



TERM 2024-2025

SAS 2025
40th ANNUAL SHOW
HERITAGE
RELOADED

SAS 40th Annual Show
Authentic Artventure at Nepal
The Art of Aging Well
SAS Marks Major Milestone
with Regional Exhibition
International Uptown Cat-X
My Visual Expression {SIBU}

ISSUE 2

Artsphere

Editorial

Dear Friends,

In the blink of an eye, a year has flown by since the launch of our inaugural issue of Artsphere in September 2024. It has been an enriching journey filled with creativity, growth, and shared experiences. With this second issue, we are delighted to reconnect with you and to showcase some of the vibrant happenings in Sarawak's art scene this past year, alongside our current SAS Annual Art Exhibition.

We are deeply heartened by the warm reception of our first issue. One copy even reached the Deputy Mayor of the Kathmandu Municipal Council, Nepal, during a visit by two of our members who participated in the International Women's Day Art Exhibition there in March 2025. Later, in August 2025, another copy was presented to our Deputy Premier, YB Datuk Amar Dr Sim Kui Hian, by President Sebastian Jong during a courtesy call to his office. Moments like these affirm the power of art to transcend cultures and borders, forging meaningful connections wherever it goes.

In this issue, we look back on a year brimming with memorable art activities and milestones. We take special pride in highlighting the many solo exhibitions by our members, each one a testament to their passion, talent, and dedication to the arts.

We hope you will enjoy this second edition of Artsphere and continue to journey with us as we celebrate the ever evolving and inspiring world of art.

Happy reading!



Sheila Kho

September 2025



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President's Message

Dear Readers, Artists, and Art Enthusiasts,

It is with great joy that I welcome you to Volume 2 of Artsphere, the eMagazine of Sarawak Artists Society. This edition continues to document the vibrant pulse of our society's artistic journey, both collectively and individually.

Within these pages, you'll find reflections on the Society's recent activities, celebrating not only our communal spirit through exhibitions and art programs but also the unique artistic journeys of our members. Many of our artists have held solo exhibitions and participated in cross-cultural exchanges in countries around the world, showcasing Sarawak's creative voice on the global stage.

This publication is timely as it coincides with the Society's annual exhibition entitled "Heritage Reloaded". This theme carries a very special meaning as it marks the 40th anniversary of Sarawak Artists Society. Forty years is not just a number. It is a journey of passion, vision, and dedication that began with our pioneers and past leaders. They laid the foundation so that artists in Sarawak would always have a place to grow, connect, and shine. For this, we owe them our deepest gratitude.

Thanks to the groundwork of our pioneers, Sarawak Artists Society has grown into an important force within Sarawak's creative industry. Yet, as we celebrate our heritage, we must also look ahead. We are now in the AI era, a new age that invites us to rethink creativity and to explore new ways of expression. This is why our theme, Heritage Reloaded, feels so timely. It calls us to preserve and honour our traditions while refreshing them with new ideas, perspectives, and tools for the future. I hope you will feel inspired by how our artists are bridging the old with the new, showing us, that heritage is not something of the past, but something alive, evolving, and deeply meaningful in today's world. Thank you for your support and for walking this journey with us. Together, let us continue to honour the legacy of our pioneers, reimagine Sarawak's art for generations to come, and share our creative voices with the world.

As President, I am deeply proud of the talent and dedication found in our Society. Let us keep building this platform of mutual support and expression, where every brushstroke and every vision find its place and its audience.

Thank you for reading, and may Artsphere continue to inspire hearts across borders.

Warm regards,



Sebastian Jong 楊礎源
President
Sarawak Artists Society
September 2025



As one of the founding members of Sarawak Artists Society, it fills me with deep pride and gratitude to witness this meaningful milestone, the 40th anniversary of SAS. What began as a small gathering of passionate artists four decades ago has blossomed into a vibrant and enduring community that continues to nurture creativity, inspire generations, and preserve the artistic spirit of Sarawak.

Looking back, the journey of art in Sarawak mirrors our land itself, which is rich, diverse, and full of quiet strength. In the early days, resources were limited, yet our hearts were abundant with dreams. We painted with what we had, sometimes with borrowed brushes, recycled canvases, or natural pigments, but always with sincerity and purpose. It was that love for art, that unspoken bond among creators, that laid the foundation for what SAS has become today.

Over the years, I have witnessed how the Society has not only provided a platform for artists to exhibit their works but also cultivated understanding, appreciation, and respect for the arts within the community. From traditional landscapes and cultural heritage themes to modern explorations of form and colour, each generation of artists brings a new dialogue, a continuation of the story we began decades ago.

As an artist, my lifelong dialogue has always been with nature, the flowing rivers, the stillness of the lotus pond, the dance of light and shadow. These elements remind me that art, like nature, reflects harmony and balance. My philosophy, influenced by Taoist and Zen thought, has taught me that creation is not about control but about flow, the letting go of ego to allow beauty to emerge naturally. In this sense, SAS has also evolved in harmony, growing through the dedication of its members, guided by humility, unity, and shared passion.

To the younger generation of artists, I offer this encouragement: paint with your heart, not just your eyes. Let your art speak truthfully, not for fame, but for meaning. Every brushstroke carries energy; every colour expresses emotion. When you create from a place of sincerity, your work will find its way into the hearts of others.

On this 40th anniversary, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Society, its President, Committee Members, and all fellow artists who have contributed to this creative legacy. May SAS continue to flourish, to inspire, and to build bridges between art, culture, and humanity. May we always remember that art is not only a reflection of life but also a gentle force that heals, unites, and uplifts the spirit.

Let us move forward together in the same light that guided us from the beginning, with humility, love, and faith in the power of art.



Bong Choo Chew
Founding Member cum Advisor
Sarawak Artists Society

ADVISOR'S



I joined Sarawak Artists Society (SAS) in 1999, and over the past 26 years, I have witnessed its remarkable journey of growth and transformation. From its early days as a humble local network of artists to becoming an established non-governmental organization with international connections and engagement with government agencies, SAS has evolved into a dynamic and respected art platform. It has been a place that not only nurtured my own artistic development but also provided countless opportunities for local artists to grow, shine, and express themselves freely.

Throughout these years, SAS has been more than just an association. It has been a community, a home for artists who share the same passion and belief in the power of art. It is a space where we connect, exchange ideas, and inspire one another. The friendships and collaborations I have built here are among the most meaningful parts of my artistic journey.

Having served the Society in various capacities, from Secretary, Assistant Secretary, and Vice President to President for two terms (2005–2008 and 2017–2023), and now as Advisor, I have personally witnessed the dedication and perseverance of many individuals who contributed to the Society's progress. Each committee member, each artist, each exhibition, and each initiative represents a chapter in our collective effort to build a thriving art community in Sarawak.

At this milestone, the passion and commitment of the founding and senior members of SAS, who laid the foundation for what we have today, remain indelible and deeply appreciated.

Over the years, we have seen SAS grow in strength, vision, and influence. It has successfully bridged the gap between traditional and contemporary art, between local initiatives and international exchange, and between personal creativity and collective identity. What began as a modest platform for local artists has now become a vital bridge connecting Sarawak's art scene to the wider world.

Art has the power to unite people beyond boundaries, to communicate emotions and ideas where words may fail. SAS embodies that spirit of openness and inclusiveness. Its members, who come from diverse backgrounds and artistic approaches, have embraced differences as sources of inspiration rather than division. This open-mindedness and willingness to evolve have allowed SAS to continue thriving over four decades.

As we celebrate the 40th anniversary of SAS, I feel both proud and humbled. Proud of how far we have come and humbled by the many who have contributed their time, energy, and creativity to bring us here. With continuous growth, open-mindedness, and mutual respect among members, I strongly believe SAS will continue to flourish and inspire future generations of artists, while continuing to connect internationally.

Congratulations to Sarawak Artists Society on its 40th Anniversary.



David Chew (周映辉)
Advisor, Sarawak Artists Society
President (2005–2008, 2017–2023)
Member since 1999



Excited and curious about Nepal, I immediately said yes to be part of an International Women's Day exhibition at the Classic Gallery, curated by its owner who is also an artist, the remarkable and renowned Sarita Dongol. As soon as we arrived, we were met with a warm welcome from Sarita with a Newari red sash, a bouquet of fresh gerbera and warm Tokla tea each. It was our first time in Nepal; all four of us Malaysian artists, myself, Sheila Kho, Shen Ying and Linda Yong. On the first night, we experienced Newari welcoming culture with a 29-year-old local liquor raksi, bara and dried fish. It was the start to an authentic experience of Nepali culture!

Curator and Classic Gallery owner with her painting



At Hotel Empire rooftop cafe in Bhaktapur



AUTHENTIC
ARTVIEW
NEPAL
in conjunction with Intern



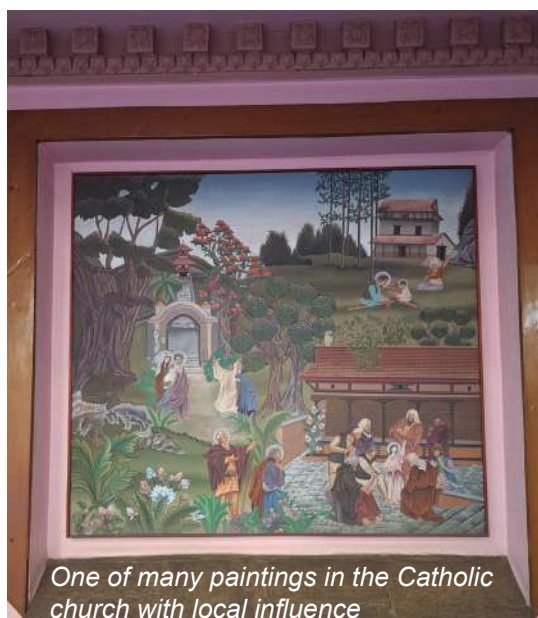
Authentic Adventure At

International Women's Day

by ANGELINA BONG



For the next few days, we feasted with both our eyes, heart and tummy. I caught a nasty cold on the way to Nepal but I did not let it get in the way! We were captivated by the ornate palaces, temples and ancient architecture boasting exquisite wood carvings while we meandered through narrow alleyways that felt like a labyrinth, including a Peacock window in Kathmandu and stacks of houses with trails of the 2015 earthquake in Lalitpur. We sketched to our hearts' contents at Bhaktapur, while being entertained by jewellery sellers. I felt like I was in a living museum. I particularly loved being at the Hotel Empire rooftop café enjoying masala tea and momo, their delightful dumplings. We were also soaking in art by visiting the Nepal Academy of Fine Arts, murals on the street, commercial galleries and the hip Kalashala art space run by an enterprising young artist, Sudikshya Dongol. Kirtipur was quiet and quaint, resonating with tradition and community. We tasted rice wine, eating on the floor like we were one of the locals. I even had the chance to attend mass at a local Catholic church. The church was adorned with beautiful paintings depicting Nepali culture.



One of many paintings in the Catholic church with local influence



Orang Utan Repurpose Collage workshop with special needs ladies led by Angelina Bong

One of the highlights of the trip was an inclusive workshop held at the picturesque Taudaha Green Resort overlooking the scenic Taudaha lake, where we bonded with Nepali women artists sketching and painting plein air. I had the pleasure of introducing the endangered orangutan to a group of special needs women artists through a collage workshop, repurposing scrap papers. I also had the privilege of delivering a brief speech and reciting a poem dedicated to women during the event. Shen Ying mesmerized everyone with her beautiful Chinese ink art demonstration in swift and powerful strokes. We ended the day with dancing and eating beaten rice for the first time!

The main feature of our trip is the International Women's Day Exhibition. We were blessed with the charismatic presence of the Deputy Mayor of Kathmandu, Miss Sunita Dangol, journalists, art collectors and fellow artists. We witnessed curator Sarita Dongol launching the exhibition by lighting their traditional lamps and although we could not fully understand her speech in Nepali language, we could feel her passion, dedication, and enthusiasm. Sheila Kho gave a speech on behalf of us Malaysian artists and she shared our experiences, including funny ones, making everyone tickled. I was honoured once again to present a poem written specially for women that night, about us being weavers in the tapestry of life. The audience was fascinated by Linda, our avid sketcher, who performed live painting in the gallery with watercolour, splashing vibrant colours.

Linda doing live painting during opening ceremony of exhibition



Everyone dress up in Nepali traditional wear on Holi, a festival





Elderly workshop participants led by Sheila

The artworks of the exhibiting Nepali artists were stunning and rich with heritage, with some younger ones exploring contemporary styles. The colours were mostly striking, some exploring bold concepts. Sarita Dongol's iconic chili was sold even before the event was launched. Congratulations! The four of us Malaysian artists also showcased different genres. Sheila's colourful Bornean tree of life expresses the fruitfulness of women, sprouting growth wherever we go. Shen Ying's Chinese ink paintings manifest blessings and prosperity, Linda's watercolour depicts the harmonious multicultural scenes of Malaysia and mine conveyed the coastal mangrove trees as symbolism of resilience and nurture, just like us women. It is also part of my ongoing work in supporting conservation for the natural environment.

The most heartfelt moment of this journey was facilitating the workshop for a big group of elderly women, joined by a few special needs ladies at an elderly care centre. Led by Sheila Kho with her fantastic supervising and improvisation, the majority of the older folks painted for the first time, dabbling with acrylic and brushes. Their fingers brought lavender in the fields to life on the canvases. The joy and laughter on their faces made our hearts fuller than the ocean. This was captured on a reel that has since garnered more than 40K viewers. You could watch it here on Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/p/DHGpvkiNANG/>

Our Nepali journey ended with us dressing up in Newari Haku Patasi, celebrating Holi, the joyous festival of colours in our little apartment, savouring Newari, Tharu and Malaysian home cooked meals.

An enriching experience, the power of art and human expression brought us together. As I returned home, I transported back not just memories but an invigorated passion for art and a deeper understanding of humanity that connects all of us. I will never forget this precious art-venture.

INTERNATIONAL UPTOWN CAT-X 2024 EXHIBITION



by LILLY METOM

The Artworks Competition 2024, held in conjunction with the prestigious International Uptown Cat-X 2024 Exhibition, was a vibrant celebration of feline-inspired creativity, proudly organized by Dewan Bandaraya Kuching Utara (DBKU). This captivating exhibition graced Gallery A at the Cat Museum in Kuching, Sarawak, for three months, from 28 December 2024 to 31 March 2025, providing a unique platform for artists to showcase their talent through cat-themed artworks.

The competition attracted diverse participation, including 10 talented members from SAS: Lilly Metom, Lucas Lau, Dr. Emmanuel Osakue, Gabrielle Lim, Fook Liew, Muyang Kumundan, Angelina Bong, Sheila Kho, Dr. Mohamad Faizwan Mat, and Clement Jimmel. Their imaginative contributions enriched the exhibition, highlighting the charm and versatility of feline artistry.

Among the standout achievements, Lilly Metom clinched 1st place in the International Category, followed by Dr. Emmanuel Osakue in 4th, Lucas Lau in 7th, and Clement Jimmel in 10th place. In the Local Artists Category, Gabrielle Lim proudly secured the top honour with a 1st place win.



Lilly Metom
– 1st Place for
International Category



This event not only celebrated artistic excellence but also fostered a creative community united by a shared passion for cats as muse and subject. Congratulations to all participants and winners for their exceptional creativity and dedication, making the Artworks Competition 2024 a memorable highlight of the International Uptown Cat-X Exhibition.



Gabrielle Lim
– 1st Place for Local Category





PAINTINGS BY SAS ARTISTS AND WINNERS



Lilly Metom
- 1st Place for International Category -



Gabrielle Lim
- 1st Place for Local Category -



Dr. Emmanuel Osakue
- 5th Place for International Category -



Clement Jimmel
- 10th Place for International Category -



Dr. Mohamad Faizwan Mat



Muyang Kumundan



Lucas Lau
- 7th Place for International Category -



Sheila Kho



Angelina Bong



Fook Liew

Sarawak Artists Society Marks Major Milestone
with Regional Exhibition

"Neighbours in Heart, Friendship in Art"

by CLEMENT JIMEL

Sarawak Artists Society (SAS) has once again demonstrated its leadership in the region's visual arts landscape by successfully organising the landmark exhibition "Neighbours in Heart, Friendship in Art", held from 20 to 26 June 2025 at the Borneo Cultures Museum, Kuching.

Involving forty five artists from Sarawak and eighteen from Brunei, the weeklong exhibition featured ninety nine artworks spanning painting, ink, mixed media, digital art, and installation. The exhibition explored shared cultural themes such as heritage, identity, spirituality, and the natural environment of Borneo by providing a cross-cultural dialogue between the two nations.

The launch ceremony on 21 June 2025 at 10:00 a.m. was officiated by YB Dato Sri Abdul Karim Rahman Hamzah, Minister of Tourism, Creative Industry and Performing Arts Sarawak. The programme included a welcoming dance, official speeches, gift exchange between Brunei and Sarawak, opening gimmick, group photography, a tour of the gallery, and a lunch reception.

Over the course of seven days, the exhibition attracted 4,626 visitors, comprising residents, tourists, students, collectors, and government officials. It was supported by a comprehensive schedule of community-based activities such as cultural performances, workshops, and artist led sessions. All were designed to promote public engagement with the arts.

This exhibition marks a significant milestone for SAS, affirming its role as one of the most active and enduring arts organisations in Sarawak. Since its establishment in 1985, SAS has continuously driven artistic excellence and regional collaboration through regular exhibitions, cultural programmes, and international exchanges. The success of this event strengthens the Society's position as a catalyst for cultural diplomacy and heritage preservation.

A visitor to the event commented:

"This is more than an exhibition. It's a meaningful cultural connection. SAS has truly elevated Sarawak's presence in the regional art scene with this initiative."





The Society's ability to organise a regional level event of this scale demonstrates both its organisational maturity and the growing recognition of Sarawak as a vibrant hub for the arts. The collaboration with Creative Space Art Collective Brunei further underscored the exhibition's crossborder significance, opening the door for future joint endeavours between Sarawak and its neighbours.



Sarawak Artists Society expresses its profound gratitude to all who made the event a success. Special thanks are extended to the Ministry of Tourism, Creative Industry and Performing Arts Sarawak (MTCP) for their funding and policy support, the Borneo Cultures Museum (BCM) for hosting and technical assistance, STATOB for coordination, and to the Society's Bruneian counterpart, Creative Space Art Collective Brunei, for their artistic partnership and dedication.

With this exhibition, SAS not only celebrates artistic expression but also strengthens regional unity, fosters deeper understanding through art, and reaffirms its commitment to the promotion of Sarawakian cultural identity both locally and beyond.



“MY VISUAL EXPRESSION” ART EXHIBITION 2025

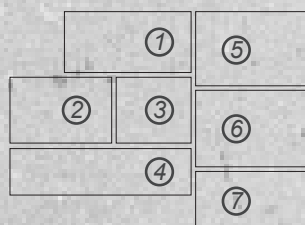
by Dr. LING PIK KUONG

The “MY Visual Expression” Art Exhibition 2025 marks Sibu’s first collaborative visual art exhibition between educators and active practicing artists. This event is jointly organized by the Confucius Institute at University of Technology Sarawak (UTS), Institut Pendidikan Guru Kampus Rajang, and the Sibu Contemporary Art Association.

The exhibition takes place from 2 May to 4 May 2025 at the Foyer of Dewan Chancellor Tan Sri Tun Taib Mahmud, University of Technology Sarawak, Sibu.

The theme “MY Visual Expression” represents not only the artists’ creative presentations but also reflects Malaysia — its identity, people, landscapes, and culture. The “MY” in the title draws a parallel to the national identity symbolized in Malaysia’s internet domain “.my”.

A total of 82 artists are participating, showcasing 192 pieces of artwork. The exhibition features a wide range of artistic styles, from realism to semi-abstract and full abstract expressionism. Over the three days, the event attracted an enthusiastic audience of approximately 1,200 visitors.



1. Presentation of souvenir by En Raymond Tiong, Chairman of Sibu Contemporary Art Association.
2. From Right : - Dr.Ling Pik Kuong (Organizing Chairperon), YB Mr Chieng Jin EK (DUN 51, Sarawak), En Mohd. Khadir Bin Fazil Rahman (Pengarah, IPGK Rajang, Sarawak)
3. An artist explaining the story behind the artworks.
4. Artists’ group photo during “MY Visual Expression” Art Exhibition 2025
5. 3D sculpture that showcases the cultural setting of Bidayuh, Sarawak.
6. Main entrance of Art Exhibition 2025 at Foyer Dewan Universiti Teknologi Sarawak.
7. Artist Datin Sri Judy Lau, also the advisor of “MY Visual Expression” Art Exhibition 2025.



Still Blooming: The Art of Aging Well

by SHEILA KHO

Aging is often seen through the lens of numbers, but true grace lies in how we embrace life at every stage. In this article, we explore the power of creativity, the wisdom that comes with experience, and how art can enrich our later years. From the joy of finding new passions to the healing power of expression, aging well isn't about fighting time. It is about thriving through it.



A Glimpse in the Mirror

The reflection in the mirror reveals wrinkles, lines, and hands marked by time, gentle reminders of aging. Yet within those lines lies more than age, a story of experience, growth, and resilience. Unlike past generations, where women looked old by 50 in loose prints and elastic pants, today many in their 60s and 70s embrace fashion and vibrancy. The beauty industry thrives on this desire to stay youthful, generating over 600 billion dollars annually and projected to grow even further in the coming years.

Self-care has become a serious investment, with both women and men spending heavily on skincare, grooming, and fitness. The men's personal care market alone is expected to reach nearly 300 billion dollars by 2030. But beyond outward appearance lies a deeper question: how do we nurture our inner selves as we age? Living longer is not only about survival, it is about staying engaged, embracing wisdom, and choosing to live with meaning and vitality.



Malaysia's Aging Population

Like many countries, Malaysia is seeing a fast-growing senior population. People are marrying later, having fewer children, or choosing not to have any at all. In 2023, the Department of Statistics Malaysia reported that 7.4% of the population was aged 65 and above which translated is about 2.5 million people. By 2040, this number could grow to over 6 million, shifting Malaysia into an “aged society.”

One thing that caught my attention while researching was the steady increase in life expectancy. If people are living longer, how are they spending their extra years?

Experts agree that staying active, eating well, and getting enough sleep are keys to aging well. But mental health is just as important. Many older adults face hearing and vision problems, memory loss, or the passing of loved ones. These changes can lead to loneliness or even depression.

I think of my late father, who lived to 95 with very few health problems. He used to walk every morning with his friends and enjoyed travelling with them. But one by one, they passed away, and he stopped going out. Instead, he spent his days tending to his fruit trees, reading the newspaper with his dog beside him, and looking forward to Wednesdays when his daughters and grandchildren would gather for dinner without fail. Often, one of us would take him for a car ride or drop in for a visit during the week.

Was he lonely or socially isolated? They may sound the same, but they are different. Loneliness is the painful feeling of being alone; social isolation means having very few people to connect with. I believe my father experienced more of the latter.

Thankfully, things are changing for today's seniors.



The Power of Staying Active

A good friend of mine is 83. She's energetic, alert, and drives herself to line dancing sessions. Her energy often puts mine to shame!

I also know a woman who recently celebrated her 100th birthday. Despite some hearing difficulties, her mind remains remarkably sharp, and she continues to join her close friends for weekly mahjong sessions, where her competitive spirit shines through.

My physician, who is in his 70s, recently shared an observation from his class reunion. He saw two distinct groups. Those who stayed active and those who did not. The active ones looked healthier, moved with ease, and had stronger voices. The others seemed to be simply “dragging” through life.

“That reunion was eye-opening,” he said. “It made me realise how much movement and engagement influence vitality.”

Research supports this. Older adults who are socially isolated are at higher risk of heart disease, depression, and memory problems. Those who remain socially engaged tend to live longer, feel happier, and keep their minds sharp.

Simple Ways to Stay Connected

Being around others lifts our mood and improves well-being. Even small gestures like a phone call, a short visit can make a big difference. Setting aside time each day to connect helps maintain relationships.

You can also meet new people by taking a class, picking up a new hobby, or joining a group. These activities not only keep the mind sharp but bring joy and a sense of purpose.

There are plenty of senior groups in the community that warmly welcome newcomers. From walking clubs and dance classes to prayer circles and faith-based support groups, there's something for everyone. Many of these groups organise activities tailored to members' interests. The introduction of pink buses in Kuching which offer free rides for seniors has turned even simple trips into adventures. Some senior groups have taken day trips to Serian and Bau, transforming a bus ride into a fun-filled outing brimming with laughter, sightseeing, and stories. Sometimes, all it takes is a small step to reach out, and you will likely find a group eager to welcome you.



Art Therapy for Seniors

I have been running art workshops with seniors for some time now. What I have learned is that they are always eager to learn something new. They take pride in their creations and enjoy the sense of community that comes with shared creativity. It reminds them that they are still capable and deeply valued.

Back in March this year, I had the chance to visit Kathmandu, Nepal, where I conducted a workshop for more than 20 senior Nepalese women with the help of two travel companions. Most had never held a paintbrush before. Though we did not speak the same language, we connected through hand gestures, smiles, and shared joy. The look on their faces as they completed their first paintings and proudly posed with them was unforgettable.

As someone who paints and teaches, I have seen firsthand how helpful art can be, not just for seniors, but also for children, including those with special needs. Art builds confidence, self-esteem, and connection. Whether it is a child lighting up at their drawing or a senior proudly displaying a painting, the effect is the same. Art helps us express ourselves, relax, and feel good, no matter our age or background.





How Art Therapy Helps Seniors

Who says fun and therapy cannot go hand in hand? Art therapy gives seniors a colourful way to stay sharp and happy. Picking up a paintbrush is more than play; it is a workout for the brain and the heart. Each stroke boosts confidence, awakens memories, and strengthens hand coordination. And when words fall short, colours speak, offering a gentle outlet for feelings. Group art sessions often turn into laughter-filled gatherings where loneliness takes a back seat.

Some may say, “But I play mahjong. It helps my brain too!” And they are right. Art and mahjong, along with many other activities, are powerful brain boosters for healthy aging. With art, memory, imagination, emotions, and decision-making all come alive. Studies show that seniors who stay creative are less likely to develop early dementia. Mahjong, on the other hand, is like a mental gym session with friends. It sharpens memory, boosts attention, and keeps social chatter flowing. The difference is that mahjong mainly trains logic and memory, while art stretches a wider canvas by tapping into creativity, problem-solving, and emotional expression. With dementia cases expected to triple worldwide by 2050, perhaps the smartest move is to enjoy both. Why not pair the brush with the tiles for a healthier and happier brain?

Senior Care

Too often, the interests and mental well-being of seniors are overlooked. Not just by society, but also in national development plans. While much focus is placed on younger generations, we must remember that older adults have shaped, and continue to shape, our communities in meaningful ways.

As Malaysia becomes an aging nation, future policies must include thoughtful provisions for seniors. This means creating opportunities for active aging, supporting mental health, and valuing the wisdom and contributions of our elders as a vital part of nation-building.

I recently attended a health talk, and one line from the speaker stayed with me:

“When we take care of our own health, we are not just helping ourselves. We are also easing the burden on hospitals and reducing healthcare costs for the government.”

It was a simple yet powerful reminder that personal responsibility plays a big role in public well-being.

A Look Across the Border: Singapore's Aging Population

Like Malaysia, Singapore is experiencing a rapid rise in its elderly population. In 2023, seniors aged 65 and above made up 17.3% of its residents (about 718,000 people), a figure projected to reach 1 in 4 by 2030 and nearly 28% by 2050. To address this, Singapore has set up 214 Active Ageing Centres (AACs), with plans for 220 by 2025, ensuring most seniors live within walking distance. These centres serve as community hubs, offering activities, skills workshops, health talks, and volunteering opportunities that foster purpose and belonging.

Malaysia can draw inspiration from this model. While infrastructure won't be built overnight, progress is underway, especially with encouraging efforts from the private sector. In a recent local newspaper article, it was reported that Sarawak's population has declined significantly over the past seven years, from 2.8 million to 2.47 million. This sharp drop is an alarming signal that calls for more proactive measures from the state government. Sarawak, however, is not alone in facing this demographic challenge. Countries such as Japan, South Korea, and even China are grappling with similar issues driven by falling birth rates and rapidly aging populations. As the proportion of elderly citizens rises, it becomes critical to ensure that appropriate facilities and support systems are in place. Beyond basic care, centres should provide enriching activities such as art, music, and creative engagement, initiatives that nurture purpose, dignity, and opportunities for lifelong growth. The time to build this future is now. After all, aging doesn't wait. We will all be seniors one day.



Final Thoughts

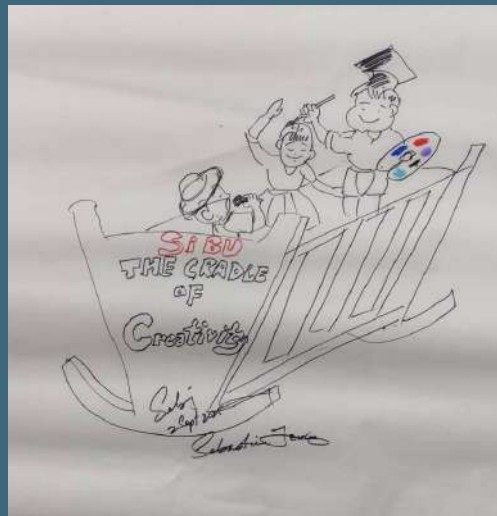
While we await the rollout of more robust support systems for our seniors, there's no need to delay action. We can begin right now with what is already within reach. Art therapy offers a simple yet powerful way to enrich the lives of older adults. Beyond its therapeutic value, it brings joy, purpose, and connection. These elements are as vital as medicine. By encouraging creative participation, we nurture not just individual well-being, but the strength and compassion of our communities.

As we grow older, we don't have to fade. We can continue to bloom.

by SEBASTIAN JONG



SIBU as the Cradle of Creativity: *Shaping Sarawak's Creative Industry*



On 3 September 2025, the Economic Planning Unit Sarawak convened an important workshop at the University of Technology Sarawak (UTS) SibU to chart the future of Sarawak's creative industry. The event brought together policymakers, educators, and industry players to contribute insights into the state's Creative Industry Development Blueprint, a plan designed to provide policy direction, development strategies, and actionable steps to transform the creative sector into one that is sustainable, competitive, and resilient.

Representing Sarawak Artists Society, President Sebastian Jong attended alongside members Johnny Tang, Amy Kho, and Ricky Hii. The team actively participated in discussions and voiced their vision for SibU's role in the blueprint.

The Society proposed that SibU be positioned as the "Cradle of Creativity" in Sarawak. With UTS as a center of higher learning and innovation,

Sibu has the capacity to nurture young talent through structured training and education. More than just skills development, the emphasis was placed on shaping mindsets, as mindset ultimately determines direction, and direction determines success or failure.

The workshop underscored the collective ambition to elevate Sarawak's creative industry from a supporting role into a driving force for economic and cultural growth. By aligning policies with education and industry needs, and by recognizing regional strengths such as SibU's academic foundation, Sarawak is taking bold steps toward fostering a creative ecosystem that will benefit generations to come.

Bau OUTdoor SKETCHING ACTIVITY at KAMPUNG TONGGA

by CLEMENT JIMEL



On 1 May 2025, Sarawak Artists Society (SAS) organised an outdoor sketching session at *Kampung Tongga*, a serene and inspiring spot fondly known as “House by the Stream”. Designed and built by Mr. Chua Shiu Peo, a retired contractor and self-taught Chinese painting artist, the venue reflects his passion for giving old materials a second life, transforming them into a beautiful retreat surrounded by nature, marvellous landscaping, and the gentle stream flowing behind the house.

Seventeen SAS members participated in the session, spending the day from 9.00 am to 2.00 pm immersed in sketching, sharing ideas, and exchanging knowledge. The surrounding nature, lush greenery, and tranquil sound of the stream inspired the artists as they explored different sketching techniques and styles. Members observed each other’s approaches, from expressive loose strokes to detailed architectural renderings, enriching their artistic experience through mutual learning and discovery.

Beyond sketching, the session became a meaningful get together for members to bond, exchange experiences, and inspire one another. A casual sharing session with Mr. Chua offered insights into his artistic journey, his passion for Chinese painting, and the creative vision behind the house, garden, and streamside retreat. The day concluded with a communal lunch, where conversations flowed freely and connections among members grew stronger.

This activity reflected SAS’s commitment to nurturing a vibrant art community by providing members with opportunities to learn from one another, explore diverse techniques, and strengthen their artistic relationships, all while enjoying the beauty of Kampung Tongga’s natural surroundings, marvellous landscaping, and peaceful stream.





More than 400 artists from across the world came together under one roof for the **Kita Orang Art Exhibition 2025: Blue & White 400**, launched at The Linc Kuala Lumpur, a sweeping tribute to the **400th anniversary of the Wanli Shipwreck**. Among them were thirteen artists from Sarawak Artists Society (SAS).

The SAS participating artists comprised **David Chew, Ng Paik San, Angelina Bong, Sebastian Jong, Sheila Kho, Chen Li Li, Lilly Metom, Aloysius Ho, Gerald Goh, Jane Ling, Clement Jonas, Georges Schneider and Leonard Darimi**. Their works, created entirely in the exhibition's signature palette of blue and white, reflected both personal artistic journeys and Sarawak's layered cultural identity. Collectively, their voices extended the story of the shipwreck into contemporary explorations of memory, heritage, and belonging.

Behind the scenes, **Artavern Art Space** in Kuching played a pivotal role in ensuring Sarawak's presence at the launch. Acting as the collection and packing hub, Artavern coordinated the careful handling of SAS members' works bound for Kuala Lumpur, ensuring that Sarawak's contributions arrived safely to join the chorus of artists from China, Japan, Italy, Spain, the Philippines, Indonesia, Nepal, Thailand, and beyond.

The Kita Orang platform, created in 2023, is built on inclusivity and accessibility. Its very name, Kita Orang ("We, the People") signals an open invitation for both emerging and established artists to take part. This spirit was felt keenly at the KL launch, where visitors not only viewed the 400 works but also engaged in artist-led workshops, storytelling sessions, and demonstrations that celebrated art as a living, participatory language.

While Kuala Lumpur marked the beginning, the story does not end there. After a stop at The Whiteaways Arcade in **Penang (November 2025)**, the exhibition will make its way to **Kuching in early 2026**, where **Artavern Art Space** will host the Sarawak edition. For local audiences, this promises to be more than an exhibition. It will be a homecoming. To see Sarawak artists alongside their international peers on their own turf will be a moment of pride and connection, situating Kuching firmly within the global cultural map.



Alice Chang Oi Lai, (Right 4) Founder of Lai Lai Art Gallery & Studio and the VIPs

李福嘉，1937年生於砂拉越古晉。1956年參加古晉美術會，1989年加入砂拉越藝術家協會。

2022年，李福嘉老師完成了他一生中最大幅的蠟染作品。

這段創作緣起於1972年。當時李老師原本為銅板浮雕計畫繪製了一幅草圖，但因製作材料短缺，作品被迫擱置。隨著歲月流逝，這份稿圖也被遺忘了。

直到2022年，我在整理李福嘉老師的作品時，意外尋獲這幅珍貴的草圖。經過數日討論，李老師決定將這幅未竟之作轉化為蠟染形式，並以此完成他藝術生涯中規模最大的一次挑戰。



Lee Hock Kia 李福嘉

李福嘉老師說：「我已經85歲了，創作大型蠟染畫需要消耗大量體力與精神，所以過去從未考慮過要嘗試。然而，當這幅塵封多年的圖稿重現眼前時，我感到應該為它畫上句點，也算是完成自己心中的一份遺憾。同時，也希望能讓後來的藝術愛好者看見其中的精神與力量。於是，我鼓起勇氣，接受了這個挑戰。」

大環境下的藝術工作者

在砂拉越，想當一名全職藝術工作者，是极具挑战及艰辛的路程。這裡資源丰厚，多元文化融合，卻少有空間讓「藝術」生根。大部分概念或生存法則任停留在努力與傳統文化傳播的層面，藝術被寄養滋生在旅遊業行銷鏈條里，或必須與資本，利益掛鉤才容易被「看見」。

許多熱愛藝術的人只能等到退休後，才有大把時間全心投入創作；而年輕一代，大多仍在為着麵包奔波，在極為有限的時間縫隙里暗聞玫瑰香。

二十年前的父母說：「學藝術賺不到錢。」唯有找最接近藝術的設計行業沾邊，年輕懷著夢想，以為熱情能改變一切。二十年後，社會科技迅速發展，但諷刺的是這句話依舊不變。甚至在政客口中，仍能聽見「藝術家只有死後才有價值」，「要把孩子送去學藝術，最好想清楚」。一開始聽到相當詫異，它揭示了當權者對藝術的不理解，以及藝術在整個社會結構中被忽視的價值。

這裡的藝術環境，似乎只停留在形式與表面。官方的支持往往像節慶煙火，大型、熱鬧、人潮、高科技；却缺乏深度與延續。審美教育沒有被真正看重，大部分人民對藝術的認識依舊片面：它被視為裝飾、被當成消遣，卻少有人把它當成思考與文化的語言。創作因此變得單薄，缺乏對議題的研究與反省，作品難以承載時代的重量。

在這樣的土壤裡，藝術家成了孤島。市場無法支撐，藏家稀少，藝術生態斷裂。重複看見的，是零星的努力、偶爾的花火，但缺乏讓這些火光持續燃燒的系統與環境。世界已經走遠——我們落後的，不只是技術，而是整個對藝術的思維與價值觀。

我們最需要的是真正的覺醒：讓藝術不再被邊緣化，不再只是少數人的夢，而是這片土地共有的文化力量。唯有如此，藝術才能在砂拉越這片多雨的土地，重新發芽，有底氣的向世界訴說屬於我們自己的故事。

文：磁铁

“Come Into Your Own”

- A Journey in Abstract Art

by DAVID CHEW

In September 2024, I held my second solo art show titled “Come Into Your Own” (映于未时) at Hoan Gallery, La Promenade Mall, Kuching, ten years after my first solo exhibition. This exhibition marked a personal and creative milestone, showcasing my journey of reflection and growth through abstract art.

Abstract art is often misunderstood, yet it holds deep emotional and spiritual resonance. With this show, I hoped to raise greater awareness and appreciation for abstract expressionism in Sarawak. I wanted to invite viewers to look inward, to feel, and to engage with art as a personal experience.

Among the works, “Past, TODAY, Future”, created with my son Lucas, and “Continuum”, capturing our interaction, reflect both legacy and the joy of uninhibited expression. These pieces symbolize the connection between generations and the evolution of my artistic voice.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to Hoan Gallery, curator Dr. Nana, and supporters like Li Li, Joanne, Angelina, Paik San and many dear friends. Special appreciation to my wife, Sarah and my son, Lucas whose love and presence brought life to this journey.

I hope this exhibition contributes to the story of Sarawak art and inspires fellow artists to express their truth through bold, authentic creation.



photo by Lee



“But First, Love.”

Solo Exhibition

by MELISSA WONG

“But First, Love.” is my first solo exhibition, showcasing my debut art collection. It was held at RH Hotel, Sibul, from December 1, 2024, to February 30, 2025.

This series was born from a simple yet profound idea: to incorporate heart-shaped elements into each artwork, symbolizing the presence and influence of love. It serves both as a deeply personal expression and a universal message, celebrating love as the ultimate creative and spiritual force in our world.

More than just an exhibition, it is a space for viewers to slow down, breathe, and reconnect with their own hearts. In a world that often forgets the importance of softness, I paint to remember—and to remind us all—that love heals and connects.

During the exhibition, I also showcased several pieces from my second collection, Mystic Earth, a body of work inspired by the profound natural beauty and energy of New Zealand.

I give thanks to Almighty God for all the blessings and opportunities. I am also truly grateful to my art collectors and supporters for being an invaluable part of my artistic journey.

Local Flowers & Fruits

- A Celebration in Oil by AMY KHO

From 15th March to 19th April 2025, I had the pleasure of presenting my second solo exhibition, Local Flowers & Fruits, at the Sibu State Library.

This collection featured twenty oil paintings dedicated to the rich botanical beauty of our region. It showcased floral subjects such as hibiscus, bougainvillea (paper flowers), and canna lilies, alongside luscious tropical fruits like durian, mangosteen, buah dabai, and engkala. Each piece aimed to capture the vibrant colours and cultural essence of Sarawak's natural bounty.

Given Sarawak's remarkable diversity of orchids, I am now inspired to explore this theme more deeply in my upcoming works.

My heartfelt thanks go to the Sibu State Library for hosting the exhibition, and to Mr. Ricky Hii, my oil painting mentor, for his invaluable guidance and support throughout my artistic journey.



The Bloom Phase

A Costume + Art Journey 2025
Featuring NG PAIK SAN



"The Bloom Phase" marks a deeply personal and transformative chapter in my creative journey, one that intertwines art, costume, and nature into a single expression of renewal. Presented as part of the Costume + Art Journey 2025 and curated by Jo.An Curates, this exhibition celebrates the moment when creation unfolds, much like a flower awakening to light.

This series was born from my lifelong fascination with the living language of flowers, their silent resilience, their fleeting grace, and their ability to tell stories without words. Each arrangement in The Bloom Phase captures a moment of transformation, blending natural elements with handcrafted costume art to explore the connection between human emotion and the cycles of nature.

Through every petal, texture, and color, I hope to convey that beauty is not only seen but felt. A living dialogue between the artist, the earth, and the observer. This phase of blooming reflects a time of rediscovery for me: a process of returning to stillness, listening to nature's rhythm, and allowing creativity to grow organically from within.

Beyond being a visual exhibition, The Bloom Phase invites guests to experience the journey through scent, touch, and emotion. Interactive elements such as hidden floral discoveries and seed-sharing rituals encourage visitors to slow down and reconnect with the quiet joy of being present. It is an experience of wonder meant to remind us that creativity, like nature, blossoms most beautifully when nurtured with care.

I am deeply thankful to Jo.An Curates for her thoughtful curation and to all who have supported and believed in my work. This project is both a tribute to nature's generosity and a celebration of the shared human spirit that continues to grow, bloom, and inspire.

May we all find our own season to bloom.

The Continuum: 3 GENERASI

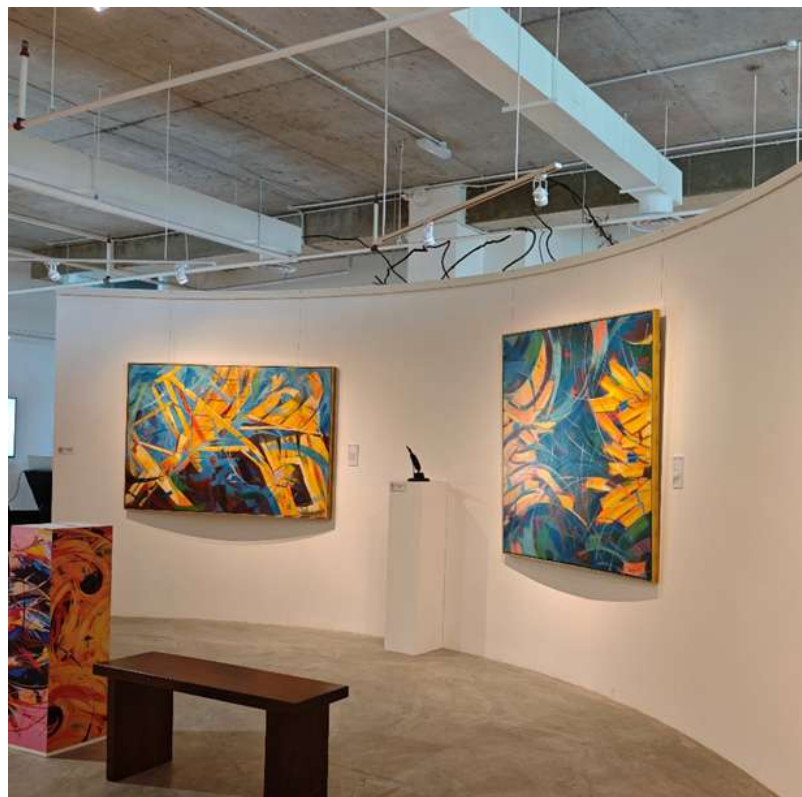
by MOHAMAD FAIZUAN MAT

The exhibition *The Continuum: 3 Generasi*, held at Hoan Gallery, La Promenade Mall, Samarahan Expressway, Kuching, from 25 July to 24 August 2025, marked a significant moment for Sarawak's art scene. Officially officiated by Datuk Snowdan Lawan, Deputy Minister of Tourism, Creative Industry and Performing Arts Sarawak, the exhibition celebrated the artistic legacies of three generations while setting an inspiring model for the future of curatorial practice in the state.

At its centre, the exhibition honoured the late Raphael Scott AhBeng, a pioneer of abstract expression in Sarawak whose vibrant landscapes continue to shape the language of Malaysian modern art. His influence resonates through Sylvester Wielding Jussem, whose works blend Bidayuh traditions with contemporary semi-abstract styles, and Dr. Mohamad Faizuan Mat, who pushes abstraction into new territories by capturing the energies of nature and experimenting with textures and materiality. Together, these three artists embody the "continuum" of Sarawakian art : past, present, and future which are woven together through shared knowledge, skills, and passion.

What distinguished this exhibition was not only the artworks themselves but also the curatorial vision behind them. Rather than approaching curation as promotion or salesmanship, the curator shaped a concept that highlighted the intergenerational transmission of artistic knowledge and values. The exhibition reminds us that the role of the curator is not to promise artists that their works will sell, but to create an intellectual, cultural, and creative space where legacies can be experienced, reflected upon, and celebrated.

This curatorial approach challenges the common perception of exhibitions as marketplaces



Art Talk by Sylvester Wielding Jussem on Ahbeng Legacy



Officially officiated by Datuk Snowdan Lawan, Deputy Minister of Tourism, Creative Industry and Performing Arts Sarawak



where works are merely “gantung” on the wall in the hope that visitors will buy them. *The Continuum: 3 Generasi* demonstrates that an art exhibition should never be reduced to the level of a *pasar malam* or retail shop. The true value of art does not lie in commercial transaction but in its ability to inspire, to teach, and to carry forward knowledge across time. Sarawak needs artists who are not merely *tukang jual* (sellers of paintings), but intelligent practitioners (thinkers and creators) who see their practice as a lifelong contribution to culture and society.

To strengthen this message, the exhibition was supported by a series of programmes that engaged audiences beyond the gallery walls. Sylvester Wielding Jussem delivered an insightful art talk on his late mentor AhBeng, offering personal reflections on his philosophy and influence. Razif Rathil led the *From Waste to Art workshop*, introducing participants to sustainable practices in artmaking. Live demonstrations by Dr. Mohamad Faizuan Mat and Sylvester Wielding Jussem gave audiences a rare chance to witness techniques and processes firsthand. These activities enriched the exhibition by transforming it into a platform of exchange, dialogue, and education.

The programme culminated in the launch of the book *Ko-kreasi Seni: Perihal* on 23 August 2025, coinciding with the closing ceremony. The launch underscored the exhibition’s intellectual dimension, linking practice to theory, and ensuring that ideas of co-creation, knowledge-sharing, and cultural continuity remain central to Sarawak’s art discourse.

In all, *The Continuum: 3 Generasi* sets a precedent for future exhibitions in Sarawak. It demonstrates that curatorial practice can and must rise above commercialism, situating art as a living continuum where wisdom, creativity, and spirit are passed from one generation to the next. It is a call for Sarawak to nurture intelligent artists and curators who understand that the strength of art lies not in glamour or price tags **but in legacy, dialogue, and the shaping of cultural consciousness.**

HERITAGE RELOADED MARKS

40 YEARS OF ARTISTIC LEGACY by SEBASTIAN JONG



YBhg Dato Haji Hilmy Bin Haji Othman mayor of DBKU presented his speech during the opening ceremony



welcoming speech from President of SAS Mr Sebastian Jong

Group photo with the Guest of honor Mayor of DBKU Dato Hj Hilmy, President of SAS Mr Sebastian Jong, advisor of SAS Mr David Chew (2 from left) and curator Dr Mohd Faizuan (1 from left)



Sarawak Artists Society's 40th Annual Art Show opens with promise of future collaboration with DBKU.

Sarawak Artists Society (SAS) celebrated a remarkable milestone on 17 October 2025 with the opening of its 40th Annual Art Show, themed "Heritage Reloaded," at Wesberly Galleria. The exhibition was officially opened by YBhg Dato Haji Hilmy Bin Haji Othman, Mayor of Dewan Bandaraya Kuching Utara (DBKU), who graced the event as Guest of Honour.

In his welcoming address, SAS President Sebastian Jong reflected on the society's four decades of growth and achievement, describing the anniversary as "a celebration of perseverance, unity, and passion for art."

Jong highlighted that Heritage Reloaded was a timely theme encouraging artists to rediscover their cultural roots while interpreting heritage through a modern lens.

"Heritage is not something to be kept in the past, but something living, to be reimagined, reinterpreted, and passed on to future generations," he said.

He also paid tribute to the society's founders and pioneers for their dedication, and expressed appreciation to DBKU and the Mayor for their ongoing support of the arts in Kuching.



In his opening speech, YBhg Dato Haji Hilmy Bin Haji Othman congratulated SAS for its 40 years of contribution to Sarawak's cultural landscape and commended the society's role in promoting art and creativity within the community.

"Sarawak Artists Society has played a vital role in shaping the cultural identity of our city," he remarked. "The theme 'Heritage Reloaded' beautifully reflects our responsibility to keep our traditions alive while embracing innovation."

The Mayor emphasized that Kuching's vibrancy as a city is deeply linked to its creative spirit, noting that "a city rich in art is a city full of life, empathy, and creativity."



SAS member Sheila Kho presented her artwork to the guest of honor



In a major announcement, Dato Hilmy revealed that DBKU is looking forward to collaborating with Sarawak Artists Society to organize a large-scale international art event in Kuching next year, in conjunction with Kuching City Day 2026. The announcement drew enthusiastic applause, signaling a new chapter of partnership and opportunity for the Sarawak art community.

Following his address, YBhg Dato Haji Hilmy Bin Haji Othman officially declared open the 40th Annual Art Show: "*Heritage Reloaded*." The moment was followed by a cake-cutting ceremony to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Sarawak Artists Society, symbolizing four decades of creativity, dedication, and growth.

The evening continued with a guided exhibition tour, where the Mayor, invited guests, and members of the media viewed an inspiring array of artworks, each piece celebrating the beauty of heritage through contemporary artistic expression.

The 40th Annual Art Show, "*Heritage Reloaded*" not only celebrated four decades of artistic legacy but also reaffirmed the growing partnership between DBKU and SAS, marking the beginning of an exciting journey toward a larger, international art event that will further elevate Kuching as a regional centre of art and culture.

Sarawak's



The year 2025 marks a remarkable milestone for Sarawak Artists Society (SAS) with four decades of continuous commitment to nurturing and promoting visual arts in Sarawak. Founded in 1985, SAS emerged from the collective passion of local artists who sought to create a platform for artistic exchange and exhibition within the state. What began as a modest community of painters and art enthusiasts has grown into a dynamic institution that reflects the evolution of Sarawak's artistic identity and its place within Malaysia's broader cultural landscape. Throughout its history, SAS has served as a vital meeting point for artists of diverse backgrounds and generations. The society's early exhibitions were grounded in traditional and modern painting practices, often highlighting local sceneries, daily life, and cultural motifs that define Sarawak's visual narrative. These early efforts built the foundation of an art movement rooted in local identity and community spirit, establishing SAS as a key force in the preservation and development of Sarawak's art heritage.

Over the years, however, the artistic landscape has expanded. SAS has progressively opened its arms to embrace other disciplines beyond painting, welcoming installation art, sculpture, photography, mixed media, and digital or new media practices.

This inclusivity signals the society's responsiveness to contemporary artistic trends and its willingness to evolve alongside the creative expressions of younger generations. By fostering a multidisciplinary dialogue, SAS continues to redefine what it means to be an artist in Sarawak today, acknowledging that creativity transcends medium and tradition. The exhibition *Heritage Reloaded* reflects this transformative spirit. Commemorating the 40th anniversary of SAS, the exhibition brings together 44 artworks that reimagine the meaning of heritage in contemporary times. While painting remains a strong and visible tradition, the inclusion of diverse art forms enriches the visual and conceptual experience, allowing audiences to encounter heritage through different perspectives, from tactile memories and cultural motifs to technological interpretations and environmental reflections.

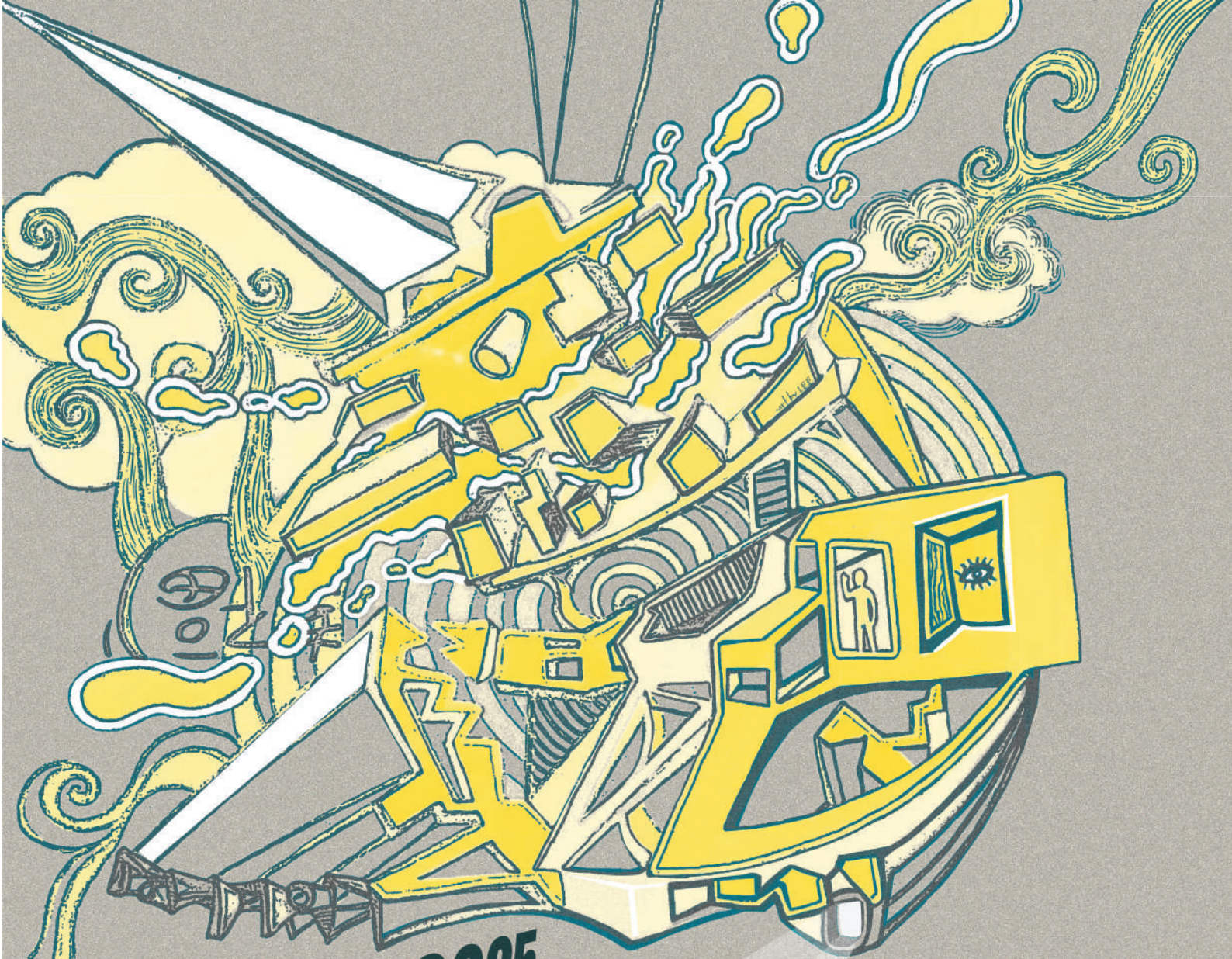
What sets Heritage Reloaded apart from previous SAS exhibitions is the introduction of a curatorial framework. In earlier decades, exhibitions were often organized collectively by members, driven by enthusiasm and the shared joy of exhibiting art. These efforts-built community and camaraderie but often lacked a structured conceptual direction. In 2025, SAS takes a significant step forward by appointing a curator to guide the exhibition's vision and coherence. The curator's role here extends far beyond selecting and arranging artworks.

Curatorial Notes by Mohamad Faizuan Mat

A curator is not an art promoter tasked with selling works, but rather a cultural interpreter, one who constructs meaning, connects ideas, and provides intellectual depth to the exhibition. Through curatorial planning, Heritage Reloaded gains a deliberate flow and narrative structure that engages audiences in a journey of discovery. The exhibition space becomes not just a site of display, but a space of dialogue, between past and present, between tradition and experiment, between heritage and innovation.

Complementing the exhibition are a series of art workshops, talks, and sharing sessions designed to enrich public understanding and participation. These programs embody SAS's enduring mission to make art accessible and meaningful to the wider community, emphasizing that art is not confined to galleries but lives through conversation, education, and collaboration. As SAS celebrates its 40th year, Heritage Reloaded stands as both a reflection and a renewal. It acknowledges the society's historical journey while projecting its vision for the future, one that is inclusive, interdisciplinary, and intellectually engaged. Heritage, in this context, is not a relic of the past but a living continuum, reloaded through the creativity and consciousness of each new generation of artists. This exhibition, therefore, is not just a commemoration; it is a declaration of intent. It reaffirms SAS's evolving role as a catalyst for artistic growth, a space for critical engagement, and a guardian of Sarawak's cultural soul, where heritage continues to breathe, transform, and inspire.

Message



SAS 2025 40th ANNUAL SHOW HERITAGE RELOADED

17 Oct
16 Nov

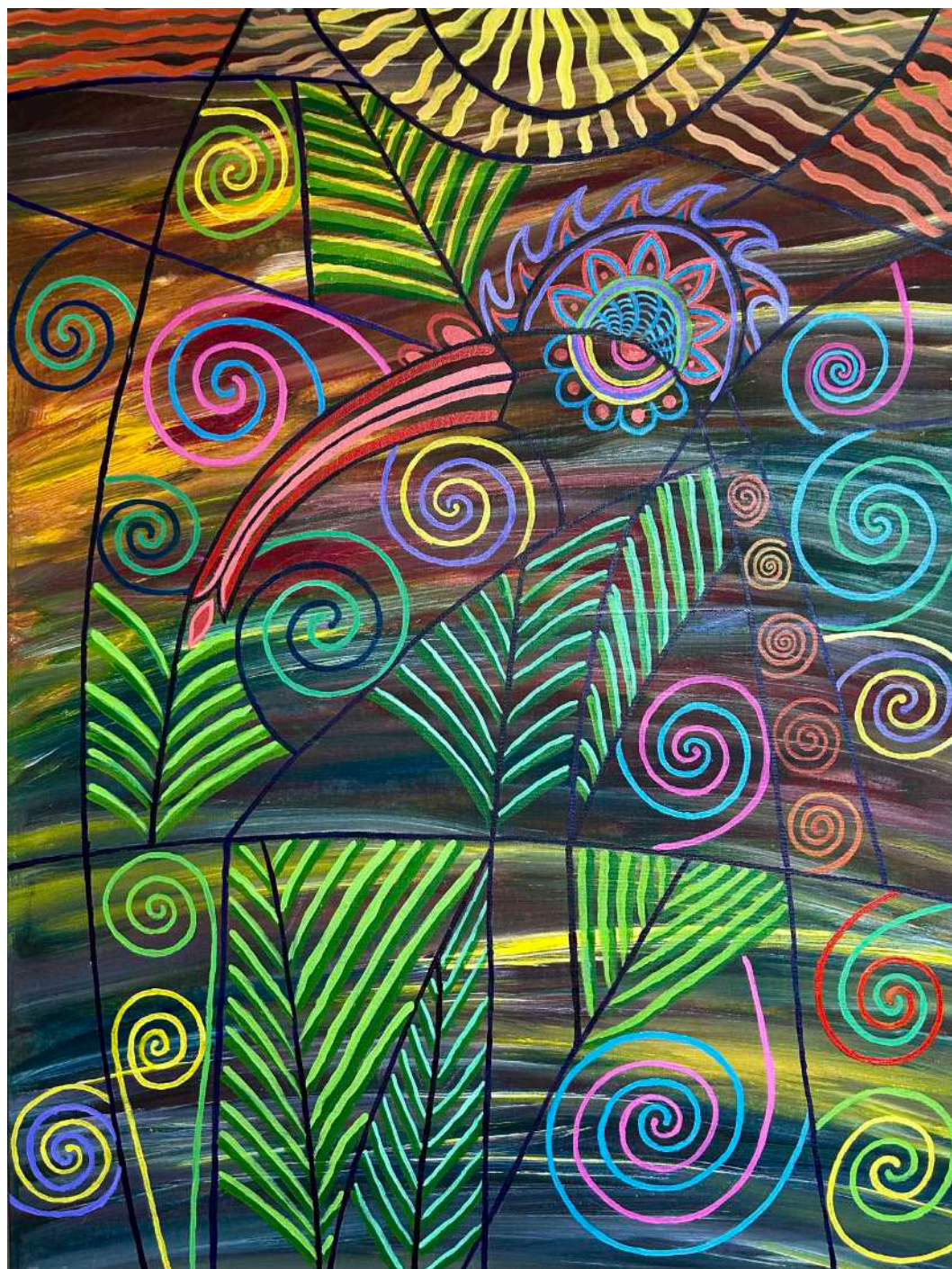
Artists

Aloysius Ho · Amy Kho ·
Angela Chong · Angelina
Bong · Anthony Rosel · Bladae
Lasem · Chai Suk Lan · Chan
Feng kuan · Chen Li Li @LEE ·
Chong Lee Lin · Chung TL · Clara
Law · Clement Jimel · David Chew ·
Dr. Emmanuel Osakue · Dr. Lilly Metom
· Dr. Mohamad Faizuan Mat · Gabrielle
Lim · Georges M.G. Schneider · Gerald
Goh · Jane Ling · Joan Fam · Joanne Lau ·
Johnny Tang · Joshua Jabeng · Kelvin Chan ·
Kho Kheng Hee · Liew Kim Phiaw · Liong Ming
Kong · Lucas Lau · Marian Chin · Mary Anne Vaz
· Marzuki Jamilah · Michelle Liou · Muyang anak
Kumundan @Mr.Owat · Ng Paik San · Petrus Alfred
· Ricky Hii · Sebastian Jong · Sheila Kho · Sim Chiap
Peng · Sim Kwang Meng · Sylvester Jussem · Vivien Lim

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**Aloysius
Ho**



Heritage with a Twist

- Acrylic on Canvas
- 80cm x 60cm

The Kenyalang motif complimented with the Kayan "tendrils" design are used here to showcase the grandeur and position of native art and design in Sarawak's rich heritage and culture. The new twist will transform its relevance to our modern taste and expectations.

This painting incorporates the trending modern "Composite Style" where Expressionism intertwined with Traditional art techniques.

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Amy Kho



英雄舞 (Ngajat) 是砂拉越伊班族在鸟神庆典等传统祭祀场合表演的仪式性舞蹈，以庆祝丰收或凯旋并展现部落文化精神。男性舞者以刚劲有力的跳跃和动作模仿雨林中的鸟类。女性舞者则穿着有羽毛装饰的服装以柔软和动人动作呈献曼妙舞姿。小舞者们拿着有伊班图腾的面具跟随着音乐活泼的舞者。这是一支在诗巫婆罗州文化节大舞台上所呈献的大型舞蹈。

The Fantastic Dancers 非一般舞者 (2025)

- Chinese Ink Painting
- 65cmx45cm

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Angela Chong



Learning the traditional method of hunting from Apai

- Acrylic paints on Canvas
- 50cm x 60cm

A young boy went hunting with his father during school holidays. Now, that boy is a grandfather, and he wants his grandsons to learn their tribe's traditional methods of hunting. This cultural practice may not survive if children are only interested in social media and digital games. Children should appreciate the beauties of nature and the traditional skills of survival on our home lands.

Angelina Bong

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We live at a time where we need to reconcile with modern culture and the original heritage we inherited from our ancestors as well as the land we live in. We have to reset our mind in order to do this.

This piece explores resetting our mindset to welcome Yobitsugi which originates from Kintsugi. Kintsugi is the Japanese art of mending broken pottery with gold to make a new creation.

Yobitsugi brings together broken pieces of ceramics from different cultures, like nations in conflict. As explained by artist Makoto Fujimura, Yobitsugi means 'to call into' (Yobi) and 'to mend' (Tsugi).

This piece is welcoming Yobitsugi, various fragmented pieces coming together from our past and present, in peace as well as turning over many leaves, represented by the leaf prints which are from Sarawak.

The sewing signifies our beings sewn into the fabric of a society that connects all of us.



Welcoming Yobitsugi (2023)

- Mixed Media
- 120 x 90 cm

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Anthony Roseli Ripen



Sound of Nature-series iv (2025)

- Acrylic on Canvas
- 30 x 41 inches

This artwork with the theme of 'Sound of Nature' series iv. This artwork used acrylic colour on canvas. The motif shows the uniqueness of flora and fauna in the form of semi-abstract shape which has its own meaning.

蔡淑兰

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Delicate Fragrance (清香)

- Chinese Ink
- 29cm x 69cm

The bloom and fade of the lotus, from surface brilliance to inner accumulation, embodies the cosmic principle of birth, abiding, change, and extinction through a simple life process. Standing still in water, neither welcoming nor rejecting, it allows the entire universe to find its relative place upon itself. The mutual reflection between the lotus and the world epitomizes the essence of Zen.

荷的花开花落，从表面的绚烂到深处的积蓄，一个简单的生命过程却完整演绎出生、住、异、灭的宇宙法则。它静立水中，不迎不拒却让整个宇宙都在它身上找到相对位置。荷与世界的相互映照更是禅意的极致。

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Chan Feng Kuan



Bako Fishing Village (2025)

- Acrylic on Canvas
- 29inches x 41inches

Bako, once a quaint, idyllic fishing village with Mt. Santubong dotting its skyline, has now become quite a new star with holiday makers, making a stop to explore it, enjoying its rustic charm and sumptuous seafood.

Tourists and city dwellers, travel vloggers and globetrotters share their experiences on social media and articles, showcasing Bako's allure, enticing many more to visit and explore!

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Nai-Nai's wok (2025) • Mixed media | variable size

Our Nai-Nai, who others would call Wài-Pó (maternal grandma), is a brilliant chef whose “big dishes” we grew up eating.

Brainstorming for this artwork led me to dig up her archives: a treasure trove of recipes, newspaper clippings, and packages — all related to food. Her cryptic recipe book is an utter joy to read.

To honour her heritage, I've used a wok — smaller than the one she used — as a canvas. On it, I collaged old photos of Nai-Nai, my family, and the food we made. Sadly, I couldn't find a single photo of the dishes she made.

As much as I cherish this heritage, I wonder why the kitchen is often considered a woman's domain. Girls are even gifted toy utensils. I leave this question for you, dear visitors, by showcasing the chrome sprayed painted toys next to the wok.



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ASTANA KUCHING

- Chinese Painting
- 69CM x 168CM



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传承的微笑

- Graphite & Charcoal
- 42cm x 59.4cm

在时代变迁的洪流中，科技迅速改变了人与人之间的交流方式。然而，无论时代如何前进，情感与笑容始终是连接世代的桥梁。

这幅作品描绘了一位身穿传统服饰的老人，与孙儿一同注视着手机屏幕的温馨时刻。祖辈的慈爱与孩童的纯真，在光影交织中相映成趣，象征着传统与现代的融合。

我希望通过这幅画，传达一个简单而深刻的信息——文化可以传承，情感不会老去。科技只是载体，而人与人之间的温度，才是永恒的“遗产”。

In the tide of time and change, technology has rapidly transformed the way people connect and communicate. Yet, no matter how far the world advances, emotions and smiles remain the timeless bridge between generations.

This artwork portrays an elderly man in traditional attire sharing a warm moment with his grandson as they gaze at a smartphone together. The affection of the elder and the innocence of the child intertwine in light and shadow, symbolizing the harmony between tradition and modernity.

Through this piece, I wish to convey a simple yet profound message — culture can be passed on, and emotions never grow old. Technology is merely a vessel, but the warmth between people is the true and everlasting heritage.

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This painting is inspired by Sarawak — where mountains meet rivers, and where rainforest, sea, and home intertwine with heritage and hope.

Water flows as a quiet thread, linking Tasik Biru, Fairy Cave, Bako National Park, longhouses, Rumah Orang Ulu, fishing villages, the Bangunan Dewan Undangan Negeri Sarawak, and cities still in the making. Though each follows its own course, these waters share one origin — a land where rainforest holds memory, and life is rooted in the harmony between nature and culture.

Composed of landmarks across Sarawak, this piece maps the essence of a place I call home — ever evolving, yet grounded in spirit.

“Where mountains flow, roots remain.”

As we grow and move forward, we carry our past within us — culture continues, and stories endure.



Where Mountains Flow, Roots Remain (2025)

- Chinese Ink Painting
- 24" x 48"

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David Chew



This piece revisits the essence of action painting, where every brushstroke and motion flows from my intuition in the moment. This approach, sparked by a chat about human versus digital (AI) artistry, makes me believe that as a human artist, I bring a unique sense of movement to my pieces. You can feel the warmth of my hands in the flowing lines and energetic strokes, each one a reflection of the human touch.

Movement III (2025)

- Acrylic on canvas
- 60cm x 80cm

Dr. Emmanuel Osakue



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Binding Union (2025)

- Acrylic on Velvet
- 3ft x3ft

The artwork highlights how marriage is more than a ceremonial act - it is a union that intertwines lives, responsibilities, emotions, and often, families. The word "bind" suggests commitment, mutual support, and shared purpose, underscoring the idea that marriage is both a person and social bond that shapes individuals and communities

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Gabrielle Lim Mei Joo



Heirloom Guardian (2025)

- Acrylic on canvas
- 60 x 90 cm

The cat faithfully guards the precious heirloom jar. The jar is more than just a sentimental belonging; it is a tangible reminder of our stories, memories of our ancestors, and the cultural traditions. Like the cat, we need to preserve and protect it to keep the legacy alive for the younger generation.

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The Genesis reflects the explosive energy of creation — where chaos and beauty converge to give birth to new possibilities.

The Genesis (2025)

- Non Toxic Acrylics on canvas
- 4ft x 4ft

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The Hand of the Tree (2025)

- Acrylic colours and collages of leaves on Fredric Artists canvas
- 2 feet x 3 feet (portrait)

Middle of river or steep slopes in the woods, To rocks you hold on, inspiration to live on.

Likewise, Vincent long ago painted 'Racines'.

In sunset, I throw colours on canvas, Yet another mesmerising roots.

Yet another Nature's creation to remember

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《银河映朱云》(2025)

- Chinese Ink painting
- 50cmx152cm(scroll)

This painting translates the spirit of traditional Chinese ink art through modern abstraction. Cascading inks of black, white, green, and faint blue flow down the scroll, echoing waterfalls. Touches of red on the cliffs evoke plum blossoms, symbols of resilience. No brush directs the motion — only an alchemy of alum, glue, ink, and pigment unfolding on rice paper, allowing nature's spontaneity to emerge, uncontrolled yet harmonious.

Between movement and stillness, substance and emptiness, the work finds balance — a quiet dialogue between past and present. Heritage, once whispered through mountains and rivers, now reloads into the rhythm of today, alive and renewed.

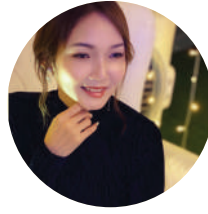
Can you hear the waterfalls?

此作以现代之意，重载水墨之魂。
黑白青碧，层层泻下，若瀑影 flows；
崖上几点朱红，如梅初绽，
寄坚韧与新生之意。
非笔所引，惟明矾、胶、墨与丹青
自相化合，
随性而生，任运成章，天机自显。

动静相生，虚实互映，
于无声处对话古今。
昔日山川低语之传承，
今朝重载于心间脉动，生气盎然。

可曾听到，瀑声悠悠？

Joan Fam Chew Ru



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Bloom Within 内在绽放

- Alcohol Ink on Synthetic Paper
- 63cm x 87cm

"Bloom Within" explores the quiet power of inner growth. Through delicate ink flows and organic formations, this piece reveals how beauty and resilience emerge from within — softly, steadily, and profoundly.

「内在绽放」探索的是内在成长的柔和力量。作品以细腻的墨迹流动与有机形态，展现出从内心深处悄然生长的韧性与美感，静静地、持续地、深刻地绽放。



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Joanne Lau



Spoken by a Sarawakian (2024)

- Acrylic on Canvas
- 3ft x 4ft

Sarawak is my homeland. It is a land of multiethnicity and multiculturalism. From the beautiful sunrise in the east to the sunset in the west, Sarawak takes pride in its thriving landscape of forests, fauna and flora. I am truly proud to be a Sarawakian.

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Johnny Tang



This painting recalls my 1988 journey along the upper Rejang, from Kapit to Belaga. One morning, I met a SESCO engineer at the Belaga Wharf, on duty to inspect the soil foundation for the proposed Bakun Dam — planned as Southeast Asia's largest.

I accepted his invitation to join him by longboat, and within two hours we reached the site where the dam would rise. It was my privilege to capture the untouched beauty of the landscape before construction — later transformed into the Bakun Dam, completed in 2010 by Sarawak Energy Berhad.

This work preserves that moment in history, reflecting both the natural wonder of the site and the start of one of the region's most significant engineering undertakings.

Before Bakun Dam

- Watercolour
- 57cm x 38cm

Joshua Jabeng

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Under One Roof (2025)

- Oil on Canvas
- 21 inches x 48 inches

This painting wishes to remind us, that it is possible for a whole community to live under one roof harmoniously.



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Kelvin Chan



This fine art portrait captures an Iban girl in a powerful visual dialogue between tradition and transformation. Draped in the intricate beadwork of her heritage and crowned with a resplendent ceremonial headdress, Jemima becomes both guardian and vessel of cultural memory. The play of light across her face evokes a sense of evolution—her identity flowing between past and present, personal and ancestral.

The image symbolizes the continuity of Iban heritage in a modern world, where traditions are not static relics, but



living expressions, adapting and evolving with each new generation. "Jemima" is not just a portrait — it is a visual ode to resilience, beauty, and the timeless spirit of the Iban people.

Jemima (2025)

- Fine Art Paper
- 22"x33"

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Kho Kheng Hee



蹬腿歇停

- chinese Painting
- 68cm x 80cm

蹬腿歇停何处去，回头错过景沿途，
人生有路多凹凸，快乐康祥得宝珠





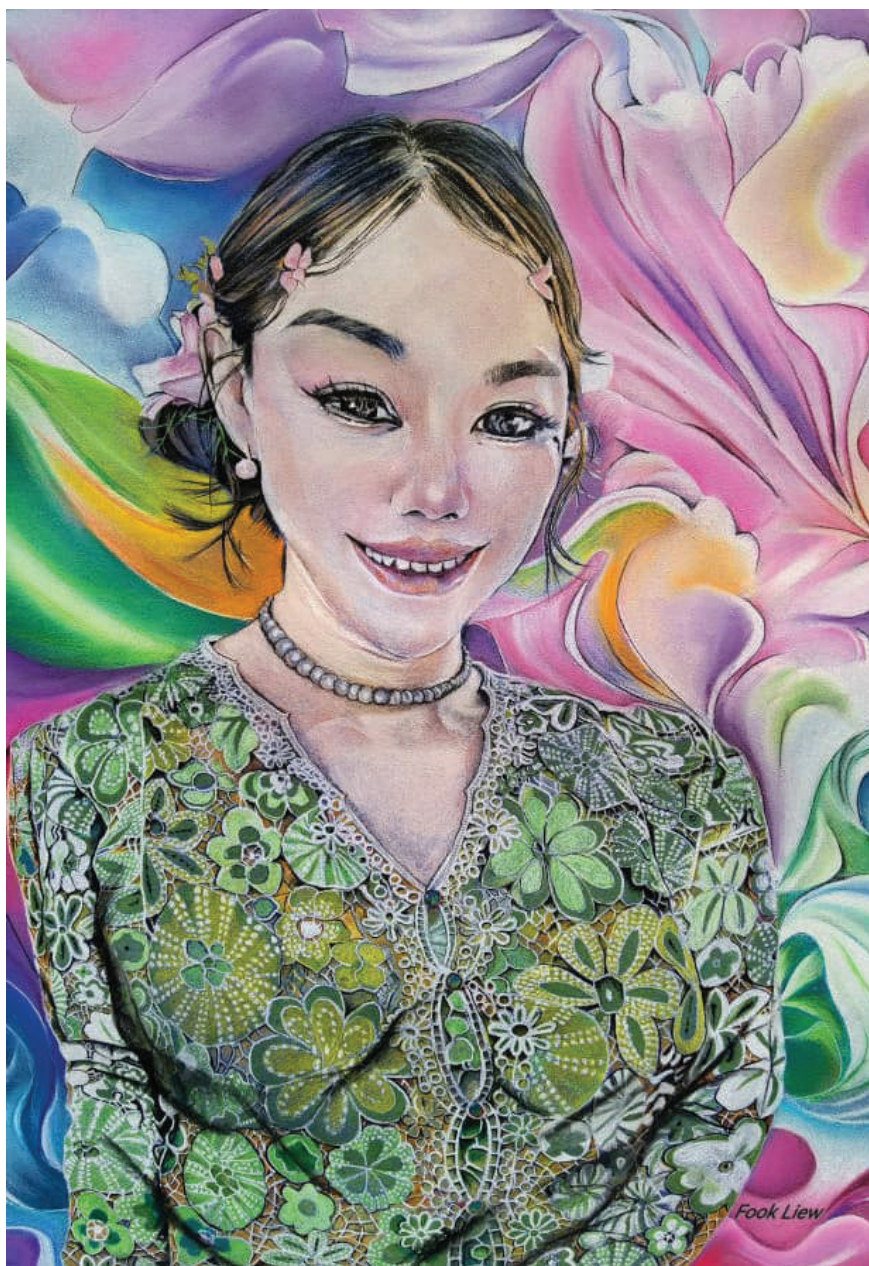
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Liew Kim Phiaw [Fook Liew]



《融·绽》 (2025)

- Soft pastel & colour pencil
- 52cm x 60cm

这幅粉彩作品《融·绽》描绘了一位身着马来可峇雅的华裔女性，完美诠释了砂拉越文化交融的精神内核。

可峇雅以其精致刺绣与通透面料，诉说着共有的文化记忆。当地华社对这种服饰的接纳——尤其是在娘惹可峇雅的演变中——生动体现了日常生活中的跨文化对话。这不仅是衣着的借用，更是一种深度的文化融合：华人将自身的审美感知注入马来传统，孕育出独具特色的混合身份。

画中人物娴静的神情与粉彩的柔和色调，定格了一个充满文化自信的瞬间。她代表着现代的砂拉越身份——在这里，文化边界不再是隔阂，而成为了美丽交汇的所在。这幅作品视觉化了“遗产重铸”的概念：文化遗产不是静止的保存，而是持续的动态绽放。它赞颂的是一种活着的文化，在相互欣赏与和谐共处中不断被重新定义，使可峇雅的优雅成为砂拉越多元社会中包容与归属的通用语言。

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Lilly Metom



Legacy of the Headhunters (2025)

- Oil Painting
- 3ft x 2ft

The Iban people of Sarawak, once feared head-hunters, are indigenous warriors known for their fierce raids tied to warfare and spiritual beliefs.

Today, they preserve rich traditions like Pua Kumbu weaving and live in longhouses, blending heritage with modern life. Their headhunting past reflects courage and social status, now replaced by cultural rituals and community pride.



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Echoes in the Moonlight (2025)

- Acrylic on Canvas
- 2ft x 3ft

This painting captures a forest at threshold between shadow and light, where nature seems alive with quiet mystery. Bare branches stretch upward in delicate, interwoven lines, silhouetted against a luminous golden-yellow backdrop that suggest a glowing moon. Beneath them, the strokes of deep green and turquoise flow upward, and forming a layered texture that resembles both dense foliage and moving currents of energy.





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Wings of Motion 2025)

- Acrylic on canvas
- 80cm X 60cm

This artwork celebrates the spirit of Sarawak's traditional feather dances. A joyful dancer embodies grace and vitality, set against a turquoise background filled with dynamic bursts of color symbolizing femininity and movement. Hidden within the canvas, light reveals hornbills, native patterns, and the artist's signature — reminding us that heritage, like light, shines through when illuminated.



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The Hills are Alive (2025)

- Acrylic on canvas
- 90cm x 60cm

Although the villages above the clouds still call out to her, Peluk finds peace and calm in the paddy fields that surround her.

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Mary Anne Vaz



The Wood Artist (2025)

- Digital Painting on fabric
- 4.2 ft x 3.7 ft

The Wood Artist made Bungai Jarau that looked like waves of the ocean, adding an air of festivity to the longhouse.

Then, he was touched by the music of the Sape. Legend has it that a farmer had a dream that taught him to make this magical instrument to heal his ailing wife. Made from the trunk of the Adau Tree found deep in the jungles of Sarawak.

So the Wood Artist became passionate about making the Sape, giving us healing music.

The Wood Artist is our precious Legacy.

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Marzuki Jamilah



Fragments of Identity (2025) • Mix media on board
• 105cm x 105cm

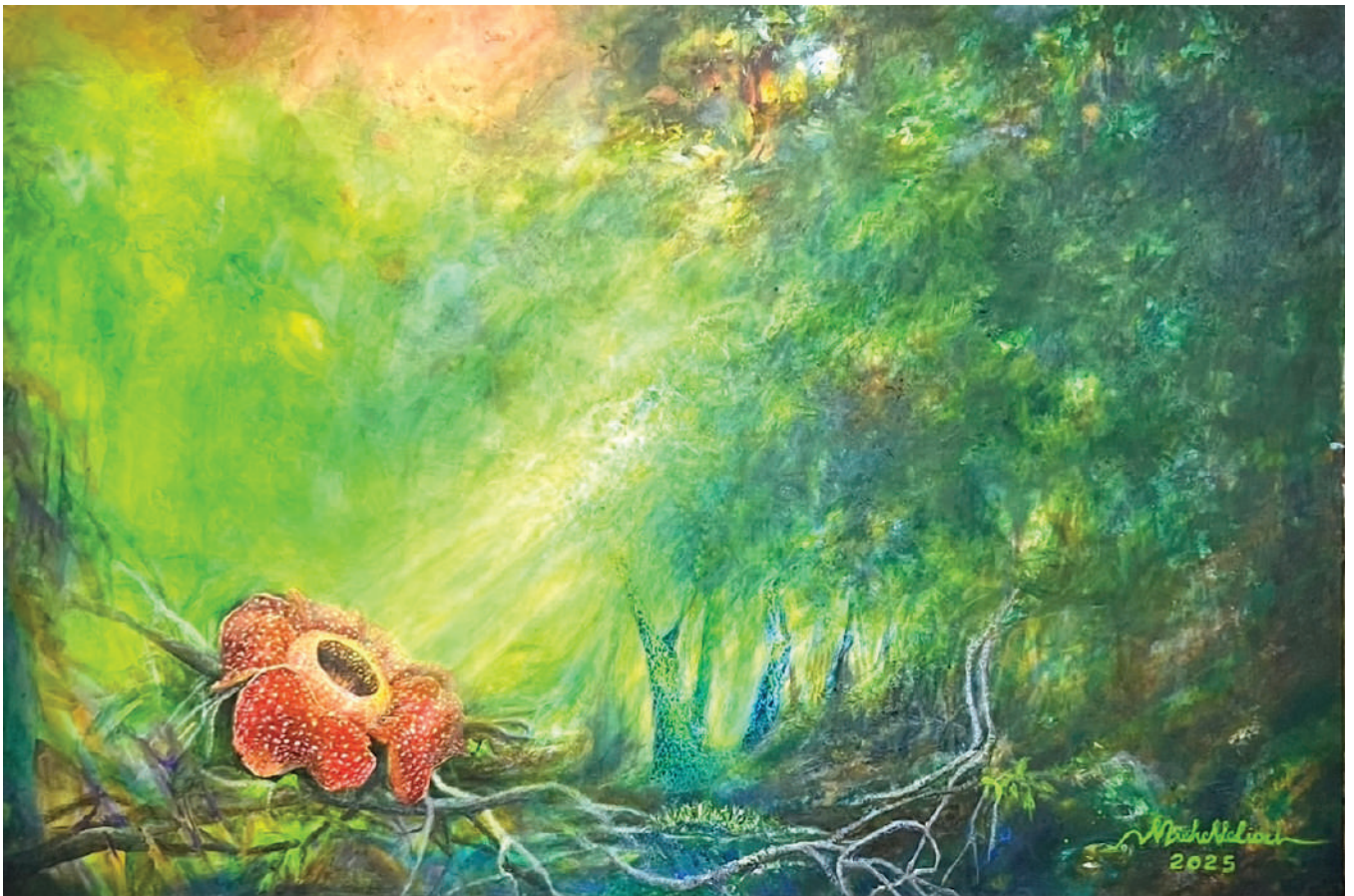
This artwork, *Fragments of Identity*, reflects the artist's inner journey in exploring cultural heritage, personal growth, and emotional transformation through abstraction. Inspired by the richness of local ethnic motifs and traditional patterns, the piece reinterprets these visual languages into a contemporary form that speaks of both memory and modernity. Each fragment symbolizes layers of identity — cultural roots, lived experiences, and evolving perspectives — intertwined within the complexity of time and change.

Through the use of abstract composition, textures, and dynamic colors, the artwork captures the tension between tradition and innovation, past and present. It reveals how identity is not a fixed construct but a continuous process of rediscovery, shaped by the dialogue between heritage and individuality. *Fragments of Identity* becomes a visual reflection of resilience, self-discovery, and the timeless connection between art and culture that defines the artist's creative journey.

Michelle Liou

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A Hidden Jewel in Full Blossom (2025)

- Acrylic on Canvas
- 2ft x 3ft

The glittering stippled sunlight shines through the forest leaves to interact with the jungle landscape, focussing on the famous Rafflesia. The largest flower in the world, it is a great prodigy of the flora world with no stems, leaves or roots. A hidden jewel of the Borneo Rainforest it fascinates the eyes of the beholder with its impressive and colossal bold blossom. Producing a foul smell to attract insects, it is a symbol of rich biodiversity creating a delightful harmony.



Bulbophyllum abangjoei (2025)

- Acrylic on canvas
- 160 x 70 CM



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Bulbophyllum abangjoei is inspired by a rare orchid species native to Sarawak, symbolising the state's natural beauty and cultural heritage. The orchid represents resilience, purity, and the deep connection between the people and their land. Its delicate form reflects the fragility of nature, while its enduring presence mirrors the strength of Sarawak's diverse communities. In this artwork, the orchid is reimagined as an icon of Sarawak—an emblem of identity rooted in the rainforest's richness and the traditions that flourish alongside it. It celebrates the harmony between nature and culture, reminding us that both are vital to our sense of belonging.

Through Bulbophyllum abangjoei, I seek to honour Sarawak's heritage and inspire appreciation for the environment that sustains it. The work stands as a gentle reminder to preserve what makes Sarawak truly unique and alive.



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Muyang Anak Kumundan @ Mr. Owat



The Rhinoceros Hornbills (2025)

- Acrylic on canvas
- 4ft x 5ft

The painting depicts a twin matured young chicks ready to leave the tree nest and spread the wings to explore the world of rainforest. The family members are too excited to witness their first flight.

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Ng Paik San



She will Fly (2025) • Acrylic on canvas • 100cm x 100cm

A compelling vision of fortitude. With the butterfly representing the artist and the universal female experience, this painting captures a moment of quiet, fierce determination. It's a simple, undeniable truth: A lady's strength is not optional, it is fundamental. Whatever challenges life brings, she is equipped not just to survive, but to soar.

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**Ricky
Hii**



A unique flavor • Oil on Canvas • 61cm x 43cm

In Borneo, there is a fruit different from the well-known olive. It is not a necessity of life; it is a seasonal fruit with a taste that is not as striking as durian. However, its unique flavor contains an inexplicable “essence.” Despite this, it has many enthusiasts.

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Sebastian Jong



Heritage in Motion 流动的传承 (2025)

- Pouring Art on Canvas
- 60cm x 90cm



Flowing blues and whites over a celadon backdrop awaken centuries of porcelain elegance, bridging ancient heritage with modern pouring artistry.

在青瓷底色的映衬下，蓝白流转，唤醒千年瓷韵；让古老的传承与现代流体艺术相融相映。

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Sheila Kho Ting Ling



Hidden realm (2025)

- Mixed medium
- 80cm x 80cm

A realm unfolds in fragments with eyes, shapes, and traces of presence. Neither fully revealed nor entirely hidden, it lingers in between, waiting to be completed by the beholder.



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Fort Margherita Kuching

- Chinese Ink
- 63cmx 51cm

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Sim Chiap Peng



Soliloquy under Tradition (Silabur Cave)

传统下的独白

- Chinese ink
- 68cm x96cm

Oriental painting art emphasizes brush and ink, values tradition, and has evolved over thousands of years to this day. Throughout the long river of history, tradition has never remained static.

Under the impact of changing times and external influences, tradition gradually transforms along with the era. This very adaptability is the essence of tradition.

东方绘画艺术重在笔墨，讲究传统，绵延数千年。传统在历史的长河中並不是一成不变的。经历时代的变迁传统笔墨皆在渐进改变中，这就是传统的本质。

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Sylvester Wielding Anak Jussem



Ring Lady in White. Series 2 (2025) • Acrylic on pleated canvas
• 52cm x 80cm

This artwork, drawn with fine white contour lines, pays tribute to the Ring Ladies of Semban — elder women of the Bidayuh community who wore brass rings on their arms and legs. Once admired for beauty, grace, and status, they now stand as symbols of resilience and cultural strength.

The use of white lines is deliberate, showing purity, respect, and the sacred value of their traditions. The pleated strips of canvas in the background symbolize focus, strength, and endurance. The combined lines and textures celebrate the ornaments and embody the profound cultural heritage they represent.

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Vivien Lim



Tender Stillness (2025) • Oil on Canvas
• 60cm X 90cm

A silent calm begins to open,
holding love and tender memories.
Its soft colours whisper gently,
spreading light where hope still lives.

May it keep blooming in the garden of
the heart, a gentle reminder
— love never disappears,
it simply becomes peace and warmth.

《静柔》源自于一份思念与爱。
我想捕捉那种由心念中生出的温柔力量
—— 随着时间沉淀，渐渐化作
宁静与光亮。

每一道笔触，都藏着一缕温情；
每一种色彩，都是记忆中的安然。
这幅作品提醒着我：即使在静默中，
爱依然绽放——温柔而永恒。



PERSATUAN PELUKIS SARAWAK
SARAWAK ARTISTS SOCIETY
砂拉越艺术家协会