



Maybank

melukis

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Acknowledgements

Maybank Foundation wishes to thank all the participating artists for making this show a success. Our deep appreciation to S. Amin Shahab as our special guest artist.

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melukis

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CEO's Foreword



Maybank Foundation as the Corporate Responsibility arm of the Maybank Group, is committed to creating positive, long term impact in the communities in the markets where Maybank operates. The Foundation adheres to its 6 pillars as the cornerstones of its programmes, namely Arts & Culture, Education, Community Empowerment, Environmental Diversity, Healthy Living and Disaster Relief.

Balai Seni 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 300 artists displayed in more than 25 exhibitions have 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 exclusive art exhibition in tribute to a favorite artistic medium of mine; graphite and ink drawings.

As part of Balai Seni Art Series 2019, 'Melukis: Drawings in Graphite & Ink' Art Exhibition serves as a perfect opportunity for us to showcase a classical artistic style transcending time and era, while embarking on a journey for us to empower the local artists in all aspects of life. The future of art is exciting and intriguing. I hope the artworks of these artists would showcase their enthusiasm for their craft and inspire us to share our unique identity.

The exhibition will feature 9 established artists who are well-versed in graphite and ink drawings that highlights the qualities of the many creative individuals with refreshing and colourful perspectives on the personal and emotional landscapes. Their experience wielding the humble pens, crayons and colour pencils together with sets of water colours would surely tell compelling stories on how their valuable worldviews could shape the future and the aspirations they seek to materialize. To stress on the importance of art and its influences in our lives, we have taken part in the preservation and sustainability of our arts and culture.

We believe in supporting the artists to explore the world and curate their adventures through their lens. Our country is a nation rich with culture and it is great to see our local artists expressing their values and experiences through an artistic medium they love.

Shahril Azuar Jimin

CEO, Yayasan Maybank

THE JOYS OF MELUKIS

Artists have traditionally used charcoal, pencil, pastel, crayon, ink, etc to produce quick, preparatory sketches of their observations and ideas before transferring these onto a canvas or walls to be completed in paint. These simple tools are cheap, light to carry and easily available. Whether drawn on paper, wood or canvas, with the exception of ink, these 'dry' media (because they do not require water or oil to make it soluble for it to be applied on any hard surface), brings to the subject matter a certain unpolished grittiness and dynamic energy. Ink and graphite images also have an unique ability to evoke sentimentality, like black and white photographs. Local artists too have been using these media since the country's exposure to western style art in the late 1800s (and perhaps even earlier) for the same purpose. It would take many decades later before a handful of art practitioners begin to use these media exclusively to produce finished works, not as merely sketches.

In the early 1960s there was the *wunderkind*, **Dzulkifli Buyong** (1948-2004). The youngest member of the Wednesday Art Group (WAG), Dzulkifli was highly regarded for his naive but uniquely composed pastel and crayon drawings that celebrated the joys of childhood life. Another highly regarded self taught artist was **Zulkifli Dahlan** (1952-1977). A member of *Anak Alam*, Zulkifli is primarily remembered today for his two major works, a large painting entitled '*Kedai Kedai*' (1973) and '*Realiti Berasingan: Satu Hari di Bumi Larangan*' (1975) a large drawing using black enamel paint on board measuring 244 x 366cm in the National Art Gallery's collection, though a belated retro lovingly dedicated to his memory in 2017 showcased for the first time his ink on paper drawings which constitutes a large part of his artistic oeuvre.

In the 1980s, when Central Market or CM was transformed from a wet market into an art and handicraft centre, numerous street artists began to take up outlets and stalls sell their works and also offered portraiture services. It was common then for many to go to CM to have portraits of their partners, friends, family and even VIPs (which would be presented to them as a gift after having launched an event) made. Depending on their budget, the portraits, which were based on the photos brought by the clients, can be skilfully rendered in pencil, ink, oil pastel or paint. Many of these nameless artists carried the influences, especially in their oil pastel works, of another important art group called *Angkatan Pelukis SeMalaysia* or A.P.S. Active since the 1950s, A.P.S mainly specialize in portraiture and landscapes in the style of academic realism. Many, especially those without the financial means, had benefited from the group's free art classes back before formal art academies were established in the country. Fast forward a few decades, CM was taken over by a new management and rebranded for a more upscale market. By that time, many of the early/ older artists that had made CM such an interesting place to hang out in the center of town had either relocated due to higher rent rates or retired. The CM of yesteryear is no more and a small but colourful chapter of the local art scene has come to an unceremonious end.

In the last 2 decades, a handful of contemporary artists who, in their brief foray into making drawings, had in no small way contributed to its acceptance among local art lovers. These artists include some the country's most respected contemporary art practitioners, namely **Wong Hoy Cheong** (b.1960), **Bayu Utomo Radjkin** (b.1969), **Jalaini Abu Hassan** (b.1963), **Ahmad Zakii Anwar** (b.1955).

Which brings us to the exhibition, 'MELUKIS' (To Draw in Malay).

Before some of these well known figures from the mainstream art scene turned to drawing as a serious art form, there were already committed individuals exploring the use of ink and graphite exclusively to present their singular visions. Though not widely recognized for their labour of love, they are pioneers of sorts who continues to produce works in the medium of their choice. The few who came after too have also pushed the use of these medias further than before. 'MELUKIS' features some of these artists, both the veterans and the upcoming generation of graphite, ink and pen specialists. The following provides some background about the participating artists in this exhibition.

In the early 1970s, **Krishnan Karuppiah** (b.1948) a medical student turned artist, pioneered the use of ball point pen in art making after coming back from his studies in Madras. He held a few solo exhibitions (including at Samat Gallery and Penang State Museum) which showcased various subject matters rendered completely with ball pen of different colours. After 4 decades, through numerous challenges and successes in his art journey, Krishnan remains an ardent exponent of the ball pen as a complete tool by itself for making art. In 1984, **Thangarajoo MA Kanniah** (b.1957) won the National Art Gallery's Bakat Muda Sezaman (Young Contemporaries Art Competition) with his entry '*Anak Anak Alam*', an ink drawing on paper. It has remained the only ink drawing work to win the country's oldest and most anticipated art competition. Thangarajoo, who is a self taught artist and a member of *Anak Alam*, came to making such unique images as a result of his profound near death experience in the early 1980s. Since then he has produced a large number of such drawings which celebrates the universal forces that connects us all in scientific and spiritual ways. **S.Amin Shahab** (b.1954), a well known painter of symbolic imagery who also found fame as a lyricist, embarked on the biggest artistic endeavour of his career with his '*Dunia dalam Satu Kilometer*' project in 2004, where he would draw about evolution, nature and the great civilizations of world using only Artline pens on rolls of canvas that are 1 kilometer in length. This feat was recorded in the Malaysian Book of Records. S. Amin Shahab appears as guest artist at the gallery for this exhibition. An artist of note to appear in the local art scene in the last few years is **Monica Lee** (b.1979). With a background in 3D animation, Monica decided to pursue her passion in art instead and made drawings with graphite pencil as her main medium. She is well regarded for her works and was even ranked by some as among the top ten pencil artists internationally. Self taught artist **Syahbandi Samat** (b.1992) too has been making waves in the local art scene with his unique approach in terms of imagery and media. Syahbandi uses a combination of pen, graphite and ink in his works which are symbolic in nature and explores the psychological aspects of his life.

Fresh from a successful solo exhibition, **Arikwibowo Amril** (b.1988)'s works in charcoal shows a renewed interest among the younger generation of art practitioners in this dry medium after a sort spell of excitement due to the previously mentioned artists' foray into making drawings.

Unlike the other participants who are part of the local art scene (with some more so than others), **N.Shanthamathe** and **Izzah Nazeri** (b.1985) were previously working in totally different fields for many years and only came to making art due to reasons unrelated to the discipline. Using only ink on wood or board, the former drew spontaneous abstract looking forms out of an inner urge after recovering from a life threatening illness. The latter picked up drawing with crayons while pregnant because she needed an outlet to express her feelings of contentment and happiness. Both individuals received something intangible but precious from their artistic awakening, which is joy and peace. The inclusion of some of the works from the *Persatuan Seni Pencil Warna Malaysia* (Color Pencil Art Association of Malaysia) functions as a reminder or a testament that drawing is a skill that can be taught to anyone regardless of aptitude or background. Formed in 2016 and led by **Hasren Ismail** (b.1971) who is popularly known as **Uneh**, the association consists of ordinary members of society who came together to learn and exhibit works done in colour pencils. Dubbed the 'King of Colour Pencil', Uneh has been giving workshops across the country on his special technique of colour pencil drawing since a decade ago.

The Art instinct, which is innate to all of us can, with the simplest of tools e.g pencil, pen or crayons, be drawn out under the right circumstance or encouragements. Working with basic stationary items that can be found in most grocery, stationary and book stores, drawing can be a liberating and a therapeutic activity. It can provide a sense of accomplishment, pleasure and even purpose to anyone regardless of aptitude or background. We hope that with this exhibition entitled 'MELUKIS', the public will be reacquainted with these media, most of which they had known since childhood and of which they continue to use in their daily lives. A wonderful world of possibilities awaits, and it all starts with a dot or a line .

Happy Drawing!

Tan Sei Hon
Curator

plates

Arikwibowo Amril

Through his affinity for charcoal, the artist examines his relationship with charcoal and water to experiment and investigates the position it holds in the ever expanding of medium of contemporary art today.



Photo: HOM



Deria Rasa
Charcoal & water on canvas
130.5 x 138cm
2018

Krishnan Karuppiah

The definition of art is present in nature. Art is everywhere and it is well defined in Nature. I chose three main themes, which is TIME, ENERGY and SPACE as a way of philosophizing the art world. Whatever the media or medium, it is in relation to my philosophy. As a self taught artist, I deal mostly with abstractions and semi abstraction. I chose the ball pen as my signature medium in 1970. The ball pen was a little known medium at that time and I was keen to established it as an serious ink medium. In 1972, I had my first solo at Samat Gallery which showcased mostly ball pen drawings. I believe I am the first person to specialize in the use of ball pen as a serious medium to make art.



Ibu
Ball pen on paper
51 x 33cm
1987/1988

Abstraction in Nature
Ball pen on paper
52.5 x 83cm
2019





The Couple
Ball pen on cartridge paper
50 x 70cm
c.2016 - 2018



Life Cycle
Ball pen on cartridge paper
50 x 70cm
c.2016 - 2018



Repose
Ball pen on cartridge paper
50 x 70cm
c.2016 - 2018



The Next Dance
Ball pen on cartridge paper
50 x 70cm
c.2013 - 2016



Local Lass
Ball pen on cartridge paper
70 x 50cm
c.2016 - 2018



Songs of the Serengeti
Ball pen on cartridge paper
78 x 54cm
c.2016 - 2018



Delirium in Line
Ball pen on cartridge paper
63 x 94cm
c.2016 - 2018



Life Force
Ball pen on cartridge paper
55 x 77cm
c.2016 - 2018

Monica Lee

Growing up appreciating photography, made the concept of photorealism appealing to me. I like black and white photographs because of its classic quality.

Specializing in graphite pencils and charcoal, I work from a photograph, recreating what I see and further exaggerating or emphasizing the details in my drawings.

Through my works, I hope to portray the beauty of my subject matter.



Water Dance
Graphite & charcoal
114.3 x 76.2cm
2019

Syahbandi Samat

Im a self-taught artist, and using the basic ballpoint pen on canvas was a simple, practical and cost effective medium with which I started using to express myself. Over time, the succinct linear representations of a ballpoint pen habe allowed me a sense of freedom into the actual art of `doing'. When committing ballpoint pen to surfaces, I enter into a space of concentration; simultaneous a distraction from other thoughts ; a focus to not focus, but to prioritise each line on paper as a form of control. I use art. To tighten my thoughts , control my emotion ; make sense of this world we move in, this time we exist in, and explore the people we come into contact with. A constant thread is the sense of my displacement, of not getting it right.



Pisau Cukur
Ball pen on canvas
188 x 99cm
2013



Rest in Beast
Ball pen on canvas
108 x 130cm
2016



Awake
Ball pen on canvas
73.5 x 67cm
2018

N. Shanthamathe

I always believed that everything in life has patterns. Being a passionate seeker of truth, I imagined that these patterns could have the answers to most of my questions. As an artist I wondered if I could express the complexities of life and the beauties of nature in a language of patterns.

What started as a doodle in my early days later progressed to surrealism, which led to my first joint exhibition in 1986, themed "Glimpses of a Fleeting Truth".

However my path took numerous twists and turns before I finally pursued my passion for art in earnest. For many years I worked in a multinational advertising agency until I finally quit my job and returned to drawing.

In December 2011, a life-changing experience caused a sudden shift in my consciousness which immediately caused a change in my drawing. I suddenly found myself drawing patterns that were much more refined and complex than before.

My new artwork received its first public exposure in 2012 at the Kuala Lumpur Performance Arts Centre. A year later, my first solo exhibition, entitled Mindsong, was launched at the Indian Cultural Centre, a part of the High Commission of India in Kuala Lumpur. Since then, my work has been exhibited in several art galleries, in Malaysia.



Rebirth
Pen & ink on wood
90 x 80cm
2011



Shadows of the Living
 Pen & acrylic on wood
 113 x 85cm
 2012



Drifting Along a Pathway
 Mixed media on board
 92 x 74cm
 2012



Map of Existence
 Pen & ink on wood
 85 x 70cm
 2011



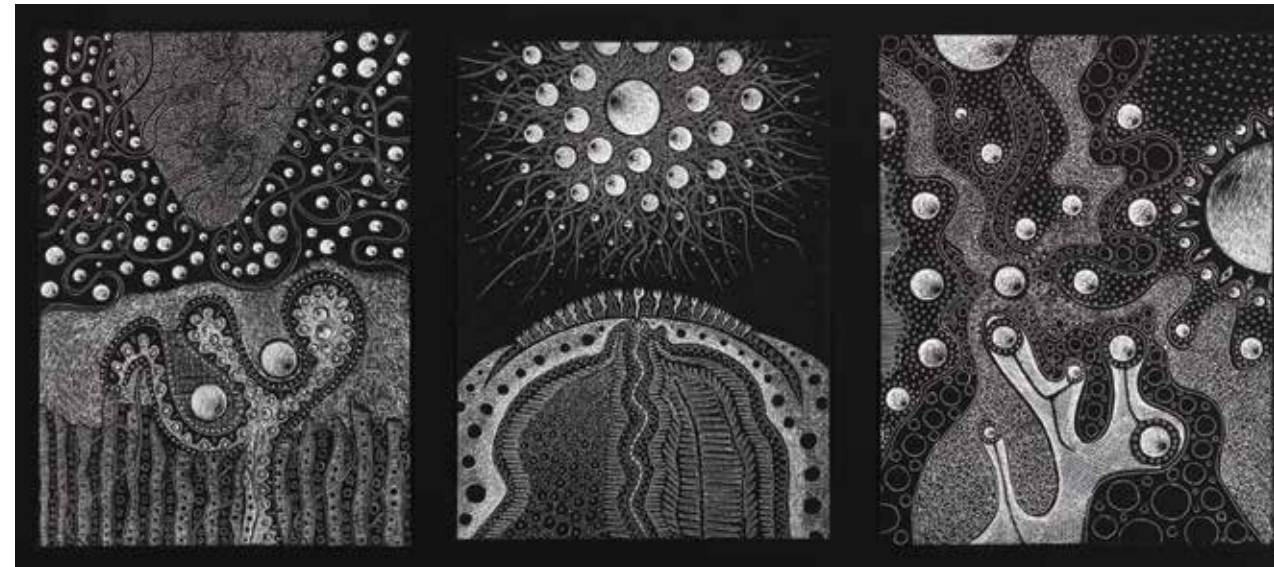
Rising Above Violence
 Mixed media on board
 97 x 73cm
 2012

Thangarajoo MA Kanniah

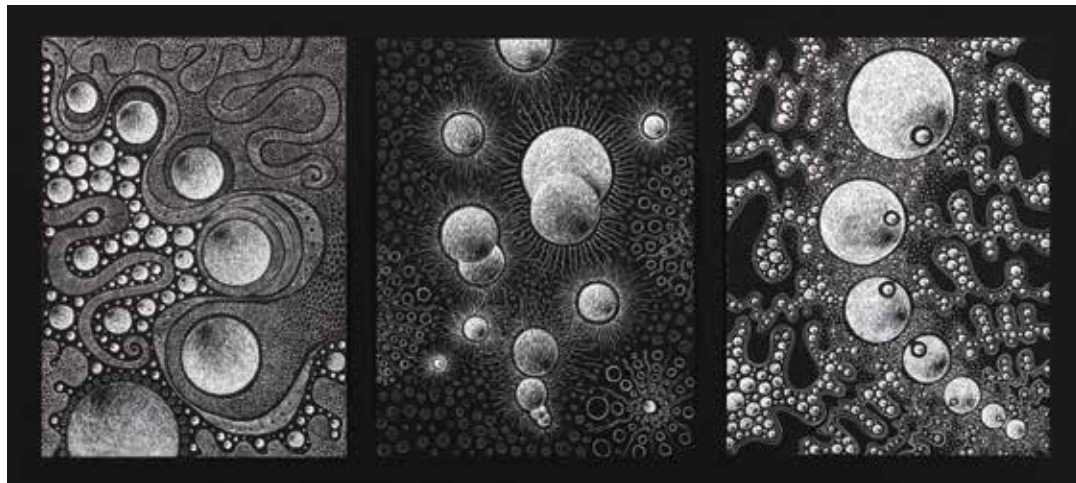
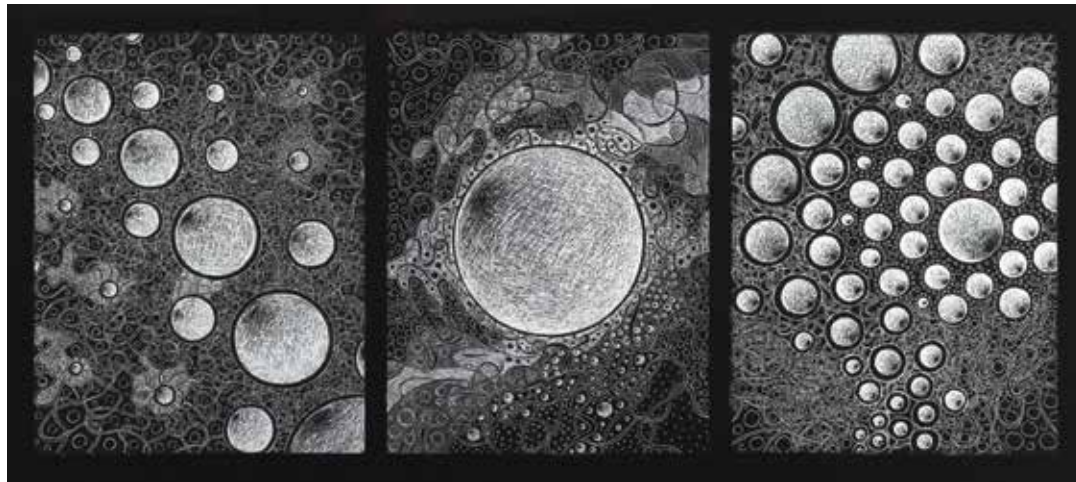
Thangarajoo believes his artistic productions cannot be encapsulated or pigeon -holed into fixed genre or categories. He works without preconceived models and does not believe in the idea of control, either by another's view point or by existing artistic methodology .

"Where flowers bloom", according to him, "they follow nature's rhythms." Control stunts growth and inhibits the achievement of full potential or full bloom" he reiterates. Philosophically he believes this is also inherently true of art. He feels it should be timeless, borderless and with a message that resonates not linearly, but in unintended ways.

He works with this philosophy in mind. An inner compunction, neither guided by time nor notions of colour or space, nor rule based follows him.

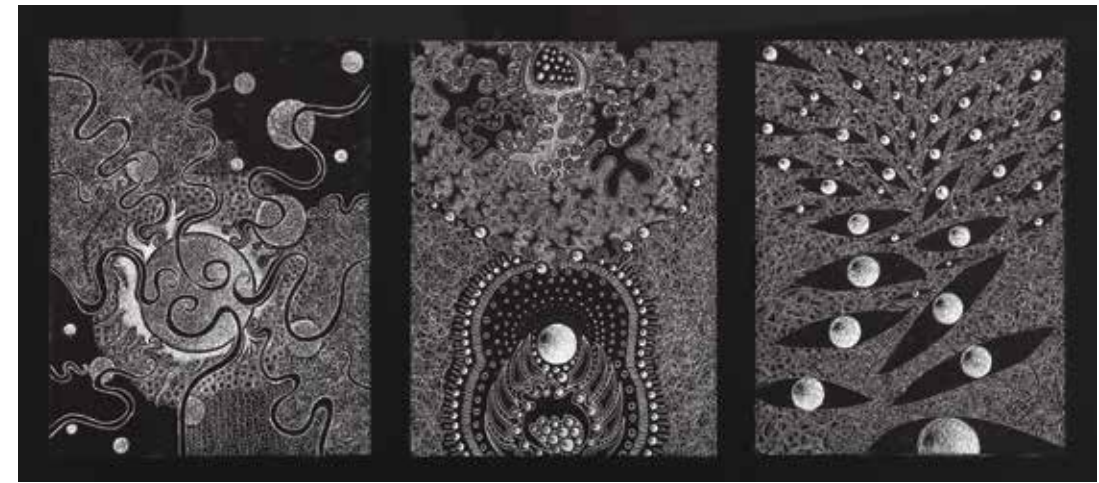
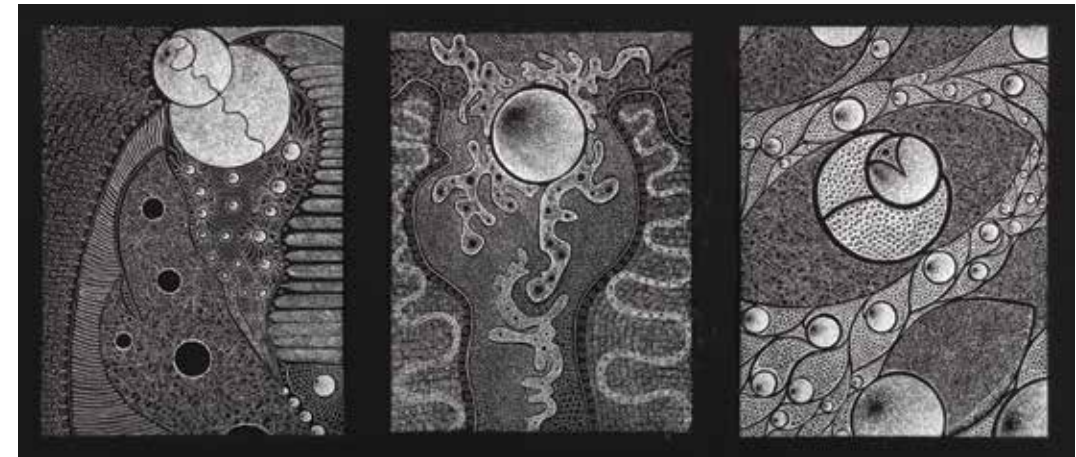


Atomic Consciousness 27
Ink on paper
30 x 30cm (each piece)
2017



Atomic Consciousness 21
 Ink on paper
 30 x 30cm (each piece)
 2017

Atomic Consciousness 23
 Ink on paper
 30 x 30cm (each piece)
 2017



Atomic Consciousness 19
 Ink on paper
 30 x 30cm (each piece)
 2017

Atomic Consciousness 28
 Ink on paper
 30 x 30cm (each piece)
 2017



Atomic Consciousness 29
Ink on paper
30 x 30cm (each piece)
2017

Izzah Nazeri

I started making art six years ago when I was pregnant with my daughter. I suddenly had this urge to draw and there were crayons lying around the house. I love to use bright colours because they represent happiness.

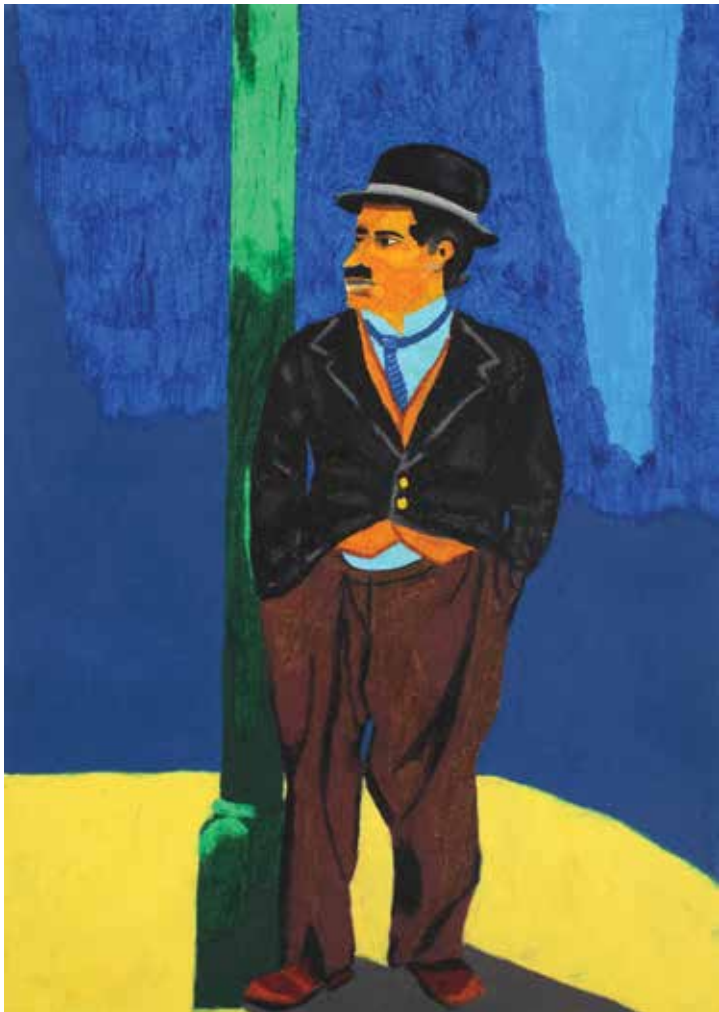
Art making is relaxing. There is satisfaction when a work is completed. But mostly making art allows me to express the state of happiness and joy that I am in now. .



Rosy Prewinkle
59 x 42cm
Crayon on paper
2018



Inner Peace
30 x 42cm
Crayon on paper
2018



Impersonator
59 x 42cm
Crayon on paper
2018

1985
30 x 42cm
Crayon on paper
2017



Roda Manis
42 x 42cm
Crayon on paper
2017

Sarah
42 x 30cm
Crayon on paper
2017

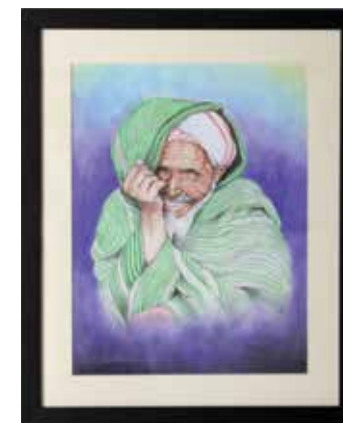


Persatuan Seni Pensel Warna Malaysia

Persatuan Seni Pensel Warna Malaysia ditubuhkan pada Januari 2016. Ahli jawatankuasa penaja yang dipengerusi oleh Hasren Ismail@Uneh terdiri daripada pelbagai latar individu bukan sahaja pelukis tetapi juga terlibat dalam bidang lain seperti penerbitan buku (editor), pendidikan (guru) & sebagainya. Keahlian saat ini berdasarkan page Persatuan Seni Pensel Warna Malaysia yang juga terdiri daripada pelbagai latar ahli.

Secara umumnya ini adalah persatuan yang menghubungkan jalinan ahli yang mengemari seni pensel warna terutamanya di dalam negara. Dari peringkat kanak-kanak (sekolah rendah), remaja (sekolah menengah) & dewasa.

Aktiviti & program persatuan setakat ini bergantung kepada kelapangan para ahli yang rata-rata mempunyai komitmen pekerjaan harian dll. Antaranya Pameran Seni Pensel Warna Malaysia yang telah diadakan sebanyak 2 kali di Galeri Shah Alam & Menara KL. Yang mengabungkan hasil karya pengkarya pensel warna (pelbagai peringkat umur) & antara matlamatnya adalah untuk memeriahkan dunia seni tanah air.





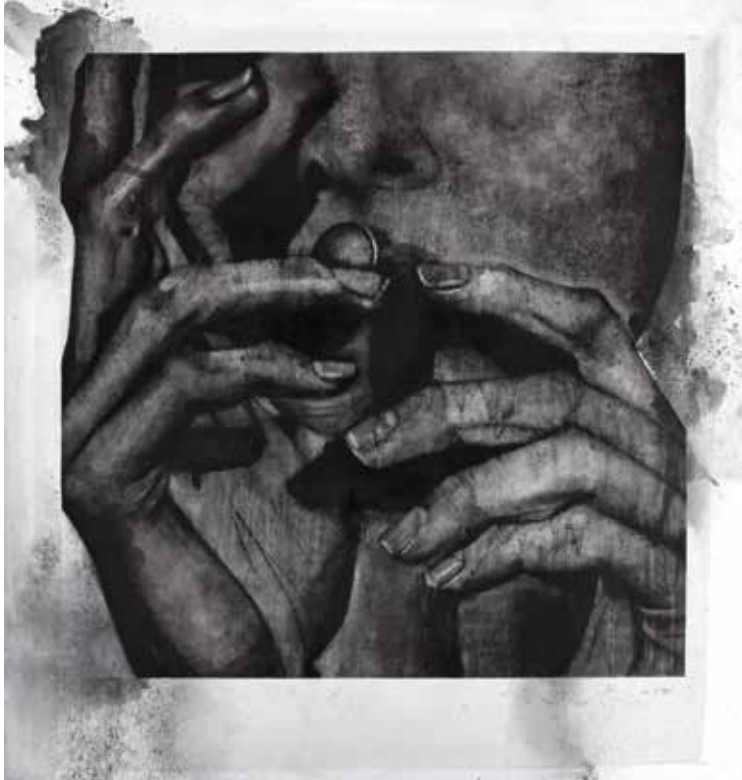


Maybank Foundation has been the strategic driver of Maybank Group's community programs since it was inaugurated in 2010, in conjunction with the Group's 50th anniversary. The Foundation's mandate is to create positive, long-term impact in communities in the markets where Maybank operates. It strives 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 6 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.



**Arikwibowo Amril • Krishnan Karuppiah
Monica Lee • N. Shanthamathe
Syahbandi Samat • Thangarajoo MA Kanniah
Izzah Nazeri • Persatuan Seni Pensel Warna Malaysia**

Special Guest Artist: S.Amin Shahab