



Maybank



PAINTING BATIK

AN EXHIBITION AND TRIBUTE

Painting Batik

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Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the artists for their participation in this special exhibition on Batik painting.

PAINTING BATIK: AN EXHIBITION AND TRIBUTE

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CEO's Message



Balai Seni Maybank has had a long history following its inauguration in 1988. Maybank's commitment to arts, culture and heritage has been sustained with a long history of support for local artists, photographers, graphic designers and writers. Balai Seni has touched the lives of thousands of people with the artistic works of more than 650 artists displayed in more than 38 exhibitions having inspired and encouraged new artists to pursue their dreams. In continuation of our acclaimed Balai Seni Art Series, we are proud to present the latest art exhibition to commemorate one of the most defining art form Malaysia has seen throughout its rich history; Batik.

As part of Balai Seni Art Series 2019, 'Painting Batik: An Exhibition and Tribute' Art Exhibition stands as a testament of our appreciation for the lively Batik motif that has been such an influential artistic standard in our Malaysian society over the last few decades. We are enthused that Batik is still in the hearts of our society and a part of Malaysia's culture that shapes our living.

This exhibition features the artworks of Abdul Rahman Abdul Rani, Ahmad Tajuddin Ahmad, Fauziah Hj. Yahaya, Amir Arshad, Hishamuddin Ahmad, Azhar Arshad, Siti Hasmah Dato Taiban, Ahmad Fauzi Hj. Arshad and Mat Dollah who are well-versed in Batik painting that highlights the qualities of the many creative individuals with refreshing and accentuated perspectives of their visions of the art and the evolution of art throughout the ages. Their experience curating their visions would surely tell compelling stories on the influence of Batik and how it is a treasure that plays a culturally prominent role in the development of our nation. Our country is a nation rich with culture and it is great to see our local artists expressing their values and experiences encapsulated by their view of our society and deep appreciation for the culture of the country we call home.

Shahril Azuar Jimin
CEO
Maybank Foundation

PAINTING BATIK: AN EXHIBITION AND A TRIBUTE

Batik is an age old craft of wax resist dye technique on textile that was practiced by various cultures around the world though it is today most associated with this side of the region especially Indonesia, which had its batik designated by UNESCO as a masterpiece of Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2009. Batik was transformed from a craft into fine art by Malaya's first National Painter Datuk **Chuah Thean Teng @ Teng** (1914-2008) in the early 1950s when he began using the *djanting* to draw images, usually of local people and scenery in styles influenced by the School of Paris. Teng's batik art combined both *djanting* drawings and traditional dyeing methods with crackles as his signature effects. He was celebrated for his efforts of pioneering art with a local identity using local materials. Other famous artists who also used the *djanting* after Teng as a drawing tool in their batik works are Dato' **Tay Mo Leong** (b. 1938), **Khalil Ibrahim** (1934-2018) and **Ismail Mat Husin** (1938 – 2015).

Later, the method of stretching a piece of cloth and painting over it with wax and dye using a combination of *djanting* and brush was first introduced by **Wan Nong Abdul Rahman bin Ahmad** (1934- 2013) in 1976. According to his former student, **Hishamuddin Ahmad**, Wan Nong Abdul Rahman, a native of Johor Baru, worked as a factory manager at the now defunct Batek Malaysia Berhad in Kuala Lumpur (KL) upon returning from the UK where he majored in textile design. It was here that he started the batik painting technique that was influenced by a Mr. Harada, a Japanese kimono artist from Kyoto, Japan. Mr. Harada was interested in the batik process making which involved the use of wax and dye. He would use the *djanting* to draw the outlines of images or forms onto a white cloth and a brush to apply colours such as Remazol (usually used in silk painting) or Procion dye. This technique allows the painter to produced many interesting effects that traditional batik making methods could not. Wan Nong Abdul Rahman began teaching this technique after leaving Batek Malaysia to established his own business at Kg. Batu Muda. Batik painting became a popular and accessible medium from the mid 1980s up till the 1990s before the Asian financial crises put a halt to the outstanding economic growth of the countries in the region.

Though it had started in KL, batik painting was eventually adopted by practitioners from other states, especially the east coast, and had even spread to other countries including Indonesia. Even though the early practitioners of batik painting were able to profit from their labour of love, with works finding their way into private collections of mostly tourists and expats, corporations and institutions, they began to face challenges from various quarters. The shoddy work done by opportunists hoping to make a quick buck began to have a negative impact on the medium. Images and motifs painstakingly painted and dyed, a process that could take up to a month and more depending on the scale and complexity of the work can now be digitally copied and modified, and mechanically mass produced at a fraction of the costs and time it took to produce by the artists. On top of that, the increasing cost of raw materials such as cloth and colour dye were discouraging factors that eventually led to the decline of this art form. Today, batik is seen only as a collection of colourful textiles to be bought and worn as fashion statements. Many are aware of the fashion brands, designers or suppliers of such clothing but have not the slightest clue about the artists that have pushed local batik into an art form since before the time of *Merdeka*.

Which brings us to this exhibition entitled 'PAINTING BATIK: An Exhibition and Tribute'. Hosted by Maybank, this exhibition features the works of the late Wan Nong Abdul Rahman's students namely **Hishamuddin Ahmad**, **Abdul Rahman Abdul Rani**, **Ahmad Tajuddin Ahmad** and brothers **Ahmad Fauzi Arshad**, **Amir Arshad** and **Azhar Arshad**. Their elder brother **Khalid Shamsuddin bin Arshad** (1957- 2016) was also a famous batik painter and student of Wan Nong Abdul Rahman. They are joined by **Mohamed Abdullah @Mat Dollah**, a personal friend of Wan Nong Abdul Rahman and well known batik painter who learnt the technique of batik painting before pursuing his studies in traditional batik making in Indonesia. The group is completed by the participation of **Fauziah Yahaya @ Kak Gee** and **Siti Hasmah binti Dato` Taiban**. On display are 43 pieces of artworks in various sizes that focuses on various subject matters. The styles ranged from the representational, stylized forms of landscapes and people to abstraction. They reveal not only the artists' personalities, private visions but also their mastery of the batik painting technique. This exhibition was put together with the intentions of honoring the late Wan Nong Abdul Rahman for his pioneering efforts and to reintroduce the idea that batik, specifically Batik Malaysia is more than just craft. Through the innovative efforts of our past artists as mentioned above, they have transformed a collective cultural marker that has been in existence for ages, into an accessible medium of individual expression that still manages to retain a unique sense of Malaysianess.

Tan Sei Hon
Curator



Abdul Rahman Abdul Rani

b.1956

I began my career as a batik designer at Batek Malaysia Berhad. My artwork is based on nature. The blessed beauty of nature and its sense of serenity are what drives me to create my works. I find much peace and satisfaction in art making. My art is a metaphor for my struggles to defend God's creation and my devotion to Him. Those who cherish peace and harmony need to focus and care for nature.



My Dream City

3D batik style on silk satin • 90 x 140 cm • 2018



Kelah Bercanda Diwaktu Senja
3D batik style on silk satin • 90 x 140 cm • 2018



Extreme Concert Late 60's
3D batik style on silk span cotton • 90 x 70 cm • 2016



Dari Mata Turun Ke Hati
3D batik style on silk span cotton • 90 x 140 cm • 2016



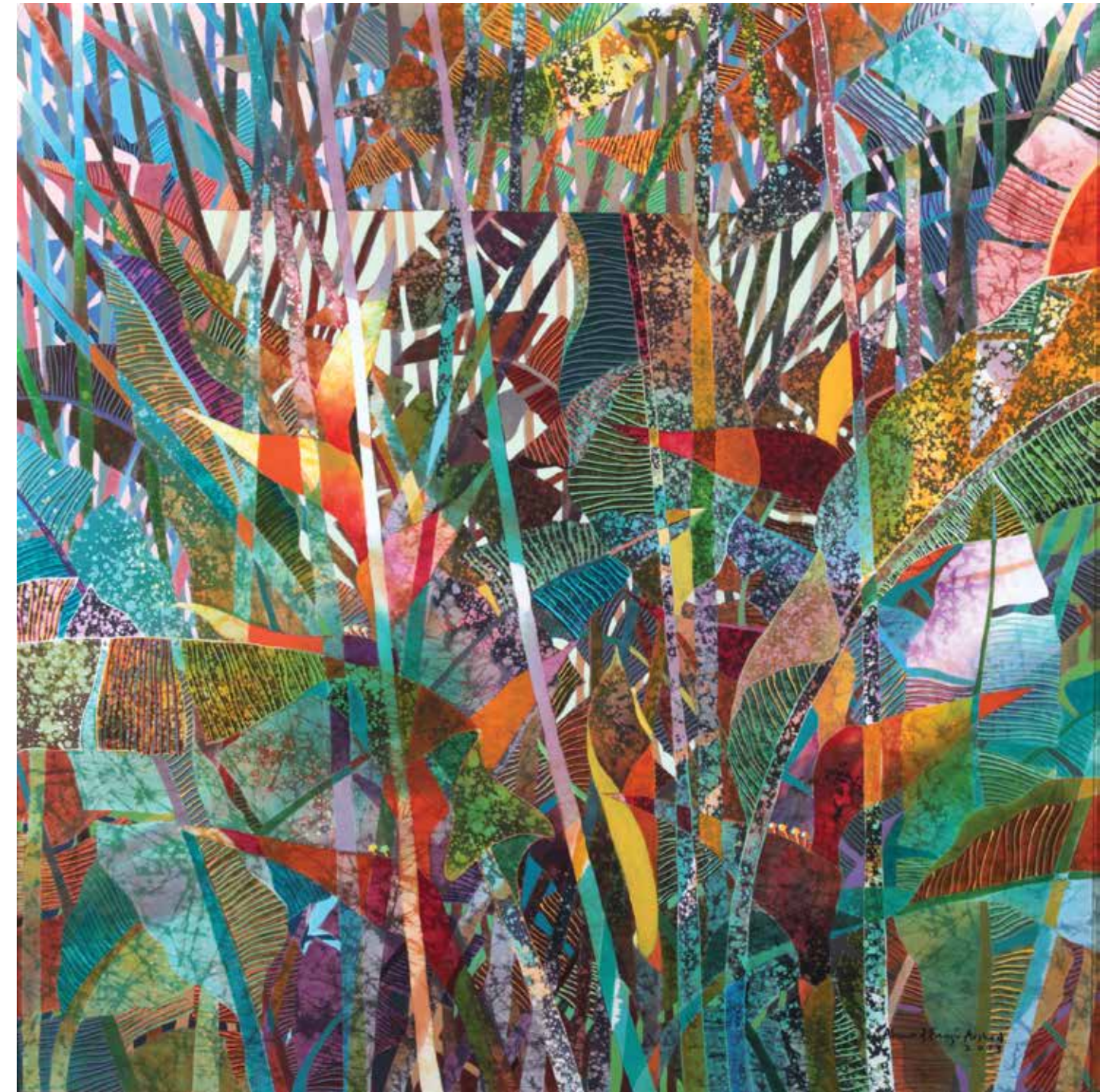
The Rhythm of The Reggae and Blues
3D batik style on silk span cotton • 90 x 60 cm • 2016



Ahmad Fauzi Arshad

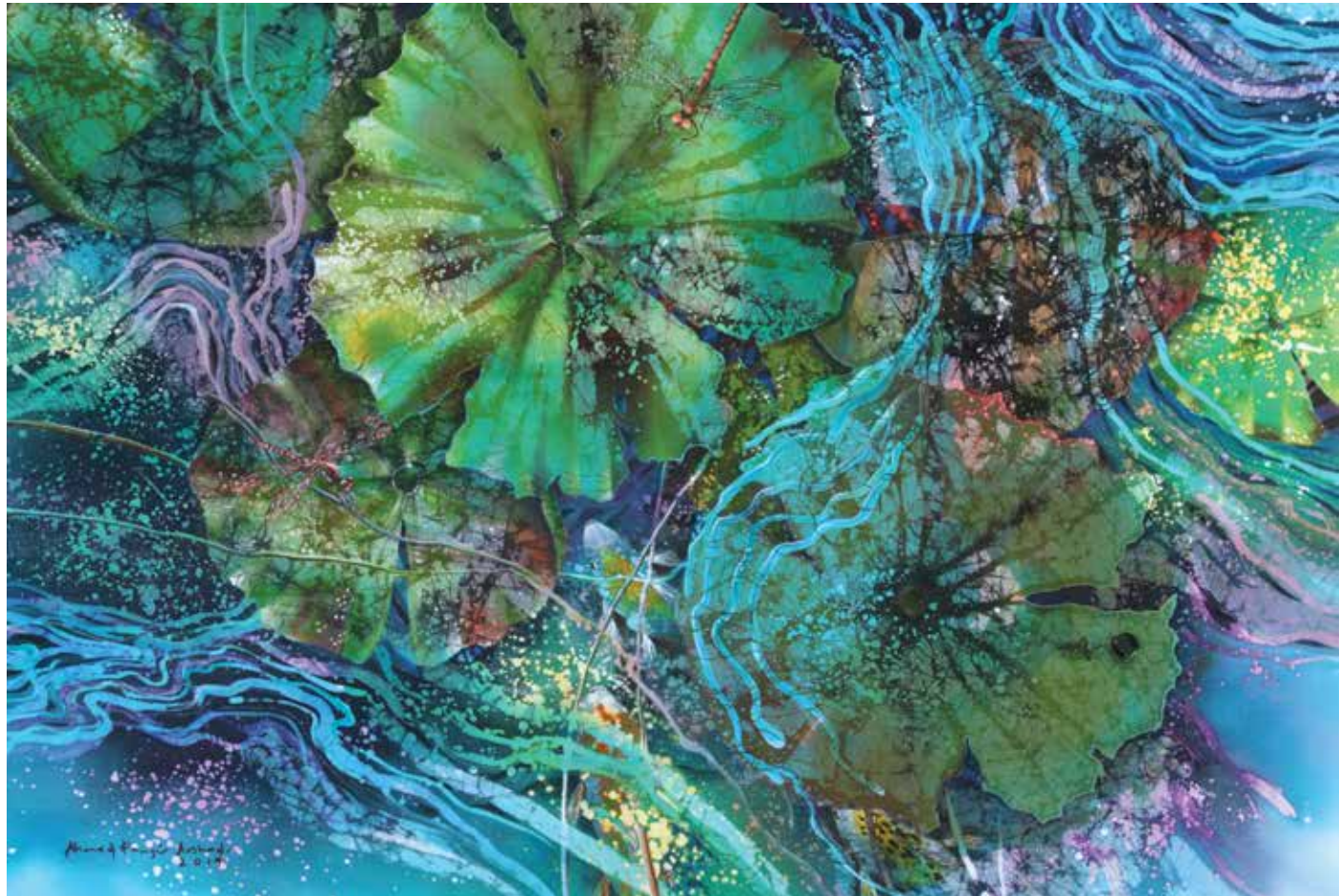
b.1961

The beauty of nature inspires most of my work. I am drawn to organic shapes and forms, the contrast of light and shadow. Nature also offers me the opportunity to explore colors, edges and forms. It allows me to produce abstractions from reality, to stylized forms, exaggerate passages, intensify hues and light and turned them into my own visual illusions.



Heliconia Garden

Fusion batik on cotton laid on canvas • 90 x 90 cm • 2019



Waterlilies
Fusion batik on cotton laid on canvas • 60 x 90 cm • 2019



Gadis & Heliconia
Batik on canvas • 144 x 134 cm • 2009



Mimpi Di Mamah Siang
Batik on canvas • 105 x 110 cm • 2019



Taman Alam 2
Batik on canvas • 70 x 70 cm • 2019



Ahmad Tajuddin Ahmad

b.1960

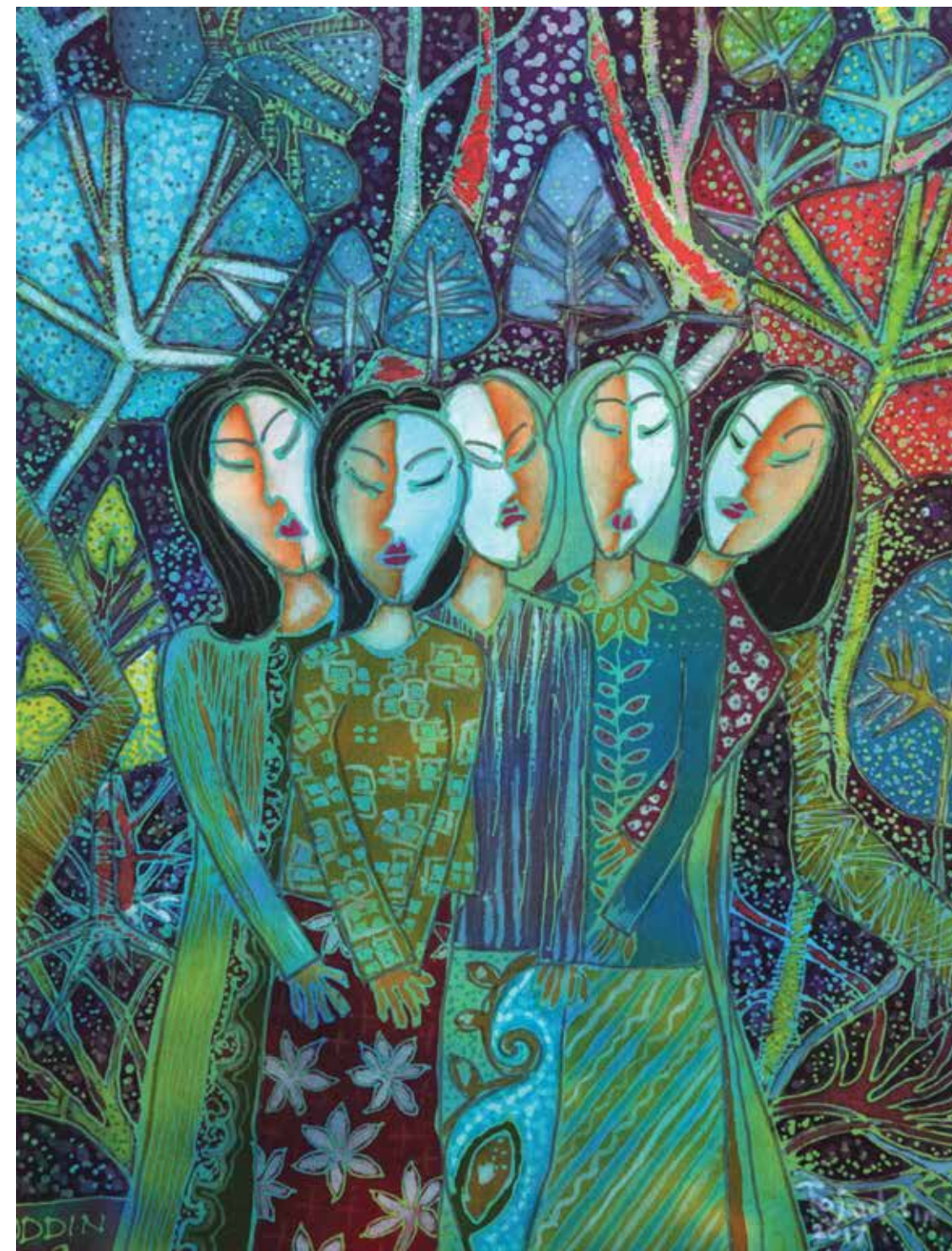
I began learning the art of batik making right after completing secondary school. Driven by my passion for the medium, I continue to explore different ways of making batik even till today. My subject matters are presented in stylized form according to my interest.



Sembang-Sembang
Batik on cotton • 100 x 100 cm • 2019



Hutan Mimpi
Batik on cotton • 80 x 85cm • 2019



Adek-Adek
Batik on cotton • 50 x 70 cm • 2019



Pokok Jiwa
Batik on cotton • 50 x 70cm • 2019



Ikan-Ikan
Batik on cotton • 50 x 70cm • 2019



Amir Arshad
b.1962

A contemporary batik artist known for promoting batik art domestically and abroad, Amir Arshad has been involved with the batik industry in Kuala Lumpur since he was 17. He also produces acrylic paintings that are conceptually abstract and naturalist.



Cinta Dan Persahabatan
Batik on linen • 90 x 113cm • 2019



Jagoan
Batik on linen • 90 x 113 cm • 2019



Laga
Batik on linen • 90 x 113 cm • 2019



Bird of Paradise
Batik on linen • 90 x 113 cm • 2019



Terbang Tinggi
Batik on linen • 90 x 113 cm • 2019

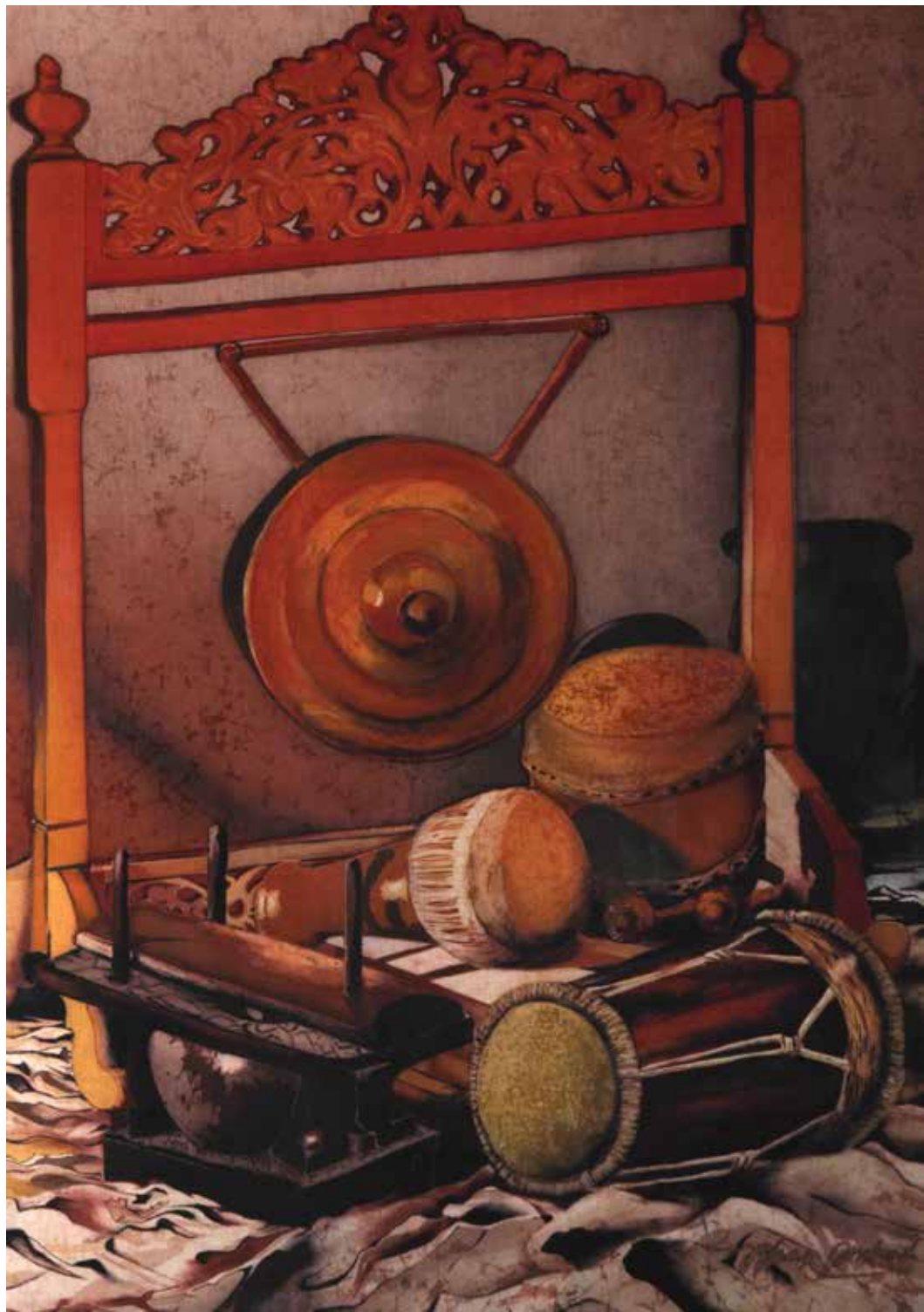


Azhar Arshad
b.1965

Azhar is a self taught contemporary artist who began painting seriously at the age of 20 and has more than 30 years experience as a batik designer and painter. During these periods he has participated in exhibitions and art activities at national and international levels.



Into Wilderness 3
Batik on cotton • 88 x 117 cm • 2019



Warisan
Batik on cotton • 89 x 130 cm • 1999



Free Bird I & 2
Batik on jacquard • 70 x 156 cm (diptych) • 2019



Bandboy 1
Batik on cotton • 136 x 70 cm • 2019



Refleksi 2
Batik on cotton • 136 x 70cm • 2019

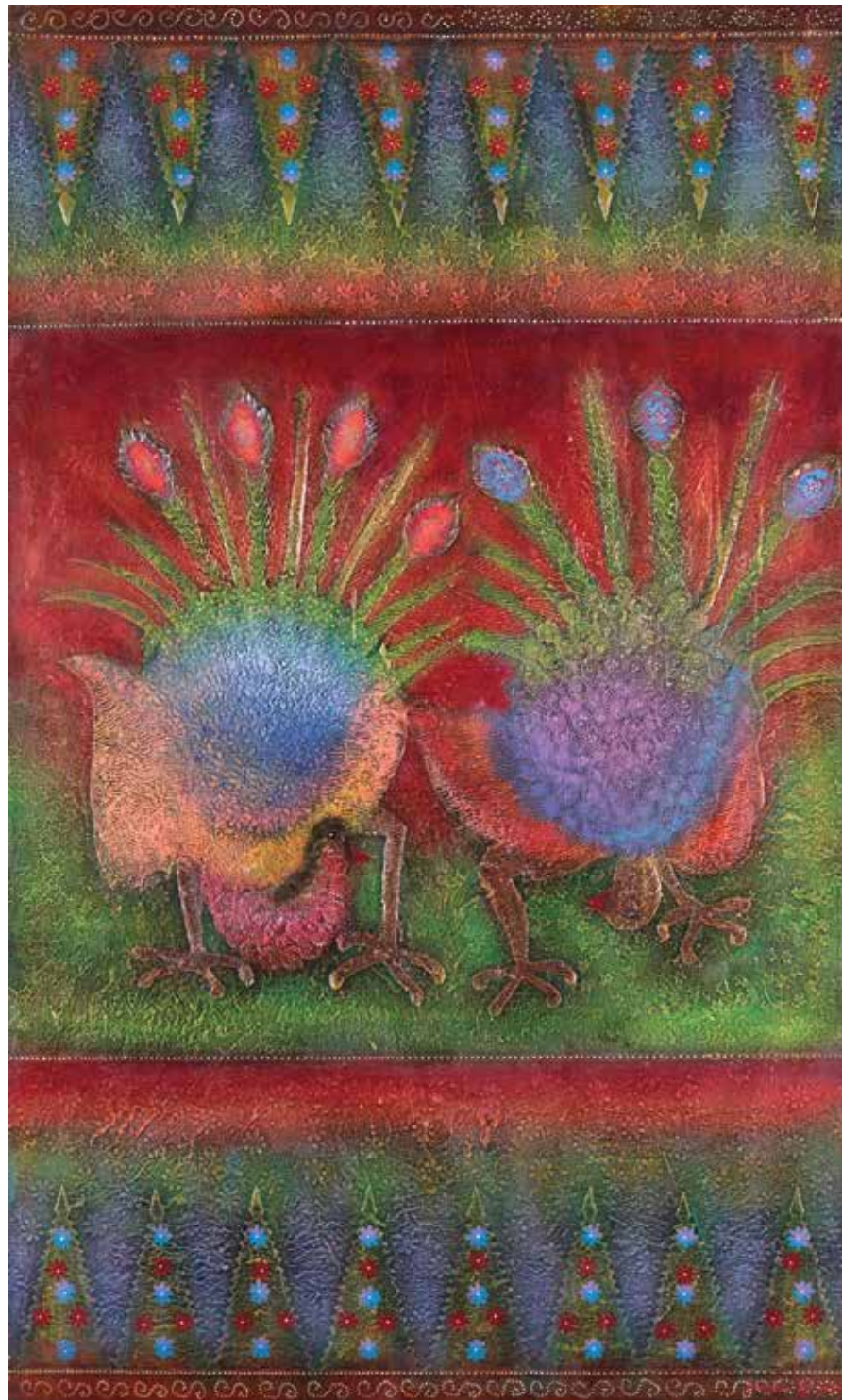


Fauziah Yahaya
b.1965

Also known as Kak Gee Conlay, my artistic journey began in 1987. Though I majored in ceramics in 1993, I decided to explore other mediums of art after various personal experiences in my life to present a sense of hope and optimism through my works.



Batik Siti Fatimah
Acrylic on canvas • 92 x 122 cm • 2018



Couple of Peacock
Acrylic on canvas • 153 x 92 cm • 2010



Orchid
Acrylic on canvas • 153 x 92cm • 2010



Hishamuddin Ahmad

b.1957

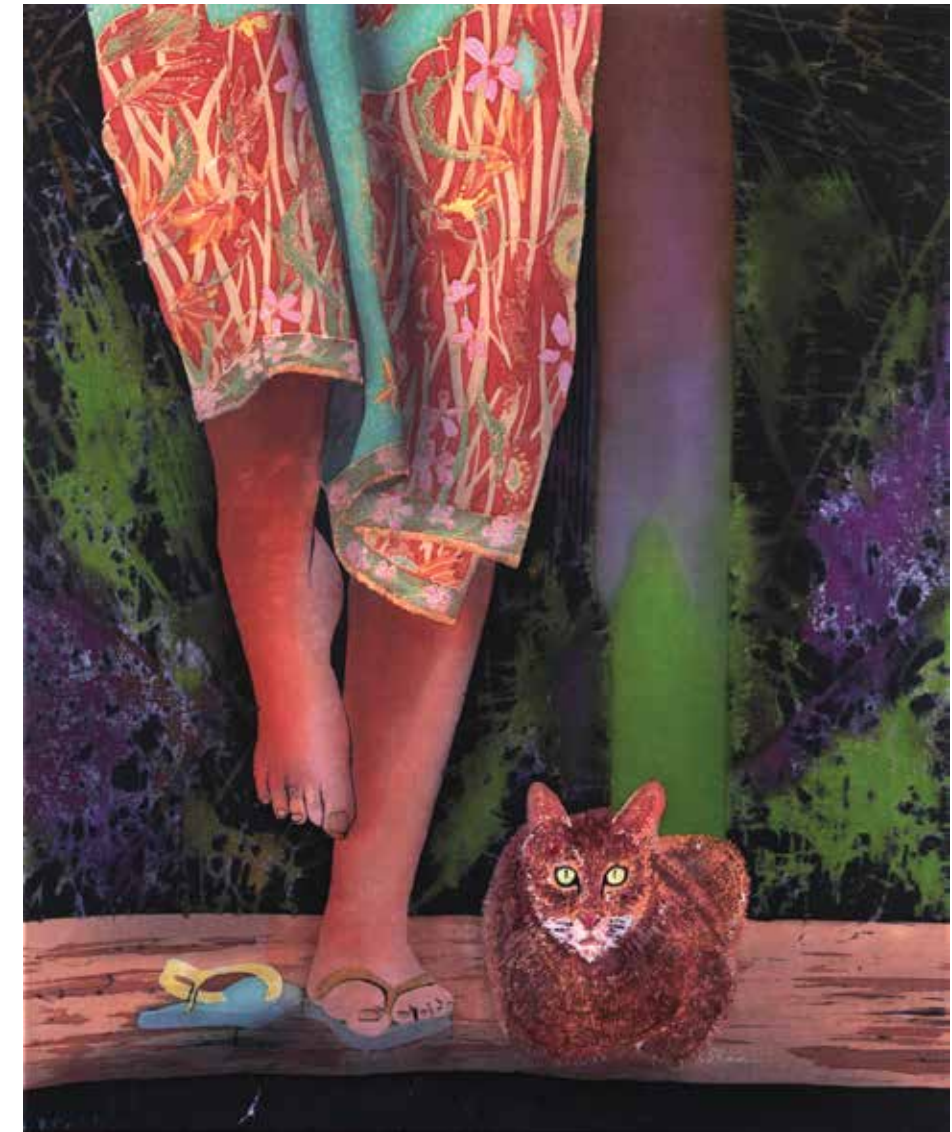
I started my career as an artist in 1976. As a batik painter, I specialized in realistic imagery. Most of the batik paintings I produced are sold to individuals who want exclusivity. To sum it up, I have produced over 10,000 commercial batik paintings. My work also includes fine work of batik drawings.



Save The Tiger
Batik on linen • 80 x 120cm • 2010



Semporna
Batik on cotton • 80 x 100 cm • 2010



Waiting
Batik on cotton • 80 x 100 cm • 2010



Surviving
Batik on cotton • 80 x 100 cm • 2008



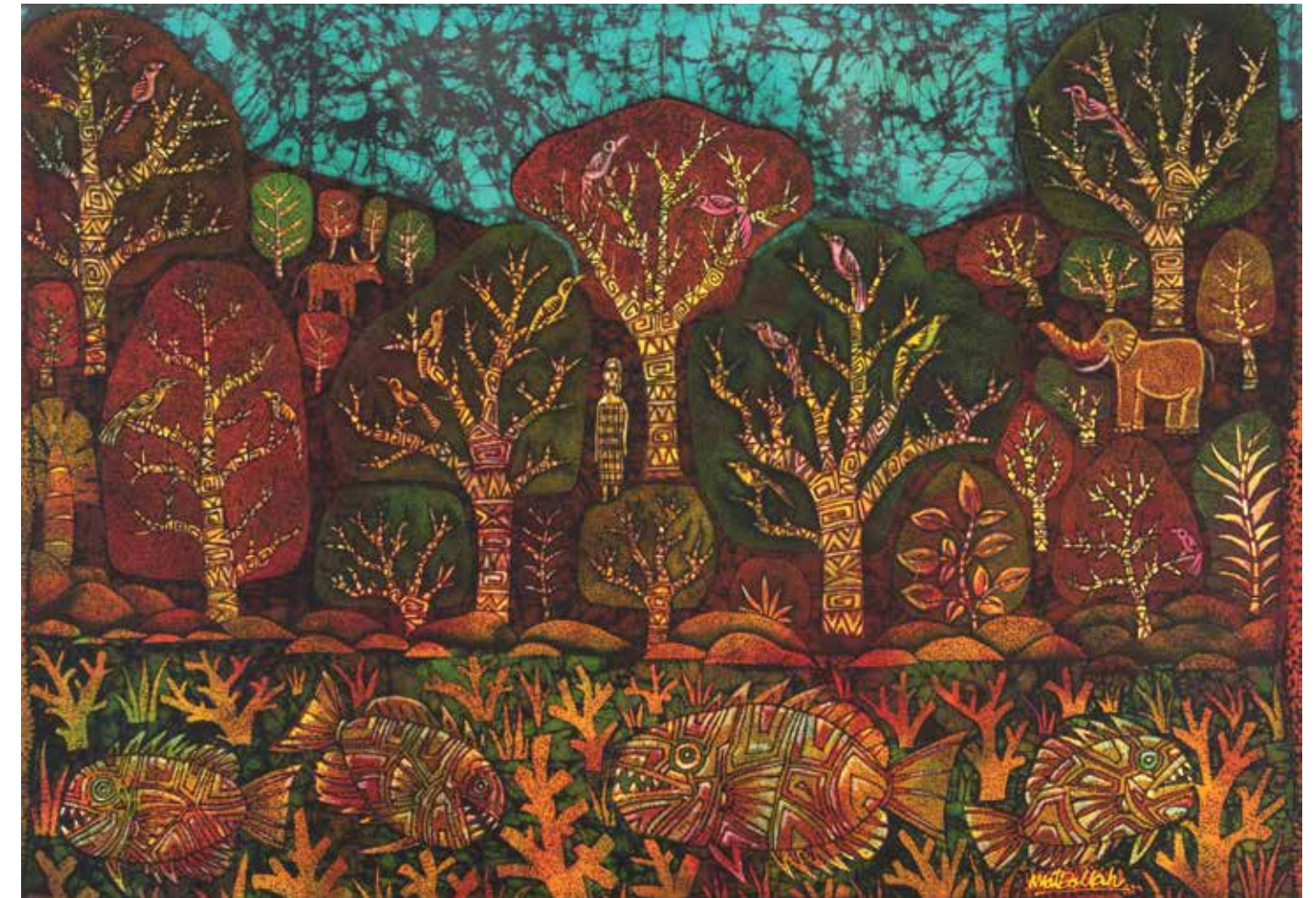
Red
Batik on cotton • 80 x 100 cm • 2008



Mohamed Abdullah
@ Mat Dollah
b.1959

Among the post-colonial artists of Southeast Asia batik is always associated and equated with the authentic and genuine art form of Asia. Either stylistically or technically batik art unquestionably embodies the sensibility and sensitivity shaped by Asian values and ideas. Specifically, by adopting batik as a media of expression Mat Dollah has addressed two major issues. First, the need to re-question and reevaluate the Western derogatory view which relegates batik as a form of marginalized and inferior art.

Through his continuous explorations and experimentation of batik as a versatile and expressive media, Mat Dollah has proven that batik technique and media is no less superior to Western paintings rendered either in oil, acrylic or tempera. Secondly, by endeavoring to elevate the status of batik as an authentic and veritable art form, Mat Dollah is self-consciously engaged in the popular debates of "Fine Art" versus "Craft". For him, to equate Western fine art as superior, both intellectually and culturally, and the craft that emanates from Asia as culturally inferior, devoid of intellectual content and aesthetically insignificant is highly unacceptable. Through his art, Mat Dollah is determined to prove that batik painting is capable of achieving the lofty and exalted status of 'Art', which is on par with the art of the West.



Puteri Di Pinggir Gunung

Batik on cotton calico • 105 x 150 cm • 2019



Desa Di Pinggir Rimba
Batik on cotton calico • 105 x 150 cm • 2019



Puteri Duyung Pulang Senja
Batik on cotton calico • 90 x 110cm • 2019



Tuah Dan Teja
Batik on cotton calico • 120 x 120 cm • 2019



Siti Hasmah Dato' Taiban

b.1956

My batik concept reflects my perceptions of nature. Bold and beautiful, accentuated by 'imperfection', they are sights to behold. It is like telling the story of life. Beauty can be found if one search for it. Every stroke serves to highlight what's precious.

Live boldly !!! ... After all, we only get one Life.

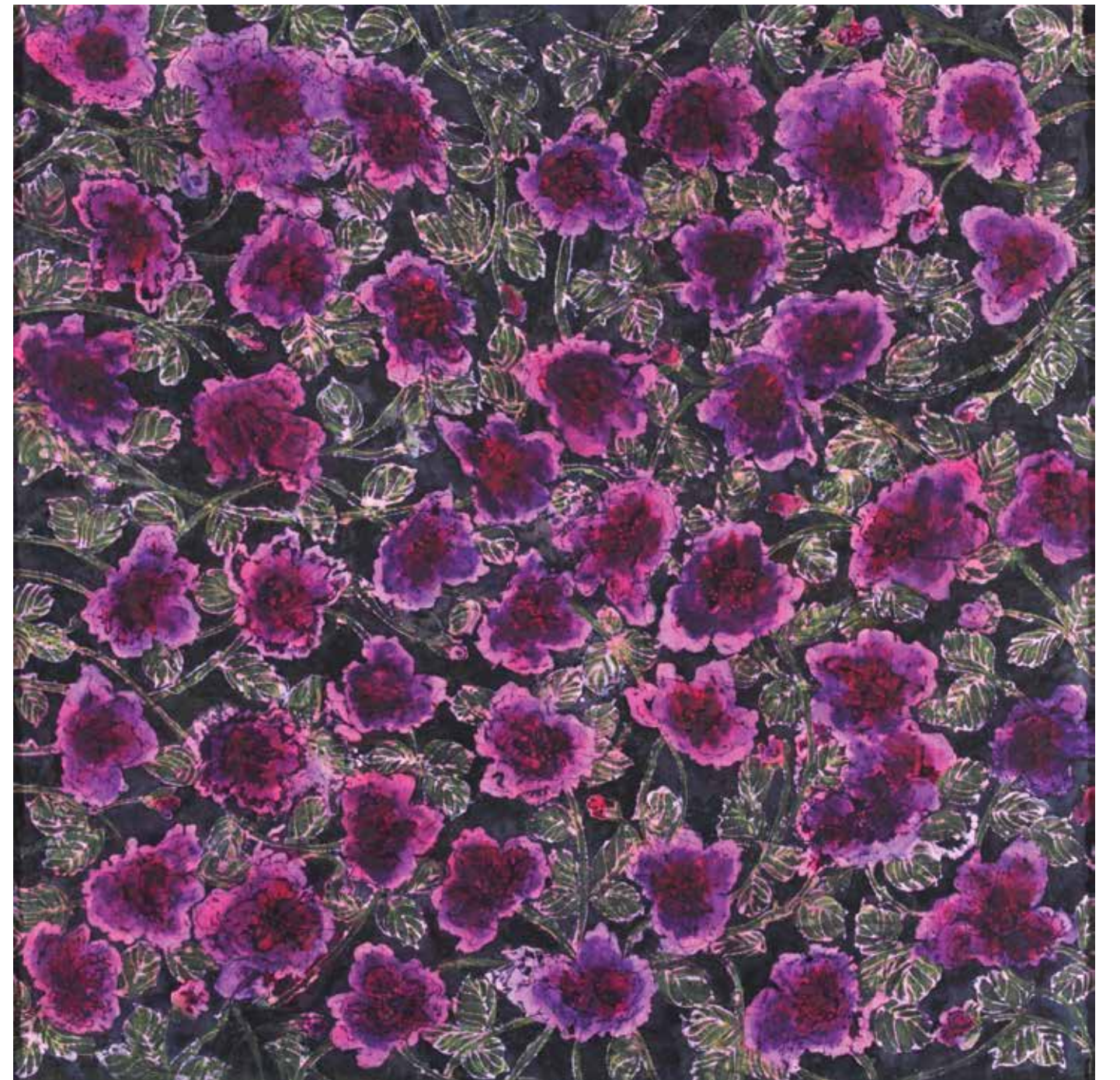


Youth

Batik on Egyptian linen • 120 x 120 cm • 2019



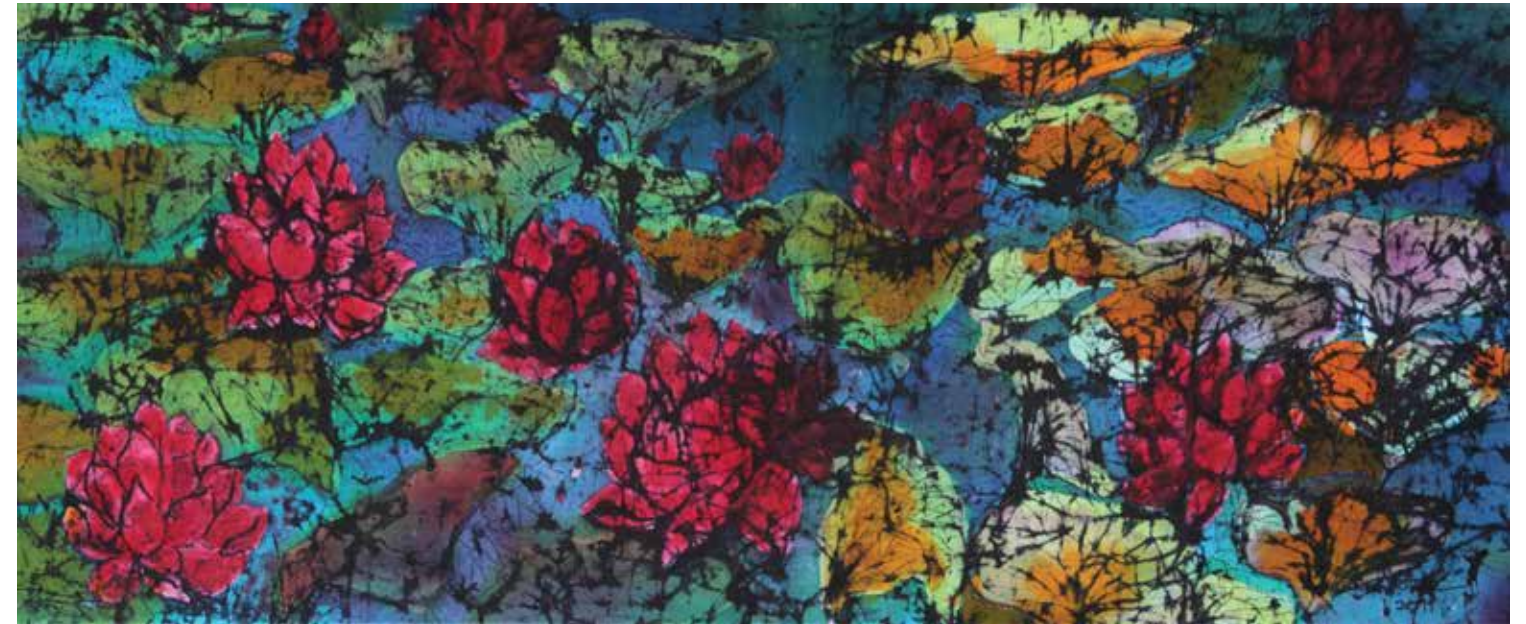
Me
Batik on Egyptian linen • 120 x 120 cm • 2019



Being a Woman
Batik on Egyptian linen • 120 x 120 cm • 2019



The Worn Out Yet Loving Soul
Batik on Egyptian linen • 131 x 68 cm • 2019



Tenacity in the Adversity
Batik on Egyptian linen • 64 x 134 cm • 2019



Maybank Foundation has been the strategic driver of Maybank Group’s community programs since it was inaugurated in 2010, in conjunction with the Group’s 50th anniversary. The Foundation’s mandate is to create positive, long-term impact in communities in the markets where Maybank operates. It strives to identify programs that will have the most tangible and sustainable results, in line with Maybank’s mission of humanising financial services.

Maybank Foundation focuses on six key areas, namely;

EDUCATION	COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT	HEALTHY LIVING	ARTS & CULTURE	ENVIROMENTAL DIVERSITY	DISASTER RELIEF
Empower future leaders in the finance community	Ensure inclusiveness of those in the communities	Promote community compassion	Promote artistic creativity of the youths	Help protect the planet’s diversity for future generations	Mobilize employees together with partners in disaster situation, locally and regionally

In all six areas and in every country it operates in, Maybank Foundation is focused on activities and programs that would create meaningful, measurable and sustainable impact, in line with Maybank’s mission of humanising financial services.



ABDUL RAHMAN ABDUL RANI
AHMAD FAUZI ARSHAD
AHMAD TAJUDDIN AHMAD
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FAUZIAH YAHAYA
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SITI HASMAH DATO' TAIBAN