

S.E.A. FOCUS

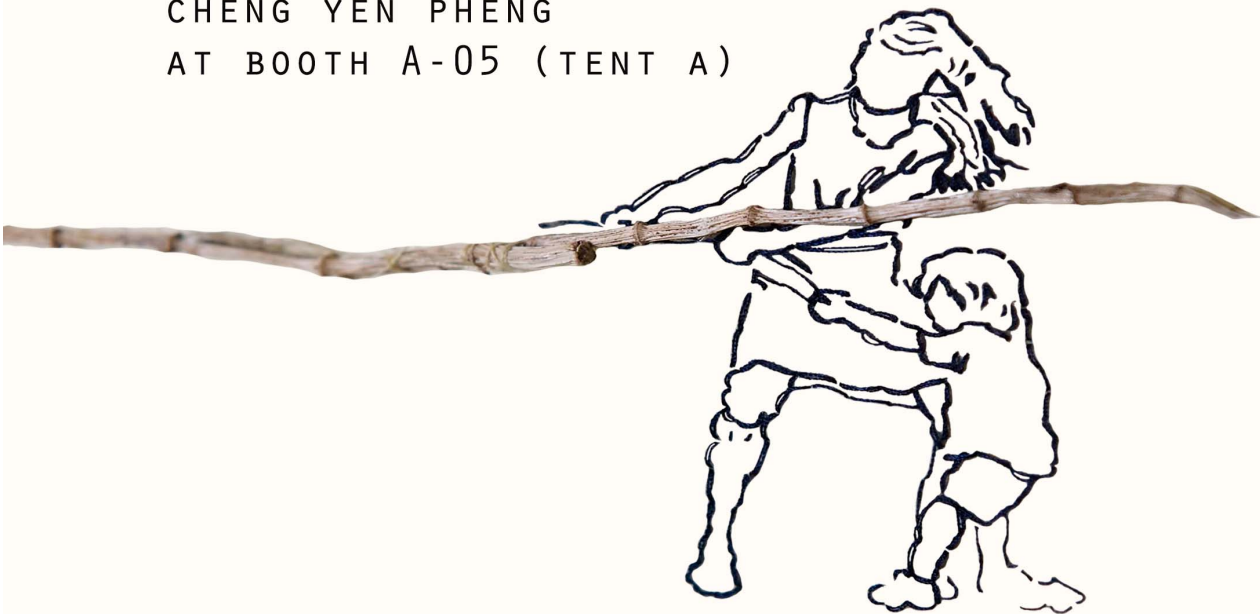
An STPI Project

DATE: 16-19 JANUARY 2020
ADDRESS: GILLMAN BARRACKS
7 LOCK ROAD, SINGAPORE 108935



WEI-LING GALLERY

CHENG YEN PHENG
AT BOOTH A-05 (TENT A)



OPENING HOURS:

THURSDAY, 16 JANUARY 2020, 1PM - 7PM

FRIDAY, 17 JANUARY 2020, 1PM - 10PM

SATURDAY, 18 JANUARY 2020, 12PM - 7PM

SUNDAY, 19 JANUARY 2020, 12PM - 6PM

CHENG YEN PHENG
IT'S BEEN FOUR YEARS SINCE ...

THIS BODY OF WORK MARKS A TUMULTUOUS YET STABILISING PERIOD IN THE LIFE OF MALAYSIAN ARTIST CHENG YEN PHENG. IT REFLECTS ON AND EMPHASIZES A CHAPTER IN HER LIFE WHICH HAS TESTED YET MOULDED HER, AND HAS CONSUMED HER IN ITS TOTALITY. ON A TRAIL-BLAZING PATH AS ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S MOST PROVOCATIVE AND BRAVE CONTEMPORARY VOICES, CHENG YEN PHENG LEFT A MARK ON THE LOCAL ART SCENE, WHEN, AS A FINALIST IN THE NATIONAL ART GALLERY'S BAKAT MUDA (YOUNG CONTEMPORARY) 2014 COMPETITION, SHE STOOD UP FOR HER WORK ENTITLED ABU, WHICH COURTED SOME CONTROVERSY AND WAS CENSORED FROM BEING SHOWN DURING THE FINAL EXHIBITION; IN MALAY, THE WORD "ABU" SIGNIFIES "ASH", BUT IT ALSO STANDS FOR "ASAL BUKAN UMNO" WHICH TRANSLATES TO "AS LONG AS NOT UMNO" (UNITED MALAYS NATIONAL ORGANISATION) – THE RULING POLITICAL PARTY. HER OUTSPOKEN, HONEST, AND DETERMINED APPROACH TOWARDS HER LIFE IS MIRRORED IN HER ART JOURNEY.

THIS BODY OF WORK IS PERSONAL. THROUGH IT, SHE COMPOSES HER OWN MUSEUM OF LIFE, LOOKING UPON THE ACT OF CREATING AS A WAY OF ASSEMBLING, MATERIALIZING AND CONSERVING LIFE'S EXPERIENCES. THE ARTIST PLACES HERSELF AS A STORYTELLER, AS SHE CONNECTS THE DOTS BETWEEN DIFFERENT EVENTS ENCOUNTERED AND MAJOR LIFE-CHANGING DECISIONS SETTLED THROUGHOUT THE PAST FOUR YEARS. ECHOING DISTINCT THEMES RANGING FROM FEMININITY, MATERNITY, MOTHERHOOD, LIFE AND DEATH, TO HER TRANSITION FROM THE CITY TO THE "KAMPONG" LIFE, THIS DYNAMIC BODY OF WORK MOVES BEYOND EXPRESSION, AS IT ALSO SERVES AS THE ARTIST'S REALIZATION OF HER INNER METAMORPHOSIS, WHILE UNFOLDING THE JOY AND STRUGGLE AS AN INDIVIDUAL, BUT ALSO A WOMAN, MOTHER, AND ARTIST.

TO CHENG YEN PHENG, AT A CERTAIN POINT IN LIFE, IT IS INEVITABLE FOR HUMAN BEINGS TO BE INTRIGUED BY QUESTIONS SURROUNDING SEXUALITY, WHICH OFTEN CONTEST OUR STATUS, ROLES, AND LIMITATIONS AS EITHER MAN OR WOMAN – AS CATEGORISED BY SOCIETY. IN HER HANGING CLOTHES INSTALLATION, THE ARTIST REVEALS A REALITY OFTEN CONSIDERED AS TABOO; THE PHASE OF DISCOVERING OUR OWN ANATOMICAL TRANSFORMATION, AND THE CURIOSITY TOWARDS WHAT THE BODY IS CAPABLE OF. HAND-SHAPED OUTLINES ARE STITCHED ONTO SHORTS, T- SHIRTS AND SINGLETS, UNDER ATTIRE COMMONLY WORN BY YOUNG ADULTS DURING THEIR AGE OF TRANSITION – A STAGE BETWEEN YOUTH AND ADULTHOOD, BETWEEN PURE INNOCENCE AND MATURITY. THE HANDS ARE PLACED WHERE THE BODY'S INTIMATE PARTS WOULD BE COVERED BY THE FABRIC, AS IF POINTING OUT THE NOTION OF DESIRE. CHENG YEN PHENG CHOOSES TO OVERLAP THE BOY AND GIRL SINGLETS, SO AS TO UNDERLINE THE BLURRING OF GENDER.

AS A MOTHER, CHENG YEN PHENG LEANS TOWARDS NATURE IN OFFERING THE BEST QUALITY OF LIFE AND LIFE-LONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR BOTH HER CHILD AND HERSELF. HAVING THE COURAGE TO LEAVE THE BIG CITY AND TAKING THE RISK TO MOVE TO A VILLAGE WITH JUST HER DAUGHTER, SHE FIGURED THAT SO MUCH CAN BE LEARNT BY IMITATING THE SELF-SUFFICIENT WAY OF LIFE THAT THE LOCAL VILLAGERS UPHOLD. ON RICE PAPER, THE ARTIST STITCHED ILLUSTRATIONS THAT WERE MAINLY INSPIRED BY PAINTER JEAN-FRANÇOIS MILLET'S OBSERVATION OF FRENCH VILLAGES IN THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY, WHICH INTERESTINGLY ECHO THE PRESENT-DAY SITUATION IN MALAYSIAN VILLAGES. FASCINATED BY NATURE THAT SURROUNDS HER CURRENT LIVING ENVIRONMENT, THE ARTIST ATTENTIVELY WOVE WHEAT ROOTS ONTO THE RICE PAPER.

THE INSTALLATION COMPOSED OF CUTS OF SANDPAPER JOINED BY STITCHING SEEMS TO CONCLUDE CHENG YEN PHENG'S FOUR YEARS OF A CRITICAL JOURNEY. IT MIRRORS HER IDEOLOGY OF PROBLEM SOLVING, BY COMBINING MULTIPLE SOLUTIONS IN ORDER TO COME UP WITH A COMPLETE STORY THAT IS IDEAL TO HER EYES. THE CHOICE OF SANDPAPER AS MATERIAL REPRESENTS "THE IMPORTANCE OF SOFTENING THE STIFF AND SHARPENING THE WEAK"; NO MATTER HOW UNPREDICTABLE IT GETS, ONE MUST BE SUPPLE IN CHOOSING ALTERNATIVE PATHS IN LIFE, AND SHALL CONSTANTLY PROGRESS. A LARGE-SCALE ORIGAMI PAPER SCULPTURE FOLDED INTO A DINOSAUR, EMBODIES THE OPPOSING WAYS SHE PERCEIVES HER DAUGHTER; A PRECIOUS CREATURE, YET A CHALLENGING ONE AT THE SAME TIME.

ALTOGETHER, HER WORK CHALLENGES THE ROMANTIC CONCEPTION OF A PERFECT LIFE THAT SEEMS TO DOMINATE OUR SOCIETY, THROUGH AN HONEST POINT OF VIEW OF THE LIFE OF A WOMAN, A DAUGHTER, A MOTHER, AND AN ARTIST. A LIFE LAID BARE.

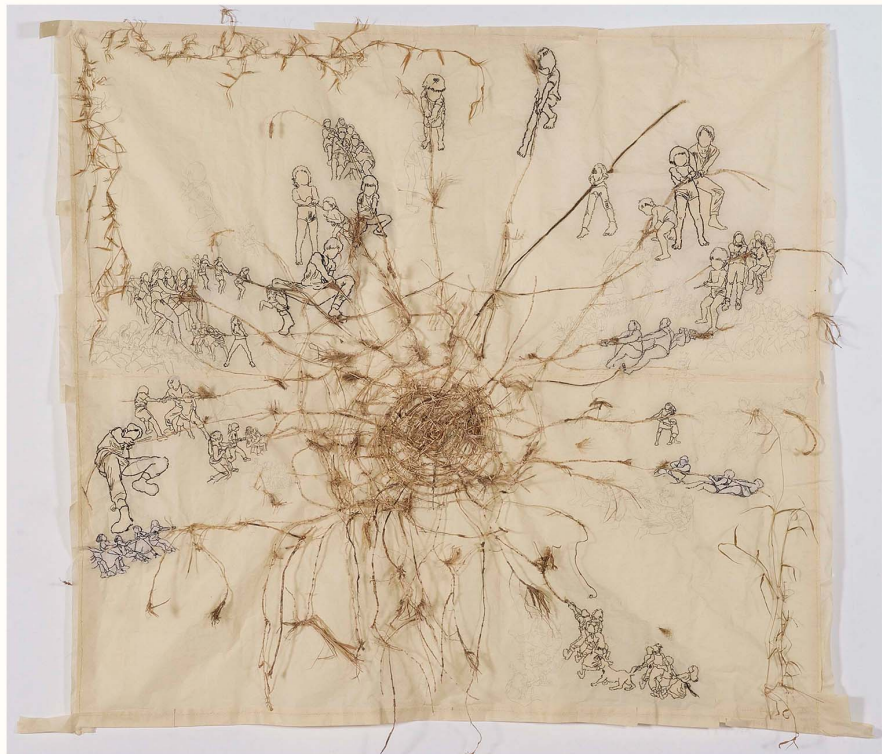
CHENG YEN PHENG IS THE 2019 UOB PAINTING OF THE YEAR (MALAYSIA) WINNER. 'IT'S BEEN FOUR YEARS SINCE...' EXHIBITION AT THE 2020 S.E.A. FOCUS IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY UNITED OVERSEAS BANK (MALAYSIA) BHD (UOB MALAYSIA).

ABOUT UNITED OVERSEAS BANK AND ART

UNITED OVERSEAS BANK LIMITED (UOB) IS A LEADING BANK IN ASIA WITH A GLOBAL NETWORK OF MORE THAN 500 BRANCHES AND OFFICES IN 19 COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES IN ASIA PACIFIC, EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA. UOB MALAYSIA WAS INCORPORATED IN 1993 BUT HAS HAD A PRESENCE IN MALAYSIA SINCE 1951.

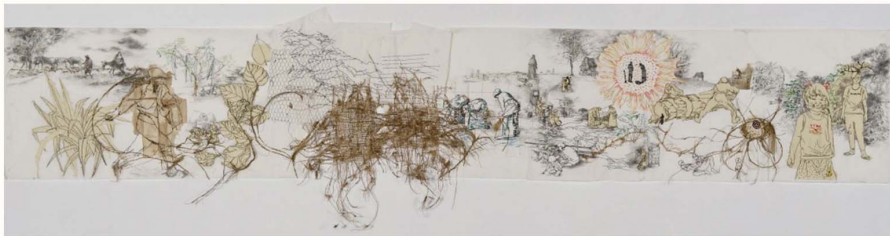
THE UOB PAINTING OF THE YEAR COMPETITION UNDERSCORES UOB'S COMMITMENT TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF ART IN MALAYSIA AND ACROSS THE REGION. LAUNCHED IN MALAYSIA IN 2011, POY IS ONE OF THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS ART COMPETITIONS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. IT IS HELD ANNUALLY IN FOUR COUNTRIES ACROSS THE REGION – INDONESIA, MALAYSIA, SINGAPORE AND THAILAND.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE UOB PAINTING OF THE YEAR COMPETITION, VISIT [WWW.UOBPOY.COM](http://www.UOBPOY.COM). FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON UOB MALAYSIA, VISIT WWW.UOB.COM.MY.



UNTITLED
LONG COARSE GRASS ROOTS STITCHING ON RICE PAPER
110CM X 130CM
2015-18





IT'S BEEN FOUR YEARS SINCE ...
WHEAT ROOT, IRON WIRE STITCHING AND PENCIL
DRAWING ON RICE PAPER
70CM X 396CM
2015-18







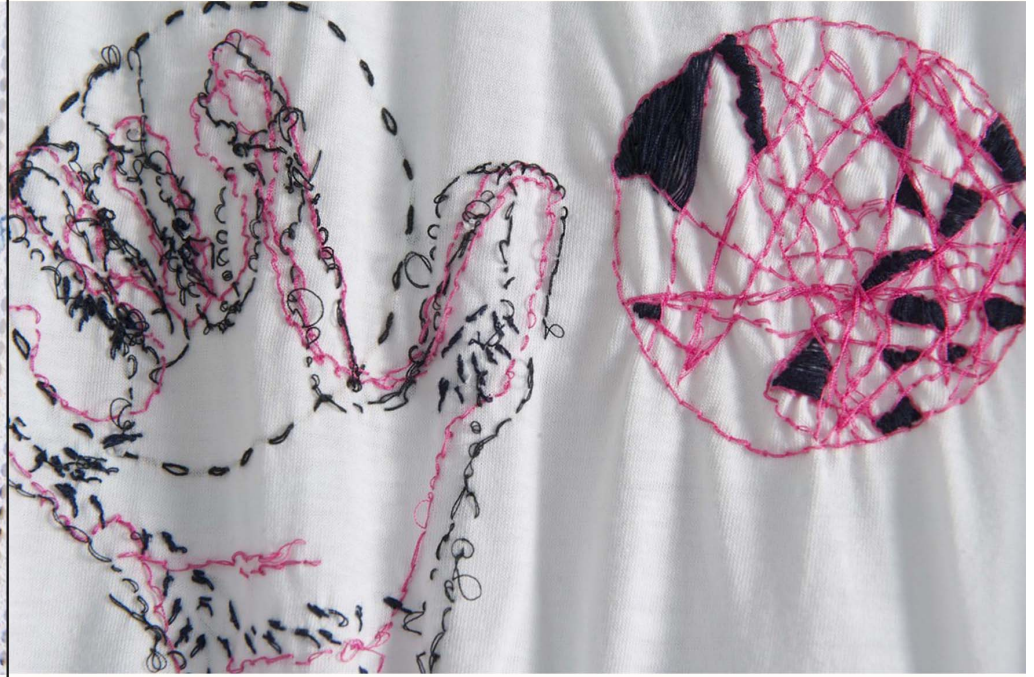
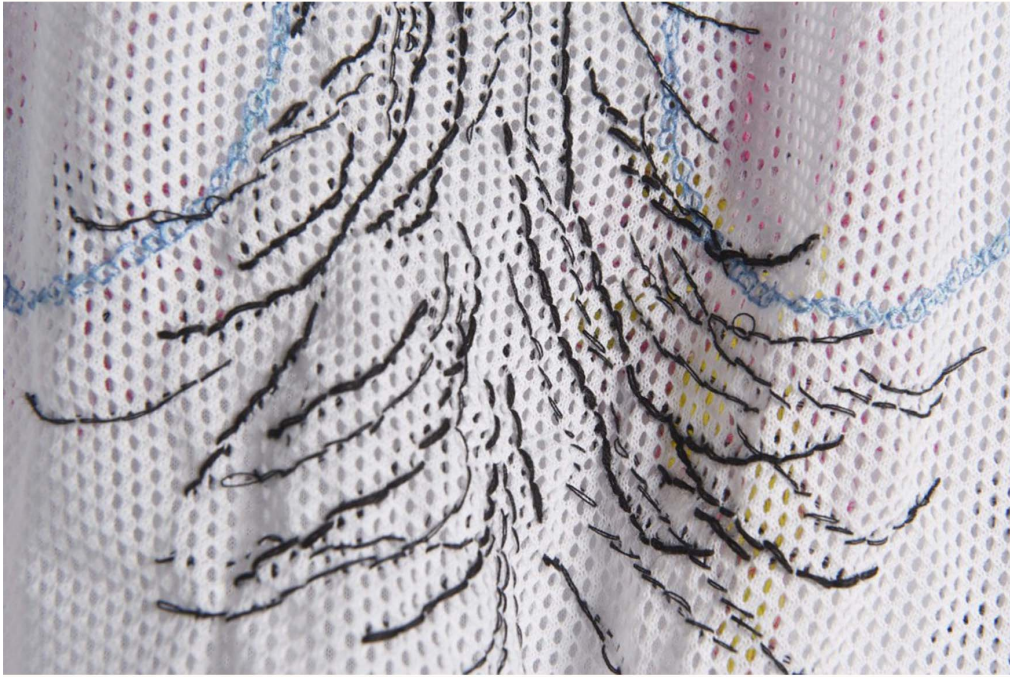
PRACTISING
STITCHING WITH SAND PAPER IRON WIRE
254CM X 153CM
2015-18



DINO
STITCHING ON SANDPAPER
80CM X 110CM X 40CM
2015-18



UNTITLED
STITCHING ON CLOTHES, SINGLET, SHORTS
DIMENSION VARIABLE
2015-18



CHENG YEN PHENG (B. 1982)

CHENG YEN PHENG'S EARLIER WORKS REFLECT HER FEELINGS ABOUT BEING A WOMAN; BOTH PHYSICALLY AND EMOTIONALLY, AND DEALS WITH THE SOCIAL PRESSURES THAT COME WITH BEING ONE. FROM SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS AND DESIRES TO FETISHES AND EROTICA, SHE AIMS TO ACT AS A CRITIC THROUGH HER PAINTINGS, TO EMPHASIZE THE ROLES BOTH WOMEN AND MEN PLAY, IN THIS DAY AND AGE.

RECENTLY, HER WORKS HAVE ADAPTED DIFFERENT FORMS, WHICH ARE LESS RESTRICTIVE IN TERMS OF EXPRESSION. THEY REPRESENT HER POINT OF VIEW REGARDING SOCIETY AND SHOW AN INCLINATION TOWARDS CURRENT SITUATIONS – FOR EXAMPLE, WOMAN'S SHIFTING ROLE IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY. A SLICE OF PERSONAL HISTORY IS OFTEN PRESENT THOUGH SUBLIMINALLY IN HER WORKS.

HER LATEST SOLO EXHIBITION, 'IT'S BEEN FOUR YEARS SINCE...' WAS HELD IN 2018 AT WEI-LING CONTEMPORARY, KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA. THIS BODY OF WORK IS PERSONAL; IT IS HER LIFE LAID BARE. THROUGH IT SHE COMPOSES HER OWN MUSEUM OF LIFE, LOOKING UPON THE ACT OF CREATING AS A WAY OF ASSEMBLING, MATERIALIZING AND CONSERVING LIFE'S EXPERIENCES. THE ARTIST PLACES HERSELF AS A STORYTELLER, AS SHE CONNECTS THE DOTS BETWEEN DIFFERENT EVENTS ENCOUNTERED AND MAJOR LIFE-CHANGING DECISIONS SETTLED THROUGHOUT THE PAST FOUR YEARS. ECHOING DISTINCT THEMES RANGING FROM FEMININITY, MATERNITY, MOTHERHOOD, LIFE AND DEATH, TO HER TRANSITION FROM THE CITY TO THE "KAMPONG" LIFE, THIS DYNAMIC BODY OF WORK MOVES BEYOND EXPRESSION, AS IT ALSO SERVES AS THE ARTIST'S REALIZATION OF HER INNER METAMORPHOSIS, WHILE UNFOLDING THE JOY AND STRUGGLE AS AN INDIVIDUAL, BUT ALSO A WOMAN, MOTHER, AND ARTIST.

CHENG YEN PHENG IS THE 2019 UOB PAINTING OF THE YEAR (MALAYSIA) WINNER.

YEN PHENG WAS SHORTLISTED AS A FINALIST IN THE BAKAT MUDA (YOUNG CONTEMPORARY) COMPETITION AT THE NATIONAL ART GALLERY OF MALAYSIA IN 2014 WHERE HER SUBMITTED WORK CREATED SOME CONTROVERSY. THE WORKS OF CHENG YEN PHENG HAVE ALSO ATTRACTED THE ATTENTION OF LOCAL COLLECTIONS SUCH AS GALERI PETRONAS & THE ALIYA AND FAROUK KHAN COLLECTION.

SHE HAS PARTICIPATED IN A NUMBER OF LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL GROUP EXHIBITIONS INCLUDING '18@8 RIGHT HERE! RIGHT NOW!' AT WEI-LING CONTEMPORARY, KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA; YOUNG MALAYSIAN ARTIST: 'NEW OBJECT' AT GALERI PETRONAS, KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA; MALAYSIA EMERGING ARTIST AWARD AT SOKA GAKKAI, SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA; INTERNATIONAL ART FESTIVAL AT SEOUL CITY ART CENTRE, KOREA; '18@8 KUL-SIN' AT ION ART GALLERY, SINGAPORE.

EDUCATION

2004 DIPLOMA IN FINE ART, DASEIN ACADEMY OF ART, MALAYSIA

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2020 IT'S BEEN FOUR YEARS SINCE..., S.E.A. FOCUS, SINGAPORE

2018 IT'S BEEN FOUR YEARS SINCE..., WEI-LING CONTEMPORARY, KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

2012 'PRICKED', WEI-LING CONTEMPORARY, KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2018 TEH TARIK WITH THE FLAG, CURATED BY WEI-LING GALLERY, IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE NATIONAL VISUAL ARTS GALLERY, KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

2017 THROUGH ROSE-TINTED GLASSES, WEI-LING CONTEMPORARY, KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

18@8 RIGHT HERE! RIGHT NOW!, WEI-LING CONTEMPORARY, KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

2016 DASEIN GALLERY GROUP EXHIBITION, 10TH INTERNATIONAL ART EXPO MALAYSIA, MATRADE CENTRE, KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

2015 STORIES OF 11 ARTWORKS, HOM ART TRANS, MALAYSIA

2014 BREAKING DOWN THE WALL, YOUNG ARTIST'S
GROUP EXHIBITION, 8TH INTERNATIONAL ART
EXPO MALAYSIA, MATRADE CENTRE, KUALA LUMPUR,
MALAYSIA

THE GOOD MALAYSIAN WOMAN: ETHNICITY,
RELIGION POLITICS, BLACK BOX, MAP KL,
PUBLIKA, MALAYSIA

FREEDOM UNDER CONSTRUCTION, MALAYSIA-MYANMAR
EXCHANGE PROGRAM, HOM ART TRANS, SELANGOR,
MALAYSIA

2013 MEASURING LOVE, WEI-LING CONTEMPORARY,
KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

2012 A DECADE OF COLLECTING CONTEMPORARY ART,
WEI-LING GALLERY

18@8 KUL-SIN, ION ART GALLERY, ORCHARD ROAD,
SINGAPORE

2011 18@8 SAVE THE PLANET, WEI-LING
CONTEMPORARY, KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

THE GARDEN OF HIDDEN DESIRES, WEI-LING
CONTEMPORARY, KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

ASIA ART LINK, PHILIPPINES

2010 ABSOLUT 18@8, WEI-LING GALLERY,
KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE, HOM ART TRANS,
SELANGOR, MALAYSIA

YOUNG MALAYSIAN ARTIST: NEW OBJECT (ION),
GALERI PETRONAS, KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

2009 MEA (MALAYSIAN EMERGING ARTIST AWARD)
EXHIBITION, SOKA GAKKAI, KUALA LUMPUR,
MALAYSIA

SASARAN INTERNATIONAL ART WORKSHOP (PART II),
MUTIARA GALLERY, PENANG, MALAYSIA

HANOI WELCOME, VIETNAME FINE ARTS MUSEUM

2008 SWASH TO SWARM, FINDARS SPACE @
ANNEXE CENTRAL MARKET, KUALA LUMPUR,
MALAYSIA

NO BIG SIZE, FINDARS SPACE @ ANNEXE
CENTRAL MARKET, KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

2007 MEKAR CITRA, SHAH ALAM GALLERY,
SELANGOR, MALAYSIA

30 FINALISTS OF PACT MAX MALAYSIAN ART
AWARDS, FOODLOFT ART GALLERY, PENANG,
MALAYSIA

FLORAL KALEIDOSCOPE, ISETAN LOT 10, KUALA
LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

2005 OPEN SHOW, NATIONAL ART GALLERY MALAYSIA

PAMERAN TERBUKA (OPEN SHOW), SHAH ALAM
GALLERY, SELANGOR, MALAYSIA

SEOUL INTERNATIONAL ART FESTIVAL, SEOUL
CITY ART CENTRE, SOUTH KOREA

SEJONG CULTURE ART CENTRE, SOUTH KOREA

ARTIST RESIDENCY
2010 ARTIST IN RESIDENCE, HOM ART TRANS,
SELANGOR, MALAYSIA

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS
GALERI PETRONAS, MALAYSIA
ALIYA & FAROUK KHAN COLLECTION, MALAYSIA

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INFORMATION.