



**Maybank**

**RRRAWRRR! 2021**

**NAFAS**

**MAYBANK'S EMERGING WOMEN ARTISTS EXHIBITION**

Maybank Foundation Balai Seni Art Series

**RRRAWRRR! 2021: NAFAS**  
MAYBANK'S EMERGING WOMEN ARTISTS EXHIBITION

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This catalogue is published in conjunction with RRRAWRRR!!! NAFAS Maybank's Emerging Women Artists Exhibition, a virtual exhibition by Balai Seni Maybank

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## CEO'S MESSAGE



For much of 2020, Balai Seni Maybank had to close its doors to the public due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, we have been working on ways to stay in touch with the communities that we serve while still upholding our mission, which is to provide a platform for local artists and support the arts as an avenue of growth.

As a result, we now have a virtual gallery that gives us the opportunity to stay connected to and continue positively impacting the arts communities. Ours is in fact one of the first virtual art galleries set up by a major corporation in Malaysia. This new platform will expand Balai Seni's presence well beyond its previous reach in incorporating our aspirations to continue being at the heart of our communities.

Since its inception in 2018 which marked the return of Balai Seni after a hiatus of nearly ten years, it has attracted the participation of many women artists from diverse backgrounds, practices and levels of artistic skill. The past three editions of "RRRAWRRR!!!: Maybank's Emerging Women Artists Show" received wide attention and good response from the arts community as well as the general public. I also believe that they have had some impact on raising awareness about women and providing greater insights into women's issues and roles in society.

This year's edition of the exhibition titled "RRRAWRRR!!! 2021 NAFAS - Maybank's Emerging Women Artists" features 20 women artists representing their works as part of the emerging art practices among women contemporary artists. Through a broad range of media, forms and approaches, the participating artists express themselves through a variety of themes and subject matters that the curator has grouped into three categories, namely, the body, life cycle (or time impermanence), and desire to belong.

Hence, I am pleased to invite you to visit our new virtual art exhibition and be inspired by NAFAS, in the spirit of celebrating the achievements of these women artists and seeing the world through their lenses.

Happy International Women's Day

**Shahril Azuar Jimin**  
CEO, Maybank Foundation

# CURATORIAL INTENTION

By Suzy Sulaiman

Despite vigorous efforts to elevate women artists, their representation in local art institutions and galleries is still lacking. Women's limited access to these sites can perhaps be attributed to the dominant narrative of art history that emphasizes cultural contributions of male artists. In their infamous words, the New York based art collective Guerrilla Girls state, "Less than 5% of the artists in the Modern Art section are women, but 85% of the nudes are female".

This year's edition of the Maybank's emerging women artists exhibition, entitled "Nafas", is driven by these curatorial questions:  
"Which curatorial approach would be sympathetic to artists whose practices have been excluded from the mainstream art discourse and rendered invisible by the different power systems within art galleries?"  
"How can we see something that we've been made blind towards?"

This invisibility can be eluded if we re-examine curatorial practices that have been accepted as the norm. Firstly, there is a conscious blurring of the definition of "artists". A number of artists in this show do not possess formal training in art and come from various educational backgrounds. In place of

a formal art training, the tenacity, coherence and consistency of their creative practices become the deciding factors for their selection. Secondly, the show is intended to include fringe art practitioners identified by their unconventional mediums or non-gallery based artworks. Loosening the definition of "artists" allows this exhibition to become more inclusive. At a glance, the exhibition presents a diverse set of artworks, which I would describe as an open field.

Open fields can be deceptively simple. They may seem plain and even repetitious, but there are invisible site forces overlaid over their planes. Urban theorist Stan Allen uses the term "field conditions" to describe an open space where site forces are present but not necessarily seen.<sup>1</sup> Local configurations, particularly the way how different elements are connected on a micro scale, can be repeated, thus allowing an open field to expand, contract and absorb. Allen uses the Cordoba Mosque as an example to describe field conditions. The mosque's floor plan consists of an almost infinite repetition of columns and arches. Within this grid-like plane, however, the mosque shares its grounds with a church and a temple. The interlocking of its architectural elements results in a space that allows

a diversity of religious beliefs to co-exist, without one belief assuming dominance over the other. Instead of being concerned with establishing an overarching narrative to bind the artworks in this exhibition together, I want to focus on connecting one artwork to another on a local scale and hence creating an interlock of part to part, an approach sympathetic to diverse elements.

*Nafas* is a common biological denominator of all living organisms. In this exhibition, it serves a metaphor to connect the artworks. *Nafas*, a Malay word meaning 'to breathe', summarizes the close relationship we have with each other. *Nafas baru* is a common phrase in Malay that implies the new and the emerging; thus an apt description of the artists in this exhibition as a breath of fresh air.

As I was assembling the artworks in the virtual gallery, a pattern started to emerge. I was able to discern the fluid territories of the fringe into particular emotive zones. For the purpose of coherence, I have clustered them into three groups: life cycle (or time impermanence), the body (including bodies in transit), and the longing to belong.

<sup>1</sup>[https://www.academia.edu/8105842/object\\_to\\_field\\_object\\_to\\_field](https://www.academia.edu/8105842/object_to_field_object_to_field)

## LIFE CYCLE

The notions of birth, aging and death are pronounced in the artwork by Nadirah Zakariya, “All Purpose Flower” (2020), which captures the transient nature of blooming flowers. Nadirah created this piece after being consumed by an insatiable yearning for flowers while she was in isolation during the lockdown. The passing of time over inanimate objects and the living hints at the quiet mortality residing within us. Mortality links us to Tiong Chai Heing’s painting, “Decomposition” (2018). She contemplates on the value of life and the meaning of being alive through her experience as a care-taker for an autistic family member. She masterfully captures the rancid stench of decay through the textures that she created. However, upon closer inspection, there is hope lying between the crevices.

Balqis Tajalli extends sympathy to other life forms generally regarded as worthless, particularly the invasive plants known as *lalang* (in Malay), or the common grass (*Pennisetum polystachion*). Living among paddy fields in Langkawi, Balqis believes that nature never produces excesses, and even *lalang* plays a crucial part in the earth’s biodiversity. Her commitment to ecological-friendly art practice is reflected in her application of cyanotype, a printing technique based on direct exposure to sunlight which she used to make “Lalang”.

As an architect, Lisa Foo designs buildings that are permanent. Interestingly, her art practice expresses the opposite: impermanence. In parallel to Balqis Tajalli’s view, Lisa believes that usefulness is not the sole measure of value or worth and something “does not (necessarily) become useless once the end of [its] intended purpose is reached”. In “Metamorphosis” (2018), Through the sculptural figures facing upwards towards the sky, Lisa depicts humankind’s arrogance over mother earth. Despite the little care given, plants continue to grow amidst the sculptures.

## THE BODY

Themes around the body are apparent in this exhibition. Philosopher Merleau-Ponty explains, “Our own body is in the world as the heart is in the organism; ...[s]ensory experience is unstable and alien to natural perception, which we achieve with our whole body at once, and which opens up a world of interacting senses.”<sup>2</sup>

Nawwar Shukriah Ali and Dipali Gupta explore the body and the world as one relentless existential space, placing the home as a conceptual symbol of the body. In “The Idea of a Home” (2021), Nawwar translates the ephemeral meaning of home into an artwork in a virtual space. This “imagined home” is a manifestation of her attempt to build an imagined safe space within her memories – artwork exists in the memory of the servers of computer systems. While Nawwar deals with home that resides in the virtual world, Dipali Gupta deals with her physical residence by means a dual channel video work that consists of “Navras in Peril I” (2020) and “Navras in Peril II” (2020). Her experience of the movement control order has exacerbated her feelings, and home became a site of tranquillity and entrapment. In this work, two separate scenes are juxtaposed: one depicting happiness and the other fear through the

expressive movements of the Bhratnatyam dancer. These two intertwined emotions are often difficult to separate within a domestic space. Aishah Mokhtar’s installation “Botanical Haven: Cultivating Everyday Moments” (2020) embodies her internal struggles as a modern woman, particularly the conflicting roles she has to play as a career-driven architect and a mother to a toddler. Aishah runs through the different versions of herself throughout a typical day, as the present demands her attention. She spends the small pockets of time she can find for herself to provide care for other living creatures like her plants, and enjoys some delightful moments when she can breathe and co-exist with nature.

The body also has the ability to remember. Bloomer and Moore posit that one’s body image is created early in one’s life through “haptic and orienting experiences.”<sup>3</sup> We experience the world around us firstly through our body, and our visual is informed by the tactile knowledge we experience with our body. In Kok Siew Wai’s “Face(s)” (2002), a single channel video work, she engages the face as a receptor.

In a masterful overlay of five videos, Siew Wai represents each of the five senses, namely, the eyes, nose, mouth, ears and skin. By controlling different video opacities, the five elements come together to create a fluid and sensuous moving image. In Wong Xi Yiang’s work, the sensual and subtly provocative images of embraces and bodies illustrate our innate desire to search for security and comfort. In “Cotton Candy” (2020), a circle formed by bodies holding hands represents Yi Xiang’s image of collective security. She also places some symbols associated with well-being, such as the *Althaea*, a perennial herb and an ingredient for cotton candy. In “Blue Socks” (2018), bananas leaves, a symbol related to the poets of the Song and Qing dynasties and associated with deep affection, are set behind two reclining bodies enveloped in a comforting embrace.

## Bodies in transit, diaspora, migration

Eleanor Goroh, an artist based in Kota Kinabalu, created “Fabrication” (2018) following her 3-month artist-in-residence programme in Kuala Lumpur. Upon her arrival in KL, she became disturbed by the obvious economic and social inequality between East and West Malaysia, a feeling layered with her personal bittersweet memories when she was a university student and an athlete representing Sabah. Her art installation consists of four scrolls that depict the various stages of colonization, with the two scrolls in the foreground representing Sabah and Sarawak. The installation is obscured by a beaded curtain that serves as a reminder to the oath and promise made in one’s spirit.

Mesita Jee’s experience of travelling abroad forces her to reconcile with her transitory identity. In her sculpture piece “Hair” (2020), her bodily substances, like her fallen hair, become extensions of herself as her body shifts localities. Mesita now employs these elements as her medium of art, just like her body that serves as the canvas when she traverses international borders.

The topic of migration is a recurring theme in Okui Lala’s body of work. “Perjalanan Bersama Desi” (2018) and “Ingatan Welding” (2018) are part of a collaborative video art piece between Okui, Desi Lastari and Ayu. One is drawn into the conversation, almost like an eavesdropping backseat passenger. Desperate for work, Ayu picked up welding in a mechanic workshop, much to the amazement of her employer. Welding is usually reserved as a man’s task, but Ayu sought to dispel this sexist perception and questioned, “If a man can do it, why can’t I?” The video depicts gestures of a welder’s (Ayu’s) hand as she used it to shield her eyes from bright sparks. She made these gestures almost reflexively, relying on her body memory.

<sup>2</sup> Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, Routledge (London) 1992, p.203.

<sup>3</sup> Kent C. Bloomer and Charles W. Moore, *Body, Memory and Architecture*, Yale University Press, (New Haven & London), 1977, p.44.

Intan Rafiza uses her own body to interface with society in different international locations she travels to. Presented here is part of a series of performance art called “Se mu ka”, which means to confront. She talks about the body, how meaning is created through direct contact with the audience, and how performance art can serve as a bridge between self and society. These interrelated performance pieces have been developed across two locations. “At That Time” (2018) examines one’s layered identities that co-exist within one’s self, particularly his/her national and personal identities. “Root Become Ritual”, performed in Vienna, Austria, links Intan to her own ancestral wisdom. In the performance, she offered turmeric root, a powerful healing plant, to random visitors whom she confronted. Self-care became the order of the day as Intan interacted with audiences from a different cultural background.

### THE DESIRE TO BELONG

The desire to connect with one’s surroundings does not only stem from the need to blend in, but to also accentuate its beauty. This intention is prevalent among artists producing site-specific works, such as Hanisah Johari and Pamela Tan. Hanisah installed “B-Loom” (2019) in the heart of Chinatown, Kuala Lumpur. A self-taught macramé artist, Hanisah intertwined and aligned this macramé piece – made from knotted strings – with the surrounding architecture to build an outdoor living room that appeared both intimate and inviting.

Another site-specific artwork is Pamela Tan’s “Dome of Disappearance” (2019). Through visual mimicry, Pamela responded to the surrounding colonial architecture at the site by creating a threshold that offers an imagined dialogue between Kuala Lumpur of the past and the present. Finding a way to connect with physical spaces describes the idea that underlies Esha Hashim’s work “Tensagrity Wall/Flower” (2018). This installation piece is an exploration of structural properties. As each component holds itself, and through the process of repetition, it is able to “grow” to suit any desired length. This allows the art installation to connect and fit into any spaces. Esha does not use mediums to create art; instead, she develops “systems”.

Alicia Lau’s “Isolated, Yet Connected” (2019) addresses the duality of connectivity. She contemplates the paradox between urban city and human body through this sculptural work consisting of monumental cylindrical forms. On the one hand, a person yearns to make a connection with others but internally hardwired to function as an individual.

There is the desire to relate to other dimensions and realities. In her “Dream II” (2016), Sonia Luhong delves into Iban mysticism through the art of pyrography. She pays homage to *Remaung*, a humanoid version of *engkuli* or clouded leopard. *Remaung* was once revered by Iban warriors and believed to be their guardian spirit. There is striking grief and sadness in Sonia’s restraint composition of the lurking *engkuli* that is vanishing along with the disappearing rainforest of Borneo.

Winnie, also known by her artist pseudonym Eryn, explores human psychology, self-identity and gender issues through the painstaking process of paper cutting. She expresses different versions of emotional state by means of the symbolism of surreal characters and other worlds. The “Blue Room” (2021) is her response to the lockdown due to the pandemic

that saw her confined to her living space, whilst having to deal with the passing of a dear friend. Battling with emotions of isolation and grief, with hope became something enticing yet elusive, Eryn created this familiar yet distorted image of reality.

Leong How Yi also uses paper to connect with her ancestors in the Afterlife. “My Mercedes” (2019) is a sculpture cast from joss paper, is How Yi’s personal mode of transport, the Kancil car. The emblem of the Kancil, a locally manufactured car common among the working class, is swapped with that of the Mercedes, a car that symbolises wealth and power. The consumption of symbols associated with class, according to How Yi, is still applicable in the Afterlife.



NAFAS is a virtual exhibition that showcases 20 women artists who occupy different intersections of the contemporary art scene. The intention of this exhibition is not to present a complete picture but to offer a vantage into the visual conversations of emerging art practices among women artists. Their expressive mediums are as diverse as their artistic backgrounds.

And for the first time, we are no longer blind.

Ref:  
<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/guerrilla-girls-do-women-have-to-be-naked-to-get-into-the-met-museum-p78793>  
<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ap-art-history/early-europe-and-colonial-americas/ap-art-islamic-world-medieval/a/the-great-mosque-of-cordoba>  
<https://www.medinaazahara.org/en/mosque-cordoba.html>

Suzy Sulaiman is an artist, designer, wife and mother. She holds a diploma in architecture from University Teknologi MARA (UiTM) and a Masters in Art & Design (New Media), UiTM, Malaysia.

Her practice explores the intersection of art, architecture and technology especially to highlight a social message about the built environment. She is an independent curator and producer. Suzy was part of the curatorial team for the Young Contemporaries (Bakat Muda Sezaman) organized by the National Art Gallery, KL in 2019, “Merata Suara: Voices of the Margins” produced by Projek Dialog and the Australian High Commission in 2018 and “Media Art Kitchen:Reality Distortion Field” (2012-2013) ; a survey exhibition of media art organized by Japan Foundation. She was a research fellow for Asia Center in 2015 for her research on fabrication labs in southeast Asia and Japan.

Suzy was selected to participate in an artist-in-residency organised by Bellas Artes Project (2018) in Manila, Philippines. Her sound installation “Jungle of Nusa” (2020) received the General Prize award at the Youfab Global Creative 2019. Suzy’s artwork was exhibited at Media Ambition Tokyo (MAT) in February 2020 in Tokyo, Japan.

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

## VIRTUAL SPACES, VULNERABLE EXPERIMENTS

A text by Goh Sze Ying in conjunction with  
RRRAWRRR! 2021:NAFAS – Maybank’s Emerging Women Artists Exhibition  
curated by Suzy Sulaiman

When Suzy Sulaiman invited me to contribute an ancillary text for her curatorial exposition, she conveyed that one of her aims for NAFAS was to leave a time capsule in virtual space: a gathering of women and their art—physical and digital, real and imagined—in a time of pandemic.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19 last year, which hurled the world to an abrupt halt, efforts have intensified in finding new ways of gathering in a ‘lockdown’ mode. Across art worlds, both locally and globally, openings were cancelled, artists’ grants suspended, shows postponed indefinitely, and livelihoods upturned. While there has since been a gradual and at times erratic resumption of the everyday, *distance and isolation* are now a lived reality; in most cases, an enforced one. The mass closure of physical spaces has led to a feverish rush towards a digital shift. At the same time, the pandemic has also revealed the inimitable value of front liners and maintenance workers. Yet, the stark inequality remains, if not amplifies, when all our worlds are turned inward, trapped within our home borders and electronic devices. The performativity of politics and culture shrinks in the face of death. This awakening ought to prompt us to question the purpose of art-related ‘gatherings’ in this strange new world.

While we now embrace the digital as *de facto* spaces for creativity, how do we make sense of this ‘shift’ beyond the cursory gesture of replicating or replacing physical events with virtual experiences?

To this end, I borrow the phrase ‘vulnerable experiments’ coined by Palestinian architect-researcher Sandi Hilal in a publication I encountered at an exhibition I visited in 2015.<sup>1</sup> Her essay ‘Roofless’ reflects on her involvement in a refugee camp improvement initiative at al-Fawwar Refugee Camp near Hebron, under the auspices of the United Nations Relief Works Agency (UNRWA). In the exceptional political reality where notions of public and private are absent, Sandi Hilal wrote about how the revolutionary and visionary can simultaneously occupy a space of extreme vulnerability.<sup>2</sup> Of course, nothing comes close to the radical enterprise of building schools, plazas, and public spaces within the impermanence of refugee camps. What I draw from Sandi Hilal’s ‘vulnerable experiments’—and the sacrifices of front liners and maintenance workers in a time of global pandemic—is a resolute commitment to making space for purpose even in a temporary place.

In a setting that has collapsed the personal and the economic, where once ‘home’ and ‘office’ had clear spatial—and temporal—divisions for most of us, domestic, recreational, and occupational spaces are more recently one and the same. Suzy Sulaiman’s novel ambitions for NAFAS, i.e. a virtual show of twenty women artists, thus animate a different sort of vulnerable experiment against two formidable challenges.

Firstly, the virtual space offers no more than paradoxical potentials of a public space; the Internet has become less of the metaphorical superhighway spoken of in the past and more like a slippery rabbit hole of perpetual and targeted distraction. Even though a virtual exhibition purports to have a longer shelf life than a physical one, it is nonetheless a temporary event in the accelerated cycle of attention economy. Secondly, feminism runs the risk of being wielded as a convenient slogan celebrating progress even if the actual work invested by women is not acknowledged, remunerated, and sustained. The annual International Women’s Day is a celebration of how much women have fought to be seen; it is also a sober reminder of how much more work is ahead of us in order to sustain and amplify this visibility. Moreover, is it not already a perennial problem that labour in domestic and maintenance spheres—primarily taken up by women and other minorities—rarely acknowledged?

These challenges pose a pertinent question: are we able to sneak meaningful ventures into our extended screen time?

In this edition, the variegated depth and breadth of artistic practices of the twenty artists are brought to the fore. The works on display range from architectural renderings to video and performances, installation to photography and paintings. Additionally, Suzy Sulaiman alongside a technical team consisting of / led by \_\_\_\_\_ invested a considerable amount of technical finesse and expertise in realising this show entirely in a virtual space, accommodating artistic proposals of a different scale and imagination. In many ways, gender is neither the sole association we find in NAFAS, nor the most exciting reason for this purpose. According to Suzy, the afterlife of NAFAS serves as a time capsule, or an archive of this virtual gathering – of artists, of technological ambitions, of concerns and sentiments reflective of a moment still arrested in the overall ‘lockdown’ mood. For some

of the artists featured in this edition, their practices are resolutely concerned with themes of the body in labour, urban, and everyday situations. These innovative and collaborative approaches bring new sensibilities of seeing the world through art. We now acknowledge that art alone cannot repair harm, but making spaces for such imagination—however temporary—is nonetheless important. It remains a hope that the archive becomes a space from which other generative interventions and initiatives may grow.

This occasion of a virtual ‘gathering’ may be brief, but for those whose attention is caught, NAFAS is simultaneously visionary and vulnerable. Let us remind ourselves this March 8 and beyond what occasionally slips our mind: we have always been here.

<sup>1</sup> Her essay is part of a volume (in a series of twelve) published in conjunction with the exhibition project, *Wohnungsfrage*, which centered around architecture, housing, and social reality at Haus der Kulturen der Welt (HKW), Berlin, October 23—December 14, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Sandi Hilal, ‘Roofless,’ in *Housing after the Neoliberal Turn: Internal Case Studies* (Leipzig: Spector Books and Haus der Kulturen der Welt, 2015), pp. 31—37.



Goh Sze Ying is a curator at National Gallery Singapore. Her research interests lie primarily in photography, time- and archive-based art, in particular, how these modalities think against and outside of normative structures of power, time and borders. She was a co-curator of the most recent Singapore Biennale 2019. Her past projects include *Minimalism: Space. Light. Object.* (NGS, 2018), *Listening to Architecture: The Gallery’s Histories and Transformation* (NGS, 2017), *Between States* (OUR ArtProjects, 2017), *ESCAPE from the SEA* (APW and Balai Seni Negara, 2017), and more than one (fragile) thing at a time (online, 2016). She graduated with an MA in urban sociology from Goldsmiths, University of London, UK.

## ARTISTS AND ARTWORKS

AISHAH MOKHTAR  
ALICIA LAU  
BALQIS TAJALLI  
DIPALI GUPTA  
ELEANOR GOROH  
ESHA HASHIM  
HANISAH JOHARI  
INTAN RAFIZA  
KOK SIEW WAI  
LEONG HOW YI  
LISA FOO  
MESITA JEE  
NADIRAH ZAKARIYA  
NAWWAR SHUKIRAH ALI  
OKUI, AYU & DESI  
PAMELA TAN POH SIN  
SONIA LUHONG WAN  
TIONG CHAI HEING  
ERYN  
XIANG YI WONG



## AISHAH MOKHTAR

b. 1990, Kuala Lumpur  
aishahmokhtar1@gmail.com

Aishah Mokhtar, an architectural designer, creates artworks in the forms of design installations, publications and photography. She has been teaching design studio in architecture schools around Kuala Lumpur and running design workshops for both students and professionals since 2015. Specialized in Advanced Architectural Design, she explores, in her works, the theme of Gender Architecture that looks into female inclusivity in urban spatial design. She believes there are little wonders in everyday routine/space/moments/memories that may seem mundane/ordinary to some. She aims to express her narratives through series of speculative design works.



### **Botanical Haven: Cultivating Everyday Moments**

Plants, steel rod & celuka PVC board  
200 x 90 x 90 cm  
2020

*Commissioned by Neue Artisans Design Showcase 2020*



## ALICIA LAU

b. 1995, Kuala Lumpur  
alicialauart@gmail.com

An artist and fine arts lecturer based in Kuala Lumpur, Alicia received her Fine Arts Bachelor's degree from Middlesex University and Diploma in Fine Arts from Dasein Academy of Art. She has participated in several exhibitions both locally and abroad, including the 5th Bangkok Triennale International Print and Drawing Exhibition at Bangkok Art and Cultural Center (2019), Kuala Lumpur International Miniprint Exhibition (2018) and Young Contemporaries (2019), both at National Visual Arts Gallery of Malaysia, and Watch This Space show at Beaconsfield Gallery Vauxhall, London (2017). In 2020, she held her first solo show "From Lines to Gaps" at G13 Gallery, Malaysia. She won Second Prize in the printmaking category in the 2014 Tanjong Heritage Awards.



*Close up/details*  
**Isolated, Yet Connected**  
MDF board & industrial paint  
Dimension variables  
2019



**Isolated, Yet Connected**  
MDF board & industrial paint  
Dimension variables  
2019



## BALQIS TAJALLI

b. 1990, Kuala Lumpur  
studiosunprint@gmail.com

Balqis Tajalli is a print-maker based in Langkawi, Kedah. She was granted a scholarship in 2011 to pursue architecture at Korea National University of Arts, Seoul. It is there where she first got to know and practiced print-making and the darkroom process. Her love for art and natural science never really took off until 2018 where she designed and co-made 'KL Mud Chair' using various soil and solid aggregates for Kuala Lumpur Chair Open Design. It was exhibited with other 17 chairs that took place in Balai Seni Negara, Kuala Lumpur. In January 2020, she initiated a collaboration with a group of scientists and held a series of cyanotype workshops at Rimba Ilmu Botanic Garden in University Malaya. In November 2020, her "Nature's Blueprint" proposal was selected to be a part of ASM ArtScience Prize which gave ideas to a 5-episode online show called "Alternatif Sunday"; highlighting craft and ecology practitioners in Malaysia. Late last year, she was featured in a collective exhibition, Neue Artisan 6.0: Feeling Biophilic. Currently, she is focusing on recording the seasonal wild floras in her hometown and exploring other sustainable practices for sun-printing.



## Lalang Oh Lalang I

Cyanotype print on watercolour  
59.5 x 42 cm  
2021



**Lalang Oh Lalang II**

Cyanotype print on watercolour paper  
59.5 x 42 cm  
2021



**Lalang Oh Lalang III**

Cyanotype print on watercolour paper  
59.5 x 42 cm  
2021



## DIPALI GUPTA

b. 1977, Mumbai, India  
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Dipali Gupta lives and works between Malaysia and Singapore. Her works have been showcased across Asia and Southeast Asia, including Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, and she has participated in various collaborations and symposia in Portugal, Miami and New Delhi. She won the prestigious Chan Davies Art Prize in 2018, and was nominated for the Young Master's Art Prize in 2019 and the Wells Art Contemporary Awards, London in 2020. Throughout the year of 2020, Dipali has consciously engaged in collaborative projects as a way to foster connectivity and engagement, despite the limitations imposed by her environment.



### Navras in Peril: I

Single channel video, color,  
moving image & sound  
4:30 mins  
2020

### Navras in Peril: II

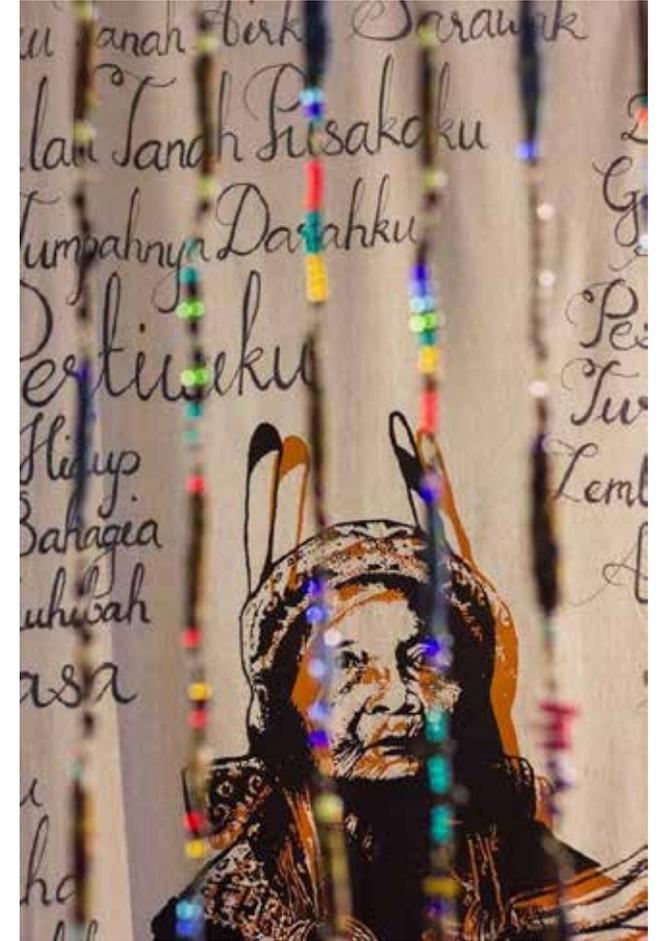
Single channel video, color,  
moving image & sound  
4:30 mins  
2020



**ELEANOR GOROH**

b.1981, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah  
 eleanorgoroh@gmail.com

Eleanor Goroh is a self-taught artist from Kota Kinabalu. Her mediums of choice are the traditional arts. Her area of interest is the adaptation of indigenous knowledge into contemporary art forms. As a former coordinator for the Indigenous Peoples Network of Malaysia, she uses her conceptual art practice as an advocacy tool. She believes that cultural revival can be achieved through appreciation of arts. This can be seen through her works with beads, music and tattoos.



*Close up/details*

**Fabrication**

Print on cotton cloth scrolls & cloth beads  
 300 x 250 x 280 cm  
 2018



**Fabrication**

Print on cotton cloth scrolls & cloth beads

300 x 250 x 280 cm

2018

*Commissioned by Projek Dialog with support from the High Commission of Canada in Malaysia*



## ESHA HASHIM

b. 1991, , Kota Bharu, Kelantan  
eshahashim.studio@gmail.com

A designer and graduate architect, Esha is currently based in Kuala Lumpur and Kota Bharu. She received her Master in Architecture from University of Westminster, United Kingdom. She joined Diploma Studio 10 and Diploma Studio 22 at Westminster University's School of Architecture and Built Environment. She was exposed to digital exploration during her 4th year at the university, and worked on a design thesis focusing on architecture, conflicts and boundaries during her 5th year. Over the years, she has started exploring the notions of other creative arts that have helped her in observing the surroundings and appreciating the details – that eventually assisted in shaping her thinking process.



*Close up/details*

### **Tensegrity Wall/ flower**

Wood struts & fabric

420 x 320 cm

2018



**Tensegrity Wall/ flower**  
Wood struts & fabric  
420 x 320 cm  
2018



## HANISAH JOHARI

A full time string artist working mainly with fibers and textiles.

b. 1990, Kuala Lumpur  
hi.condimentstudio@gmail.com



*Close up/details*  
**B-Loom**  
Fiber & textile  
Dimension variables  
2019





**B-Loom**

Fiber & textile

Dimension variables

2019

*Commissioned by Nippon Paint Malaysia & Urbanscapes Festival 2019*



## INTAN RAFIZA

b. 1981, Bentong, Pahang  
intanrafiza.ab@gmail.com

Intan Rafiza works as a curator and, as an artist, she has been practicing performance art for the past 17 years. Her art reflects and responds to social issues within contemporary society. She takes the bold step of creating performance art as a medium of expression as well as for having dialogues with the public. She has presented her performance pieces at Gluck50 Milan, Italy (2018), Asiatopia Conference SE Asia, Bangkok, Thailand (2016), and the 5th Beyond Pressure Festival, Myanmar (2012). She is currently working on a performance series titled SEMUKA – Face to Face.



### At That Time & Root Become Ritual

Installation & performance

Dimension variables

2019

*At That Time, Rasa Sayang Exhibition, A+ WORKS of Art, Kuala Lumpur*  
*Root Become Ritual, Performing Zomia Project, University of Applied Art, Vienna, Austria*



## KOK SIEW WAI

b. 1977, Kuala Lumpur  
kokbuffalo@yahoo.com

Siew-Wai started out as a video artist and is now active as a vocal improviser and artist-organizer. She lived and worked in USA from 1998 to 2005, received her B.A. in Media Study from State University of New York, Buffalo and her M.F.A. in Electronic Integrated Arts from Alfred University, USA. She has presented her works, performances and curatorial video screening programmes in Asia, Europe, Canada and USA, including at allEars Improvised Music Festival (Norway), Asian Meeting Festival (Japan), CTM Festival (Germany), Nusasonic (Indonesia), Image Forum Festival (Japan), Singapore International Film Festival, Kaohsiung Film Festival (Taiwan) and International Film Festival Rotterdam (Netherlands). Her video text + vocal improvisation performance piece entitled "Language of Self" (2011/2014) is collected by He Xiangning Art Museum in Shenzhen, China. Siew-Wai has a true passion for experimental and improvisational arts, and co-founded the Kuala Lumpur Experimental Film, Video & Music Festival (KLEX) in 2010. She is currently teaching at the Faculty of Creative Multimedia, Multimedia University.



### Face(s)

Single channel video, color & sound

7:00 min

2002



## LEONG HOW YI

b. 1997, Kuala Lumpur  
leonghowyii@gmail.com

After finishing Diploma in Fine Arts at Dasein Academy of Art, she went to Taipei National University of the Arts to further her studies. Her body of work encompasses sculpture, installation, drawing and photography. She employs the physical elements of her art, namely everyday objects like joss papers, neck ties, stockings, wires and cloth, to symbolically evoke her memories and imaginations of the societies.



### **My Mercedes**

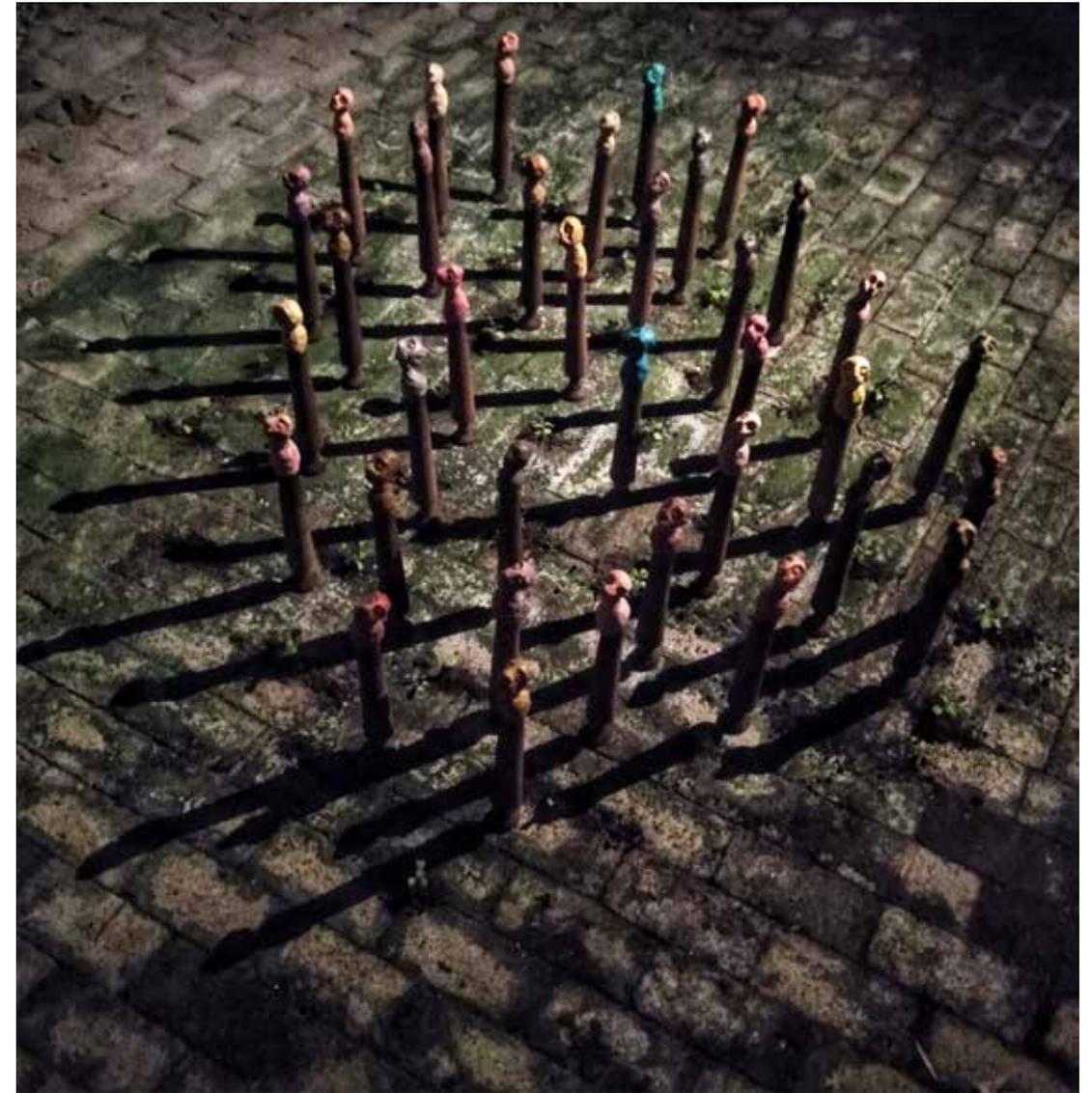
Joss paper, resin & white glue  
141 x 140 x 340 cm  
2019



## LISA FOO

b. 1975, Kuala Pilah, Negeri Sembilan  
oofasil2020@gmail.com

Trained in architecture, Lisa now practices design independently. She has participated in numerous collaborative art and performance art projects that included creating site-specific installations in various sites like rivers, a botanical garden and an urban paddy field.



### **Metamorphosis**

Modelling clay, timber, soil, bricks & life plant  
60 x 200 x 69 cm  
2018



*Close up/details*

**Metamorphosis**

Modelling clay, timber, soil, bricks & life plant

60 x 200 x 69 cm

2018



## MESITA JEE

b. 1999, Kuala Lumpur  
jmjmes99@gmail.com

An emerging visual artist based in Kuala Lumpur, Mesita is currently enrolled as a second year student in BA Fine Arts and History of Art at University of Leeds, Mesita's artworks are largely sculpture and installation-based; she builds structures and objects by juxtaposing found ephemera, organic materials and everyday items. Guided by the ideas of interconnectedness, solitude and love for nature, her works explore the materiality of both the natural and human worlds, and the interplay of connections between these two worlds. In 2019, she took part in the Young Contemporaries/ Bakat Muda Sezaman competition hosted by National Visual Arts Gallery of Malaysia, and a group show UNKNOWN at Segaris Art Centre.



### **Mala**

Hair rolled into 108 beads  
58 cm diameter  
2020



**Untitled (Nest)**

Bird's nest & hair  
13.5 x 11 x 6.4 cm  
2020



## NADIRAH ZAKARIYA

b. 1984, Kuala Lumpur  
hellonadirah@gmail.com

Born and raised in Malaysia, Nadirah Zakariya draws inspiration for her works from her upbringing in non-specific geographical locations. Currently based in Kuala Lumpur, Nadirah received her Bachelor in Fine Arts from Fashion Institute of Technology in NYC. An internationally published photographer, her works have been featured in numerous magazines such as Bloomberg, The New York Times Magazine, NYLON, VICE, Dazed and Confused, Refinery29 and Vogue Italia. Nadirah's works have been exhibited in major cities including New York, London, Paris, Tokyo and Kuala Lumpur. In 2011, she was invited to hold her first solo exhibition "Daughters Ago" in New York, and in 2016 she held another solo entitled "GIRLHOOD" at Leica Gallery in Kuala Lumpur. Her "Fuji-San LoveLetters" series was shown at Ilham Gallery in 2018. Most recently, her works were featured in the Tokyo Curiosity Exhibition at Bunkamura Museum, Tokyo in June 2020. Nadirah is the co-founder of Layar Lucida – a women led creative studio –, KL20X20 Photography Project, and Exposure + Photo.



### All Purpose Flower

Giclee print using archival grade pigment inks on photo paper  
100 x 70 cm  
2020



**All Purpose Flower**

Giclee print using archival grade pigment inks on photo paper  
100 x 70 cm (each)  
2020



## NAWWAR SHUKRIAH ALI

b. 1985, Kuala Terengganu, Terengganu  
stellar15stellar@gmail.com

Nawwar Shukriah Ali, better known as Bono Stellar, is an art director and designer-turned-multidisciplinary artist based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. In her body of work, a mix of drawings, installations and photography, Bono merges references to art history with her experiences and personal reflections on her past, present and future. Working primarily with iridescent films, mirrors and plexiglass – although her true materials are light and space –, the goal of this Kuala Terengganu-born artist is to produce works that appeal to the imagination and the senses, abandoning fidelity to the visible world in favour of exploring abstractions in truth and transparencies. Bono is the founder of Stellar Design and Stellar Studio. Her multi-disciplinary Stellar Studio has worked with a wide range of clients, including BMW, L'Officiel, Better Cities, Mini Cooper, Nelissa Hilman, Shiseido and Zalora. She also founded MAKE IT HAPPEN! two years ago with the aim of creating a platform to educate her fellow creatives, peers and the public on the importance of creative process. She holds a Degree in Architecture and a Master in Art and Design: Industrial Design, and has been lecturing on design and history of architecture at a local university.



**The Idea of A Home**  
3D Architectural Model  
600 x 260 cm  
2021



## OKUI LALA

b. 1991, George Town, Penang  
okuilala@gmail.com

An artist and cultural worker based in Malaysia, Okui has developed a practice that spans from video and performance to public engagement. Okui's works address themes of diaspora, home and belonging through performances of domestic acts or vocational labour, such as sewing, cooking, conversing and building. Some recent presentations of her work include shows at Singapore Biennale (2019,) Festival/Tokyo (Japan, 2019), Para Site (Hong Kong, 2018), and National Visual Arts Gallery (Malaysia, 2017). Aside from teaching multimedia and moving images at local colleges, she also facilitates visual workshops (photography and video) with NPOs, such as Arts-Ed (Penang) and Kuriya (Japan), that focus on place-based education and work with different communities.

## CATUR SETYO RAHAYU (AYU)

b. 1977, Malang, Jawa Timur, Indonesia

Ayu used to work in Malaysia as a welder, domestic worker, supervisor and admin clerk for more than 20 years. As a member of Serantau and Pertimig Malaysia, she was also active in community work. Ayu is now back in her hometown of Malang, Jawa Timur, Indonesia.

## DESI LASTATI

b. 1990, Temanggung, Indonesia

Desi worked as a domestic household assistant in Malaysia from 2010 to 2018. She came to Malaysia to fulfill her dream of earning an income as well as becoming a writer. Besides working, she also learned to write and contributed to several anthology books, and went on a few backpacking trips around the region. Desi managed to further her studies by taking a course at a university in Malaysia. She was also an active member of Serantau, an organisation for Indonesian Migrant Workers in Malaysia. Her writings can be found at [Babubackpacker.blogspot.com](http://Babubackpacker.blogspot.com).



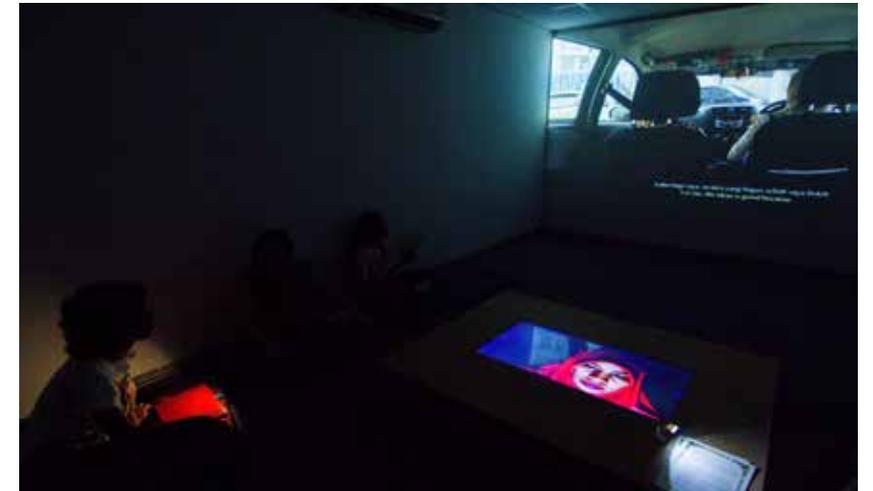
**Ingatan Welding (Welder's Flash)**

Single channel video, color & sound

Video on loop

2018

*Commissioned by the Project Dialog with support from the High Commission of Canada in Malaysia*



**Perjalanan Bersama Desi (A Journey with Desi)**

Single channel video, color & sound

7:08, 9:13 & 8:08 min

2018

*Commissioned by the Project Dialog with support from the High Commission of Canada in Malaysia*



## PAMELA TAN POH SIN

b. 1991, Wilayah Kuala Lumpur  
pamelatan.pss@gmail.com

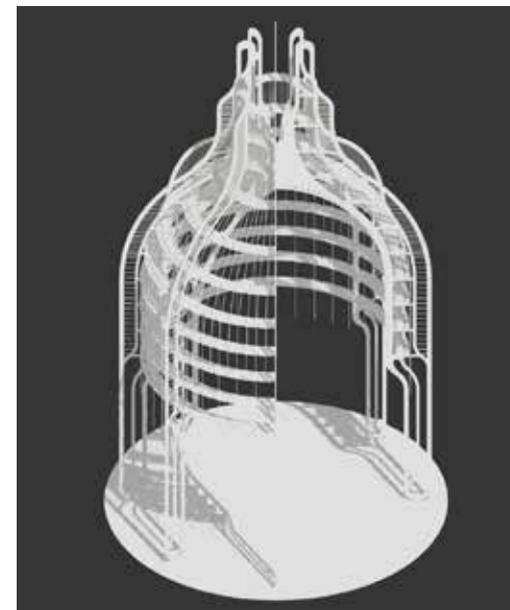
Pamela Tan is an architectural designer who produces artworks through explorations of art, architecture and design. Her practice involves blurring the boundaries between different creative disciplines, thus invoking a sense of ambiguity in her art. Through her craft, she seeks the subtle unseen and intends to unveil the unknown delights in various scales. She aspires to create artworks that embody layers of spatial and experiential narratives. Pamela Tan obtained her Master in Architecture RIBA Part 2 (MArch) from University of Greenwich, UK. Her first year's MArch studio project entitled "Mappa Mundi: A Map Maker's Dream" was selected for the 2015 Royal Academy of Arts Summer Exhibition in London. She was the winner of the fifth and final cycle of the Tan Sri Chan Sau Lai Architecture Award in 2016. Recently, two of her projects, "Eden" and "Projection Kite", won Bronze and Merit awards respectively in the Design for Asia Award 2020 under the category of Environmental Design.



### Dome of Disappearance

Steel & whitecotton string  
360 x 200 x 200 cm  
2019

*Commissioned by Cultural Economy Development Agency (CENDANA)*



### Dome of Disappearance 1/12

Scale Model  
Steel & white powder coating  
29.2 x 16.2 x 16.2 cm  
2019

*Edition of 5*



## SONIA LUHONG

b.1989, Kuching, Sarawak  
sonialuhong@gmail.com

Sonia Luhong is a self-taught contemporary visual artist hailing from Kuching, Sarawak. A graphic designer by training and currently working in the field of renewable energy, Sonia's diverse portfolio reflects her constant exploration of intersectionality in both her own life and her art. She draws inspiration from the cultural and natural heritage of her Bornean homeland, and her distinctive style seeks to empathically discuss both folk tales of the otherworld and current social/environmental issues in society, while navigating the boundaries – or lack thereof – between these two realms. She is one of the few artists in Malaysia known for actively practising the art of pyrography. In 2019, she was selected for the Tiger Roar Project organised by Tiger Beer.



### **Dream II**

Pyrography & acrylic on plywood  
29.7 x 42 cm  
2016

*Collection of Huda Nejjim Al-Asedi*



## TIONG CHAI HEING

b.1986, Batu Pahat, Johor  
chaiheingtiong86@gmail.com

A graduate from Dasein Academy of Art, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 2008, Tiong Chai Heing works in mixed media, water colour and oil painting. She had won numerous awards, including Grand Prize in the UOB Painting Of The Year Award (Malaysia, 2015), and was shortlisted in the 2019 Young Contemporaries/Bakat Muda Sezaman competition.



*Close up/details*

### **Decomposition**

Oil, fake villain & epoxy on canvas

190 x 220 cm

2019



**Decomposition**

Oil, fake villain & epoxy on canvas

190 x 220 cm

2019



**Winnie Cheng a.k.a ERYN**

b. 1983, Sg. Petani, Kedah  
erynthology@gmail.com

An artist based in Penang, Winnie Cheng produces surreal compositions using the techniques of drawing, painting, cutout and collage. Her interest in storytelling is apparent in most of her works that are driven by narratives revolving around human psychology, self-identity and gender issues in Southeast Asia. Using a small scalpel, Winnie creates layers of meticulously cut paper dioramas of strange characters in otherworldly settings inspired by the lush tropical biodiversity of her home. She draws upon personal observations to craft human-animal and human-plant hybrids, turning the familiar into a distorted mirror of reality to try to see beyond the everyday into the hidden depths of our psyche. Winnie completed her Master of Arts by Research at University of Brunei Darussalam in 2013 and, before that, her Bachelor of Arts at University of Toronto in 2006. She has participated in local and regional art exhibitions including Taiwan, Indonesia, South Korea, and Brunei. She was the recipient of Gold Award in the Emerging Artist category of the 2015 UOB Painting of the Year (Malaysia) Competition. She held her first solo exhibition "Mirror Mirror" at G13 Gallery in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in July 2019.



**The Blue Room**

Acrylic on canvas & paper cutout  
46 x 46 cm  
2021



## WONG XIANG YI

b.1987, Kuala Lumpur  
w.x.yi0124@gmail.com

Wong received her Bachelor of Fine Arts from Chinese University of Hong Kong in 2010, and Master of Fine Arts from Taipei University of the Arts in 2016. While studying Master's degree in Taiwan, Wong majored in ink painting, received training in the traditional Ling Nan Chinese Ink painting, and was strongly affected by China's new ink painting movement, Japanese-style painting (Nihonga) and the impact of ink painting trend on thought. Wong is highly passionate about studying gender-related matters, and she chooses to use a subcultural genre in Japanese manga, BL (Boys' Love), as a subject matter for her works. For Wong, the BL culture strongly shows young generation's ways of seeing, and she attempts to merge these unique ways of seeing with the characteristics of ink painting in her creations.



### Blue Socks

Pigment on gold paper  
80 x 80 cm  
2018



### Cotton Candy

Ink, pigments & golden leaf on silk  
43 x 42.5 cm  
2020

## ABOUT MAYBANK FOUNDATION



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.

