



# RASA SAYANG

WONG CHEE MENG

# Rasa Sayang

'Rasa Sayang' marked the fifth solo exhibition by seasoned Malaysian contemporary artist, Wong Chee Meng. This innovative body of work explored the experiences of living in a multicultural environment and aims to restore love and positivity towards forging a "new" Malaysia, while showcasing Wong Chee Meng's unique exploration of cultural perception and artistic expression.

With 'Rasa Sayang', Wong Chee Meng unravelled the core essence of Malaysia's identity by drawing inspiration from the amalgamation of diverse cultures that have shaped the nation. Across his works, Chee Meng displayed a myriad of richly coloured hues, which are an essence of the nation itself, through concepts and compositions, all while orienting towards acculturation. The artist deftly peels back the layers of influence that have shaped our perception and connection to Malaysian heritage.

The title of the exhibition, 'Rasa Sayang', takes its inspiration from a Malay folk song. This well-known melody, deeply ingrained in Malaysian culture, represents unity and love. Wong Chee Meng references the song to honour its influence in fostering a shared common ground and appreciation for cultural diversity.

*"Finding common ground is perceived as an effort to converge the mental representation of shared knowledge, it enables us to create shared memories, allow us to activate, seek, and rapport building, as well as knowledge building that could be built in the communicative process."*  
- Wong Chee Meng.

These artworks here not only transcend traditional boundaries but also flawlessly incorporate augmented reality (AR) components, featuring animations that come to life when scanned from a mobile app. The artist hopes that spectators of all backgrounds will recognise familiar components from their daily lives and gain a deeper appreciation and understanding of Malaysian culture. This integration of art and technology not only propels modern art forward but also develops a reinvigorated sense of national identity amid the changing terrain of the "new" Malaysia.

To put it succinctly, 'Rasa Sayang' acts as a visually multifaceted anchor for the collective memories, experiences, and emotions that constitute Malaysian culture, highlighting the beauty of traditions as well as the importance of cultural preservation and adaptation.



# Insitu



*Love Song | Acrylic On Canvas; 122cm x 183cm  
2023*



*Love Song | Acrylic On Canvas; 122cm x 183cm  
2023 (With AR filter)*



*Installation view in Wei-Ling Gallery (2023)*

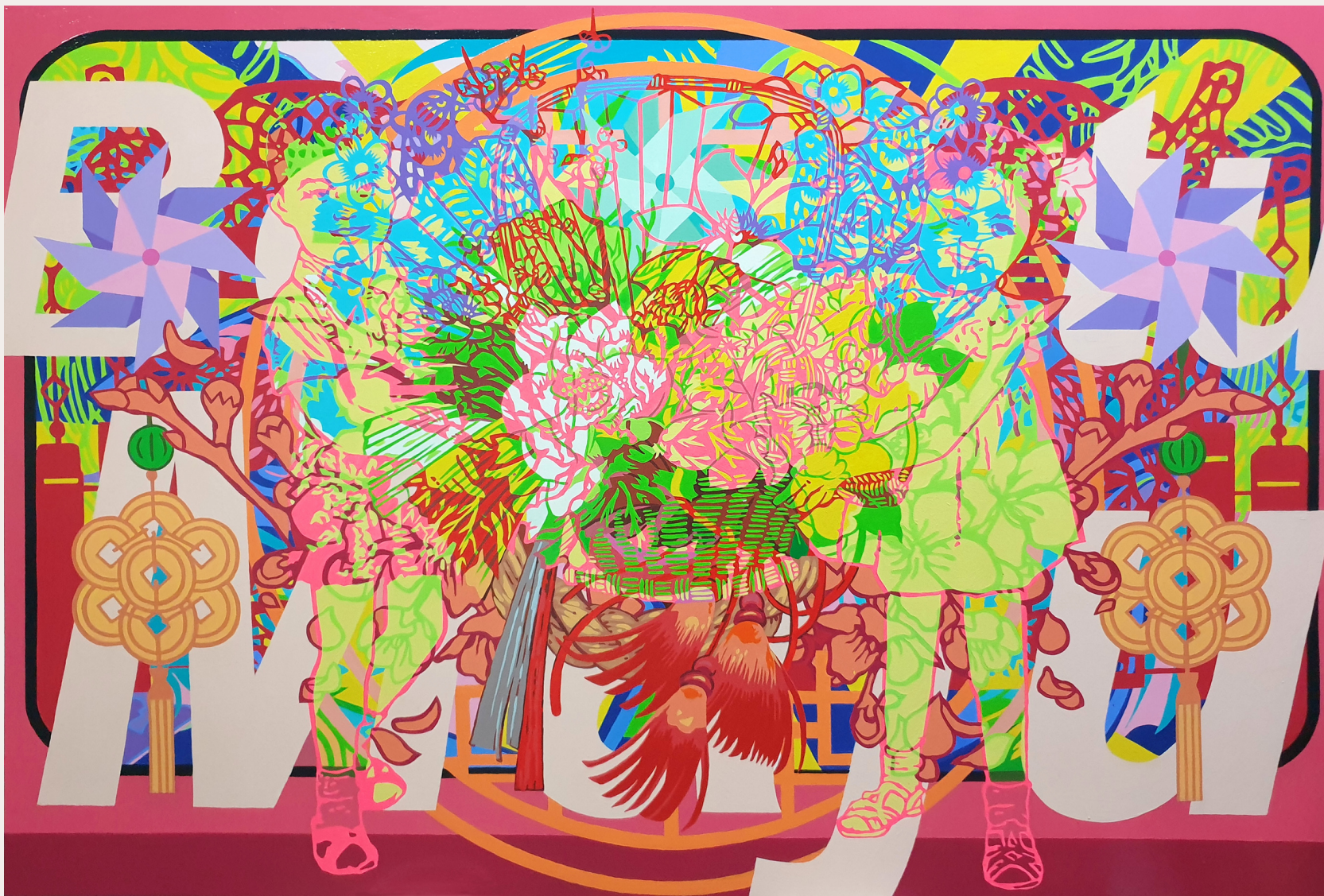


## A New Day

Acrylic On Canvas  
152.4cm x 121.92cm  
(Diptych)  
2022

*With the vibrant depiction of a tiger at its center, the artwork exudes strength and spirit. Layers of vibrant colors intersect, revealing hidden depths and symbolizing the diverse tapestry of Malaysia.*

*The artwork encourages viewers to embrace the new day with optimism and determination. It celebrates the strength of the tiger and the beauty of Malaysian culture, inviting viewers to start their own journey of personal growth.*



## **Together Towards Growth**

Acrylic On Canvas  
122cm x 183cm  
2022

*The remarkable painting symbolizes the power of unity and celebrates the joy that comes from shared accomplishments. At the heart of the composition, a boy and a girl stand side by side, their hands intertwined in a gesture of solidarity and collaboration.*



## **Enchanted Garden**

Acrylic On Canvas  
122cm x 183cm  
2022

*The painting invites viewers into a world of wonder and enchantment. As viewers explore the intricacies of the garden, they discover that it is not just a physical space, but also a representation of a vibrant way of living. The abacus, an ancient tool of calculation, represents intelligence, precise calculations, success, prosperity, and the relentless pursuit of knowledge.*

*Within this magical garden, it serves as a symbol of the inherent wisdom and potential that resides within us all.*



## Love Song

Acrylic On Canvas  
122cm x 183cm  
2023

*The painting beautifully merges traditional Malaysian culture with contemporary ideas. The artwork showcases vibrant colors, intricate details, and harmonious composition. The painting exudes a sense of warmth and tenderness, reflecting the relationship between Rama and Sita. Their embrace and gentle expressions convey a deep and caring connection, reminding viewers of the power of love to overcome challenges. At its core, the artwork showcases the beauty of love and care in a multicultural context. It invites viewers to appreciate the richness of diverse cultures and the unifying power of love, reminding us that true connections go beyond societal boundaries and nurture the human spirit.*



## Golden Flower

Acrylic On Canvas  
152.4cm x 121.92cm  
(Diptych)  
2023

*The painting beautifully combines cultural elements to evoke feelings of gratitude, opportunity, tribute, and prosperity. In this artwork, diverse cultural symbols intertwine, forming a harmonious arrangement.*

*The patterns and motifs reflect the richness and diversity of our world, reminding us to appreciate the wisdom passed down through generations.*



# Wong Chee Meng

(B. 1975)

Wong Chee Meng's view on the world is skewed by the blurring of lines and double images as the result of an accident that left him with permanent damage to his vision. Playing on the way he sees things, in multiple layers, sometimes crossing over and overlapping, his works are complex and multi-faceted. By meticulously painting layer upon layer of images, he camouflages many stories and hidden vistas, creating harmonious compositions that reveal deeper references, as we focus and look beyond the surface.

Wong Chee Meng's interest lies in the investigation of image-making through additive and subtractive transformation. He weaves random objects and subjects into intricate forms that are seemingly there, but fade into an absolution of colour chains. To him, art has a strange presence in our daily lives; it occurs anytime and anywhere. Through his paintings, which are often combined with techniques such as paper cut and stencil, he responds to social issues and cultural interventions that play on his subconscious, urging him to question and ponder their significance. Drawing on traditional symbolism, and subjects gleaned from fables of yore, he crystalizes his irreverent position and stance on the subject.

Through his previous exhibition 'Good Days Will Come' (2020), Wong Chee Meng worked with familiar visual elements including Chinese homophones, hidden numbers, lucky phrases and charms: iconic symbols found in Chinese culture, believed to carry positive energies and blessings. Hiding key elements within his paintings' multiple layers, the artist invites the audience to slowly reveal them. He was inspired by the science of optical illusion in applying the "anaglyph 3D" effect to his paintings, achieved by encoding one image to one coloured filter. The result is a painting that reveals three different images, as seen through a red-tinted filter, cyan-tinted filter, or without a filter.

His 2017 exhibition, 'Have You Ever', featured seven paintings, each depicting a familiar scene from everyday life yet fraught with deep underlying symbolism and meaning. In this series, beach balls – caught in mid-air or placed on higher planes, as they are tossed up and juggled– act as metaphors for new perceptions, actions, willingness, optimism and opportunities in life.

Active as an artist since 1996, Wong Chee Meng has been represented on numerous local and international art platforms. His work can be labelled as Contemporary Pop with a focus on Social Realism. He was selected as the artist in residence at the Mali Hom Residency in Penang in 2007 and represented Malaysia at an exposition of Malaysian art in Havana Cuba in 2006. His works have been widely collected by both private and public institutions and can be seen in the collections of Axiata, Rimbun Dahan, ABN Amro Bank, Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Kuandu Museum of Fine Arts, and the National Visual Art Gallery in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

# Solo Exhibitions

2023 Rasa Sayang, Wei-Ling Gallery, Kuala Lumpur Malaysia

2020 Good Days Will Come, Wei-Ling Contemporary, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

2017 Have You Ever?, Wei-Ling Gallery, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

2015 [F]ortune of Lives, Wei-Ling Contemporary, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

2013 THE URBAN ABYSS, Wei-Ling Contemporary, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

# Selected Group Exhibitions

2023

HansaeYes24 Foundation International Culture Exchange Exhibition  
"Embrace Malaysia, Insa Art Center, Seoul, Korea

2022

A Paradigm Shift - Reflecting on Twenty Years of The Malaysian Art Scene,  
Wei-Ling Gallery, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
WLG IGNITE, Wei-Ling Contemporary, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
Art Expo Malaysia 2022, GMBB, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

2021

100 Pieces: Art for All, Wei-Ling Contemporary, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
Fragilità, curated by particle in collaboration with Fondazione ICA Milano  
(Online exhibition)

2019

18@8 Turning Points, Wei-Ling Contemporary, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

2017

18@8 RIGHT HERE! RIGHT NOW!, Wei-Ling Contemporary, Kuala Lumpur,  
Malaysia

2016

Art Stage Jakarta 2016, Sheraton Grand Jakarta Gandaria City Hotel,  
Jakarta, Indonesia

2015

18@8 Heirlooms, Wei-Ling Contemporary, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
Blue Garden: Petite Tour, Kuandu Residency Program, Kuandu Museum of  
Fine Arts, Taipei, Taiwan  
THE SPACE BETWEEN, Wei-Ling Contemporary KL, Malaysia

2014 HO MIA, Wei-Ling Contemporary, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

18@8 MIRROR MIRROR ON THE WALL, Wei-Ling Contemporary, Kuala  
Lumpur, Malaysia

2012  
PRECIOUS LITTLE PIECES, Wei-Ling Gallery, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
18@8 SAVE THE PLANET, Wei-Ling Contemporary, KL, Malaysia  
A DECADE OF COLLECTION FEATURING- BRIGHT YOUNG THINGS, Wei-Ling  
Gallery and Wei-Ling Contemporary, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
SOUTHEAST ASIA ART GROUP EXCHANGED RESIDENCY (SAGER), HOM  
Gallery. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
SOUTHEAST ASIA ART GROUP EXCHANGED RESIDENCY (SAGER), Perahu art  
Connection Art Space, Yogyakarta. Indonesia.

2011  
ART CAGED, Wei-Ling Contemporary, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
WHAT'S YOUR PORN?, Wei-Ling Gallery, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
ABSOLUT 18@8, "Safe The World" Wei-Ling Gallery, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

2010  
ABSOLUT 18@8, Wei-Ling Gallery, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
A METER PERSPECTIVE, Matahati & Friends at HOM Gallery. Kuala Lumpur,  
Malaysia

MALAYSIA BOLEH, Taksu Gallery, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
ANNIVERSARY SHOW 2009/2010, Pace gallery, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

2009 ISKANDAR MALAYSIA CONTEMPORARY ART SHOW 2009 (IMCAS) , Danga  
City Mall, Johor, Malaysia  
FAB 4, Taksu Gallery, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
ART SINGAPORE 2009, Singapore

2008  
LOCALS ONLY, Taksu Gallery, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
PENINSULA & ISLAND, Taksu Gallery, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
EXHIBITION # 3, Artist in Residency Program Exhibition, One Menerung  
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

2007  
EXHIBITION # ONE, Artist in Residency Program Exhibition at  
ABN AMRO Building, Penang, Malaysia  
FORCE OF NATURE, Darling Muse, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
18@8 2007, Weiling Gallery, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

2006  
KATA DI KOTA: a Malaysia Exhibition of Contemporary Art in  
Cuba: In conjunction with the 9th Havana Biennale 2006  
MERDEKA SCULPTURE EXHIBITION, National Art Gallery, Malaysia  
FEED ME WWF Charity Show, Rimbun Dahan Art Gallery, Malaysia

2005  
ANNIVERSARY SHOW, Darling Muse, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

2003  
THINKING SPACES, Soka Gakai Tower, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

2002  
CHOW KIT FESTIVAL, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

2001  
MALAYSIA STILL LIFE, Valentine Willie Fine Art, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
OPEN SHOW 2001, National Gallery, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
CIVILIZATION DIALOGUE - INTERNATIONAL ART EXHIBITION,  
Metro Fine Art, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

2000  
SAN, a cash and carry art exhibition at Wan Gallery, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
LANGKAWI INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ARTS (LIFA), Ibrahim  
Hussien Museum, Langkawi, Malaysia

1999  
HUMAN EXPRESSION, Valentine Willie Fine Art, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

1998  
COMING TOGETHER, Pelita Hati Gallery, Kuala Lumpur  
GEMA: RESONANCE (MALAYSIA CONTEMPORARY ART EXHIBITION),  
Manes Gallery, Prague, Czech Republic  
13th ASIAN INTERNATIONAL ART EXHIBITION, National Art Gallery, Malaysia

1997  
14 EXPRESSION, Graduation Show, Malaysian Institute of Art, Kuala Lumpur,  
Malaysia  
PEKAN SENI IPOH II, Town Hall, Ipoh, Perak, Malaysia  
WU GROUP EXHIBITION, Wan Gallery, Kuala Lumpur  
12th ASIAN INTERNATIONAL ART EXHIBITION, Macau

1996  
YOUNG TALENT 96, Bank Negara, Kuala Lumpur  
CONSTRUCTION WORKSHOP, Malaysian Institute of Art, Kuala Lumpur  
MALAYSIAN YOUNG CONTEMPORARY 96, National Gallery Kuala Lumpur



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To accompany the exhibition entitled 'Rasa Sayang' by Wong Chee Meng from 19th July - 20th August 2023

Wei-Ling Gallery & Wei-Ling Contemporary  
No. 8 Jalan Scott, Brickfields  
50470 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.  
T: +603 2260 1106  
E: [info@weiling-gallery.com](mailto:info@weiling-gallery.com)  
W: [www.weiling-gallery.com](http://www.weiling-gallery.com)



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PROJECT DIRECTOR | Lim Wei-Ling

DESIGNED BY | Mikhail Vanan

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COVER IMAGE | Together Towards Growth (2022) (Close-up)

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