

[An Intergenerational Dialogue in Malaysian Abstract Art]

SAAD

Cheong Laitong	Hamidi Hadi	Iwadh Mahadi
James Ly	Khabir Roslan	Kim Ng
Latiff Mohidin	Mark Tan	Nasrul Rokes
Yau Bee Ling	Yeoh Choo Kuan	Zulkifli Lee

WICHI

[curated by prissie ong]



Sandwich (An Intergenerational Dialogue in Malaysian Abstract Art)

13 June — 18 July 2026

Cheong Laitong, Hamidi Hadi, Iwadh Mahadi, James Ly, Khabir Roslan, Kim Ng, Latiff Mohidin, Mark Tan, Nasrul Rokes, Yau Bee Ling, Yeoh Choo Kuan, & Zulkfli Lee

Wei-Ling Gallery
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

“You ever get tired of telling people what art is?” —Ken to Rothko in *Red* (Logan, 2009, p. 34).

Sandwich (An Intergenerational Dialogue in Malaysian Abstract Art) is a group exhibition that shares this sentiment. It is less about cementing the definition of abstract art, and more about what it can be.

Abstraction has never existed as a singular style, language, or movement as it is constantly reshaped by the artists who take it up. And across generations, it encompasses gesture, structure, atmosphere, process, material inquiry, political response, spiritual reflection, and conceptual methods. An ever-evolving frame of mind.

Sandwich follows how abstraction in Malaysia shifted with economic conditions, sociopolitical realities, artistic pedagogies, and cultural anxieties. Featuring works by the late Cheong Laitong, Hamidi Hadi, Iwadh Mahadi, James Ly, Khabir Roslan, Kim Ng, Latiff Mohidin, Mark Tan, Nasrul Rokes, Yap Chee Keng, Yau Bee Ling, Yeoh Choo Kuan, and Zulkifli Lee, this here is not an attempt to present a complete or definitive history of Malaysian abstract art. Rather, an exhibition offering one possible framing of the field through a selection of artists whose practices reflect the breadth, tensions, and possibilities of abstraction across time.

The origins of Malaysian abstract art may be traced to the post-independence period of the late 1950s and 60s, when artists began problematising national identity, modernity, and regional consciousness (Abdullah, 2013; Chow & Abdullah, 2024). Unlike Western abstraction which often centred on formalism and the autonomy of form. The National Culture Policy (NCP) in 1971, often cited as a major catalyst in the proliferation of Malaysian abstraction, encouraged artists to consider local culture, indigenous traditions, and Islamic values as central components in the formation of national artistic identity (Abdullah, 2020). Yet framing the NCP as the sole contributor to Malaysian abstraction oversimplifies things. Artists were already experimenting with regional modernism, expressionism, calligraphy, and non-figurative forms well before the policy existed. The NCP did not start abstraction; it reinforced and redirected ongoing dialogues.

Over the decades, the practice has continued to take on new forms. Early figures like Latiff Mohidin and Syed Ahmad Jamal drew from both international modernism and Southeast Asian contexts, emphasising structure, gesture, and material exploration. For later generations, abstraction has become less a fixed style than a method—a way of thinking through memory, labour, space, systems, and everyday life. Today, it appears through installation, process, repetition, and spatial fragmentation as much as through painting.

“Abstract art” here remains deliberately expansive. Not a singular movement; instead, an umbrella of mutable tendencies. What connects them is an interest in how meaning is constructed through form, material, rhythm, and gesture rather than direct depiction.

Sandwich treats abstraction as an active, evolving field shaped by different generations responding to the conditions of their time. By placing these artists in dialogue, the exhibition traces both continuity and divergence—showing how abstraction in Malaysia has shifted alongside politics, economics, urbanisation, technology, and cultural discourse. Ultimately, it is best understood not through a single narrative, but through the layered accumulation of practices and perspectives that continue to redefine what abstraction can mean here.

References

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[Cheong Laitong]



[Cheong Laitong]

Untitled

Oil on canvas

155cm x 151cm

1995

Cheong Laitong's abstract paintings emerged from an intensely intuitive process. Often working late into the night accompanied by soothing classical music, he painted directly onto the canvas without preparatory sketches, allowing colour, rhythm, and gesture to guide the composition. Rejecting fixed formulas, Cheong constantly sought new visual possibilities, driven by a desire to create paintings unlike any he had made before.

Inspired by both observed and imagined landscapes, his abstractions evolved from the earthy, atmospheric tones of his earlier works towards increasingly luminous palettes and dynamic forms. In this untitled work, splintered and fragmented shapes intersect with swift calligraphic marks and intricate patterning, creating a sense of movement and improvisation. The composition reflects his ability to balance spontaneity with structure, while retaining the radiant glow that became a hallmark of his practice.

Cheong frequently chose not to title his works, preferring to leave them open to interpretation. Rather than directing meaning, he invited viewers to engage with the painting's formal qualities—its colour, energy, and rhythm—and to discover their own associations within its abstract landscape.



Insitu of *Untitled*, 1995



Close-up of *Untitled*, 1995



Landscape: Drop II

Industrial paint on canvas

230cm x 170cm

2008

This work was produced in 2008, several years after my return from completing my Master's degree in the United Kingdom. Measuring 230 cm x 170 cm, it is executed on raw burlap canvas without undercoat, allowing the surface to remain open, absorbent, and responsive.

The burlap functions not only as a support but as a metaphor for a porous body—skin or membrane—capable of receiving and retaining traces. Using a dripping technique with diluted pigments, color seeps into the fibers, forming organic, evolving patterns. While these forms may evoke microorganisms or cellular structures, they are not intended as literal representations, but as reflections on broader systems of life—layered, interconnected, and in constant flux.

The work emerges from an extended process of observation and lived experience, prior to its materialization in painting. It is inspired by a chance incident—a spill of milk from my daughter's bottle that formed an unexpectedly vital, organic pattern. This moment was later translated into the language of painting as a form of material memory.

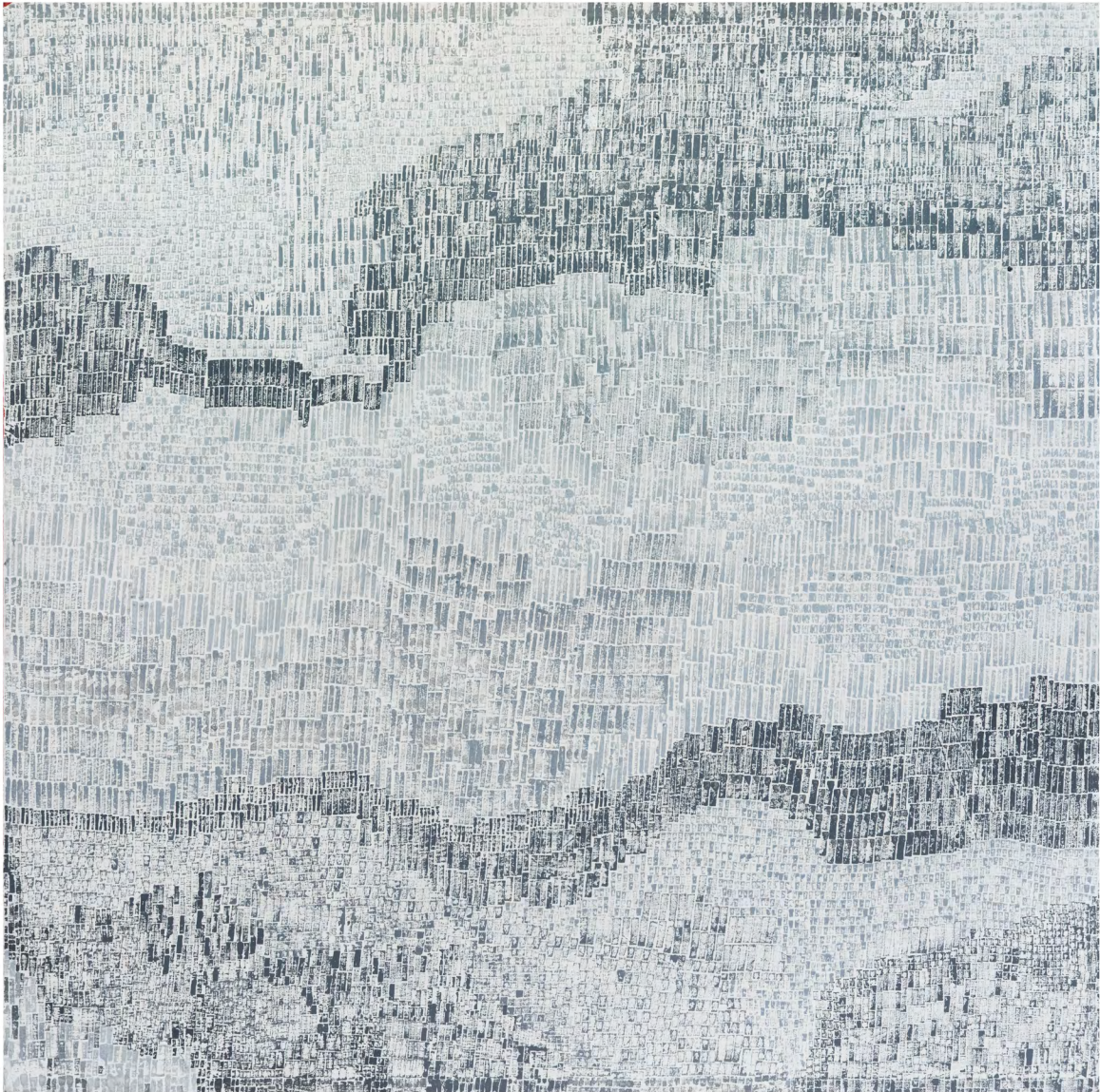
Ultimately, the work reflects an ongoing attempt to navigate and understand lived experience, where material, process, self, and the spiritual intersect within a shared, intuitive rhythm.



In situ of *Landscape: Drop II*, 2008



Close-up of *Landscape: Drop II*, 2008



Lumpuh

Bamboo stamp on canvas

76.2cm x 76.2cm

2026

Lumpuh developed during a period of personal loss in which I found myself emotionally immobilised and unable to produce in the way I normally would. Rather than approaching the surface through a predetermined composition, I began repeatedly stamping cut bamboo onto a gessoed surface, attempting to align each mark while allowing slight shifts, failures, and inconsistencies to remain visible.

The repetitive process became less about constructing a perfect system and more about continuing through routine despite emotional paralysis. Each stamped impression carries traces of pressure, hesitation, exhaustion, and persistence. What emerges is not a fixed grid, but an unstable accumulation of repeated attempts at order.

I approach abstraction here not as a purely formal exercise, but as a way of embodying psychological and bodily conditions through material, labour, and process. The surface reflects the tension between structure and collapse, where repetition becomes both an act of control and a record of vulnerability.

Through bamboo, repetition, and imperfect alignment, *Lumpuh* negotiates grief as something that is not overcome, but moved through slowly, mechanically, and bodily.



Close-up of *Lumpuh*, 2026



[James Ly]

A.T.A.Z {Augmented Tides of Autopoietic Zones} [From the Series REDREAMING TECHNICS]

Unity game world, bio-materials, tree root, clay, cut up paintings from artist collection, self made books, spray paint, nike hyper venoms, Ultraman action figure, Claw rings, Goats fur, mutton rib bones, generative AI, video, audio recording of Earth's magnetic field, 3D model, projection
Variable dimension
2026

This work is a single organism disguised as an installation. I conceive it as a distributed nervous system stretched across a Unity game world, bio-materials, clay, canvas, spray paint, synthetic images and the low, constant murmur of Earth's magnetic field processing sensory and emotional information about civilisational change in real time. It sits in the midst of our technological revolution, where AI, quantum computation and planetary sensing are reshaping what it means to be human, and asks: how can consciousness expand enough to grasp civilisational evolution as it is happening?

Inspired by philosophy, science, peripheral cultures and ancient knowledges, my practice begins with an awareness of spacetime and the fragile fiction of the "human" as separate from its environment. I treat spacetime itself as a medium, building self-propagating, self-modifying ecosystems that emerge, evolve and disappear like constellations. In this work, those ecosystems take the form of an autopoietic automaton: a system that maintains and reconfigures its own identity under unstable conditions, ingesting data, player decisions, generative AI outputs and environmental recordings, and folding them back into its evolving world.

The piece emerges out of my ongoing project "Redreaming Technics", a methodological inquiry into human existence within a rapidly shifting planetary and technological landscape. Here, I use art as a

heuristic a way of thinking through making to cultivate a situated, embodied awareness capable of navigating intricate biological, technological and spiritual systems. The work liberates objects, images and ecologies from narratives inherited from the Age of Enlightenment, which separated mind from matter and human from world, and instead speculates on futurities of humanity as fundamentally relational. Existence is treated as co-existence.

Materially, clay, canvas and bio-matter anchor the work in the tactile and vulnerable, while the Unity game space and 3D models host a posthuman abstraction: an expanded field of consciousness where human and nonhuman intelligences, algorithms and organisms, meet. The recorded vibrations of Earth's magnetic field form a kind of planetary heartbeat, a reminder that our nervous systems are nested within a larger electromagnetic body. Generative AI operates here not as a tool of control but as a collaborating agent, a partial mind inside the ecosystem.

Thematically, the work moves through kinship, extinction, regeneration and evolution. It imagines zones where autopoietic systems cells, minds, machines, cultures learn to sense, model, predict and adapt under rapid, non-deterministic change. These zones are portals into dense layers of memory and thought, functioning as epistemological constructs: poetic attempts to structure my ontology of the Anthropocene and what might come after it.

Ultimately, "A.T.A.Z {Augmented Tides of Autopoietic Zones}" is a posthuman mirror. It invites viewers to inhabit a shifting game-world and material landscape that reflects back our entanglement with other forms of life and intelligence. In doing so, it proposes an expanded consciousness—an emergent awareness able to recognise that every revolution in technics is also a revolution in how we feel, think and coexist.



Installation view of A.T.A.Z {Augmented Tides of Autopoetic Zones}, 2026



SEBELUM CAHAYA (BEFORE ILLUMINATION)

Medical gauze, compost soil, burnt red soil, fiber thread

11feet x 23 feet (flat)

2026

SEBELUM CAHAYA is a wall installation made from folded medical gauze coated with compost soil and burnt soil. Through a labor-intensive process of repetition, folding, cutting and gathering, I interlock individual gauze units that are inspired from the structural logic of tanggam and traditional Malay architecture language.

The individual elements gather into a larger whole in which fragility and flexibilities coexist. Repetition is at the focus of this work, generative and contemplative in nature. The repetitive folding of each unit resonates with the rhythmic concept of zikir (remembrance of God), and with the basic principles of Islamic geometric and arabesque traditions in which multiplicity is reconfigured and reintegrated into recurring patterns. Repetition for me is more than simply a formal system, it is a direction toward continuity through focus, remembrance, and return.

The artwork is read in multiple layers. On a material level, gauze is a material of care that remains open. It holds without sealing, supports without fixing, and allows transformation to continue. Compost soil can be interpreted as cycling processes of decomposition and renewal. Burnt soil, on the other hand, is the residue of heat, breakage, and persistence. On the perceptual level, I reflect upon existence as a condition of interconnectedness. The interdependence of these forms mirror the notion of quantum physics, where no element exists in separate and alienation, but through its relation with one another. At the same time, the triangular arrangement of the burnt-soil motifs suggests a movement of gathering and ascent, a gradual ordering of multiplicity toward unity, much like a single cell dividing and organizing into a living system.

Rather than being presented as a flat surface, the artwork is suspended on the wall by gathering, folding, and settling into a wavy terrain. The topography transforms the work from a patterned field into a spatial condition in which shadow becomes an active material. Through these folds, visual certainty is interrupted, suggesting a condition of ongoing becoming. Lastly, *SEBELUM CAHAYA* inhabits the gap before emergence in the moment when form has not yet formed, relation has already begun. Within this suspended condition, repetition becomes remembrance, matter becomes transformation, and multiplicity gathers toward unity.



Installation view of *SEBELUM CAHAYA*, 2026



Accumulated Absence

Acrylic, silkscreen print, carving and varnish over plywood

183cm x 122cm

2026

This work emerges through a process of adding and taking away; reflecting the contradiction of human behaviour—layering, covering, erasing, and revealing. Each mark is both a presence and a trace of something lost. Built through multiple layers of silkscreen print and woodcut, the surface holds a tension between what is deposited and what is removed, where absence becomes a material in itself.

The composition reflects an inner landscape shaped by action and emotional residue. Fragments accumulate, yet clarity dissolves; what remains is not a complete image, but a shifting field of partial truths. The act of removal is not destruction, but a way of seeing—uncovering what lingers beneath.

In *Accumulated Absence*, the painting resists resolution. Instead, it holds space for what cannot be fully retained: moments, sensations, and identities that slip away even as they are formed. The work invites viewers to dwell within this instability, where meaning exists between layers—constructed as much by loss as by presence.



Insitu of Accumulated Absence, 2026



Close-up of *Accumulated Absence*, 2026



[Latiff Mohidin]

Rimba

Oil on canvas
122cm x 260cm
1996

Rimba

Your breath: Night-embers
My fingers: The troubled wind
You wake up
Opening each layer of your skin
Each time I touch your wound

Rimba

A cluster of lalang
In the dried up land
I am your lover
I am the one that rustles

Rimba

Pale pulp of forgotten continent
Keep on howling Fling back your solitude
To my breast

(translated by Latiff Mohidin in Sabapathy, *Rimba Series*, 1998, 13)

In *Rimba*, Latiff Mohidin invites viewers into an intimate encounter with nature, one that is deeply tactile, visceral, and immersive. Rather than depicting the forest as a distant landscape or an idealised sanctuary, he brings us close to its very surfaces and structures. The title *Rimba*, which translates as “primaeval forest”, evokes an entity that endures across time, symbolising growth, continuity, and the ever-changing rhythms of life.

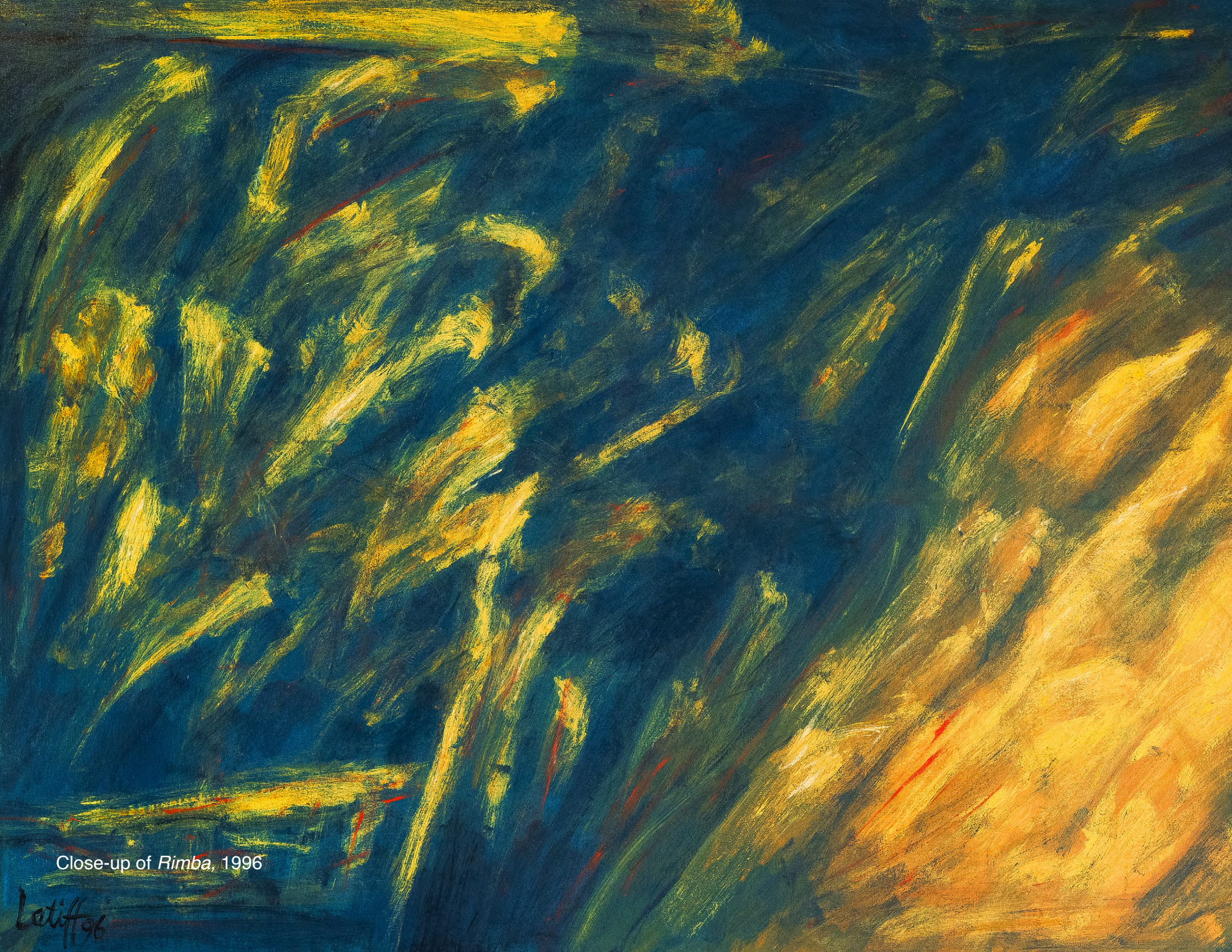
Focusing on the microscopic rather than the panoramic, Latiff examines the intricate details of trees, from bark and trunks to leaves, twigs, and flowers. These elements are not treated as static forms but as living organisms in constant transformation. For the artist, nature is “pregnant with life”, continuously growing, merging, rustling, and intertwining within dense environments. This sense of vitality is conveyed through vigorous brushwork and richly textured surfaces that make the act of painting itself visible.

Materiality plays a central role in the *Rimba* series. Latiff experimented with unconventional tools and mediums, including bark, coarse brushes, and even sticks. Reflecting on his process, Latiff explained that “there are four techniques involved in *Rimba*; they are wet on wet, wet on dry, dry on wet, and dry on dry” and that he employed “the coarse brush and even sticks on dry grounds” (Latiff Mohidin in Sabapathy, *Rimba Series*, 1998, 25). The resulting surfaces are layered and dynamic, emphasising texture as much as image.

At the heart of the composition, bold strokes of yellow and navy radiate outward, creating a sense of movement and energy. Through these gestures, Latiff transforms the forest into an experiential space. As he remarked, “In the *Rimba* pictures, you go deep, into the very bark of the trees, as if you are reaching for the invisible. Yes, as it is said, if you wish to reach for the invisible you must go right down, deep into the visible. Yes, you can walk in and out of the picture” (Latiff Mohidin in Sabapathy, *Rimba Series*, 1998, 28). Here, the forest becomes both a physical environment and a meditation on perception, inviting viewers to look beyond appearance and into the unseen forces of nature itself.

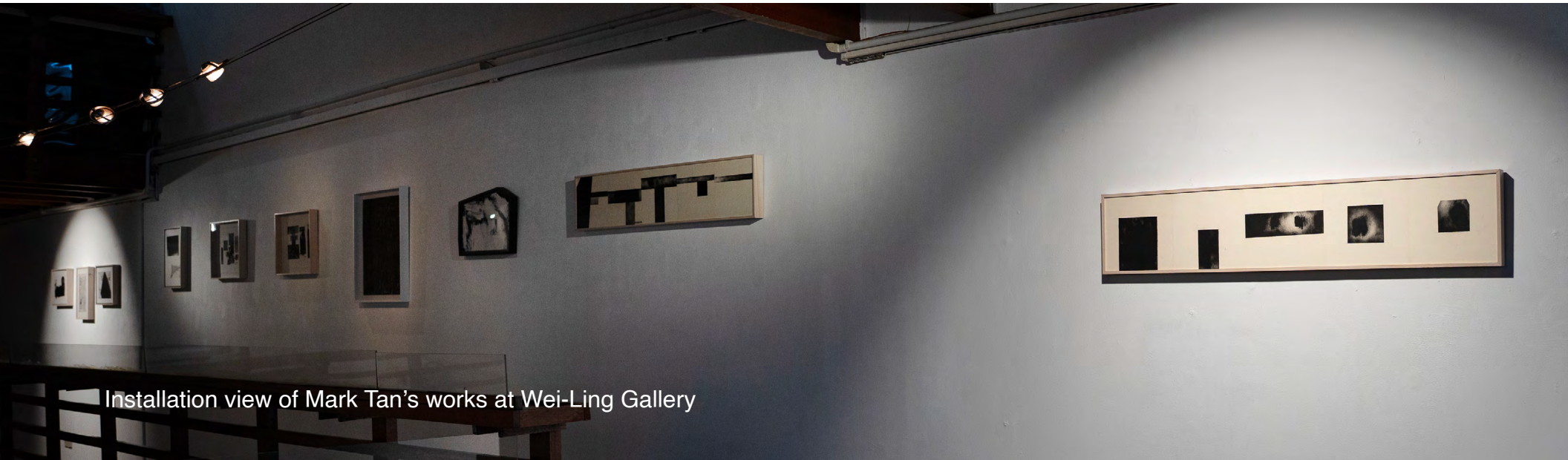


Insitu of *Rimba*, 1996



Close-up of *Rimba*, 1996

Letiff 96



Installation view of Mark Tan's works at Wei-Ling Gallery

This body of work is a reflection of me working in multiple different art studios throughout the years. The place itself becomes material: the surroundings' texture and objects, the sound that emits from the outside, the facilities that make certain works possible and the landscape observed through the windows. The studio doesn't just contain the work; it conditions how I see, what I notice, and what eventually makes it into form.

I begin by paying attention to the ordinary geometry of the space. The angle where two walls meet. The shadow cast by a shelf in the late afternoon. The way light flattens a corner into a single plane, then deepens it again as the day moves. Over time, I realized that my interest wasn't in documenting them, but in extracting their structure and letting go of their literal identity.

The process moves from place to shape to form. I start with direct observation—sketching, photographing, making quick studies of the studio environment. Then I reduce. I remove color, context, and detail until I'm left with a relationship between line, mass, and void. A ledge becomes a horizontal bar. A gap between objects becomes a channel of negative space. The specific dissolves, and what remains is an abstract interpretation of the experience of being in that place.

Through the years, the studio has changed, and so has my way of seeing it. Early work clung to recognizable structure. Now I work with ambiguity, letting form suggest architecture, landscape, or body without declaring which.

[Mark Tan]



Sunset
Etching and chine collé on paper
38cm x 21cm (unframed)
2017

[Mark Tan]



Warp
Etching and chine collé on paper
38cm x 21cm (unframed)
2017

[Mark Tan]



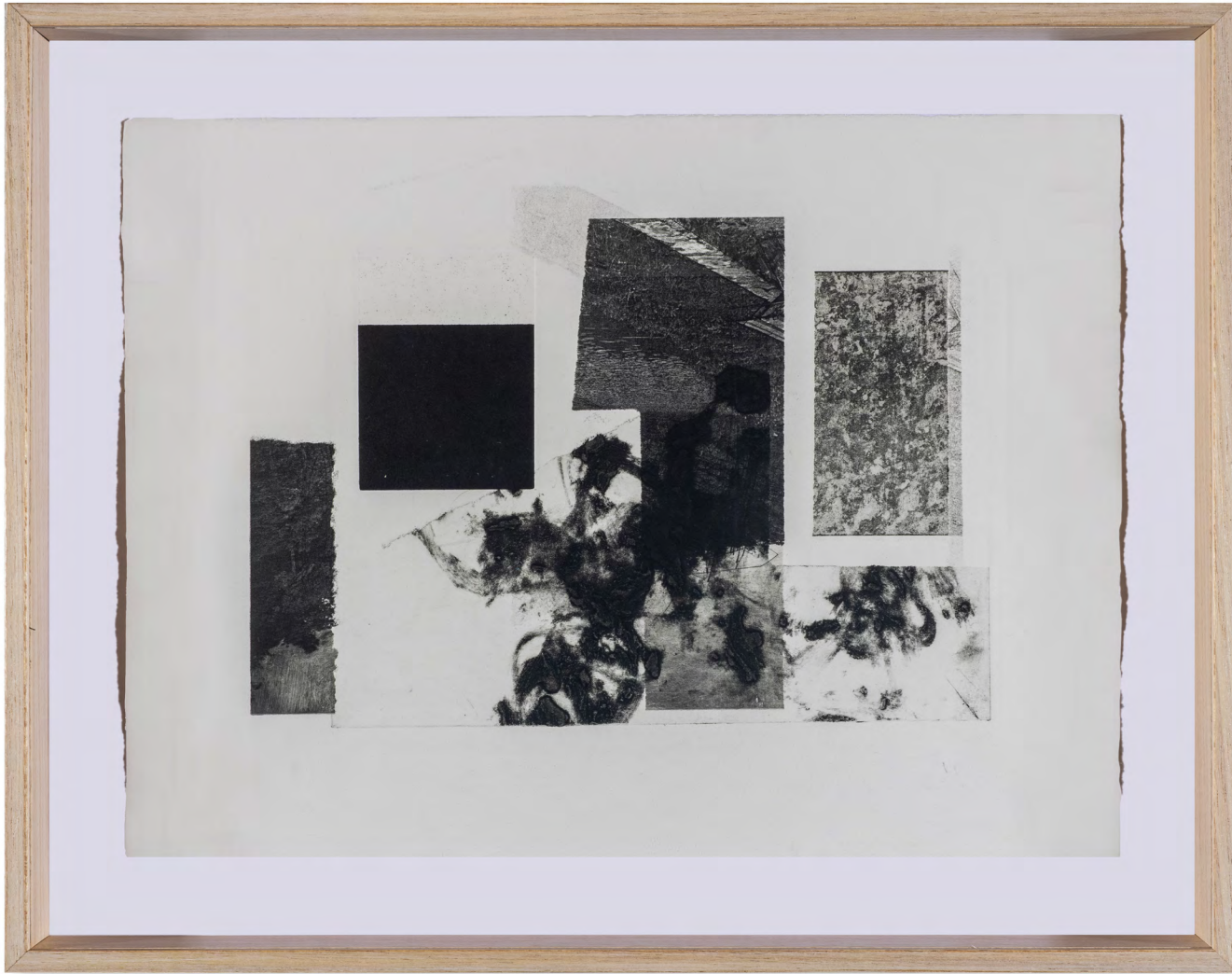
Boulder
Etching and aquatint on paper
21cm x 38cm (unframed)
2019

[Mark Tan]



Adjunct II
Etching and chine collé on paper
38cm x 28.5cm (unframed)
2019

[Mark Tan]



The act of remembering: untitled I
Etching and monoprint on paper
38cm x 28.5cm (unframed)
2019

[Mark Tan]



The act of remembering: untitled II
Etching and monoprint on paper
38cm x 28.5cm (unframed)
2019

[Mark Tan]



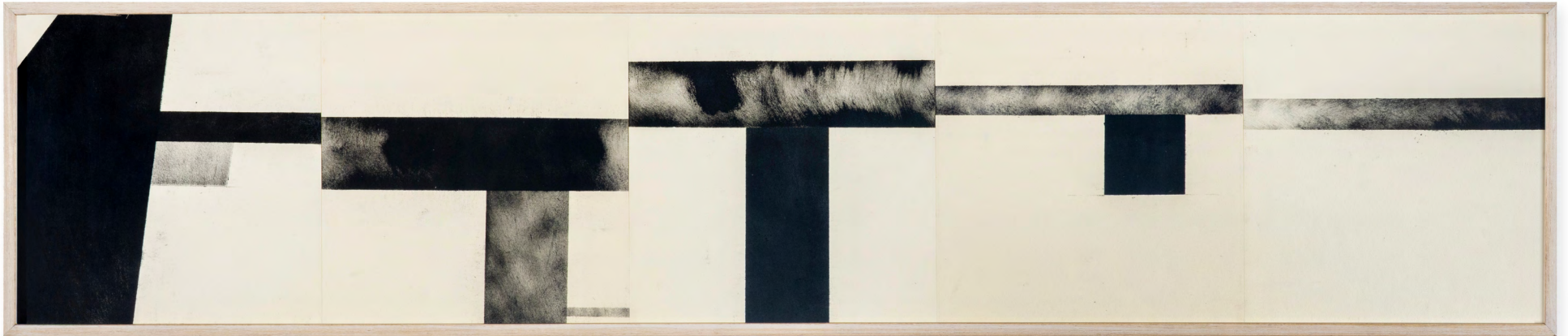
Boulder scrubbing on tarmac
Oil on paper
50cm x 42cm (unframed)
2026

[Mark Tan]



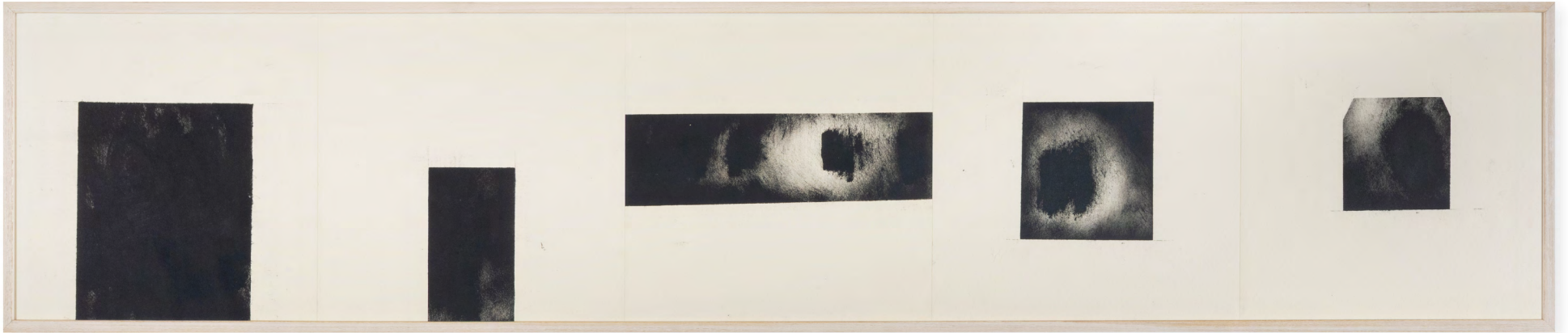
Cloud
Acrylic and mixed media on paper
Multiple dimensions (unframed)
2026

[Mark Tan]



Modernization, Overpass II, Overpass I, Link II, Link I
Oil on paper
21cm x 105cm (unframed)
2026

[Mark Tan]



Mass I, Mass II, A voice within I, A glimpse into reality III, A glimpse into reality II
Oil on paper
21cm x 105cm (unframed)
2026



Liminal Space

Sand and oil on canvas

152cm x 152cm

2026

This artwork explores memory as a fragmented system. Our memories are often incomplete rather than a continuous narrative. It will switch abruptly, appear and disappear.

The painting reflects this instability where moments are not fully connected but exist as separate yet interacting fragments. Through divided colour fields, layered transparencies and structural form, I construct memory spaces that are assembled through my personal experiences. Each section represents a discrete memory or emotional state, while the intersection acts as points of interference where boundaries blur and meanings become Uncertain.

This work focuses on its inconsistencies, distortions and sudden transitions. It reflects an experience of perception that is constantly shifting, interfering and disconnected.



Insitu of *Liminal Space*, 2026



Close-up of *Liminal Space*, 2026



The Space Between Appearances

Oil on jute canvas

160cm x 61cm

2026

This vertical triptych examines the formation, transformation, and possible dissolution of identity under different forms of the gaze. The first panel presents a fluid and primordial state of being. Swirling blues and ochres create a vast, almost cosmic space where no fixed face can be identified. The self exists here as potential rather than definition, untouched by external judgment and not yet shaped by the perceptions of others. Circular movement and layered brushwork suggest an interior consciousness still whole, existing before the mirror of society.

The second panel marks the emergence of identity through social encounter. A face appears through fractured layers of paint, simultaneously revealing and concealing itself. Its gaze confronts the viewer while expressing uncertainty and longing. Influenced by Michel Foucault's notion of disciplinary observation, this section explores how individuals learn to see themselves through the eyes of others. Expectations, relationships, and cultural pressures become invisible forces that shape selfhood. Identity is therefore not simply discovered but constructed through recognition, performance, and the desire to be seen.

The final panel abandons the human figure entirely. Fragments of colour, gold, blue, and deep amber collide as the self is deconstructed and reassembled within a technological landscape. Here, artificial intelligence functions not merely as a tool but as a new form of mirror—one capable of predicting desires, replicating appearances, and translating human behaviour into data. The body becomes an interface and identity becomes increasingly mediated by algorithmic systems.

The triptych's vertical format reflects the standing human body, vulnerable under observation. Thick impasto, layered surfaces, and translucent passages of colour act as physical traces of lived experience. Ultimately, the work asks what remains when identity is increasingly shaped by technology and systems of visibility. It proposes that the most essential aspects of human existence may be those that cannot be measured, optimized, duplicated, or fully seen.



Insitu of *The Space Between Appearances*, 2026



Close-up of *The Space Between Appearances*, 2026

[Yeoh Choo Kuan]



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Installation view of *The Last Happy Meal*, *Hard Target*, *You've Been Served II* at Wei-Ling Gallery

[Yeoh Choo Kuan]

Hard Target

Oil on custom PE board and stainless steel
120cm x 75cm
2016-2020

You've Been Served II

Oil on custom PE board and stainless steel
110cm x 75cm
2016-2020

The Last Happy Meal

Oil on custom PE board and stainless steel
110cm x 75cm
2016-2020

Although *Today's Special* was conceived in response to the political climate of Donald Trump's first presidency and exhibited against the backdrop of the 2020 U.S. election, its concerns remain strikingly relevant in 2026. With Trump's return to the White House, escalating tensions between the United States and Iran, ongoing conflicts across multiple regions, and the increasing normalisation of political spectacle as governance, Yeoh Choo Kuan's works read less as a reflection on a particular administration and more as a broader meditation on the cyclical nature of power.

Across the exhibition, Yeoh examines the relationship between authority, violence, absurdity, and public performance. His recurring references to Trump's reality television persona, particularly the phrase "You're Fired", transcend their original context to evoke a political culture increasingly shaped by provocation, humiliation, and media-driven theatrics. In an era where global politics often unfolds as spectacle, Yeoh's works anticipate the blurring of boundaries between entertainment, governance, and public discourse.

The artist's heavily worked surfaces, scarred and disrupted through acts of cutting, scraping, and marking, resonate with contemporary anxieties surrounding geopolitical instability and social fragmentation. What once reflected the tensions of a polarised America now mirrors a wider global condition marked by conflict, uncertainty, and the erosion of institutional trust. The chopping board motif—simultaneously associated with consumption, violence, and repetition—becomes an apt metaphor for societies continually subjected to cycles of political crisis and public spectacle.

Viewed from the perspective of 2026, Yeoh's shaped board works appear less concerned with documenting a historical moment than with exposing the enduring mechanics of power itself. Their damaged surfaces and fragmented forms suggest not only deterioration, but also the cumulative consequences of political decisions enacted through force, rhetoric, and performance. In this sense, these works remain a timely reflection on how authority is exercised, consumed, and contested in an increasingly volatile world.

(This text is based on an original exhibition essay by Christiaan Haridas, commissioned by Richard Koh Gallery for Today's Special (2020), with contemporary revisions and contextual updates for 2026.)

[Yeoh Choo Kuan]



Hard Target

Oil on custom PE board and stainless steel

120cm x 75cm

2016-2020

[Yeoh Choo Kuan]



The Last Happy Meal
Oil on custom PE board and stainless steel
110cm x 75cm
2016-2020

[Yeoh Choo Kuan]



You've Been Served II
Oil on custom PE board and stainless steel
110cm x 75cm
2016-2020



Kembangan Majnun di Timur Tengah

Ink on canvas

163cm x 150cm

2026

Lately, I have been exploring materiality through how pigments reflect light: the same color can absorb or glint depending on its composition. This physical fact shapes how I think about visibility, concealment, and our perception of distant relationships.

This work is my reaction to the current ongoing war in the Middle East. The work features mandala-like, radiating patterns constructed from the silhouettes of American and Iranian weapons. Rendered entirely in black, the compositions reflect the asymmetrical shadow war in the Middle East. Iranian weapons face outward, denoting an expanding proxy reach. American weapons largely face inward—turning the gaze back onto the architects of war, with a few deliberate exceptions that complicate any easy binary.

Materiality dictates visibility. Through variations of black inks, the surface tension between absorption and reflection conceals and reveals. Initially, darkness consumes the patterns. Only as light shifts do the hidden drones and missiles reluctantly emerge, mirroring how fleeting news reports momentarily expose a covert war before it fades back into obscurity.

This work reacts to our aestheticization of conflict. By drawing viewers in with ornamental elegance and unsettling them with lethal reality, I condemn the destruction these shapes represent. Black acts as mourning, stripping the weapons of their power and asking viewers to recognize the violence buried beneath the beauty. Ultimately, the material fact that not all darkness behaves the same way becomes a political truth



Insitu of Kembangan Majnun di Timur Tengah, 2026



Close-up of *Kembangan Majnun di Timur Tengah*, 2026

[Zulkifli Lee]



Patah Tak Tumbuh, Hilang Tak Ganti

Stones, Tembusu wood, engine parts, stainless & mild steel

190cm x 25cm x 70cm (irregular)

2025

The idea for this sculpture emerged from an incident I remember: the sudden cutting of a tree outside my apartment window by the management. This personal loss opened into a broader contemplation of modern displacement. Like a gentrification of nature, where trees give way to skyscrapers, hands to machines, and the natural world to the artificial.

This reflection materialized through a gift from a friend, an engineer: bedrock core samples, the very stone used to test the ground before construction begins. Making sure the building can stand strong and secure. I found it deeply ironic, how our built world still depends on the very nature it replaces. Around these geological remnants, I created a jarring mix of wood, stone, and machine parts. Making physical dialogue between materials that allude to what is lost and what remains.

Drawing from architectural and engineering principles, the form references complex geometric solids, using industrial fragments to pose philosophical questions about progress and reality. What we are building, losing, replacing, and what we might yet heal.

This piece is a meditation on endings and alliances: it questions whether human ambition fosters connection or conflict with the natural world. It is a quiet plea to contemplate what we build, what we destroy, and how the world we make, in turn, remakes us.



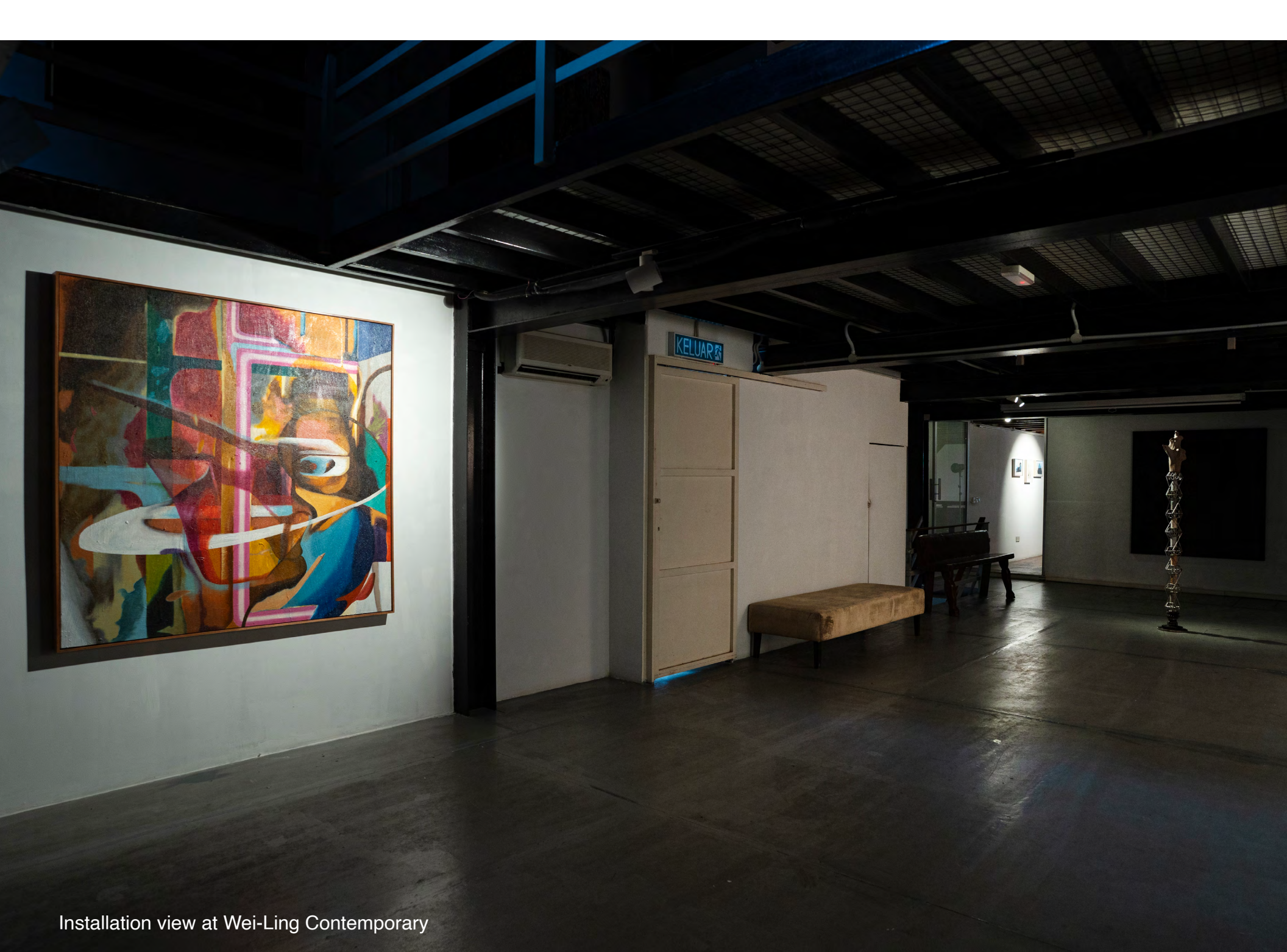
Close-up of *Patah Tak Tumbuh, Hilang Tak Ganti*, 2025



Installation view at Wei-Ling Gallery



Installation view at Wei-Ling Contemporary



Installation view at Wei-Ling Contemporary

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

CHEONG LAITONG (1932—2022)

Born 1932 in China, Cheong Laitong came to Malaysia in 1937. As one of the earliest contributors in Malaysian modern art, he alongside his contemporaries established themselves as the “avant-garde” artists in the KL art circle of the 1960s with inclinations towards abstract expressionism. In 1961, he was granted a scholarship to study at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine, USA before going on to further his art education at the Central School of Arts and Crafts in London. A member and later President of the Wednesday Art Group, he is well known for having designed the large frontal mosaics of the National Museum in Kuala Lumpur. The 1960s also saw him join Rothman’s as its Creative Director, a post that he held from 1963 to 1992. He has won numerous awards including first prize at the Salon Malaysia in 1969 and 1979, and his work has been exhibited in Malaysia, India, UK, Canada, Japan.

(Credit: Ilham Gallery)

HAMIDI HADI (B. 1971)

Hamidi Hadi is regarded as one of the most prominent abstract artists of his generation, and is well-known for his experimental and explorative use of material. Over the years, his practice has formally migrated from pictorial representation of the objective world, into abstraction and the synthesis of complex materials and methods, to describe his emotional and spiritual responses to the world.

He investigates the natural phenomenon of the world and uses this in his imaginary landscapes, through the application of industrial paint, resin, wax, linseed oil and charcoal in layers, allowing gravity and movement, to create surface tension. As we contemplate his abstract works, we begin to connect the reference points that give us clues to the artist’s inner landscape, and his contemplation of his place in the world.

Hamidi Hadi received the UOB Painting of the Year (Malaysia) - Bronze Award, Established Artist Category in 2018, the Bank Negara’s Kijang Award in 2004 and the Philip Morris ASEAN Biennale Art Award in 2000. His works have also been collected by both public and private institutions and corporations. Amongst them are the Grand Hyatt Kuala Lumpur, Setia Berhad, and the National Art Gallery of Malaysia. He has exhibited extensively both within Malaysia and on international platforms, with exhibitions in Singapore, Hong Kong, Indonesia, China, the Philippines and the United Kingdom.

[\[Click here for the artist’s CV\]](#)

IWADH MAHADI (B. 1999)

Iwadh Syafiq Ikhwan bin Mahadi (b. 1999, Malaysia) is a contemporary artist whose practice moves between abstraction and figuration through material-based processes. Working across painting, installation, and printmaking, he is known for his use of bamboo frottage, ground textures, and textile assemblage as primary visual language.

His practice is rooted in the act of imprint—treating surfaces not as passive grounds but as sites of contact, memory, and transformation. Through rubbing, stamping, and repetition, he constructs images that emerge from physical encounter rather than illusion. These marks function as both index and structure, forming systems that echo natural growth, ritual practice, and human networks.

Central to his work is an ongoing inquiry into spirituality as lived condition. Drawing from Islamic thought and personal mythology, he explores the tension between discipline and failure, control and surrender, the sacred and the flawed. His works often occupy a threshold where order begins to destabilise, and where imperfection becomes a form of sincerity.

Iwadh frequently works on raw, unprimed surfaces, allowing material vulnerability to remain visible. The body plays a critical role in his process—not as subject alone, but as an agent—where gesture becomes a form of submission and making becomes an act of negotiation rather than control.

His recent solo exhibition, *Trilogy: The Lightseeker* (2025) at Wei-Ling Contemporary, marked a significant development in his practice, presenting a body of work that frames art-making as both spiritual inquiry and material encounter.

[\[Click here for the artist's CV\]](#)

JAMES LY (B. 1984)

James Ly is an artist, curator and educator whose practice evades easy definition. A graduate of the Duncan Jordanstone College of Art & Design, he is an artist with an interest in globalisation, the transitory nature of things and the relation between image and language. He co-founded Minut Init in 2010. An art project that is dedicated to the diversification of the artistic climate in Malaysia and Anthology of Metaverses in 2020 an online initiative, virtual exhibition space and digital exploration project that embraces the idea of the internet as a deterritorialized space.

Often creating works that are multilayered studies of materiality, form and process. James investigates different forms of language, understanding and perception through drawing, painting, sculpture, installations and projects. With a focus on creating temporality structures that meditate on the theme of co-existence and legacy in the time of global warming, technological revolution and cold war, as an instrument to speculate equatorial futurities within the south east Asian region through the lens of globalisation and the environment.

Central to his practice are the ideas of freedom and hybridity, which are expressed through his process of deconstructing ontological categories through embracing experimentation. Often juxtaposing unfamiliar materials together to create hybrid sculptural objects and structural interventions of spacetime to explore novel possibilities for production and meaning making. Through this process James liberates objects and ecosystems from established narratives inherited from neo colonialism and late capitalism to propose alternate narratives infused with themes related to kinship, extinction, regeneration and evolution. Through poetic gestures that allude to explorations of alternative models for co-existence and human legacy on earth in the form of abstraction, personal fantasies and fiction that are informed by history, philosophy and mass media. To ask the questions “How will we (humanity) evolve?” and “What will we leave behind?”

[\[Click here for the artist's CV\]](#)

KHABIR ROSLAN (B. 1995)

Khabir Roslan (b. 1995, Malaysia) is a trans-disciplinary artist whose practice explores the intersections of materiality, spirituality, ecology, and post-human thought. Working across painting, sculpture, installation, and site-responsive practices, he investigates themes of impermanence, interconnectedness, memory, and care through materials such as compost soil, gauze, raw jute and organic matter.

Khabir is a graduate of Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, with a Bachelor of Fine Arts, Khabir received the Most Promising Artist Award in the Emerging Artist category of the UOB Painting of the Year Malaysia 2020. His practice draws from Islamic philosophy, Nusantara cosmology, and posthumanism, exploring how processes of decay, healing, and regeneration reveal the entangled relationships between humans, non-human life. Through organic and trans-formative materials, his works challenge anthropocentric perspectives and propose a more relational understanding of being.

In 2021, he was selected as a Pelatih Tamu (Guest Trainee) for the Ilmu Program at Museum Gallery Tuanku Fauziah, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), where he developed site-specific works through engagements with traditional Malay architecture, cultural heritage, and tacit knowledge. In 2023, he participated in the WLG Incubator Programmed at Wei-Ling Gallery, further expanding his research into material transformation and ecological systems. He has also participated in artist residencies including the Sunyi Artist-in-Residence Programmed in Langkawi and the Inap Ilmu Residency, where he was mentored by Prof. Hasnul Jamal Saidon and Hasanul Isyraf Idris.

In 2025, Khabir presented his first solo exhibition, Sukma: Megah, Tundok, at Wei- Ling Gallery. The exhibition brought together a body of work centered on decomposition, repair, humility, and transformation through the use of compost soil and hand-stitched forms. Reflecting on the porous relationship between body, earth, and time, the exhibition positioned material change as both an ecological process and a spiritual condition, embodying the artist's ongoing investigation into interconnected modes of life.

[\[Click here for the artist's CV\]](#)

KIM NG (B. 1965)

Kim Ng is a Malaysian artist based in Kuala Lumpur. Since 2002, he has been actively engaged in academia, teaching, and managing the Fine Art department. Kim Ng holds an honours Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts, which he obtained from London Guildhall University in the UK in 1996. He further pursued his education, earning two Master's degrees in Design and Media Arts from the University of Westminster in 1997 and an MA by Project from London Metropolitan University in 2002, both in London, UK.

Over the past three decades, Kim Ng has demonstrated his proficiency in multidisciplinary art. His artistic practice encompasses diverse mediums such as printmaking, mixed media painting, ceramics, sculpture, and installation art. With an impressive portfolio, he has held eight solo exhibitions at various local art galleries and spaces in Malaysia since 2000, in addition to participating in numerous group exhibitions.

Kim Ng's talent has garnered international recognition, as evidenced by his invitation to participate in the collateral event at the Venice Biennale in 2022. His work is being collected by private individuals and corporations both within and outside the country.

Beyond his local engagements, Kim Ng has actively participated in international art workshops and artist residencies in Taiwan, Thailand, and Malaysia. As a dedicated professional, he consistently seeks growth as an artist, enthusiastically embracing new challenges and pushing the boundaries of art-making.

[\[Click here for the artist's CV\]](#)

LATIFF MOHIDIN (B. 1941)

Abdul Latiff Mohidin (b. 1941) is a prominent Malaysian modernist artist, writer and poet from Seremban, Negeri Sembilan. As a child he was known as “Wonder Boy” and “the magical boy with the gift in his hands” due to his prodigious talent and early artistic acumen. He completed his primary education at Kota Raja Malay School in Singapore where he also had his first exhibition in 1951. From 1960-1964, Latiff studied art at Hochschule fur Bildende Kunste (Academy of Fine Arts) in Berlin, Germany on a scholarship. A journey across Southeast Asia in 1964 would later inspire an array of esteemed artworks and series which melded his European experience with his cultural identity. His series, Pago-Pago (1960-1969), Mindscape (1973, 1974-1983), Langkawi (1976-1980) and Gelombang (1985-1993) are known for their distinctive representation of culture, nature, the environment and mysticism. His masterful technique and use of dynamic brush strokes, textured oil paint and vibrant colours mark his works with an identifiable Latiff flair. He has exhibited worldwide, including solo exhibitions in Berlin, Frankfurt, Bangkok, Singapore, New Delhi, New York, Sydney, Osaka, Montreal, Manila, Jakarta, Dublin and London to name a few. In 2018, he became the first Southeast Asian artist to be featured at the Centre Pompidou in Paris. The artist now resides in Penang.

(Credit: Ilham Gallery)

MARK TAN (B. 1991)

Mark Tan is an artist based in Kuala Lumpur. He received his BA in Drawing and Applied Arts from the University of West England. Working through photography, drawing, and printmaking, his various configurations become sensory fragments that investigate the methodologies of mark-making. The psychological spaces of memory as a site of constant flux are then used as a trigger for Tan’s practice. Mark is one of the recipients of the Khazanah Nasional Residency in 2022/23 and over the years he has exhibited both locally and internationally in Singapore, Indonesia, France, and the UK.

[\[Click here for the artist’s CV\]](#)

NASRUL ROKES (B.1999)

Born in Besut, Terengganu, Malaysia, and raised in Johor, Nasrul completed his Bachelor's degree in fine art at UiTM Malaysia. Growing up near a sand and cement factory, Nasrul's childhood play with the earthen material is embedded in his work.

With a focus on sand as his medium of choice, Nasrul sees the canvas as an "arena" in which artists act; "acting" upon the canvas in a similar way in which he used to play with sand as a child, Nasrul's abstract work captures a sense of his own personal memory, experience, and pure emotion. In his most recent series of works, Nasrul depicts the symbiotic relationship between the Earth and the community, disrupted by the relentless pursuit of urban expansion. In his paintings, he mimics the aesthetic quality of rainfall, with colorful sand droplets forming unique textures, symbolizing sentiments of growth, joy, and love, questioning how these forces collide with the corrosive elements of human-led degradation of the Earth. Through his tactile artistic language, Nasrul creates an abstract landscape to amplify the silent cries of displaced soil, echoing the environmental and societal consequences of prioritising profit over preservation, conveying the concept of an artificial landscape created by humans.

Throughout his artistic journey, he has actively participated in various art competitions and exhibitions across Malaysia and Singapore. Nasrul's first solo exhibition, Kontekstura, took place at TAKSU Kuala Lumpur in 2023 and was a successful, largely sold-out show. With a promising career ahead, Nasrul's artworks were recently acquired by the luxury brand LVMH Group and the Hyatt Hotel Group, and have been collected by both regional and international collectors, as well as public institutions in Shanghai, Singapore, and Malaysia.

[\[Click here for the artist's CV\]](#)

YAU BEE LING (B. 1972)

Yau Bee Ling (she/her) (b. 1972, Malaysia), one of Malaysia's foremost painters, has spent her 35-year career creating a deeply personal commentary on women's complex roles in contemporary society. Her work draws from her own experiences, using symbolism and autobiographical themes to examine the shifting female identities of woman, wife, and mother. Family and community ties engage her inner self in a complex dance between duty and independence, hope and fear, success and failure. Within this context, she explores questions of meaning, probing existential themes and pondering, ultimately, her own legacy.

Each series of paintings is charged with its own distinctive energy, reflective of her state of mind, her emotional wellbeing and the way she perceives her place in the world at the time. Her works are therefore a cathartic process for her as she struggles to reconcile the meaning of life, through the layering and scraping back of paint and colour, navigating her way through the twisting terrain of her paintings in the search for truth.

Bee Ling has exhibited extensively in exhibitions across China, Pakistan, Sweden, Singapore, Bangladesh, Japan, Indonesia and Malaysia and represented Malaysia at the Asian Art Biennale in Dhaka, Bangladesh in 1999 and at the Fukuoka Triennale in 2002. Her collection is also at the Kuandu Museum of Fine Arts, Taipei National University of The Arts, Taipei, Taiwan, where she was Kuandu Artist in Residence at the Kuandu Museum of Fine Arts in Taipei in 2016. Her works are in the permanent collections of numerous private and public collections including Mulpha, Maxis Berhad and the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum.

[\[Click here for the artist's CV\]](#)

YEOH CHOO KUAN (B. 1988)

Yeoh Choo Kuan's practice articulates the tension between a spiritual élan and the magnetism of desire, violence and the flesh. The natural landscape and the overload of information are extremes of a spectrum he embraces and represents in all its contradictions. With abstract painting as a strong foundation, Choo Kuan has in the latest years transcended into the conceptual realm of installation. His explorations of different artistic domains meet a sheer enjoyment of textures, mark making, and disintegration of the pictorial matter. The biographical, psychological and emotional element is always his point of departure, leading then into visual reflections on our shared socio-political realm.

Choo Kuan's solo exhibitions include: *Today's Special* (2020), Richard Koh Fine Art Singapore; *Streaming Mountain* (2019), Richard Koh Fine Art Singapore; *Lights In* (2018), Tang Contemporary Art, Bangkok; *Live Leak* (2017), Richard Koh Fine Art Malaysia; *Private Sentiment* (2012), and House of Matahati, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

He currently lives and works in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

(Credit: Richard Koh Fine Art)

[\[Click here for the artist's CV\]](#)

ZULKIFLI LEE (B. 1978)

Zulkifli Lee (b. 1978, Malaysia) is a multidisciplinary artist working across painting, sculpture and installation. His practice explores the language of materials and their inherent properties. By using organic and industrial elements, he reflects on the dynamic relationship between humans and nature, investigating the intersections of man-made and natural systems. Embracing chance and the intrinsic qualities of his chosen materials, Lee often allows nature to act as a collaborator in the creative process, highlighting tensions between agency, intervention, and control. His work engages with ideas of formal aesthetics, identity, and the contingent values of contemporary life.

He holds an MA in Fine Art and Technology (2013) and a BA in Art and Design (2000) from Universiti Teknologi MARA. Since 1999, he has exhibited widely in Malaysia and abroad. His four solo exhibitions include *Material, Order & Chance* (Rimbun Dahan, 2017), *Trace* (SantySap-tari, Jakarta, 2020), *Interdependence* (TAKSU, Kuala Lumpur, 2021), and *Consonance & Dissonance* (Mizuma Gallery, Singapore, 2024).

He has undertaken residencies at Rimbun Dahan, Malaysia (2017) and ACME Studios, London (2019). His works are in major collections including the Singapore Art Museum, ILHAM Foundation, Khazanah Nasional and Muzium Seni Kontemporari Kuantan.

[\[Click here for the artist's CV\]](#)

To accompany *Sandwich (An Intergenerational Dialogue in Malaysian Abstract Art)* by Cheong Laitong, Hamidi Hadi, Iwadh Mahadi, James Ly, Khabir Roslan, Kim Ng, Latiff Mohidin, Mark Tan, Nasrul Rokes, Yau Bee Ling, Yeoh Choo Kuan, & Zulkfli Lee from 13 June – 18 July 2026.

Gallery Information

Free Admission for visitors.

Operating Hours:

10 AM – 6 PM (Tuesday to Friday)

10 AM – 5 PM (Saturday)

Closed: Sundays, Mondays, and Public Holidays

Image Courtesy : Wei-Ling Gallery & the artists, Cheong Laitong, Hamidi Hadi, Iwadh Mahadi, James Ly, Khabir Roslan, Kim Ng, Latiff Mohidin, Mark Tan, Nasrul Rokes, Yau Bee Ling, Yeoh Choo Kuan, & Zulkfli Lee

Specific courtesy to:

Cheong Laitong, & his estate

Latiff Mohidin

Yeoh Choo Kuan & Richard Koh Gallery

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