗列了主张地域性主义的艺术家的画作，这些作品结合了中华艺术和西方的绘画技术，完美地描绘出南洋的著名地标和画家心目中对遥远的故土随想，也捕捉住了本土的特色。为了突出关联性和传承性，这次的展销会会鼓励参观者对于南洋风格展开自己的理解，来推广和承传我们乡土的历史。当然，这次独家的展销会也提供有素质要求的收藏家一个收集珍贵历史记忆的机会。

起源

在19世纪中国五口通商条约实行以后，对中国艺术教育发展带来了深刻的影响。中国艺术家被大量西方艺术概念和技巧冲击，其中一项显为突出的就是油画。随着传统艺术作画的式微，西方艺术的新概念对于中国艺术中那种被条条框框所困制的瓶颈的窘境中来说，是一项相对完美的解决方案。从而推进了1910年代的新文化运动。

在新中国现代化的驱使下，教育被视为改革创新的根本来承载新经济的发展。一个重要的历史人物背起了这个发展教育的任务，他就是蔡元培（1868-1940）中国第一任的教育部长。他相信结合中西方的艺术元素将可以塑造现代中国思想。现代化的艺术教学在蔡元培的积极推进下渐渐茁壮成长。这些新式的艺术教育机构例如成立于1918年的北京艺术学校、1928年的杭州国际艺术学院。当时的艺术学校也向欧洲和日本的艺术学校取经，高等教育系统成为中国教育革新艺术的中枢力量。其实相关杰出的都市艺术学校包括了上海的新华艺术学校、上海艺术大学和上海美术学院。

在1920年代中晚期，这些艺术学校培育出第一批的毕业生。他们其中很多任都移向海外深造，例如巴黎和伦敦。从欧洲回到中国的途中，他们都会存在在途经的马来亚寻找海外华人顾客购买他们的画作和举办展览。新加坡和檳城成为了绝佳的海外华人艺术的经销市场。

社会

在1930年代，新马一代的华侨数目持续增长，吸引了艺术家和教育工作者长期居住在东南亚一代，为当时渐渐成长的艺术绿芽贡献一份力量。他们之中有很多人在中国学艺，尤其是上海艺术学校、上海美术学校还有新华艺术学校。例如陈文希（1906-1991）、蔡天定（1912-2008）、李清庸（1913-1974）、许西亚（1913-1984）和郭若萍（1913-1966）。

在1920年代初叶，一些小规模提供基础美术训练的画室在新加坡渐渐发展开来。在这个战前时代，艺术学校就包括有在1922年成立的海外华人艺术学院（华侨美术学院）、在1929年成立的玫瑰艺院；1931年成立的南星艺术专科学校；还有在1937和1938间创立的白鹭艺术学院；西南艺术学校、西湖艺术学校和一间由俄罗斯人创立的Mengya Sigen艺术学院。

还有另外一间杰出的艺术学校，就是由林学大在1938年成立的南洋艺术学院（NAFA）。他带着一种南洋精神，要在海外华人的社会里，使艺术教育成为一门必要的学科。这所学校曾一度因为世界第二次大战（1941-1945）而停办，尔后在1946年复办，直到今天。在当时中国方面有相熟人脉的煽动下，南洋艺术学院由当时在新加坡和马来西亚的一个常驻海外的华裔商人陈厥祥所发起。作为一个之前在厦门的集美中学毕业的陈厥祥，他同时也是集美海外学生会的其中一个创会会员。

林学大曾经在厦门艺术学校担任美术老师，这是一间在1918年所创立的私人艺术学校。这所艺术学校随后在1922年与另外一所由王逸云所创立的厦门绘画学院合并，随后改称厦门美术专科学校。这所学校也在1937年的中日战争中被停办。为了避开日益艰巨的国际局势，林学大和一群手足漂洋过海来到南洋。当在新加坡中转的时候，林学大作为一名集美的前老师，遇上了集美的海外学生会代表——陈厥祥，然后就讨论如何推广海外华人教育。

在檳城，无师自通的艺术家的杨曼生（1896-1962），他也被成为“马来西亚的绘画之父”，在1935年和他的同伴李清庸成立了檳城华人艺术研究会。李清庸当时被委任于主席一职。同年间，他创立了新加坡华人美术研究会，他自己还是屈居于副主席一职。他也在檳城成立了一间美术工作室。关于杨曼生所创立的美术工作室，还有以下几项记录，在檳城牛干冬街的蔚观画室，在同一条街上杨曼生还有一间名为Tai Koon摄影工作室。蔚观画室在1930年的时候改成了曼生美术馆。

在1951年间，李清庸是檳城钟灵中学的专用美术老师，与此同时，陈文希也在南洋艺术学院担任水墨画老师，他在海外享有一定的名声。作为外来的画家，他们俩都是上海新华艺术学校的毕业生。他们的另外一个校友许西亚在1933年曾拜于英国水墨画家——罗素裴灵特（Sir Russell Flint）的门下。郭若萍则在中国就读于培元中学，他在钟灵中学教学之前，也曾就读于南洋艺术学院。他是南洋艺术学院1940年第一批的毕业生，他在毕业后收到了不同学校的聘约，如钟灵、团结、立德和寒江。蔡天定在很短的时间内也收到了福建厦门鼓浪屿艺术学校的邀请函，但过后因病而推却。在经历了1940年代马来亚动荡不安的战争时代，和创业失败的人生低潮。蔡天定为了生活，才执起教鞭，他先后在1950年代和1960年代在檳城寒江中学还有钟灵中学教书。

这些艺术家大部分在中国所学习的，都是一些西方的思潮，他们热切地希望投身艺术教育工作和奉献社会。他们离乡背井，此番心志加上本身在美术上的天分和创意，在现代美术发展历史上留下了功不可没的一页。







浪漫时期

“南洋风格”这个概念由中国移民来马来亚的画家（第一代）而开始衍生，还有那些在马来西亚出世的华人（第二代）因为他们这些特别的经历，所以他们受到这些先驱作家很大的影响。除了适应本地的风土人情，他们也尝试以一些西方的技术来作为视觉效果上的代替技术，来反映出他们在马来亚这片新国土上所面临的各种挑战与冲击。

杰出的艺术历史学家——T.K 瑟巴帕迪 (T.K Sabapathy) 在南洋艺术作品中针对这个专门的本土性内容的目的是，要辨识出某个人在当前的背景中：“这些主题是从画家当时所出的环境中带出...“地方上的本土性”明显被吸收成为一个活动主题，体现了南洋艺术家的美学观点。”

“南洋色彩”的概念——承传自南洋华人文学中的概念，“南洋混合”是把文学上的概念转化而来，这由戴隐郎、张汝器和陈炼青三人把这个从文学上的概念，衍生到绘画这些图像性的联想上。

将“南洋色彩”这个美学观点融入文学的范畴是由多产作家——Zhang Jinyan 所主张，他在他的写作中曾动容地指出，“我们一定要试着形容我们在南洋的生活，大胆地描述出来。如果我们可以做得到，那南洋文学将会发光发热。”身为艺术评论家和策展人的 Seng Yujin 在他的报告中指出。

南洋风格因此包括了马来甘榜、回教堂、庙宇、小溪、水果静物画、和一些本地特别的器具、宗教仪式、节日庆典、还有其他的日常生活情景。这些做作都被注入了各种巴黎艺术学校和中国水墨画的技巧。

审美观

南洋艺术学院校长林学大将其“南洋美术”的概念，更具体地凝结成六大美学方向纲领

- 沟通东西艺术
- 融汇各民族文化风尚
- 发挥20世纪科学精神和社会思潮
- 体现出本土热带情调还有南洋艺术风格的创意
- 配合教育意义和社会功能

这是林学大在一个名为《马来亚艺术青年》的文告上提出的第六个美术教学理念。这篇文告是为了南洋艺术学院1955年第十五周年毕业班所写的，里面指出：

- 反映本邦人民大众需求

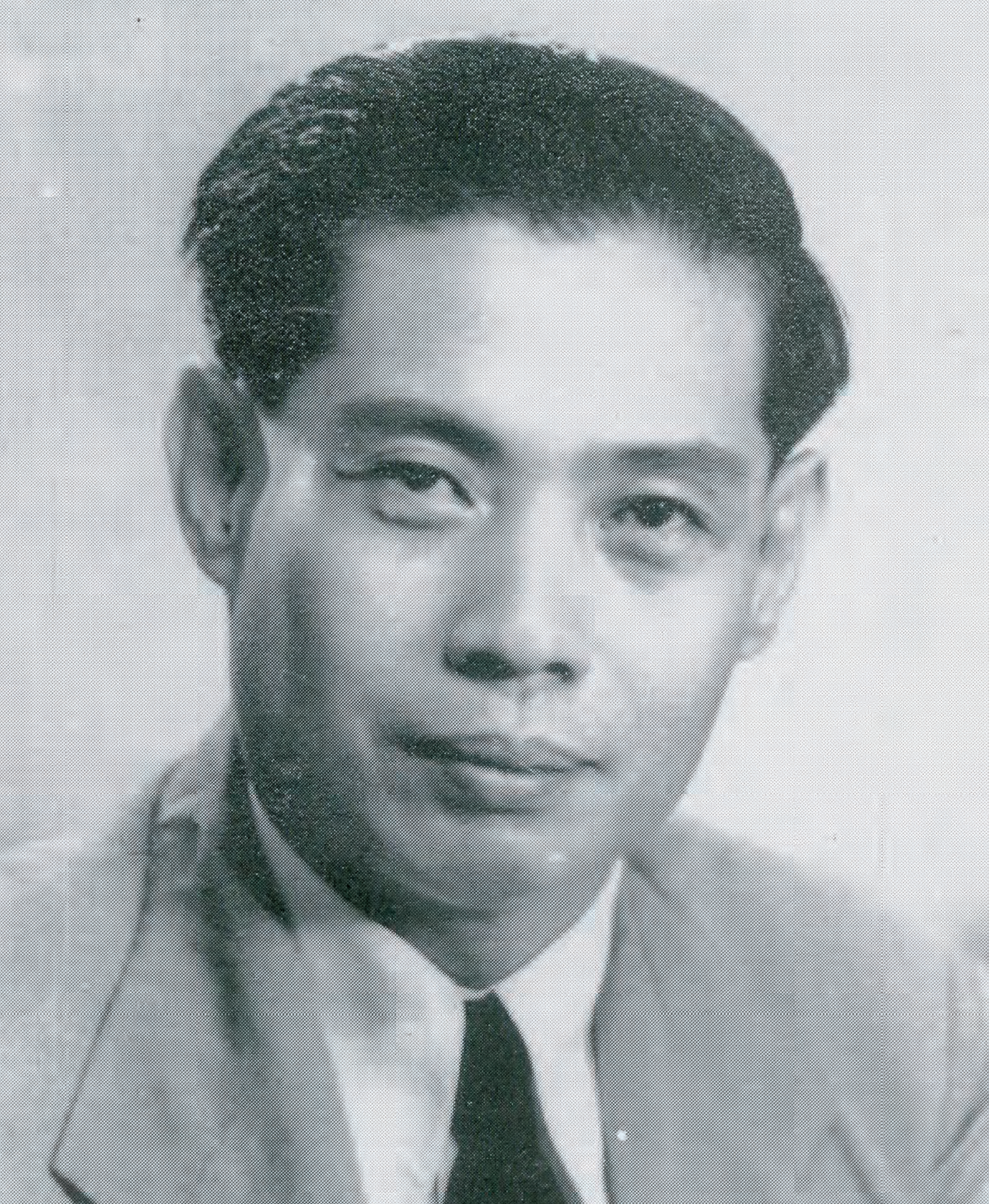
虽然这些指标形成了南洋艺术的动力，但不是所有的南院学生有必要代表南洋风格，当他们在各种不同的指导下和个人在不同主题领域有自己的发展。

凭着与华人艺术协会的紧密联系，南洋艺术学院创校开始的几年以重要性的艺术平台，塑造了南洋风格的美术和正统风格。这协会的独家会员在1935年，只授予三间上海久负盛名的艺术学校校友，特此展示了其象征性和文化资本。

艺术历史学家和本身也是艺术家的力扎皮耶鞑萨 (Redza Piyadasa) 形容南来移民的中国华人艺术家在风格上的选择是丰富多元的，他们可以借鉴和吸收中西技巧来表达他们独特的个人观点需求。

南洋艺术和南洋风格的复杂性牵涉到的是社会政治的影响，从一个散居流放的社会和一个移民的国度、现代中国的哲学、中日战争 (1937-1945)、文学、教育和本土境况，还有很多其他的因素。因此，南洋艺术在当代思潮里形成了一个非常独特的艺术运动。









THE 'NANYANG STYLE': DIFFERENT VIEWPOINTS AND CONTEXTS

EMELIA ONG

The term "Nanyang Style" has been discussed at length among local art writers, art enthusiasts and Nanyang artists themselves. The range of meanings attached to this term is thus wide-ranging and even confusing to someone who merely wants a simple answer to the question: What is "Nanyang Style"? or How did it emerge? However, attempts to answer this question are what sustain a lively debate in local artistic discourse. Such attempts continue to locate the term within different frameworks from which it can be re-contextualised.

I would like to offer as a comparison just some of the ways it has been examined in Malaysia and Singapore since this exhibition will be held in both places and interestingly includes the names of Nanyang artists who are not commonly known such as Yong Mun Sen, Chuah Thean Teng and Khaw Sia who were based in Penang.

In Singapore, the term Nanyang style in art has often been viewed within the context of the making of Singapore as an independent nation and her search for a coherent cultural identity. In Malaysia, however, it has not been featured quite as closely to the narrative of the nation but rather that of the region and within the context of the migrant Chinese community.

When the Nanyang Artists Retrospective exhibition, curated by Redza Piyadasa, was held at the National Art Gallery (Kuala Lumpur) in 1979, art historian, T.K. Sabapathy highlighted the subject of the Nanyang Style—that there has yet to be a study that proposes a description or definition of Nanyang Style even though it was a term that was frequently used. Since then, there has been a host of writings that proposed various explanations and definitions for the term. The artists themselves, such as Chung Chen Sun, Tan Tee Chie, Loong Thien Shih, Foo Chee Sun and others have offered their viewpoints in various interviews and publications.

In 1995, Chua Ek Kay combines several of these opinions and he claimed, "...Nanyang style does not necessarily only refer to synthesized formalism, but also to the Parisian art form or Chinese ink painting itself with subject matter of local representation." (18) He posited that the Nanyang style is a significant contribution to ASEAN aesthetics. His thesis examined the role of Nanyang style from the

context of the construction of a regional cultural identity. Then in 1997, Tan Meng Kiat's thesis titled, "The Evolution of the Nanyang Art Style: A study in search for an Artistic Identity in Singapore. 1930-1960," links the selection of subject matter and artistic explorations directly to the construction of a Singaporean identity and developments in Singaporean art history. Since the Nanyang Academy of Fine Art (NAFA) was founded in Singapore (1938), the story of the so-called Nanyang artists unfolded in Singapore with a majority of artists practicing there. Thus, the Nanyang art story, if one may call it such, became synonymous with Singapore art history during the pre-independence period.

A decade later, it was interesting to me how Nanyang style was read as the construction of national and regional cultural identity and yet the actual definition of Nanyang Style had not been critically explained. As such, I began to explore the artistic contexts of the term Nanyang style and provide more specific descriptions in art historical and formalistic terms, following Sabapathy's initial expositions on the formal considerations of this style. In my thesis, "Style" was interpreted as a series of linked solutions corresponding to an artistic problem. By doing so, Nanyang Style may be suggested to encompass three distinct "styles" or categories of "artistic problems" that beset the Nanyang artists during the period 1950s to 60s.

The first is the problem of fusing techniques and modes of representation from different artistic traditions, which included Modern art from the School of Paris, Chinese traditional ink painting from the literati tradition as well as the Shanghai School. A good example is Chen Wen Hsi's approach towards abstraction, which produced paintings that could not be fully categorised as "Western" or "Chinese" in terms of formalistic method. The second problem involved the incorporation of "Nanyang" subject matter into Chinese traditional painting. In this area, Chen Chong Swee paved the way for formalistic innovation in methods of brushwork, texture, composition and expression distinct from traditional ink painting from China. The third problem involves the formulation of a distinctive Southeast Asian expression through the appropriation of styles from the Western tradition. Cheong Soo Pieng's "figure-type" and Liu Kang's naiveté depictions of *kampung* are prime examples of solutions that many artists have come to recognize as "Nanyang" in motif and expression.

Having said this, the definition of Nanyang Style, as with all artistic styles continues to be open to interpretation. And each interpretation when substantiated with relevant contexts, help us to appreciate a holistic picture of how art is produced and how artistic styles come







to be recognised as such. In more recent writings, the examination of Nanyang Style has been considered beyond the field of art to see how notions of modernity, nationalism, migration, ethnicity, hybridity and post-colonialism implicitly shape the creation of art. Analysing the Nanyang Style from these new contexts have not only informed our understanding on the practice of art but has also played a part in transforming the way art history is being written.

In "De-Nationalizing Nanyang Modernity" (2008) for instance, Ahmad Mashadi examines the idea of Nanyang style within the broader contexts of Chinese' immigrants diasporic modernity, thus moving away from the narrative of "nation-building in Singapore." He says, "...to limit Nanyang to a construct of nationhood denies the multiplicity of cultural mappings within an open system where Nanyang may be read as dynamic frames for investigating the fluidity of diasporic modernity, including an ambivalent regard for "nation." By underscoring diasporic contexts, he reminds us to look at transnational links that allow a comparative reading of Nanyang Style against artworks produced by Chinese migrant artists living in Indonesia and other parts of Southeast Asia.

Later, Yvonne Low's "Remembering Nanyang Feng'Ge" (2010) suggests that Malayan identity overlapped with Nanyang identity for a particular period of time. Thus she analyses Nanyang style within the context of the individual [artists'] interpretation of what is considered local—be it the multicultural aspect of Malaya or the "tropicality" of the South Seas. In doing so, she underlines the differences in perception between the "English" and "Chinese" speaking communities.

Subsequently, my analysis of "Nanyang" artworks/style have also moved towards the broader contexts of hybridity and diaspora, where their artistic practices were grounded in issues of belonging to two different spaces: their ancestral home in China, and their new home in Malaya. I suggest that their "re-formulation" of Malayan or Nanyang culture through the Nanyang Style may be seen as a necessary process for a dis/re-located diasporic community. As such, the Nanyang Style may be viewed as a form of negotiation that unfolds from the tension of being in a transitional position.

These examples, while not comprehensive, provide us with a wide range of contexts from which the Nanyang Style can be discussed. Interestingly while many interpretations of the Nanyang Style are incongruous, many art writers seem to agree on the progenitors of the Nanyang Style. The four artists singled out included, Cheong Soo Pieng, Chen Wen Hsi, Chen Chong Swee and Liu Kang. The writings of Marco Hsu, Piyadasa and Sabapathy respectively, have in a way cemented

these artists' key role in the emergence of the Nanyang Style. The latter were then hailed by the art public as "the Four Masters" after the Bali trip art exhibition in 1953. The study of these artists' works will thus be productive in relation to the understanding of the Nanyang Style. As a last note, I would like to forward some artists who for some reason or another have not been as prominently featured especially in Malaysia. This includes See Cheen Tee, Yeh Chi Wei, Tan Tee Chie, Georgette Chen, Lim Mu Hue and Chua Mia Tee. Their works have no doubt contributed to the development of a style that has been recognised as Nanyang or Malayan in form and content.

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南洋风格：不一样的观点，不一样的背景

EMELIA ONG

译者：尹贞霓

“南洋风格”一词在此前已经用很长的篇幅被讨论过，其中包含了以各个角度去探讨，例如本土的艺术评论者，艺术爱好者还有南洋艺术家的看法。这样的诠释方式是广义的，甚至会让作者产生混淆，到底什么才是“南洋风格”呢？她是怎么形成的？无论如何，如何去诠释南洋风格到现在还是本土艺术家热切讨论的课题。他们做各种尝试，并以不同的角度和思维来重新定义这个词。

既然这个展览会在新加坡和马来西亚举行，我想借着此展览提出新马之间的对照和比较。此外，有意思的是这次展览不仅仅有我们常闻的南洋画家，而且也包括了杨曼生、蔡天定和许西亚这些在檳城艺术家。

在新加坡，艺术领域中的“南洋风格”一词常常以新加坡作为一个独立的国家为背景，然后找寻一个于她有相关文化身份认同。而在大马，南洋风格还没有像叙述领域那样被鲜明地定义出来，但是大概也看得出南洋风格的背景也是定义在南来华人的社会里。

在1979年，由力扎皮耶鞑萨 (Redza Piyadasa) 在吉隆坡国家艺术馆所策划的《南洋艺术家回顾展》里，艺术历史学家——T.K 瑟巴帕迪 (T.K Sabapathy) 特别地指出了南洋风格这个主题仍有待成为一门研究的课题。她作为一个在艺术上的常用语，但还需要明确的定义和解释。自此，许多关于南洋风格的写作纷纷出炉，各自都提出了不一样的解释和定义。就连这些艺术家本身，如钟正山、陈世集和龙田诗等人都在访问里提出了自己的看法。

在1995年，蔡逸溪集合了几种不同的意见后指出，“南洋风格”不一定要参考这些综合的形式主义，但也需要参考巴黎的艺术风格和中国水墨画本身在本地绘画上的体现。他设定了南洋风格是亚洲美学上一个重要的贡献。他的论文研究了南洋风格在国度文化身份认同上所扮演的角色。

随后在1997年，陈明杰题为“南洋艺术风格的进化：1930-1960年间的新加坡艺术的身份认同研究”将以上那些重点，和艺术上的进化，直接与新加坡人的身份认同、新加坡艺术历史，互相结合和联系。自从南洋艺术学院 (NAFA) 在1938年在新加坡成立以后，一大批所谓的南洋艺术家在这里展开了实践性的艺术生涯。因此，南洋的艺术故事，我们也可以这样地称呼为，新加坡在独立前的艺术历史的代名词。

十年以后，我发现有趣的是尽管南洋风格已经被解读在国家建设和国度文化的身份认同，南洋风格真正的意义却还没有被严谨地制定出来。在这种情况下，我开始去发掘南洋风格一词的艺术背景和其他正式的专用语，在瑟巴帕迪对于南洋风格一词提出各种不同的考量以后，我在论文中针对“风格”一词在艺术上的问题，诠释了一系列相关的称呼。在这么做的时候，我建议南洋风格可以包含以下这三种不同的“风格”，或把它们组合在不一样的艺术议题下。这些和“风格”有关的议题都在1950-1960年一直困扰这南洋艺术家。

第一个困扰的问题，就是各种由不同艺术门派融汇的而成的手法和模式，例如巴黎学校的现代艺术，还有这些上海艺术学校的传统水墨画的技巧。一个很好的例子就



是陈文希的画作，接近抽象的画风，他的画作并不能完全地被归类在“西方”或者是“中国”这两个正规的规范。第二个问题牵涉到了“南洋”一词和中国传统绘画之间的联系。在这个范畴里，陈宗瑞就为此而铺路，他用水彩画，油画，各项不一样的组合手法，结合中国传统水墨画来呈现。第三个问题就是牵涉到东南亚人以不同的方式，去传达和运用西方传统的绘画技巧。钟泗宾的“图像型”和刘抗画笔下淳朴的甘榜就是这些手法主要的例子。这是例子使到很多艺术家开始认识“南洋”，到底是怎么样的一个主题和表达方式。

南洋风格的定义，就好像其他的艺术风格一样，是可以继续地公开讨论与诠释。每一个看法当有与之相关且属实的背景作为论据，都可以帮助我们更全面地了解其艺术风格的产生和归类。在一些近期的报告中，怎么去定位南洋风格已经超越了仅仅是实践艺术的范畴，更是牵涉到现代化的概念、民族主义、移民潮、族群、各种因素的融合以及后殖民主义对于艺术创作潜移默化的影响。从这几个背景来分析南洋风格不只是重新建立我们对于实践艺术的认识，也参与了艺术历史的推进。

在2008年的《去国有化的现代南洋》为例子，阿末马沙迪 (Ahmad Mashadi) 把背景设置在更广阔的中国移民流落到南洋的历史中，考核南洋风格这个概念。因此也脱离了以“建立在新加坡”的叙述，把南洋风格移到了更广阔的视野。他指出，把南洋风格限制在国界上就忽略了文化组合的复杂性，南洋风格如果可以在一个开放的空间（超越国界）里被讨论的话，南洋风格就可以有更生动的框架下被解读。这些框架也研究了流散移民的流动性和他们在国度上的渗和。除了强调这个离散的背景，他也提醒我们去关注跨国的限制，使到南洋风格可以在中国移民到印尼或其他东南亚国家的画家的艺术上可以被解读。

随后，Yvonne Low在2010年写的《犹记南洋风格》中，提出马来亚的身份认同和南洋的身份认同在过去的一段时间是重叠的。因此她分析南洋风格是建立在个别不同的艺术家的背景上来诠释什么是本土性——无论是马来亚多元文化的角度亦或者是南海的“热带性”。在这么做的同时，她也强调了一点，在英语为主要媒介语的社会和以华语为主要媒介语的社会之间的文化差异是需要被注意的。

我分析“南洋”艺术作品和风格的报告，也向着这个更广阔的互相融合和流散的背景为基础，将这些实践艺术作品归类在两个不同的组：一个是他们在中国的先祖，还有他们在马来亚的家园。

我建议重新制定南洋风格里的“马来亚”或“南洋文化”，这对于一个经历流散而又集聚起来的社会背景而言，是一个必要的过程。这样，南洋风格才可以从一个过渡性的窘境中，展开讨论。

这些例子，虽然不周全，却提供我们一个更加宽阔的视野去讨论何为“南洋风格”。有趣的是，有许多关于南洋风格的诠释之间是相互不协调的，很多艺术评论家似乎更加倾向于南洋风格源于他们从中国而来的先人。这当中有四个被选出来的艺术家包括了，钟泗宾、陈文希、陈宗瑞和刘抗。在玛戈 (Marco Hsu)、皮耶鞅萨和瑟巴帕迪个别的叙述中，对于这些艺术家所扮演的关键作用有他们各别的组合方式。而后者曾在1953年的巴厘岛艺术之旅展览后被艺术界人士成为“四大才子”之一。当我们需要去理解什么是南洋风格的时候，这些艺术作品的研究工作就会很有建设性。最后，我想提出一些还没有在马来西亚被特别提出的艺术家，他们包括了许振第、叶之威、陈世集、张荔英、林木化和蔡名智。他们的作品无疑在形式上还是在内容上，都对南洋或马来西亚的艺术领域作出了贡献。





LOOKING BACK

Gathering of artists, 1956



Standing: Chuah Thean Teng (third from right), Tsue Ta Tee (second from right), Tan Choon Ghee (right)
Seated: (from left to right) May Fong Sien, Kuo Ju Ping, Loh Cheng Chuan, Lim Hak Tai, Cheong Soo Pieng and wife



Lee Cheng Yong (4th from right) as a member of Penang Museum Art Gallery Committee, 1965



Kuo Ju Ping with some young artists in front of his shop.



Photo of Kuo Ju Ping, with daughter, Roslyn and Tan Choon Ghee



Lee Cheng Yong Solo Exhibition, 1960



Lee Cheng Yong at work.



Khoo Sui Hoe visits Chen Wen Hsi's studio, Singapore, 1981



Tan Choon Ghee at ABN Bank Charity Art Exhibition, 1991



美香飯店

泰興旅店

泰興信局

中西
茶室

廣源旅館

悅南客棧

福興和參茸藥材

代辦
陸軍醫院

金日城加





KUO JU PING

郭若萍

View Of Kapitan Keling Mosque

undated

oil on board

59 x 47.5cm

EXHIBITED

Kuo Ju Ping Memorial Exhibition,
Penang State Art Gallery, 1997;
illustrated on exhibition catalogue, p33

PROVENANCE

Private Collection, Penang



KUO JU PING
郭若萍

Hot Afternoon
c.1950s
oil on board
45 x 37.5cm

Signed (lower left)

EXHIBITED
Kuo Ju Ping Memorial Exhibition,
Penang State Art Gallery, 1997;
illustrated on exhibition catalogue, p33

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



TAN CHOON GHEE
陈存義

Street Scene
1983
ink & watercolour on rice paper
43 x 50cm

Signed and dated in Chinese
with one seal of the artist
(lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



TAN CHOON GHEE
陈存義

Street Hawkers

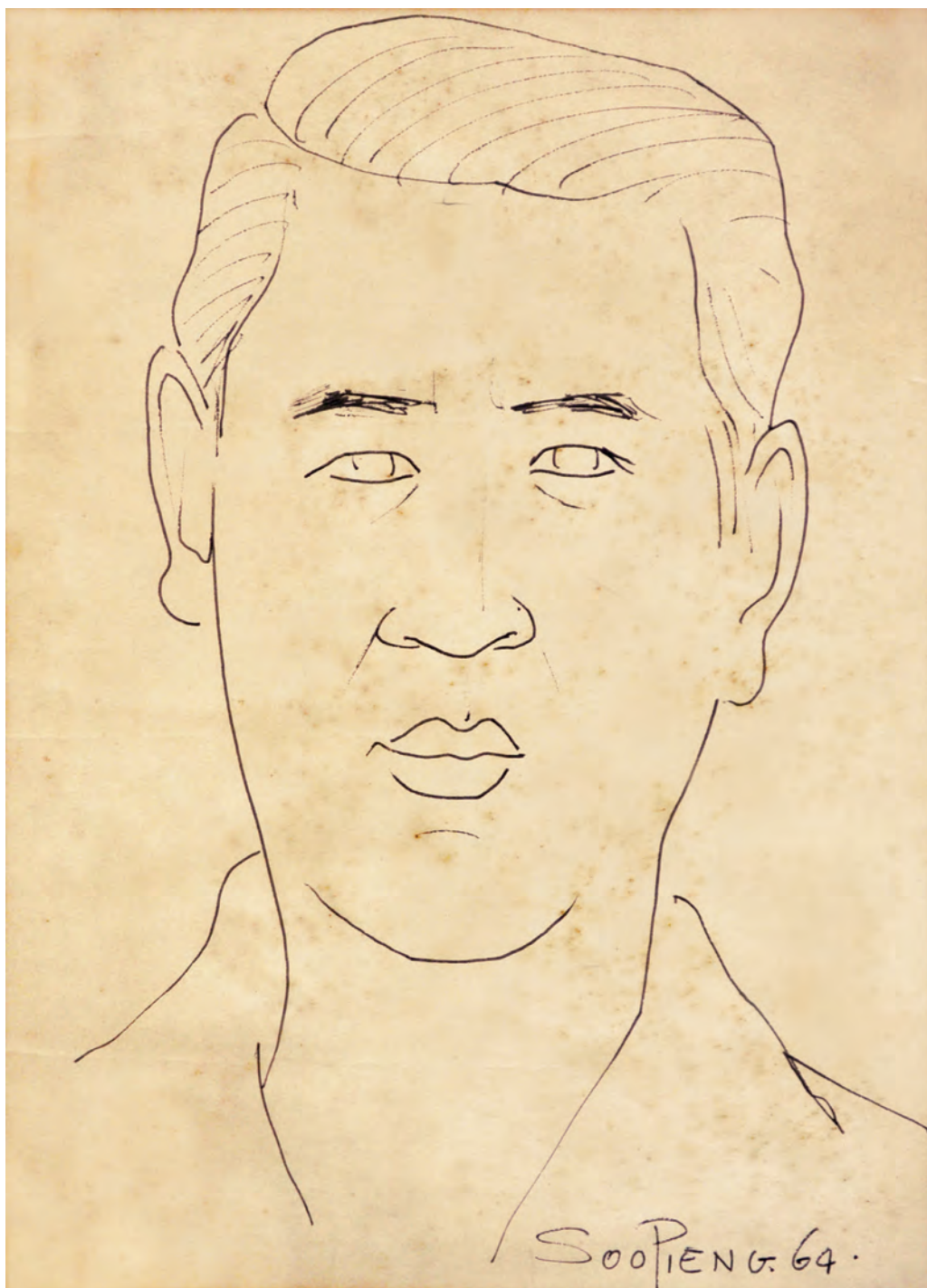
1984

ink & watercolour on rice paper

42 x 70cm

Signed and dated in Chinese
with one seal of the artist
(upper left)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



CHEONG SOO PIENG
钟泗宾

Portrait
1964
ink on paper
36 x 26cm

Signed and dated
'SOO PIENG 64'
(lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Selangor



LEE CHENG YONG
李清庸

Encik Ali
1959
mixed media on paper
36 x 26.5cm

Signed and dated
'LEE CY 59'
(lower right)

EXHIBITED
Lee Cheng Yong Retrospective Exhibition,
Penang State Art Gallery, 1996;
illustrated on exhibition catalogue, p25

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



LEE CHENG YONG
李清庸

Mother And Child
1959
mixed media on paper
36 x 25cm

Signed and dated
'LEE CY 59'
(lower left)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



LEE CHENG YONG
李清庸

To The Market
undated
mixed media on paper
34 x 24cm

Signed (lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



LEE CHENG YONG
李清庸

Satay Seller
undated
mixed media on paper
35 x 24cm

Signed (lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



LEE CHENG YONG
李清庸

Abstract
undated
pastel on paper
35 x 25.5cm

Signed (lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang





LEE CHENG YONG
李清庸

Apples And Pears
1958
watercolour on paper
46 x 62cm

Signed and dated
'LEE CY 58'
(lower left)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



KHAW SIA
许西亚

Orchids
undated
watercolour on paper
55 x 38cm

Signed in Chinese with
one seal of the artist
(lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



YONG MUN SEN
杨曼生

Blue Flowers
1954
watercolour on paper
64.5 x 50cm

Signed (lower left)

EXHIBITED
Yong Mun Sen Retrospective 1999,
Penang State Art Gallery, 1999;
illustrated on exhibition catalogue, p68

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



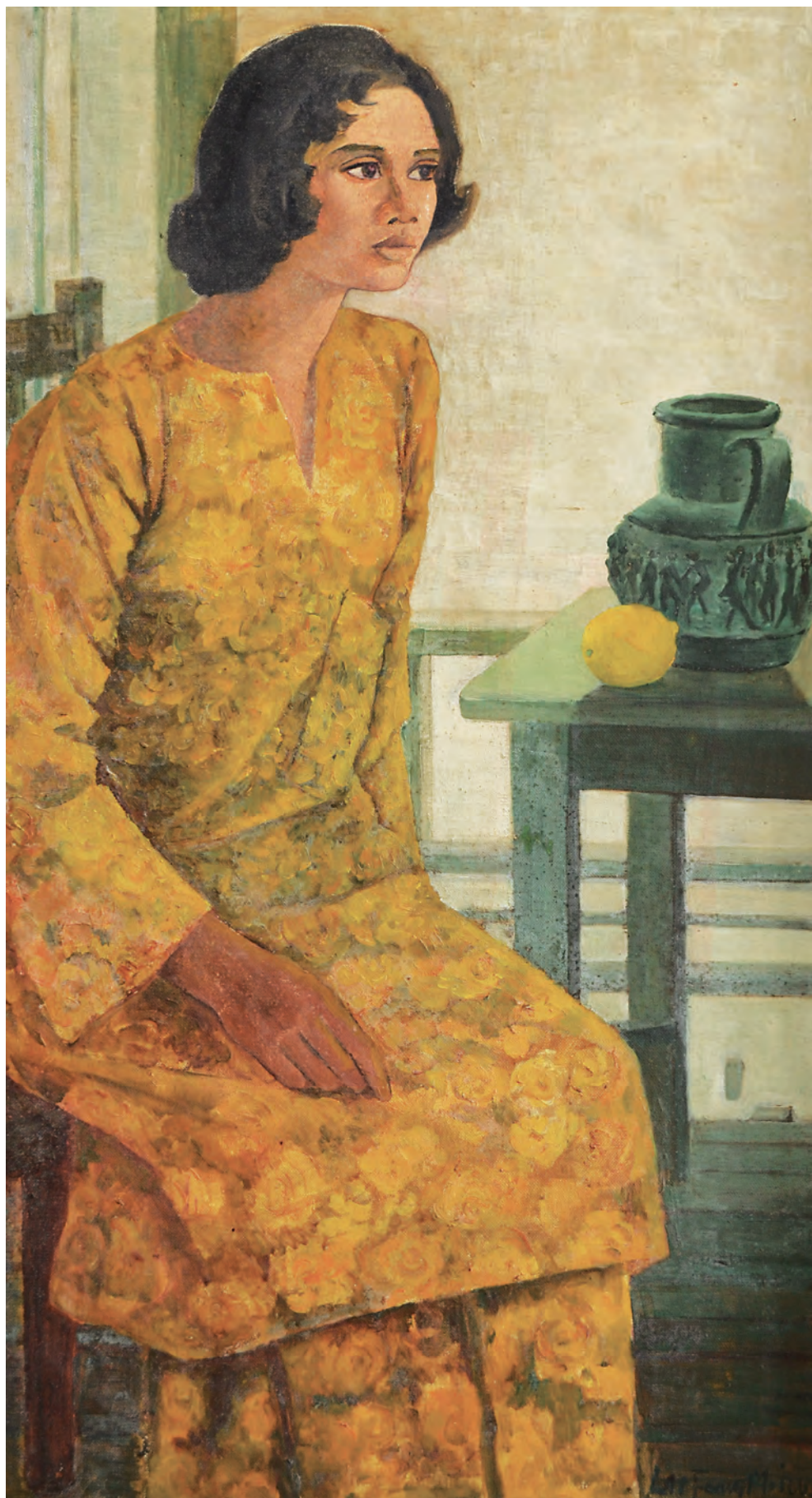
LEE CHENG YONG
李清庸

Bouquet Of Flowers
undated
oil on board
53.5 x 42.5cm

Signed (lower left)

EXHIBITED
Lee Cheng Yong Retrospective Exhibition,
Penang State Art Gallery, 1996;
illustrated on exhibition catalogue, p29

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



LAI FOONG MOI
赖凤美

Lady
1966
oil on canvas
98.5 x 51cm

Signed and dated
'LAI FOONG MOI 66'
(lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang





LEE CHENG YONG
李清庸

Nude Lady
c. 1960s
oil on board
56 x 86cm

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



LEE LONG LOOI
李龙雷

Untitled
1985
oil on canvas
80 x 60cm

Signed and dated
'Long Looi Lee 1985'
(centre right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang

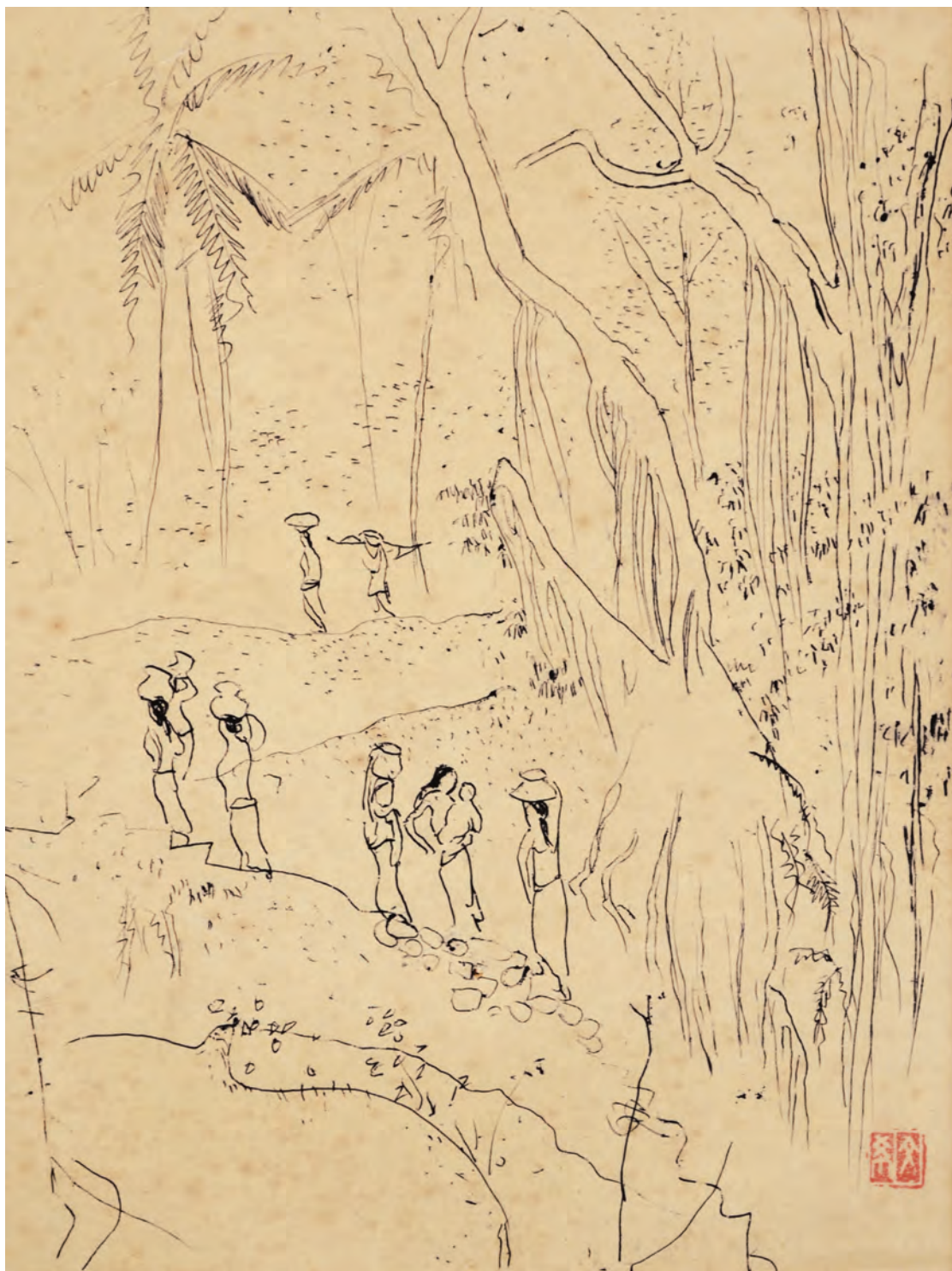


TAY CHEE TOH
郑志道

Sarawakian Woman
undated
ink & colour on rice paper
94 x 44cm

Signed in Chinese with
one seal of the artist
(lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Selangor



CHEN WEN HSI
陈文希

Bali Scene
c. 1950s
ink on paper
29.5 x 22.5cm

One seal of the artist
(lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Kuala Lumpur

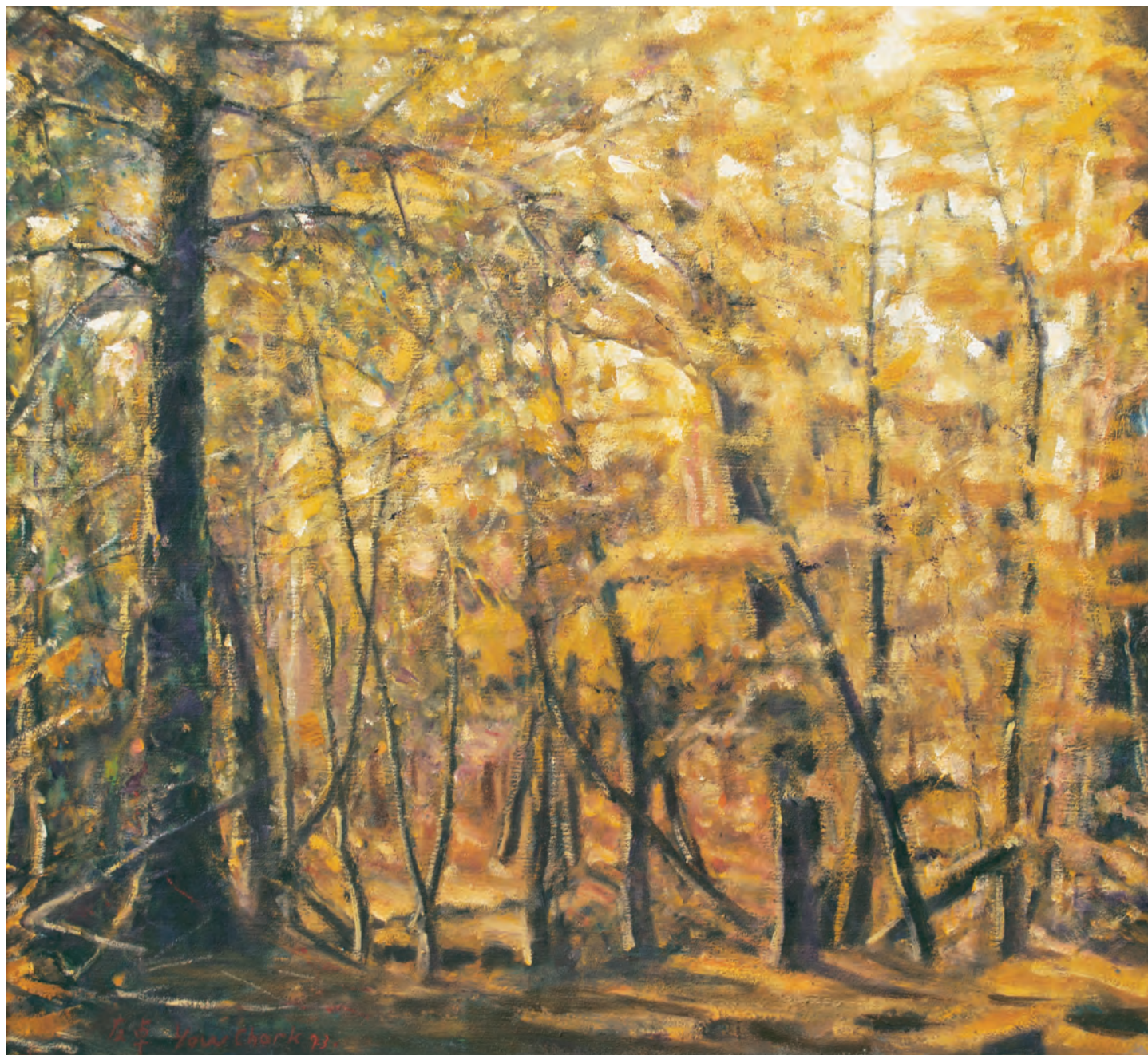


CHEN WEN HSI
陈文希

Bali Scene
c.1950s
ink on paper
22.5 x 29.5cm

One seal of the artist
(lower left)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Kuala Lumpur

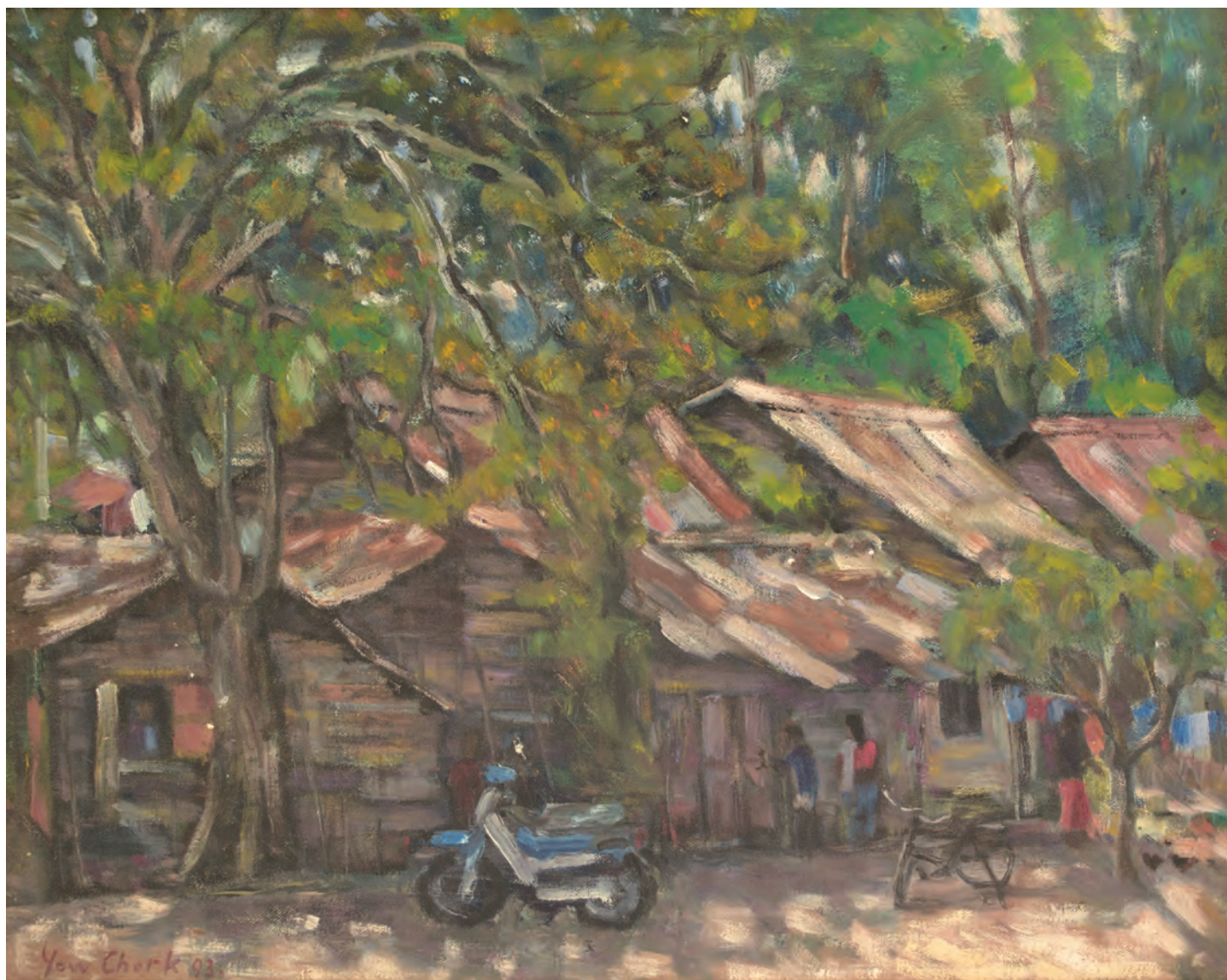


FUNG YOW CHORK
范友卓

Forest Light
1993
oil on canvas
55 x 60cm

Signed and dated
'友卓 Yow Chork 93'
(lower left)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



FUNG YOW CHORK
范友卓

Village Scene
1993
oil on canvas
40 x 50cm

Signed and dated
'Yow Chork 93'
(lower left)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



TAN CHOON GHEE
陈存义

Busy Street Scene
1979
ink on rice paper
47 x 70cm

Signed and dated
in Chinese and English
with one seal of the artist
(lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



TAN CHOON GHEE
陈存義

Bustling Street Scene

1980

ink and watercolour on rice paper

44 x 67.5cm

Signed and dated
in Chinese and English
with one seal of the artist
(lower left)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



ENG TAY
戴荣才

The Gathering
1982
etching, artist's proof
44 x 60cm

Inscribed 'a/p' (lower left)
titled 'The Gathering' (lower centre)
signed and dated (lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang

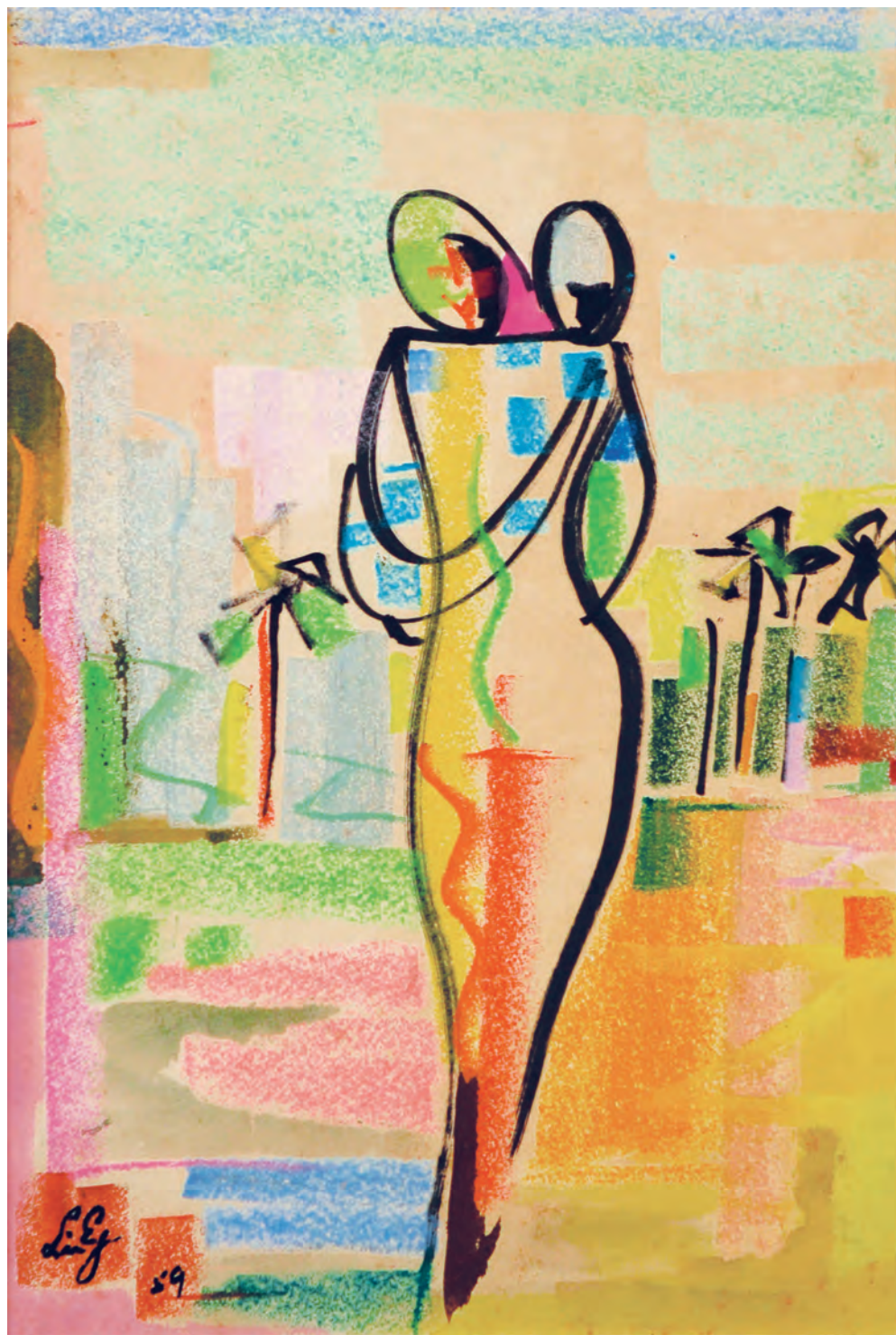


TEU NAI TONG
张耐冬

Rubber Tapper Ladies
undated
oil on canvas
60 x 90cm

Signed (lower left)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang

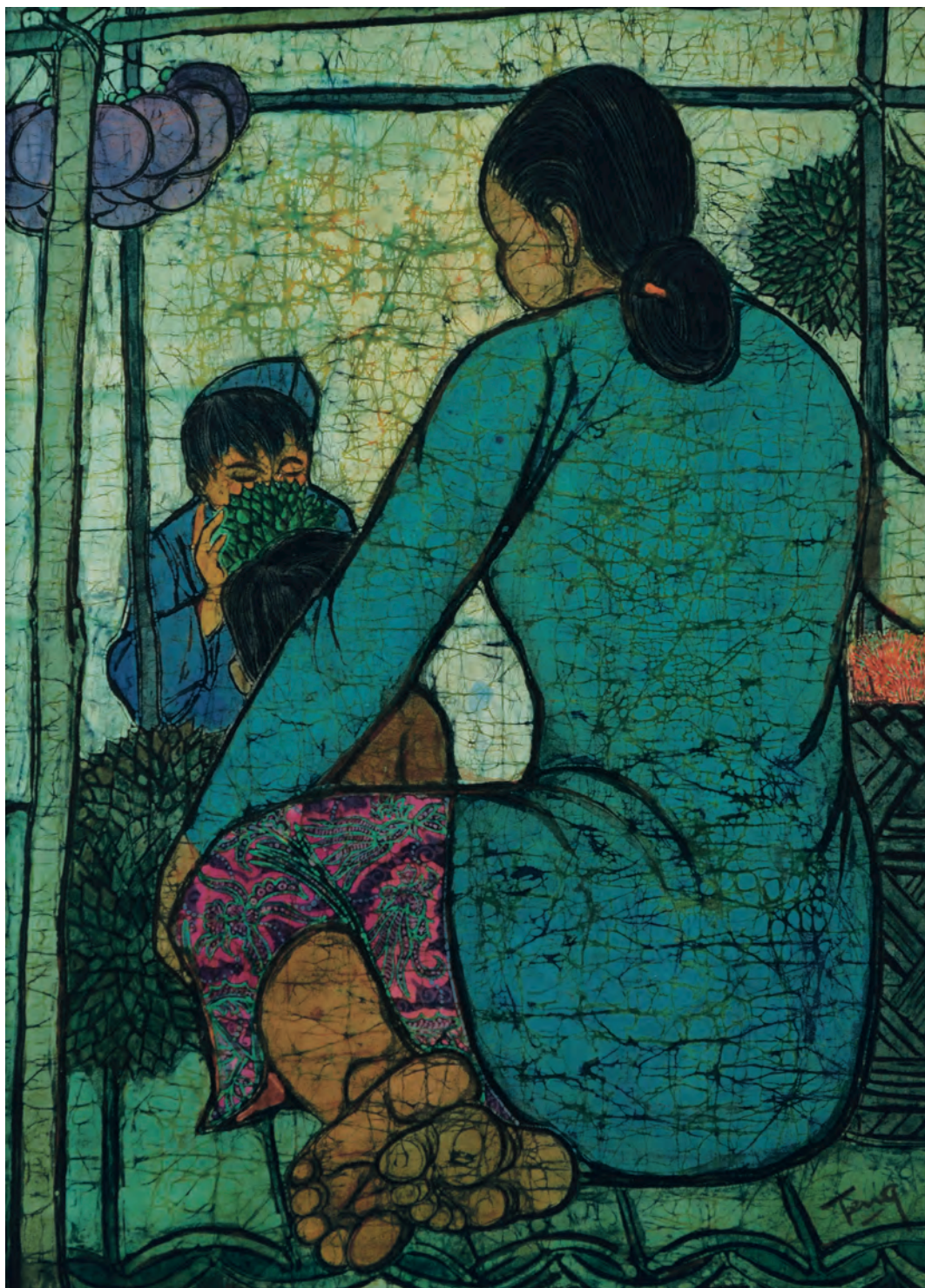


LEE CHENG YONG
李清庸

Family
1959
mixed media on paper
35 x 24cm

Signed and dated
'LEE CY 59'
(lower left)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



CHUAH THEAN TENG, DATO'
蔡天定

Fruits Seller
undated
batik
60 x 44cm

Signed (lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



ENG TAY
戴荣才

Awaiting Festival I
1993
etching, artist's proof
60 x 75cm

Inscribed 'a/p', titled
'Awaiting Festival' (lower left)
signed and dated (lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang

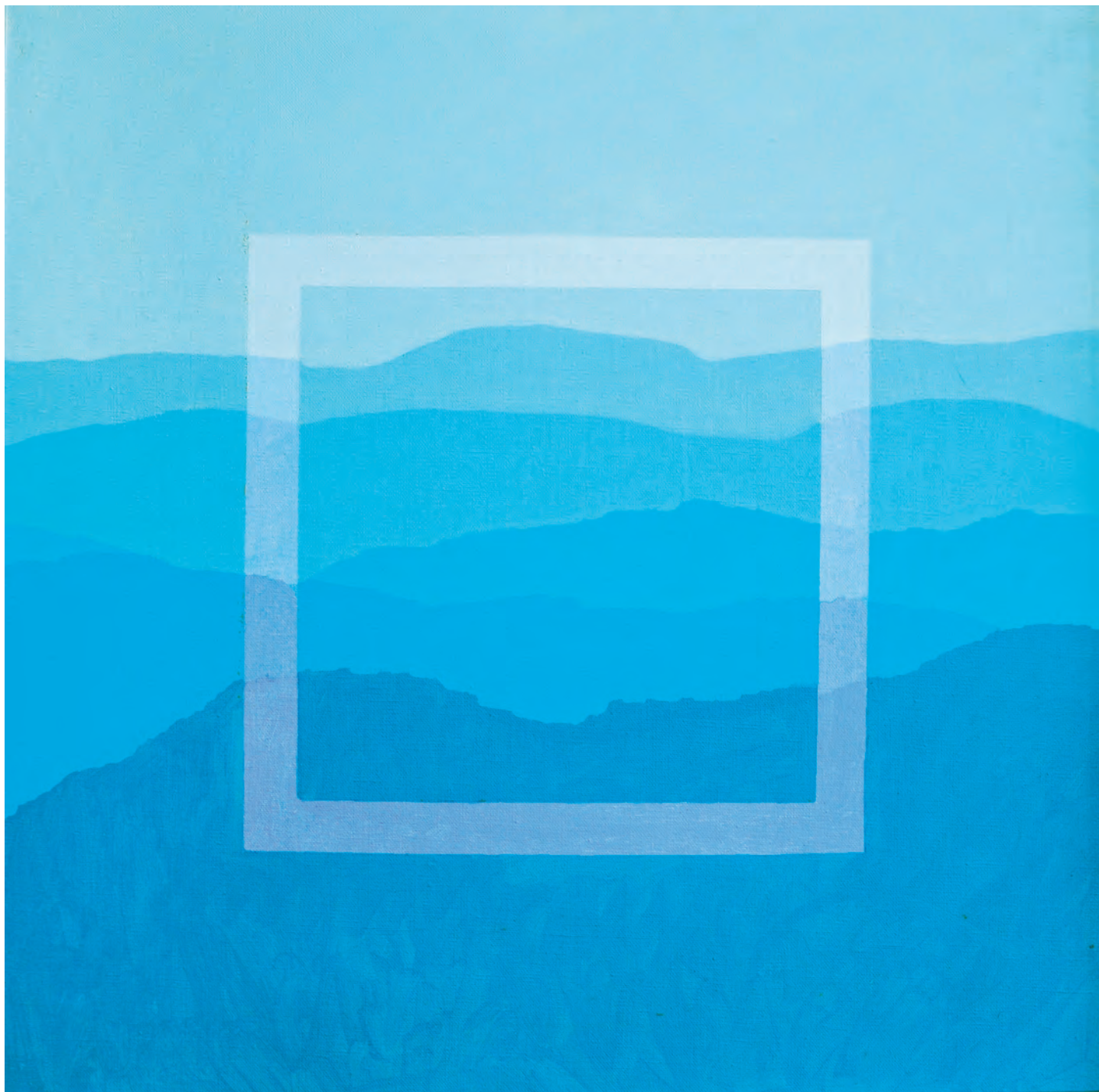


ENG TAY
戴荣才

Grace
1992
etching, artist's proof
60 x 75cm

Inscribed 'a/p' (lower left)
titled 'Grace' (lower centre)
signed and dated (lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



KHOO SUI HOE
丘瑞河

Cameron Highlands Series
undated
oil on canvas
diptych, 55 x 55cm each



Signed (lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



CHIA YU CHIAN
谢玉谦

Village
undated
ink & colour on rice paper
45 x 61cm

Signed in Chinese with
one seal of the artist
(lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



CHIA YU CHIAN
谢玉谦

By The Shore
1981
oil on canvas
45 x 55cm

Signed and dated
'Yu Chian 1981'
(lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Selangor



TEO NAI TONG
张耐冬

Hokkien
undated
oil on board
29 x 70cm

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Kuala Lumpur



TEW NAI TONG
张耐冬

Singapore
2000
oil on canvas
49 x 49cm

Signed (lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Kuala Lumpur



CHEN WEN HSI
陈文希

Chickens
undated
ink & colour on rice paper
mounted on scroll
34 x 33cm

Signed in Chinese with
one seal of the artist
(upper right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Selangor



CHEN WEN HSI
陈文希

Untitled
undated
ink & colour on rice paper
64 x 52cm

Signed in Chinese with
one seal of the artist
(upper right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Selangor



CHEN WEN HSI
陈文希

Untitled (Finger Painting)
undated
ink & colour on rice paper
65 x 48cm

Signed and inscribed
in Chinese with
one seal of the artist
(upper left)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Selangor



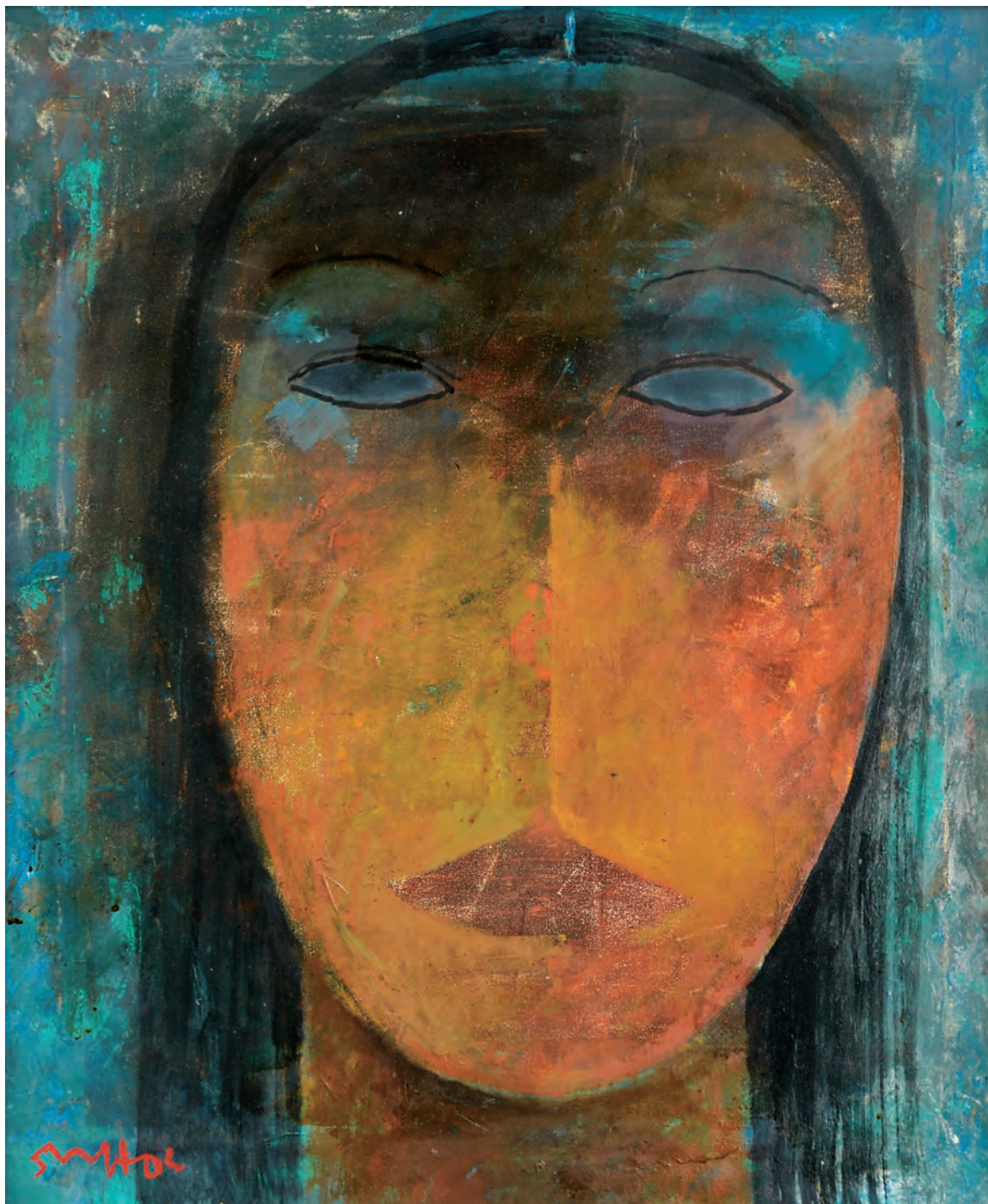
CHEN WEN HSI
陈文希

Fishes 仿古画鱼
undated
ink & colour on rice paper
59 x 117cm



Signed and inscribed
in Chinese with
one seal of the artist
(lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang

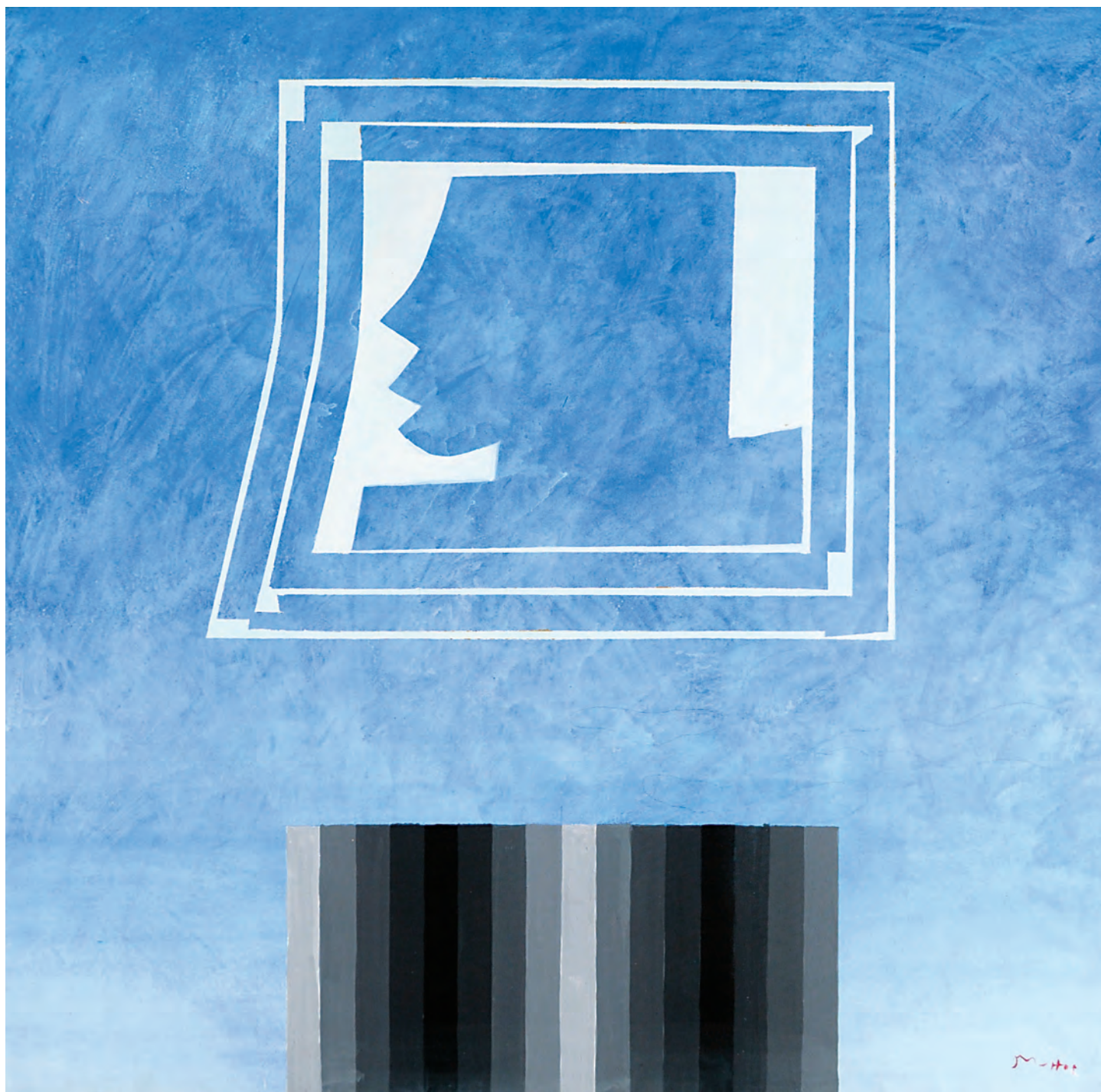


KHOO SUI HOE
丘瑞河

Girl
1996
oil on canvas
60 x 50cm

Signed (lower left)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Negeri Sembilan



KHOO SUI HOE
丘瑞河

Side Portrait, Keytone
undated
oil on canvas
81 x 81cm

Signed (lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



LEE CHENG YONG
李清庸

Self-Portrait
1939
oil on board
45.5 x 34.5cm

EXHIBITED
Lee Cheng Yong Retrospective Exhibition,
Penang State Art Gallery, 1996;
illustrated on exhibition catalogue, p19

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



LEE JOO FOR
烈如火

Portrait
1990
mixed media on paper
60 x 83cm

Signed and dated
'John Lee 90'
(lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



YONG MUN SEN
杨曼生

The Scholars
c.1946 - 1955
oil on canvas
56.5 x 46.5cm

Signed (lower left)

EXHIBITED
Yong Mun Sen Retrospective 1999,
Penang State Art Gallery, 1999;
illustrated on exhibition catalogue, p34

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



LEE CHENG YONG
李清庸

Lover's Island
undated
oil on canvas
44 x 60cm

Signed (lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



FUNG YOW CHORK
范友卓

Malacca River
1984
oil on canvas
32 x 43cm

Signed and dated
'Yow Chork 84'
(lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Negeri Sembilan



LEE CHENG YONG
李清庸

Untitled
undated
oil on canvas laid on board
33 x 44cm

Signed (lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Negeri Sembilan



TEW NAI TONG
张耐冬

Boats
undated
oil on canvas
64 x 64cm

Signed (lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



TAN CHOON GHEE
陈存義

Boats
1964
ink & watercolour on paper
39 x 31cm

Signed and dated
'TAN 1964'
(lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



HO KHAY BENG
何溪鸣

Fishing Boat
1975
oil on canvas
60 x 75cm

Signed and dated
'BENG' 75'
(lower left)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang

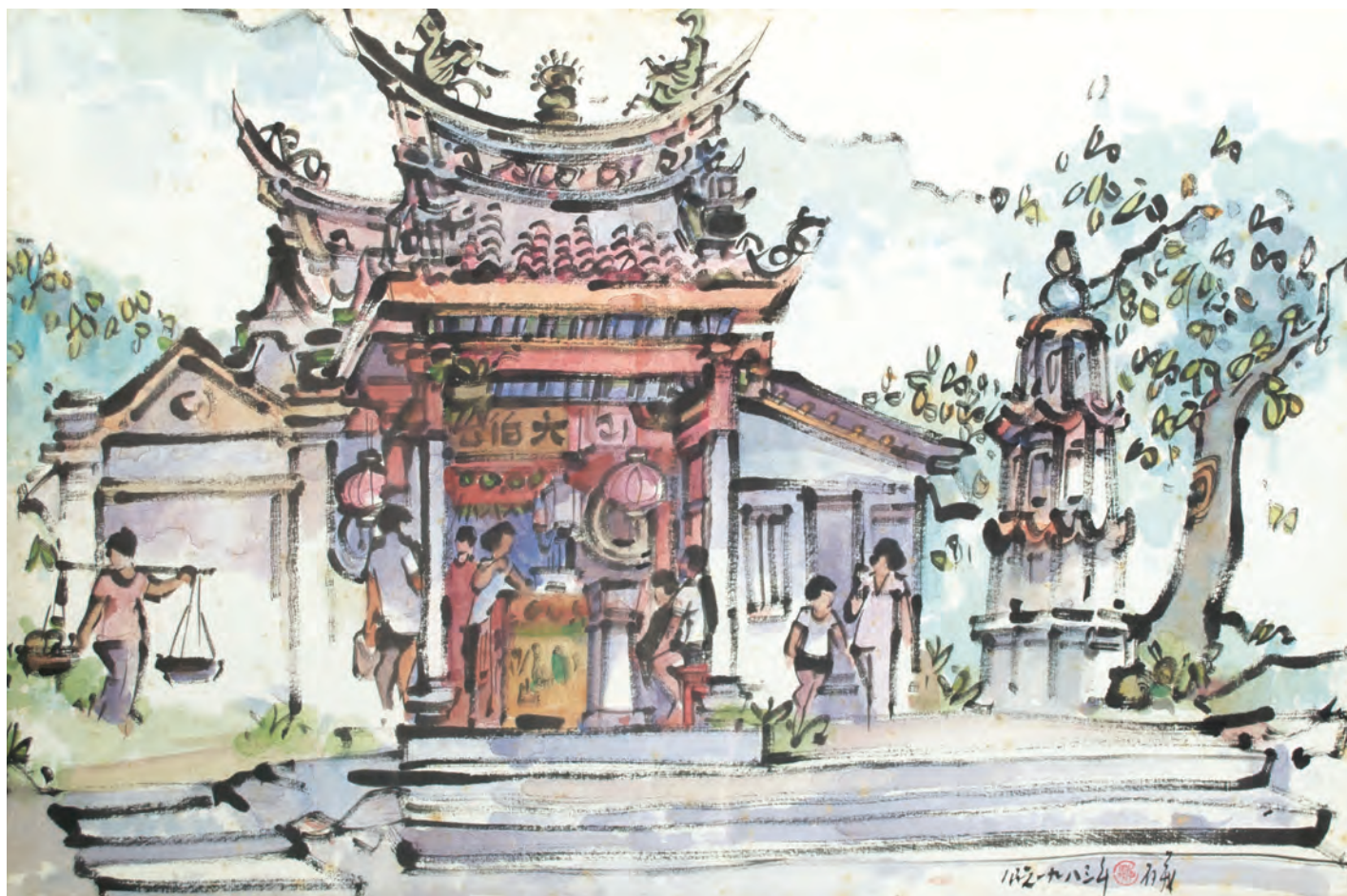


TAN CHOON GHEE
陈存義

Temple
1988
watercolour on paper
55 x 36cm

Signed and dated
'CHOON GHEE 1988'
(lower left)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



TAN CHOON GHEE
陈存義

Temple
1983
ink & watercolour on rice paper
45 x 69cm

Signed and dated
in Chinese with
one seal of the artist
(lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang





KHAW SIA
许西亚

Temple
1962
watercolour on paper
50 x 66.5cm

Signed and dated
'Khaw Sia 1962'
(lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



YONG MUN SEN
杨曼生

Rocks On A Riverbed
1952
watercolour on paper
49 x 64cm

Signed and dated
'MUN SEN 52'
(lower right)

EXHIBITED
Yong Mun Sen Retrospective 1999,
Penang State Art Gallery, 1999;
illustrated on exhibition catalogue, p66

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



YONG MUN SEN
杨曼生

Untitled
1952
watercolour on paper
37 x 55cm

Signed and dated
'MUN SEN 1952'
(lower left)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



TAN CHOON GHEE
陈存義

Market Scene
1962
ink on paper
52 x 36cm

Signed and dated
'TAN 1962' with
one seal of the artist
(lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang



YONG MUN SEN
杨曼生

Buffalo
1953
watercolour on paper
50 x 64cm

Signed and dated
'MUN SEN 1953'
(lower left)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Penang





CHIA YU CHIAN
谢玉谦

Malayan Life
1958-1962
oil on canvas
47 x 120cm

Signed, dated and inscribed
'Yu Chian 1958-1962 Kuala Lumpur'
(lower right)

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Selangor





10 FACTS ABOUT ARTISTS



CHEN WEN HSI 陈文希

- Born in Baigong Village, Jieyang County, near Shantou, Guangdong Province, China in 1906
- Enrolled in the Shanghai College of Art in 1928 and transferred to Xin Hua Art Academy and graduated in 1932
- Taught at South China College in Shantou, China from 1946 to 1947
- Lectured at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts from 1951 to 1959
- As a child, Chen Wen Hsi walked half an hour to school and on his way befriended sparrows, chicks, geese and ducks
- Looked up to house painters of his village and admired their wood work of traditional bird and flower designs
- Obtained paint by crushing coloured rocks and by using vegetable dyes during his childhood
- His father, a scholarly landowner in a village of 300 passed away when he was 15 and he moved to Shanghai at the age of 19 to pursue art education
- Learned finger painting from the great Chinese artist Pan Tianshou
- Known to rear a pet gibbon in his garden upon arriving in Singapore in 1948 which eventually turned into six

CHEONG SOO PIENG 钟泗宾

- Born in Xianmen, Fujian Province, China in 1917
- Enrolled into Xianmen Academy of Fine Arts from 1933 to 1935 and studied under Lim Hak Tai, one of the founders of the school who later established the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA)
- Furthered studies at the Xin Hua Art Academy in 1936
- Arrived in Singapore in 1946 at the age of 29
- Taught at NAFA in 1947
- Traveled to Bali with Chen Wen Hsi, Chen Chong Swee and Liu Kang in 1952 for an inspirational trip hosted by Belgian artist Adrien-Jean Le Mayeur de Merpres and his wife Ni Pollok where he created over 300 sketches
- His wife Huang Li Zhen and two sons arrived in Singapore in mid 1950s
- Traveled to Borneo and produced many sketches in 1959
- Turned full-time artist in 1961 and traveled to Europe between 1961 and 1963
- Died of heart failure on 1 July 1983 months before his retrospective exhibition at the National Museum Art Gallery, Singapore

CHIA YU CHIAN 谢玉谦

- Born in Kota Tinggi, Johor on 1 September 1936
- Attended Pei Wah Primary School in Johor
- Enrolled into Singapore Chinese High School
- Attended Christ Church English School, Singapore
- Learnt the French language at the Alliance Francaise de Singapour, Singapore before attending L'Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris
- Took up personal art trainings with Chen Wen Hsi
- First artist in Malaysia to be awarded with a French government scholarship to study art at the Ecole Nationale des Beaux Arts de Paris from 1959 to 1962
- Established his first studio in Paris at 20, Rue du Sommerard Latin Quarter-Sorbonne in 1959
- Commissioned to create a grand mural titled *Life in Malaysia* for the Malaysian High Commission in Paris, France
- Received Honourable Mentions in the Salon des Indépendants and Société des Artistes Français in Paris

CHUAH THEAN TENG 蔡天定

- Born in Jinjiang, Fujian Province in China on 22 April 1912
- The “Master of Batik” was also known as Zhu Teng
- Attended primary school at Leong Kang in 1921 and Fong Cheng secondary school in Fujian in 1926
- Visited Penang in 1928 to help his father with handicrafts trading and food supplies business
- Enrolled into Amoy Academy of Art in China in 1932 but was withdrawn shortly after due to typhus fever
- Worked as a sales clerk, secretary, street peddler prior to becoming an art teacher in Muar, Kedah and Kelantan between 1930 and 1944
- Began experimenting with batik from 1936 onwards
- Married Chong Swee Lean, a fellow teacher in 1943
- Yahong gallery or Coconut Breeze (a literal meaning from a Chinese proverb) was established at 31B, Leith Street in Penang in 1953
- Taught art including batik at Chung Ling High School, Penang in 1959. In the same year, he became the first Malayan artist to exhibit in a major art show sponsored by the government at the Commonwealth Institute in the UK.

ENG TAY 戴荣才

- Born in Kedah in 1947
- A student of Lee Long Looi in secondary school
- Moved to New York City to study at The Art Students League in 1968
- Graduated from The School Of Visual Arts in 1972 as a graphic designer and worked in the graphic arts field until 1978
- Traveled on painting trips throughout South America and to Indonesia from 1978 until 1980
- These trips formed a basis for the scenes and moments that became his theme – images of people playing music, family moments and interactions, market scenes and daily rituals
- Eng Tay resides in Soho, New York City, with wife - Professor Anne Pike-Tay, son - Brendan Yi-Fu, and daughter - Hannah Ling. Travels extensively to Asia and Europe
- He continues to paint, sculpt and make etchings at his TriBeCa studio
- He created a public sculpture located at Kiaraville Complex in Mont Kiara, Kuala Lumpur
- He has exhibited over 50 solo shows internationally to date

FUNG YOW CHORK 范友卓

- Born in Canton, China in 1918
- Migrated to Singapore in 1933 and moved to Malaysia the following year
- A self-taught artist
- Influenced by Chong Pai Mu who taught at Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts
- During his early years in Kuala Lumpur, he worked as a salesman, shop assistant and typesetter at a Chinese newspaper
- Painted on Sundays, public holidays and more often upon retirement in 1977
- Founder member of Thursday Art Group and later Wednesday Art Group
- A member of the Selangor Art Society, Singapore Art Society and Malaysian Artists Association
- Known as the Cezanne of Melati Flats in Pudu area where he used to live
- Passed away in 2013 at the age of 95

HO KHAY BENG 何溪鸣

- Born in Penang in 1933
- His interest in art was ignited by pioneer artist Kuo Ju Ping and enrolled into Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts from 1956 to 1958 and was taught by Lim Hak Tai, Cheong Soo Pieng and Chen Wen Hsi
- Taught art at Han Chiang High School, Penang from 1958
- Held his first solo exhibition at Chin Kang Association, Penang in 1965 and used the sales proceeds to fund his art education in Italy
- Attended the Academy of Fine Art in Rome, Italy from 1965 to 1967
- Invited to exhibit his work at the National Art Gallery in Rome, Italy in 1967
- He was awarded six gold and silver medals in national and international competitions between 1965 and 1968
- Appointed vice president of the Penang Art Society from 1970 to 1975
- His works had been exhibited in Singapore, Hong Kong, Australia, India, Spain, Switzerland, France, Italy and United States
- He has painted portraits of iconic figures like Sultan Ahmad Shah; Tunku Abdul Rahman; Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamed and his wife Tun Dr. Siti Hasmah; and China's great artist Qi Baishi

KHAW SIA 许西亚

- Born in China in 1913
- Attended Xin Hua Art Academy in Shanghai from 1925 to 1932
- Received private art lessons from Sir Russell Flint in England in 1933
- While in England, he was greatly inspired by William Turner and John Constable
- Migrated to Penang in 1937
- Taught art at Chung Ling High School in Penang in 1949 until 1958 and taught at Penang Chinese Girls High School
- He was known to be the first Malaysian artist to visit Bali in 1954 following the historical trip by Cheong Soo Pieng, Chen Wen Hsi, Chen Chong Swee and Liu Kang two years before
- Prior to Bali trip he signed his works at 'SIA-' or 'SIA' and after the trip to 'K.SIA' particularly after 1957
- Also known to sign his work in full cursive script of 'Khaw Sia'
- An expert in the cultivation of orchids, he was a member of the American Orchid Society

KHOO SUI HOE 丘瑞河

- Born in Kedah in 1939
- Known as Khoo Swee Hoe, Khoo Sui-Ho and Khoo Sui Hoe
- Attended Han Chiang High School in Penang
- Took up a job as a concrete labourer upon arriving in Singapore in the late 1950s
- A graduate of the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts class of 1961
- Taught by Georgette Chen and Cheong Soo Pieng
- Established the Alpha Singapore Gallery in 1972 with seven other artists and Alpha Utara Gallery, Penang in 2004
- Attended Pratt Institute in New York under the John D Rockefeller III grant in 1974
- Founder of Utara Group art collective in 1977
- Migrated to Houston, Texas in 1982 and then moved to Little Rocks, Arkansas in 1996

KUO JU PING 郭若萍

- Born Koay Seng Chye in Fukien, China in 1913
- Changed his name to Kuo Ju Ping after a water plant for good fortune
- Migrated to Penang with his parents as a teenager and attended Chung Ling High School
- Enrolled to Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and was among the first batch of graduates in 1940
- Managed his family business 'Sin Guan Thye Co', an import/export goods trading company in rattan, cloves and nutmegs
- Offered art tuitions in his spare time to high schools in Penang such as Chung Ling, Union, Li Tek and Han Chiang
- Influenced by Chinese artist Xu Beihong whom he had met in Penang in 1941
- One of the founding members of the Penang Chinese Art Club in 1935
- Instrumental in introducing Chong Pai Mu to the art scene in Penang
- He mentored Tan Choon Ghee, one of his most successful students

LEE CHENG YONG 李清庸

- Born on 26 March 1913 in China
- Held two solo exhibitions in his lifetime, in 1932 and 1960 and another two posthumously in 1996 in Penang
- Co-founded the Penang Chinese Art Club with Yong Mun Sen and was elected President
- Attended Xin Hua Art Academy in Shanghai
- He was inspired by the works of Paul Gauguin, Vincent van Gogh, Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, Emil Nolde, James Ensor, Max Ernst, Wassily Kandinsky, Carlo Carra, Giorgio Morendi, Renato Guttuso and many other Western modern painters
- Taught art at Chung Ling High School in Penang
- Commissioned to create sculptures of lion and the mythical creature 'kilin' at Hotel Royal on Newton Road in Singapore
- Commissioned to paint 9 abstract murals for the chain of Hotel Royal in Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Korea, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and India
- He was married to Tan Wan Kheng and they bore 4 children together
- He was reclusive and melancholic particularly after the demise of his wife in 1964

LEE JOO FOR 烈如火

- Born in Penang in 1929
- Also known as John
- Awarded a scholarship by the Malaysian government to study art at Brighton College of Art, England in 1957
- Founded Malaysia Art Circle at Malaysia Hall in London in 1961
- Furthered education at Camberwell School of Art in 1962 followed by Royal College of Art in London in 1963
- Migrated to Australia in 1973 and Currently resides in Melbourne
- Besides painting, he is skilled in sculpture and printmaking techniques such as woodcut, linocut, etching and lithograph
- A multi-disciplinary talent, he is an artist, art critic, educator, novelist and a playwright
- Held solo exhibitions at London Commonwealth Institute in 1960, International Institute, New York in 1969 and Samat Gallery, Kuala Lumpur in 1971
- He was honoured two retrospective exhibitions in Penang in 1995 and 2008

LEE LONG LOOI 李龙雷

- Born in Kedah in 1942
- Attended Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts during which Lim Yew Kuan (Lim Hak Tai's son) was Principal
- Upon graduation in 1964, he taught at Sin Min High School and Keat Hwa High School in Kedah and among his students were Eng Tay and Lye Yau Fatt
- Attended the Arts Student League, USA in 1970 followed by Pratt Institute Graphic Program in New York in 1973
- After tragic fall which injured his wrist in 1984, he was unable to paint expressively but there was a blessing in disguise when he discovered a new medium to work with: a combination of soft oil pastel and oil paint with watercolour, ink and acrylic
- Resided and practiced art in the USA for over 40 years
- Established himself as a well-known artist in the USA and own properties in Miami, Florida and in Chatham, New Jersey
- Inspired by Andy Warhol, Henri Matisse and Constantin Brancusi among other Western artists
- In 1980, while exhibiting at a mall in Miami, he saw Gloria Estefan performed at the Miami Sound Machine and her niece bought one of his paintings and presented it to the pop star
- A follower of Taoism, the tranquility of his artworks are influenced by the art of Zen meditation

LAI FOONG MOI 赖凤美

- Born in Seremban, Negeri Sembilan in 1931
- Enrolled at Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts from 1950 to 1953
- Awarded a scholarship by the French Government to study at Ecole Nationale des Beaux Arts de Paris in Paris, France from 1954 to 1958
- The first Malaysian-born woman artist to study art in Paris and was influenced by Post-Impressionism
- Emerged in the Malayan art scene as one of the few women artists in the 1950s
- Held a teaching position at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA) from 1958 until 1994
- She invited Professor Chapelain Midy, her lecturer at Ecole Nationale des Beaux Arts de Paris to visit NAFA
- Participated in group exhibitions Salon de Mai and Salon Autumn in Paris between 1954 and 1958
- Known for her iconic portrait study of an elderly Chinese San Sui construction worker dated 1967 in the collection of National Visual Arts Gallery, Malaysia which represents the working class
- Died in Singapore in 1995

TAN CHOON GHEE 陈存義

- Born in Penang in 1930
- Attended Chung Ling High School and graduated in 1948
- Enrolled to Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts from 1949 to 1951 with the influence of his mentor Kuo Ju Ping
- Attended the Slade School of Fine Art in London, United Kingdom from 1957 to 1959
- Renowned for his skilful watercolour and ink rendition of Penang streetscapes and observation of his European travels
- Boarded the transatlantic ocean liner Queen Elizabeth 2 in 1992 and sketched frequently on the cruise ship
- Participated in a group charity art exhibition by ABN Bank in 1991
- Painted scenes of Amsterdam for KLM and was selected by the British government to paint Carcosa, the official residence of the British High Commissioner before the building was handed over to the Malaysian government
- The Penang State Art Gallery recently acquired 35 sketchbooks of Tan Choon Ghee spanning half a century and displayed them in an exhibition titled A Lifetime of Drawings in May 2014
- His characteristics was described as “reserved, humbled and self-disparaging”

TAY CHEE TEOH 郑志道

- Born in Johor in 1941
- Studied at a Chinese school in Johor before moving to Singapore to attend the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA) from 1958 to 1960
- Mentored by Cheong Soo Pieng at NAFA
- Recipient of the Cultural Medallion Award conferred by the Government of Singapore in 1985
- Held his first solo exhibition at the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Kuching, Sarawak in 1966
- Studied the culture of indigenous Dayaks which influenced his thematic and stylistic ventures featuring Dayak women with elongated figures and limbs
- Showcased these fresh artistic expressions in his second solo exhibition at the British Council in Singapore in 1967
- Actively involved with Alpha Gallery (established by Khoo Sui Hoe and company) in the 1970s and held solo exhibitions there in 1972 and 1973
- Won first prize at the Singapore Innovations in Art competition sponsored by Singapore Airlines in 1981
- Besides painting, Tay also explores other mediums such as sculpture, batik, Chinese ink and woodblock prints

TEW NAI TONG 张耐冬

- Born in Klang, Selangor in 1936
- Attended Peng Hwa Chinese School at age 7
- Trained at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts from 1956 to 1958
- Attended Ecole Nationale des Beaux Arts de Paris from 1967 to 1968
- Visited Bali numerous times between 1996 and 2006 and produced scores of paintings depicting the Balinese culture
- Re-visited Paris between 1999 and 2002 for inspiration
- Known for his phoenix-eyed figures and rustic landscapes
- Held first solo exhibition at British Council in Kuala Lumpur in 1964
- The National Visual Art Gallery of Kuala Lumpur honoured him with a Retrospective show in 2007
- Succumbed to lung infection on 4 May 2013

YONG MUN SEN 杨曼生

- Born Yong Yen Lang on 10 January 1896 in Kuching, Sarawak and changed his name to Mun Sen in 1922
- Known as the “Father of Malaysian art”
- His father managed the coconut and pepper plantation in Kuching founded by his grandfather who migrated from China circa 1840
- Eldest of 11 siblings. At age 5, he was sent to family’s ancestral village of Tai-pu in Kwantung for education and returned home two years later
- Inspired to become a painter when he witnessed a Japanese artist painting in his family’s plantation and when he received a set of watercolour as a gift by a Dutchman
- Married at age 20 to Lam Sek Foong and have 5 children. His wife passed away in 1941 from stroke. Married Yao Chew Mooi the same year and have 6 children
- Moved to Singapore in 1918 and worked at Kee Huar Bookshop and was later transferred to the Penang branch in 1920
- Set up a photography studio called Tai Koon / Wei Guan Art Studio in 1922 and renamed it Mun Sen Studio in 1930
- Formed the Penang Chinese Art Club in 1935 and was elected vice president. Initiated the formation of the Singapore Chinese Art Club the same year
- A posthumous memorial exhibition was held in Singapore in 1966 and in Kuala Lumpur at the National Art Gallery in 1972

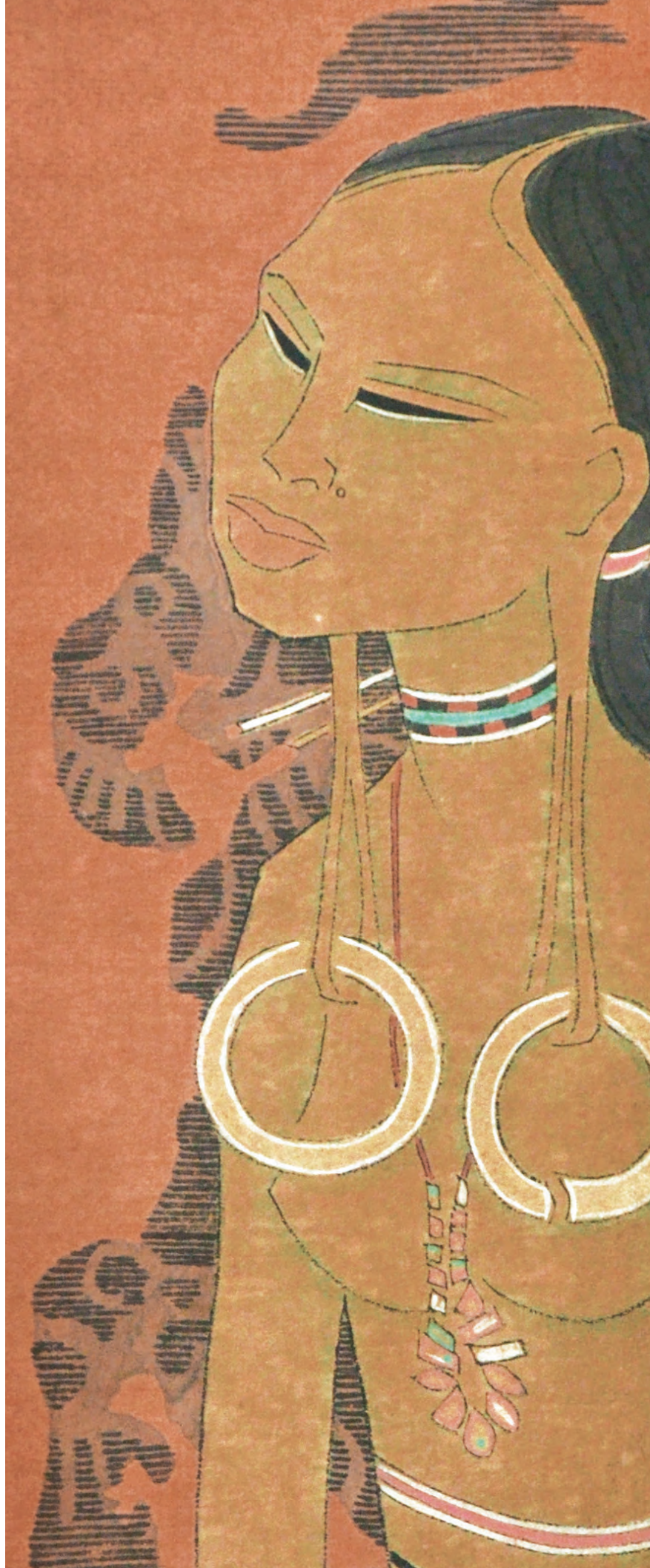






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