



**Maybank**

**MAYBANK FOUNDATION'S BALAI SENI ART SERIES:**

**IRRRRII**

**MAYBANK'S EMERGING WOMEN ARTISTS SHOW 2019**

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## Acknowledgements

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### RRRAWRRR!!! :

#### MAYBANK'S EMERGING WOMEN ARTISTS 2019

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## Chairman's Foreword



Women have contributed immensely towards the well-being and betterment of humankind since the beginning of time. Over the years, there have been increasing recognition and appreciation of the roles they have played in society and their contribution to the progress of communities worldwide. These include leadership roles in world-class organisations, creating positive impact on the lives of the community and shaping progressive cultures across borders.

This year's International Women's Day themed #BalanceforBetter, is a call-to-action for gender equality across the globe. Not only is gender equality a fundamental human right, it is a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. Advancing gender equality is critical as it will make way for a healthier society, reduce poverty, place greater importance on education as well as create a safer and conducive environment for our children's well-being.

As one of Southeast Asia's leading banking groups, Maybank has in place numerous initiatives to recognise the capabilities and contribution of women, not just within our organisation but also in locations where we operate. We endeavour to empower women to be better employees, mothers, entrepreneurs or social workers so that they can create positive impact in the lives of their communities. For example, one of our flagship corporate responsibility programmes, namely the Maybank Women Eco-Weavers, aims to promote and enhance traditional textiles globally in a sustainable manner whilst creating economic independence and financial inclusion for women weavers regionally. The programme currently runs in three ASEAN countries - Indonesia, Cambodia, and Laos. It has been extremely successful in training new women weavers in the skills of silk weaving and providing them sustainable revenue opportunities.

A key area where women have increasingly played a meaningful role has been in the world of arts – whether in the field of dance, literature, theatre, art or music. Recognising the need to celebrate talents in this field, we are pleased to organise 'RRRAWRRR – Maybank's Emerging Young Women Artists' exhibition, to promote emerging women artists in Malaysia. Organised for the second consecutive year, RRRAWRRR is part of Maybank Foundation's Balai Seni Arts Series and aims to give a voice to the talented women in our midst.

Our intention is for Balai Seni Maybank to continue being an exciting and contemporary platform for local talents to showcase the struggles and achievements of all artists, including women, through their beautiful artworks.

To all the artists participating in this exhibition, my heartiest congratulations and deepest appreciation for sharing your stories. May you continue to help us in our endeavours to make our lives a #BalanceforBetter.

Happy International Women's Day 2019!

**Datuk Mohaiyani Shamsudin**

Chairman of Maybank and Maybank Foundation

## CEO's Message



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. Balai Seni Maybank has featured the works of women artists and we hope to provide opportunities to more young and talented, women artists across the globe. In continuance of our successful Balai Seni Art Series, we are proud to present the latest instalment of an exclusive art exhibition geared towards women artists in recognition of their talents.

As part of Balai Seni Art Series 2019, 'RRRAWRRR!!!: Maybank's Emerging Women Artists 2019' Art Exhibition serves as a perfect opportunity to embark on a collective journey to empower women in all facets of life. The art exhibition, in conjunction with the annual International Women's Day celebrates the many qualities and experiences of women in their daily lives. The future is exciting. To drive a better world for everyone, collective

action and shared responsibility for driving a gender-balanced world is key. I hope the artworks of women artists showcase the enthusiasm of the many proud individuals on displaying their own unique identity.

The exhibition will feature 34 artists who specialise in various media and a variety of subject matters, offering refreshing takes on the personal and political landscape through their eyes. Coming from different backgrounds, I am sure they have their own beautiful stories to share on how being a woman shapes their worldview. To denote the importance of art and its effects in our lives, we have involved ourselves in the preservation and sustainability of our arts and culture.

We believe in supporting the women artists by giving them a platform to freely express their spirit and curate their adventures through their crafts. Our country is a nation rich with culture and it is great to see women artists expressing the values and experiences of being a woman through their artworks.

Happy International Women's Day

**Shahril Azuar Jimin**

CEO, Maybank Foundation

# Women in Art

by Suzy Sulaiman

## Part 1:

I admit; my privileged, middle-class upbringing blinded me from acknowledging gender discrimination. Having lived overseas, well-travelled, well-read with maids to care for me, I had a cushioned childhood with a capital “C”. I couldn’t see or rather didn’t want to see; that being a woman was a problem (because it didn’t feel that way in my house).

But as I ventured further from the nest, things got hairier. Starting my professional life in the construction industry, a male-dominated environment was the only thing I knew. Not only did I have to survive in it, I needed to make a living from it. Boys will be boys, I believed and a little damsel in distress or flirting helped sway decisions to my favour. A few times, where I was the only woman in the meeting with men contractors, I felt their eyes undressing me and it left me extremely uncomfortable that I had to leave the meeting. Worst of all, I accepted and internalized this toxic masculinity and even began turning on my own gender when I used derogatory terms like ‘girly’ or ‘pussy’ to mean cowardice or weak.

Then I had a daughter.

## Part 2: Being Invisible in Public

Without doubt, a woman’s environment gives shape to how she perceives her gender roles to be. In a traditional community, women’s lives revolve around caring for their families and therefore are mentally and emotionally shaped for that role. Penang-based artist, Rebecca Duckett-Wilkinson expressed, “Generally women (and certainly in the Asian context) are still limited to the function of family caretaker; expected to marry, produce children and take care of them and to set aside their aspirations for anything else.”

Initially, I thought this was a truth found only in the villages or rural areas, but it’s more ubiquitous than I could have ever imagined.

A few years ago, I travelled to Japan on a research grant with my 8-year old daughter. Despite its outwardly successes, Japan is a patriarchal society. Patriarchy was even projected onto its public spaces. Once, I watched a local news in Tokyo where the members of the public debated whether baby strollers should be allowed on the trains during peak hours. It concluded with interviews by several passengers who said mothers with kids should avoid peak hours because they often blocked their pathway and slowed people down.

There were not a lot of public spaces where parents could be with their loud and playful kids in public and child rearing; was a woman’s job. I never saw a Japanese man strapped with a baby carrier or pushing a baby stroller. It is always the women who shoulder this, with their guilt-ridden faces, clinging on to their toddlers and praying for a safe passage without any embarrassing incidents (especially since baby strollers are hunted down at train platforms!)

I felt compelled to respond to this discrimination against mothers and their kids. With the assistance of Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media (YCAM) staff I organized a series of cooking workshops where parents and their kids, friends and spouses could be together and have a loud, good time. Food became a metaphor of connection, between genders, cultures and age groups. During the time spent preparing, cooking and eating together, I successfully created a gender and age neutral space; suspending the patriarchal quality of that public space. People young and old, could enjoy the mess and friendly chatter that comes with food preparation. The highlight of that was when staffers who worked late, popped by our improvised community kitchen with their empty bowls. Then we ran out of curry.

## Part 3: Being Invisible in An Art Exhibition

Two years ago, I exhibited my artwork in an art gallery for the first time. A gentleman; an artist and someone of position in the gallery; looked at my artwork and said, “It’s hard to believe a woman made this!”. Something similar was said to Malaysian artist Kua Chia Chi when her drawings were likened to that done by a man because she used wild and bold lines that seemed to be associated with a man’s work<sup>i</sup>. Even famous abstract expressionist artist Lee Krasner tutored under Hans Hoffman, said, “...one day he (Hoffman) stood before my easel and he gave me the first praise I had ever received as an artist from him. He said, ‘This is so good, you would never know it was done by a woman.’”<sup>ii</sup>

It’s appalling that women, across time and geographical locations and especially someone of Lee’s calibre, are made to feel worthy by art men in position, only when compared to a man.

At the same time, when asked to comment on the subject of women artists banding together, forming an all-girl network, forcing more recognition for themselves, Lee Krasner replied, “I wouldn’t become part of that,” she said, “I’m an artist, not a woman artist.”

But then, “she changed her name from Lenore to the sexually ambiguous Lee.”<sup>iii</sup>

#### Part 4: Being Invisible Towards Each Other

Last year, I curated an art exhibition called *Merata Suara* where artists partnered with collaborators from different marginalized communities. One of the artists, Victoria Cheng was excited to be paired with silat guru named Puan Norzihah Kasim, fondly called Kak Ji. During her trip to Kedah to visit Kak Ji, a guy from the silat group asked why is Kak Ji her subject of interest, to which she tried to explain she was keen to know about Kak Ji and feminist struggle. The man vehemently replied, "We don't have those here. Don't bring your city problems to our village!". His defensive respond did not surprise Victoria, but Kak Ji's reaction did. She simply quietly nodded and said feminism was not something she believed in.

Expressing indifference or admonition towards any form of feminist discrimination is a symptom of society's systemic conditioning. Such responses allow the cycle of gender discrimination to continue, because it creates a protection barrier from queries, allowing it to form institutionalized thinking. Even more surprising, the ones who perpetuate this discrimination are the successful and strong women in all layers of society.

The recent Pakatan Harapan government's lack to fulfil their manifesto's promise of 30% woman representation<sup>iv</sup> in the cabinet<sup>v</sup> resulted in a public showdown between Tan Sri Rafidah Aziz and Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir. The former's remarks on "merits over gender" was where she urged Malaysians to look for quality instead of only gender representation initiated this response from Marina, "It's not fair for women to think 'if I did it then other women can do it too' because not all women come from the same background or are competing on a level playing field."<sup>vi</sup>

#### Decentering the Feminist Discourse: Lessons in Listening

One of the biggest lessons I learned from 'Merata Suara' when one engages with marginalized communities, one needs a sound grasp of the Malay language, especially in its ability to translate the nuances, to start the conversation. In Victoria's case, the issue started with her direct translation of "feminism" (a liberal, Western and Kuala Lumpur centric perspective) into the traditional silat community in Grik, Kedah. Although nobody could've anticipated their reactions, we discovered that to the rural Malay folks, feminism is an alien concept and has no place in their community. So instead of opening new doors of conversation, it slammed shut-leaving us out in the cold.

I looked for another door to enter this conversation and searched for universal truths that brought women together. Motherhood was the one common and revered character I noticed in all the collaborators and soon, I discovered that starting conversations relating

to their experiences as a mother or their mothers, would put them at ease. With their guards down, I was now able to discourse. Once we associated this brand of feminism as 'kebondaan' (from the Malay root word 'bonda' which means mother), their stories became more approachable as they revealed their invisible worlds to me.

The feminist discourse must be culturally appropriated and made relevant to the community it serves. By doing so, it helps women by giving them different entry points to share their struggles so that every story is an important one.

Before we can find ways to solve the problem, we must first admit that we have one. A lot of women (and here I am describing Suzy Sulaiman in her 20's) refuse to acknowledge the discrimination and that's completely normal. For the fear of losing one's job, livelihood, position, influence over men or just being seen as 'not one of the guys', would be enough for any woman to keep quiet. They do not want to be ostracized by the same social circle they've worked hard to get in, even if means denying the rights of other women.

"If she's the only one who succeeds and nothing is gained for women in general out of her success, then what's the point? It's not about individual cases, we want opportunities for all women."-Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir

<sup>i</sup>Artists' Chat Room. (2017). Di Mana (where are) young exhibition catalogue, National Visual Art Gallery. Pg.17 (unpublished)

<sup>ii</sup>[https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/style/1983/10/23/lee-krasner/cfe27fd-8017-483f-bc08-039ab666f5a8/?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.25dbaaeb12c1](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/style/1983/10/23/lee-krasner/cfe27fd-8017-483f-bc08-039ab666f5a8/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.25dbaaeb12c1) (Accessed 15 February 2019)

<sup>iii</sup>Ibid

<sup>iv</sup><http://www.theedgemarkets.com/article/problem-30-women-quota>

<sup>v</sup><https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/women-sidelined-in-new-malaysian-government-despite-campaign-promises>

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## Guest Writer's Profile



Suzy is a trans-disciplinary artist who moves between the disciplines of art, architecture and media technology to explore the human social dimensions. Her artworks actively participate in the public sphere and local context thus is often commissioned for site-specific festivals or events. She is the co-producer for Digital Art + Culture Festival (DA+C), a curator, writer and was Japan Foundation Asia Centre Fellow in 2015. In 2018, she curated 'Merata Suara: Voices of the Marginalized' for Projek Dialog supported by the Australian High Commission and was selected into "Namamahay" artist-in-residency project curated by Dayang Yroala for Balles Artes Project in Bataan, The Philippines.

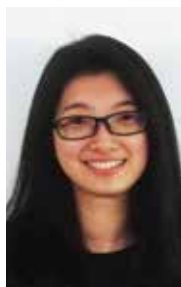
Suzy currently lectures in the interior-architecture school in a private Malaysian university.

[www.suzysulaiman.com](http://www.suzysulaiman.com)  
[www.dacfestival.com](http://www.dacfestival.com)

PLATES



## Alicia Lau



By exploring the different tension process, the interconnection between memories that are lingering in our mind reflects on the result of my art practice. By contemplating the understanding of tension that can be created with the interaction between two elements, I intervene tension to create tension. Based on this thought, my practice begins by creating a mark making process on 2-dimensional surfaces. Through the method of repetition, an element of therapeutic effect is achieved. The actions that are performed are a result between the current mental state and earlier experiences through subconsciousness. This idea had drawn me to further explore my artworks in 3-dimensional form between several disciplines such as sculpture and installation.

Mind The Gap  
Acrylic on canvas  
152.5 x 107cm  
2019



## Amani Azlin



Amani Azlin is a 25 year old photographer with a graphic design background from London College Of Communication. Amani is often cited for giving 'lost in thought' experiences and a 'haze of self discovery' with her subjects. Through her exploration of both photography and graphic design lies the compositions for her work. Her soft hues and conceptual narrative are the two main components that shapes her photography.

Salasilah is her tribute to women and nature. Combining elements of earth and the female form to portray the origin of life. We come from women and we rise from the soils.

### Salasilah

Photographic print on epson matte paper

76.2 x 76.2cm

2019



## Anna Azzreena Azilan



Anna Azzreena is an artist who focuses on the medium of mixed media. Her works are mainly processes of life's gifts as well as her fascination with coming of age stories mostly influenced by the late John Hughes. She is now getting by living her life as a freelancer and is inspired by the process of her future experiences being in a state of reality.



Sopan II  
Mixed media on canvas  
16 x 21 cm (18 pieces)  
2019

## Choo Ai Xin



I have always been interested in the trivial of the everyday that people tend to overlook. My artworks consist of my exploration and observation of these textures that I consider to carry traces of time and space. This series of paintings on visual textures are the small part of a whole thing. The textures on the wall are the elements that recorded the time in a space. The forming of the textures is different due to the history or the age of the buildings, the materials and the weather. I magnify the textures on the old walls of the buildings found in the Old Town of Ipoh. They are like presence without existence due to our oversight. These pieces suggest that we tend to see the bigger picture in things but overlooked the little details that make up the whole.

Wall II  
Acrylic, PVA glue and modelling paste on canvas  
128 x 72cm  
2017



## Choo Yan Xin



I am interested in triggering sensory awareness and visual perception in the viewer through a spectrum of colour in different forms to evoke psychological and emotional responses. Rather than attaching any meaning, the works create the experience of dream-like spaces to allow viewers to bring to the piece or take from the piece whatever they wish. My work may take the form of a painting, sculpture or installation.



Skins of Colours  
Acrylic on canvas  
95 x 150cm  
2019

## Dhaniya Yusof



My work explores my sense of identity, also on femininity and womanhood. Due to being slightly in denial of my own femininity, my work became an observation of myself from a second point of view in which my struggles and growth in being a female is more saturated and visible.

'Roots with No End' is part of a therapeutic self care series, emboldening parts of which I've grown, in mind and being. A self portrait that serves to comfort my various insecurities.

Roots with No End  
Canvas print with embellishments  
91.44 x 91.44cm  
2018



## Elly Nor Suria MZ



During my years studying fine art, I was into expressionism, with its loud and vibrant colours. Since I became a mother, my approach has slowly turned mellow and whimsical. My kids and my life now influence my art. Today, I might be regarded as a contemporary naive artist as most of my works are based on happy surroundings with happy colours. Many have even described my works as decorative naive with a semi abstract twist.

In my opinion, naive art is closer to my heart since it is the purest and most direct approach. The placing of colours, distorted forms, zero perspectives and its effectiveness in presenting narratives visually are what pushes me to explore naive art even further. I am also a children's book illustrator and have already published 2 children picturebooks.



2 Se-Joli  
Mixed media  
165.1 x 106.6 cm  
2019

## Emily Chow Wen Qi



I often explore different kinds of materials besides the ordinary ones. I am always on the look out for new techniques and materials that I could incorporate into my artwork. As for the concepts behind my works, I am always interested in the way people think of a situation or an object. I get lots of inspiration from social media, because on social media everyone could voice out their opinion freely and not have a face to face confrontation with other people. For my works I try to interpret different kinds of thinking by combining different methods and materials together.

Introvert  
Water-based paint on canvas cloth, wooden frames  
103 x 153cm  
2019





## Fitriah Roslan



This artwork is based on the story of 'Singapura dilanggar Todak' with a modern twist. It is a battle between man and nature that has been going on since the beginning of humanity. The questions of "Who is going to win?", "What will happen if the event occurs at this moment?" and "How to save ourselves with modern technologies?" are playing in my mind. Here I picture that situation, which will be totally different with the existence of new technologies and weapons. Through this painting, I tell a story of the possibilities of what might happen from my point of view.

As a form of parody, the men defending the island are symbolically represented as toy soldiers with their weapons of mass destruction while the numerous school of swordfish, obeying their instinctual nature pushes forward and attacks relentlessly. I use the technique of icing on canvas to create complexities and to give it a 3-dimensional feel to the image.

Man Vs Nature ( Singapura dilanggar Todak )

Oil paint on canvas

122 x 122 cm

2018



## Foong Yeng Yeng



Foong explores the beauty in Malaysian culture and celebrates heritage through painting. Through her works, she illustrates her observations of cultural shifts in Malaysian society. With a dominant use of pastel colours, Foong has a unique and individualistic painting style that successfully captures the essence of her local heritage. Through her paintings, she seeks to encourage the appreciation of cultural heritage locally.

“An idea about cultural exchanges, this painting presents the harmonious coexistence of Malay and Chinese cultures. I incorporate Malay traditional patterns within a traditional Chinese painting style to show how an idea of cultural exchange or culture mixing can take place.”

Gourd  
Acrylic on canvas  
100 x 70cm  
2018



## Ho Kar Lok



My work explores the psychological state of my inner self and feminine conditions in general. I am a daydreamer that tend to daydream about the past and the future including things that may or may not happen, or thinking about some memories of the past. Interesting thoughts come automatically into my mind when I am sitting in a train, having a meal, taking a shower, before I go to sleep or even in my dreams. I would take out my notebook or even phone to note down or sketch some of these unassuming happenings. I believe that these images are not simply random imaginings but rather they came from my subconscious. I am interested in using my own visual language to trigger similar experiences among the audience.

### Normal Society

Oil and embroidery on canvas, ink on paper  
128 x 72 cm ( & set of 20 smaller drawings)  
2019



## Iona Danald



Iona Moira Evemarie Danald is a Bidayuh painter who works with primarily oil and acrylic on canvas and textile. Her work is the expressive exploration of mental health issues and its journey to recovery.

"Formally, my work explores the expressive reactions of mental health issues. I often used myself as a reference because the artwork are strong emotional reflections of oneself during an emotional hardship and temporary inability of acceptance. The overall vision of my work is to attract familiar emotions that we all have felt at one point of our lives. *Protected Peacefulness* is the portrayal of a gentle grieving process and the beginning of its acceptance. The delicate resting female figure is blessed with four watchful guardian angels."

*"May your grandmother's prayers still keep you out of harm's way always."*



Protected Peacefulness

Mixed Media

Variable size

2019

## Jessica Kuok



Every second, is counting. How the wind blows, how the tree grows, your future. Sometimes I wonder, am I making a right decision. And then I found out, we will never know. Until you reach to the end in your life, there's no way of turning back. From the past, the present, the future. Once was calm, storm will come, and what? What's behind the clouds, how will my future be? What will you become in the end of your life? It's good to question, than to keep silent. Because whatever the future will be, I'll know, when the day comes. Believe it, storms will go, another new day will come.

I, Wonder  
Acrylic on canvas  
121.9 x 91.4cm  
2019



## Joy Ng



Drawn to the complexity of human emotions, my artwork revolves on the exploration of the inner universe; memories, sentiments, traumatic events, self-consciousness etc. I am fascinated at the way these emotions influence our actions and decisions in our daily life. I aim to capture the fleeting moment of intense emotions, experiences, narratives and recreate it with my own interpretations.

I primarily paint figures and portray humans in their deepest emotions. I picture my subjects against a semi abstract background. Using bright palettes, tonal contrast and expressive strokes, the different states of mind and various states of being are reflected. Through this, I hope to create a connection with the audience, to evoke certain memories and emotions.

Metamorphosis  
Oil on Canvas  
92 x 105cm  
2019



## Kara Inez



Throughout history, the female body has been abjected due to its bodily functions and its refusal to conform to the patriarchal system that deems it impure and lacking in propriety. Lady Lumps highlights the parts of a female body that are usually kept hidden and deemed as imperfections such as the folds, bulges and bodily functions.

Instead of the abject being something that is seen as repulsive and something to distance yourself from, this sculpture acts as a way to embrace the abject as a form of feminist aesthetics, as a means to challenge the physical and behavioural societal constructs surrounding female ideals and the oppressive category of beauty that defines a desirable woman as contained, orderly and devoid of imperfections. This piece forces the audience to come face to face with these organic forms that occur naturally within and on a woman's body.

Lady Lumps  
Silicone, thread, stockings and rice  
14 x 14 x 18cm  
2019



## Koo Yeanni



My work is inspired by the naïve as well as the pure and innocent qualities found in folk art and children's art. The spontaneous and unconstrained quality of my work comes from my love of folk art and from years of observation when teaching art to children. I embrace the everyday life, history, traditions and various cultural aspects of my native land through a series of vibrant paintings, collages and embroidery pieces. They record and preserve mainly the social significance of my homeland through a joyful process of imaginative play and observation with the qualities of anthological, nostalgic and the sentimental always present in my works.

Journey Through Oceans  
Oil on canvas  
100 x 100cm  
2018





## Leong How Yi



My work is about the connection between people living in a variety of social conditions and cultural backgrounds. I am curious about how human condition drives our society and am interested in studying human psychological responses to different life experiences from various perspectives. The outcome of my studies may take the form of sculptures, installations or two-dimensional mixed media works.

To Be or Not To Be  
Charcoal and oil pastel on Joss Paper  
100 x 74cm  
2019



## Liew Mei Toong



My work explores the people in my lifeblood that I observed and encounter in different times and spaces. It records my inner emotional swings and sentiments towards outer situations, everyday trivialities and personal experiences when encountering people. Time refers to the past, now and moments of a day, whilst space refers to venues, locations and existences that consist of subjective materiality while people refers to the familiars and strangers.

The content of the work shuttles between togetherness, parting, sadness and anxiety about different conditions of life. I enjoy expressing my sensible side with broken images and textured surface. I attempt to present vicissitude, loneliness, depression and helplessness found within the cause and effect of life.

"To know myself is to know each other's self." Our existence are based on the existence of others and we are interconnected. Sometimes when I observe people on the streets, it is difficult for me to understand their inner feelings through their faces but sometimes I can as if see through a little.

Neverland  
Paper, gloss gel, oil pastel and acrylic on canvas  
103 x 71cm  
2019



## Liew Yih Min



My artistic practice is related to the redirection of energy in daily life. In the process of delivering ideas, I distribute the excess energy within my mind into 2-dimensional form of art, in order to break free from the chaotic state of mind that is input by the surroundings. My artistic output is a variety of adhesive materials on flat canvas, depicting the merge of illusion and reality, in accordance to the psychological activities in my head.

Are You Okay  
Acrylic, oil & charcoal on canvas  
150 x 120cm  
2017



## Lim Jing



Lim Jing is a young artist who works multidisciplinary. By the way, Jing prefers to use the singular 'they' as their pronoun. Their work often explores identities, spaces and power. Spaces are created by humans, and humanity is created by spaces. Jing sees every preference of them as merely the preference of the system, and even this thought might be just an influence from one of the systems too. People have no where to escape from any system, because as soon as they leave one, they will be trapped and controlled by another.

System Form  
Folding and stitching on silkscreen mesh  
124 x 93cm  
2019



## Lyia Meta



A visual artist and singer songwriter, Lyia Meta has a penchant for speaking through song where freedom is found through voice. She paints to speak the words she cannot sing sings the words she writes.

Born in Malacca, West Malaysia to a Malaccan Portuguese father and a Sinhalese-Chinese mother, she pursued distance studies in Interior Design but decided to make the stage her life.

Her music has won her International Awards in UK, California and Southeast Asia. Her most recent success was her winning the World Music Artist of the Year 2018 from The Josie Music Awards in Tennessee, U.S.A in September of 2018. She was the only Malaysian, shortlisted from over 13,000 hopefuls.

“ POSTCARDS FROM ACROSS THE POND’ is a visual diary I keep. A series that delves into the emotional and visual impact social media has on me as an artist.

Of the people I ‘meet’ and the thoughts they share. Where photos shared tell a story of a moment or a day in their life.

These are stories FROM ACROSS THE POND.”

Postcards From Across The Pond - Horizon  
Acrylic on canvas.  
91.4 x 121.9cm  
2019

Postcards From Across The Pond - Umbrella  
Acrylic on canvas  
91.4 x 121.9cm  
2019



## Lyne Ismail (Dr)



The abstract idea of morphism has always been a fascinating one for me. Morphism is not a semantic language but rather a graphical one, which is to say it is less concerned with the intrinsic meaning than with the change that happens to a phenomenon. From the Parallel Universe series, I have made an oil on canvas painting measuring 140cm x 140cm titled Morphism: The Spiral. It is an interpretation on the idea of spiral growth in our life. How each layer of our life experiences is a layer of process in the making that connected to each other by twisting and bending like the spiral grains of a tree. That these layers are a sacred symbol that represents the journey and change of life as it unfolds; taking a labyrinth-like passage that leads to the Source or in other words, to Our Creator. The spiral symbol can represent the consciousness of nature beginning from its center expanding outwardly.

Morphism: The Spiral  
Oil on canvas  
140 x 140cm  
2019



## Maheswary Manickam



This painting is conceived from my studies on colour and its sound vibration. I chose the square to represent a pixel and translated it as a symbol for energy. The Five elements with their symbolic colour representations fills the background of the canvas. It explores plant, animal and humans in different space and time that vibrates and respond to each other in its own unique way.



Within Space and Time  
Acrylic on canvas  
122 x 122cm  
2019

## Marisa Ng



As a child, I was enthralled by the story, "The Secret Garden" by Frances Hodgson Burnett. Today, I am a grown woman on a journey to discover my own "secret garden", the one that is embedded deep within my heart.

Strangely, I had almost forgotten it existed, buried so thick underneath the overgrown tangle of emotional despair and heartache. Yet, as I gather the courage to pull out the weeds, I begin to uncover tiny buds of life beneath the layers of debris. As I tend to my garden, it starts bursting with blooms, rich and warm, bright and beautiful. What an amazing and glorious find, the garden of my heart. It is alive and well!

As an artist, I am interested in creating artwork that engages my audience and draws them into my realm of imagination. My style is abstract expressionism, leaning on my subconscious and spontaneous actions which result in gestural brush strokes, seeking balance between chaos and control. In creating "The Secret Garden" series, I drew inspiration from CY Twombly in mark-making and structure in my work, whereas Joan Mitchell inspired me with her prominent brush strokes and use of color.

My mark-making process involves using different tools such as pencils, crayons, charcoal sticks, brushes and pallet knives to produce interesting textures, marks and surfaces. I enjoy using oils for their vibrancy, intensity and versatility. Its buttery consistency also gives me the freedom to create textures and forms, while it can be also be diluted to produce splashes on the canvas. The abstraction of my subject matter focuses on colour, texture, organic form and the visual language of paint. The backgrounds in my paintings are mostly muted, with bright colour accents outlining forms to introduce greater dimension and depth.

Series: The Secret Garden  
Roses are red, violets are blue  
Mixed media  
152 x 152cm  
2017





## Mona K.V



In life, everything is connected and nothing is solitary  
For a night, there is a day. For a negative, there is a positive  
In every good, there is a little evil and even in the darkest hour, there exists light  
Nothing in life is simply black or white  
Each exists in the other and each needs the other to exist  
Constantly giving way and changing into the other

To live life is to embrace both the light and the dark  
To find the good during the bad times and to find love in the midst of hatred  
To live a life of harmony and balance, the path to peace.

Duality in Unity  
Acrylic on canvas  
91.4 x 243.8cm  
2019



## 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.



Behind the Curtain IV  
Graphite and charcoal  
64.7 x 95.2cm  
2019

## Ruby Subramaniam

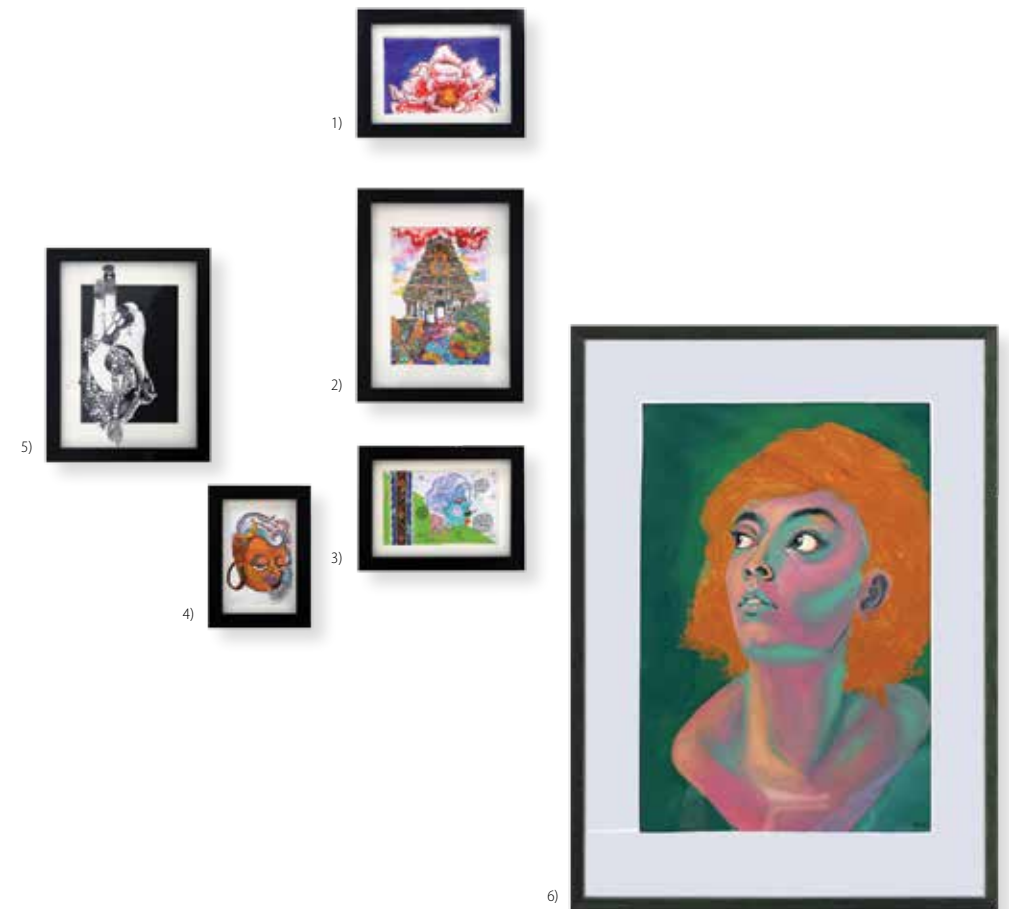


Ruby Subramaniam is keen on raising questions about culture and society, for an urban audience with her works. She believes art is inspired by the society and finds its value when it's consumed back by the society, and is reflected upon. A cycle of completion.

As a feminist, Ruby is curious about what her religion, Hinduism, says about the role of women. She found ancient Hindu Goddesses archetypes as a useful path to self-discovery, as these are values transcending time and cultures. In all her works, she wants to remind people that feminism isn't a "New Age" idea, but has its roots in age-old ideologies and spirituality.

### Ebb and Flow of the Chakra

- 1) Crown
  - 2) Ajna
  - 3) Judgement
  - 4) Sacral Fantasy
  - 5) Mudra
  - 6) Rupa
- Mixed media  
Variable sizes  
2019



## Sarah Joan Mokhtar



In this symbolist work, the Tongue is the secret clue.

The artwork references the piercingly drawn tongue of the silent screaming mother figure in Picasso's masterpiece Guernica, clutching her limp lifeless infant amid the aftermath of a devastating bombing, as etched in the mind's eye of the artist.

Guernica was a political statement on the pointlessness and cruelty of war.

This is a more intimate, psychological statement on the abundance of hope and inspiration, despite the viciousness of our own inner conflicts and self-criticism (and criticism of others) that can devour and destroy dreams.

This artist is at war with her self, her womanhood, her creative power, and her femininity as symbolised by the Celtic inspired muses from her half-Irish upbringing.

This dimension of strife will always exist, but the artist has drawn a secret golden escape hatch, a window, as bright as the sun.

The artist is inviting the viewer to be the key. She would ask you, the viewer, to come with her, to meet her and her muses, as Rumi would say, on the other side, where life thrives and all is always well.

The work is a sigil, an affirmation, a prayer. And an invitation.

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Sarah Joan Mokhtar is a half-Irish Malaysian artist born in 1983, Petaling Jaya. She lived in Kuwait with her family from 1984 to 1991 and is still recovering from the emotional impact of the sudden loss of home at the age of 7 when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait while visiting family in Malaysia. The subsequent sense of inner isolation and the struggle to catch up linguistically and culturally with her peers while being a mixed race person fuelled her artistic career which began at the age of 14 in the field of comics.

### The Tongue

Acrylic on canvas

152.4 x 152.4cm

2018



## Sharina Shahrin



I recently begun to work with self-portraits that explore the personal and universal narratives as a woman. "Not Exotic but Exhausted" is the introduction to a series that illustrates the experiences referencing aspects such as the male gaze, the legacy of colonialism and distortion of religion within a community. Using myself as a canvas through photography, the image constructed hopes to open a dialogue that challenges the politics of identity within a localized societal framework.

Not Exotic but Exhausted  
Photographic print on canvas  
83.8 x 83.8cm  
2019



## Shany Ahmed @ Manje



Shany Ahmed, more commonly known as 'Manje' is a Visual Artist based in Kuala Lumpur. Manje's works are heavily influenced by feminism, elements in nature and folklore. Her love for color and experimenting with various mediums and techniques often give a surreal quality to her paintings and illustrations. Manje believes that every time one looks at art they should discover more about the art, the artist and even oneself.



Unwavering Strength  
Mixed media on canvas  
91.4 x 121.9cm  
2019

## Sharifah Bahiyah



One of the questions that artists are most often asked, is what inspires them. As a self-taught artist, my simple and yet complex answer is that it is my surroundings. The city has always been a source of creativity or stimulant. I view the city like a kaleidoscope, offering an infinity of colour and patterns. Amidst the hustle and bustle, it is too easy to lapse into routine and ignore the inspiration that awaits. The steamy heat of a traffic jam transforms a street scene into a mirage or the morning's first light into the opportunity of a pristine white canvas. I am proud to be a self-taught female artist, these are labels that do not confine, but belly the gut instinct that defines me. I started by teaching myself to paint pretty pictures - still-lifes and flowers that are pleasing to the eye and bring calm to the mind. As my art evolves, I gravitate towards non-representational art. I seek the challenge of conveying movement and emotion thru colour and texture, it is the power of speaking without words. Currently, I am working on abstract landscape paintings taken by drone - aerial views of the city and rural areas. Skyscrapers and padi fields are the form and physical presence of our country. My intention when putting brush to canvas is to convey our union of modernity and tradition, desire to progress and respect for heritage. Subtle brush strokes, colour fields and layers of pigment seek to bring out the viewer's response rather than informing them. My art speaks to those who seek.

In order to attain happiness, everything has to be done in it's measure where all aspects of your life must be balanced. Using my hectic lifestyle in the city as my source of inspiration, **"The Quest For Balance,"** mirrors my constant internal struggle to find and maintain that balance between myself, my faith, my family, the people I'm connected to and the work that I do.

***"Happiness is not a matter of intensity but of balance, order, rhythm and harmony. ~ Thomas Merton***

The Quest for Balance

Acrylics on canvas

121.9 x 121.9cm

2019



## Shiela Samsuri



*Dalam mata,  
Hati yang melihat.*

*Darah mengalir,  
Dalam perbatasan.*

*Bahasa,  
Antara manusia dengan Tuhan.*

•

And so we speak, through this iris. Matters of the heart, out of a black. As blood floods in two ways. So much of the unsaid is heard. The unseen, felt. Human, we'll find our ways of looking at the sun.

•

Shiela Samsuri. Human. Being.

Mata Hati (01)  
Watercolour, ink and pencil on paper  
89 x 69cm  
2019





## Teh Nadira



Teh's work evolves around a heartfelt psychological curiosity by exploring self- experience from a broad perspective about the daily routines. Her interest is to show the sense of feminine spirit. At the same time, it reflects her life's journey to rediscover and inspire the feminine spirit through best narrative, as a female artist.

Her concept is influenced by her own personal experience as well as exploration of women's behavior captured over energetic moments that celebrate femininity. Her choice of subject matter and approach in her creative style is greatly influenced by the Impressionists.

Patiently Waiting  
Acrylic and charcoal on canvas  
106.7 x 91.5cm  
2018





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;

<b>EDUCATION</b>	<b>COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT</b>	<b>HEALTHY LIVING</b>	<b>ARTS &amp; CULTURE</b>	<b>ENVIROMENTAL DIVERSITY</b>	<b>DISASTER RELIEF</b>
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.

# RRRAV

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HOW YI • MARISA NG • MAHESWARY MANICKAM • MONICA LEE • MONA K.V • LYNE  
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