



## **NORMA ABBAS (b.1951)**

### **EDUCATION**

- 1969 Pre-Diploma Foundation Studies in Art Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM).  
1975 Bachelor of Arts, Printed/ Woven Textiles, Manchester Polytechnic School of Art, England  
1982 Masters in Autographics Print Making at Chelsea School of Art, London.

### **SOLO EXHIBITIONS**

- 2022 Coded Diaries, Wei-Ling Gallery, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

### **SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS**

- 2023 CIMB ARTOBER – ART & SOUL, MITEC, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

*“My artworks are true expressions of my own inspiration, spirituality and reality. Love, peace and compassion flow through my heart and actions on to the canvas with absolute intent to cause other hearts to stir with passion and spreading consciousness to all like-minded souls all over the world. If art is true to the artist’s inner being, then this fact, above all, makes everything meaningful.” - Norma Abbas*

She began exhibiting in 1975 in England and later with Malaysia’s National Art Gallery, Shah Alam Gallery, Art Salon Gallery, Maybank Gallery, Galeri Citra, Badan Warisan and Smith’s Gallery, London to name a few.

At Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), her classmates included Tajuddin Ismail and Fauzan Omar, and her teachers were Joseph Tan, Redza Piyadasa and Jolly Koh.

During her third year at UiTM, Norma decided to continue doing a Degree in Fine Art, but was told her prospects afterwards were limited. At the time, UiTM began offering student loans and after speaking to one of her teachers, she applied and was amongst the first to acquire one and journeyed to Manchester Polytechnic School of Art before completing her Diploma course.

In her third year at Manchester, Norma was offered to do her Post Graduate Studies but unfortunately, UiTM had ceased providing loans of that particular vein.

She soon returned to England, working part time and painted whenever time permitted and was soon accepted to do her Masters in Fine Art at Chelsea School of Fine Art.

In 1989, she held a two-person show with Khalil Ibrahim, ‘*Liku-Liku Hidup*’ at Galeri Citra and began a 20 year collaboration with the establishment.

At the urging of the late Tan Sri Zain Azraai, Norma began preparing for her first solo, and ‘*Spreading Consciousness*’ was held at Galeri Citra in 1995. ‘*99 Names of Allah Part 1 in 1999*’ was held at Galeri Citra, and ‘*99 Names of Allah Complete Collection*’ 2001 with Badan Warisan.

Even from the beginning of her artistic journey, Norma has always explored themes encompassing relationships, intimacy, love and contemplation as a way to commune with her Maker and those she is close to.

Her works in the 70s and 80s primarily focused on printmaking, leaning towards etching, monotypes and lithographs. Her love-affair with Cubism is apparent, but Norma puts her own signature on every piece - colours are heavily stratified and exceptionally detailed, resulting in her ‘characters’ dancing their way out the frames.



Norma Abbas is one of Malaysia's most esteemed women artists, whose works stand alongside illustrious artists Ruzaika Omar, Nirmala Shanmughalingam, Siti Zainon Ismail, Fatimah Chik, Kalsom Muda and Sivam Selvaratnam.

Norma observes, *"When it comes to my works, you have to read between the lines. The messages are there, albeit hidden. Those who can see would immediately understand."*

A comprehensive collection of her works, 'A Colourful Journey to a Promise' (Kembara Pelangi Menuju Janji) was held at the Bank Negara Malaysia Museum and Art Gallery in 2016.

Norma Abbas currently works from her home-based studio accompanied by her feline family, Titat Girl, Matisse Boy, Hiyo Boi, Mavrik Girl, Bojie Boy and Poody Boy.



## ABOUT THE GALLERY

Wei-Ling Gallery was founded in 2002 by Lim Wei-Ling with the ambition to nurture the development of Malaysia's contemporary art scene. The flagship Gallery is housed within a heritage shophouse that was ravaged by a fire in 2004. The unique interior is an installation unto itself, having been designed by renowned Malaysian architect, Professor Jimmy CS Lim.

The Gallery's position has been achieved through ambitious, diversified and contextual curatorial projects and programming. Wei-Ling Gallery has repeatedly presented Malaysian Contemporary art to international audiences, simultaneously representing a selection of widely-acclaimed local and international artists. Our exhibitions are free and open to all as a space for public imagination and inquiry.

In its continuous efforts of cultivating the local contemporary art scene, Wei-Ling Gallery is also one of the most prolific publishers of art publications in the country, valuing the importance of archiving. The Gallery's publishing activity encourages an appreciation for contemporary art with a backlist of monographs, artists' books, and exhibition catalogues which highlights the often-overlooked characteristics of an artist's practice.

The Gallery is also active on all relevant social media platforms, especially our podcasts which took root during the Covid-19 Pandemic Lockdown. Launched in 2022, WLG Incubator identifies the next generation of Malaysian artists, by bringing together the opportunity for them to be advised and guided by an established artist. WLG Incubator also aims to highlight and encourage project collaborations with emerging Malaysian artists, helping them develop a practice that is authentic, experimental and progressive.

Our WLG Discussion Lab covers topics which are pertinent to current issues and the Gallery will soon usher in WLG Salon, a gathering of individuals from the art fraternity and academics for serious discourses.

### Notes to Editors

Preview by appointment.

Images and further information are available upon request.

### Gallery Information

Free Admission

Operation hours: 10AM– 6PM (Tuesday-Friday), 10AM – 5PM (Saturday)

Closed on Sundays, Mondays and public holidays

### Wei-Ling Gallery

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