



THE 23RD
UOB PAINTING
OF THE YEAR
EXHIBITION

Message From The Guest-of-Honour Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam

For 23 years, the United Overseas Bank (UOB) has consistently and actively promoted local art through its Painting Of The Year Competition and Exhibition. While the Competition challenges artists to express their creative talents, the Exhibition continues to be a visual treat of local artistic imagination. Indeed, each year, this annual event brings to life the diversity and richness of local art for Singaporeans to enjoy and appreciate.

I commend UOB for its unstinting support of the arts. Its investment adds a certain buzz to the arts scene. It is an affirmation of the role that the aesthetic plays in our lives. I encourage the Bank to continue to support our local talents and to inspire and motivate Singaporeans to enjoy the arts.

Art transcends the realm of words. Artists are best placed to depict the spirit of our times, in ways quite different from writers or historians. And exciting times these are, as we continue to innovate and stay relevant to a changing world, while retaining a sense of community and developing deeper engagements with each other. This annual Exhibition serves to encourage young Singaporeans to capture the spirit of the times as they see it, and as they imagine.

I would like to extend my heartiest congratulations to all participants of the Competition and this year's winners. I wish you every success in your pursuit of creative excellence.



Tharman Shanmugaratnam
Acting Minister for Education

The Judges



CHIEF JUDGE

Professor Robert Ely *FRSA*
President & CEO,
LASALLE-SIA College
of the Arts
(centre)

LOCAL JUDGES

Ms Eng Tow
Artist
(top left)

Mr Chua Ek Kay
Artist
(bottom left)

OVERSEAS JUDGES

Ms Pacita Abad
Painter, Philippines
(bottom right)

Mr Alan Rubenstein
Artist, Australia
(top right)

The 23rd UOB Painting Of The Year Competition – 2004

About The Judges

Chief Judge

Professor Robert Ely FRSA

President & CEO, LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts

Professor Robert Ely was born in Scotland in 1955 and educated in Manchester, England. Originally trained as a teacher, he has taught in schools, colleges and universities in the UK and Australia for over 25 years. Prof Ely has also worked as an actor, director and designer in professional theatre and television.

A graduate of the Manchester Metropolitan University, he undertook postgraduate studies at the University of Salford. Currently, he is active in the research of university governance.

In 1988, Prof Ely founded the Arden School of Theatre. He was Principal and Chief Executive of Rose Bruford College, London from 1993 to 2000. He was also Director of the Western Australia Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) and a Professor at the Edith Cowan University in Perth before joining LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts. The College has a School of Visual Arts and a School of Performing Arts with a total of 1,200 full-time students studying up to PhD level.

He has senior management experience in large and complex organisations. He has also served on numerous boards, committees and charitable trusts, and has acted as a consultant in the university sector on the validation of degree programmes. He was Chair of the Higher Education Quality Council in Eastern Europe in 1998 and was appointed as Assessor for the Institute of Learning and Teaching in 2000. He is currently on the National Steering Committee of Create Australia.

Prof Ely was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of the Arts and became a member of the Institute of Directors in 1995. A committee of vice chancellors, in recognition of his achievements, awarded him a Professorship in 1996 for his contribution to Theatre and Theatre Education in the UK. In 1997, he became a Distinguished Honorary Professor of the Stephen F Austin University in Texas, USA.

In the same year, Governor George W Bush awarded him the Freedom of the State in recognition for his contribution to education in the state of Texas. As a practising artist, Prof Ely is also a writer, director and painter. In 1976, his work as a designer was exhibited at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. In 2000, he was made an Emeritus Professor in the UK.

Ms Pacita Abad
Painter, Philippines

Born in the Philippines, Pacita Abad is an international artist who has lived and painted in Asia, Europe, North America, Latin America and Africa for 25 years. For the past 10 years, she has lived in Indonesia and Singapore.

Pacita's work is strongly influenced by the multicultural world she lives in. Revealing a passion for colour, her work ranges from social narratives with strong primitive and naive tendencies to pure abstraction, often incorporating elements such as buttons, broken mirrors and stitched fabrics.

She has held numerous solo exhibitions in museums and galleries in Asia, USA, Latin America and Africa. She has also participated in more than 50 group and travelling exhibitions throughout the world. Her works are held in public, corporate and private art collections in over 40 countries.

In addition to painting, Pacita frequently gives talks, conducts seminars and workshops for artists and has been involved in a wide range of community, regional and international art activities and organisations.

Pacita is currently the Artist-in-Residence at the Singapore Tyler Print Institute (STPI). Under its artist-in-residency programme, STPI invites acclaimed international and regional artists to work with its highly qualified team of printers and papermakers at its state-of-the-art workshop to create and produce print art. Pacita is the fourth artist to participate in STPI's Visiting Artists Programme, following Frank Stella, Donald Sultan and Chua Ek Kay.

She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of the Philippines and a Master of Arts degree from the University of San Francisco in California. She studied painting at the Corcoran School of Art in Washington, DC and the Art Students League of New York City.

Mr Alan Rubenstein
Artist, Australia

Born in 1942 in Melbourne, Australia, Alan Rubenstein started his career as a sessional lecturer in Painting and Drawing at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, and as an exhibiting artist in Melbourne.

In 1994, he was appointed Dean of Fine Arts at LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts and was subsequently appointed Vice-President of the College in 1995.

During this time, he served on various committees to advance creative arts education in Singapore. Always a strong advocate of artists and their practice, he was appointed as a board member of the Singapore Tyler Print Institute. He was also Nokia's international art advisor and judge of the Nokia Asia Pacific Art Prize in 1999.

Alan has exhibited paintings and drawings in group exhibitions at the Earl Lu Gallery in LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts as well as at The Substation. In 1999, he held a major solo show at the Art Forum Gallery. His works are in numerous public and private art collections in Singapore, Australia, UK and USA.

He returned to Melbourne in 2003 to resume his studio practice and is still involved in Singapore's visual arts scene through his international art advisory work with the acclaimed Victorian Tapestry Workshop and support of LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts.

Educated in Melbourne, Alan graduated with a Diploma in Art & Design in 1979 and a Graduate Diploma in Education in 1981. He also holds a Master of Arts degree (Studio Art) from New York University.

Mr Chua Ek Kay
Artist, Singapore

Chua Ek Kay lays claim to eminent cultural awards and accolades for his unique vision and contribution to local art development. His receipt of the Grand Prize in the UOB 10th Painting Of The Year Competition (1991) marked the first time this premier award was presented to a Chinese ink painter in its 10-year history. Ek Kay was also honoured with the Juror's Choice in the highly competitive Philip Morris Asean Art Awards (1998) and the inaugural Fellowship of LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts (2002).

His extensive and influential roles as artist, educator, judge, advisor and mentor attest to the respect accorded him by his contemporaries and recognition by foremost cultural bodies. Ek Kay's outstanding practice and singular pursuit of his aesthetic interests have enriched the cultural life and landscape of Singapore. In 1999, he was awarded the Cultural Medallion.

Ek Kay uses Chinese brush techniques and Chinese philosophy as ancient as China's Wei Dynasty (300 AD). While colour is hardly used in Chinese painting, he breaks away from tradition by incorporating the vivid colours of India into his landscapes. His vision is a culmination of many Asian influences – from Bali and Thailand to India.

Having studied Chinese Ink Painting under Fan Chang Tien, Ek Kay graduated with an Advanced Diploma from LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts and a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Tasmania, Australia. He also holds a Master of Arts (Visual Arts) from the University of Western Sydney.

Ms Eng Tow
Artist, Singapore

Eng Tow began her art education in Singapore at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts but later left for the UK where she completed a Bachelor of Arts at the Winchester School of Art (1972), followed by a Master of Arts at the Royal College of Art in London (1974). She then worked in London for a number of years before returning to Singapore in 1981.

Eng Tow is a noted mixed media artist, having produced important works in hand-cast paper, textiles and a variety of other media. In the 1980s, she was acknowledged by Kwok Kian Chow (Director of the Singapore Art Museum) as one of the most outstanding female artists in Singapore.

One of her recent major achievements is a work commissioned by the Land Transport Authority for Kovan MRT Station on the North-East Line. Titled 'The Trade-Off', it is a site-specific, permanent installation of floor-works based on maps of the area.

Since 1974, her works have been showcased at numerous group exhibitions and seven solo exhibitions spanning Singapore, Indonesia, Korea, Japan, Australia, UK, Austria, Germany, Netherlands, Denmark, France and USA.

Eng Tow was awarded the New Craftsmen's Grant from the Crafts Council, UK in 1977 and the British Crafts Award (Textiles) by Telegraph Sunday Magazine (UK) the following year.

She was also presented the Fellowship Award by the Asian Cultural Council/JDR III Fund, USA and the Japan Foundation in 1986 and 1989 respectively. In 1991, she was awarded Artist Residency at the Curtin University in Western Australia.