

# **Narratives in Malaysian Art : A New Publication**

(working title)

Sponsorship Proposal

## Narratives in Malaysian Art

Chuah Thean Teng, *Cowherd*, 1985



Cheong Soo Pieng, *Attap Weaving*, 1956



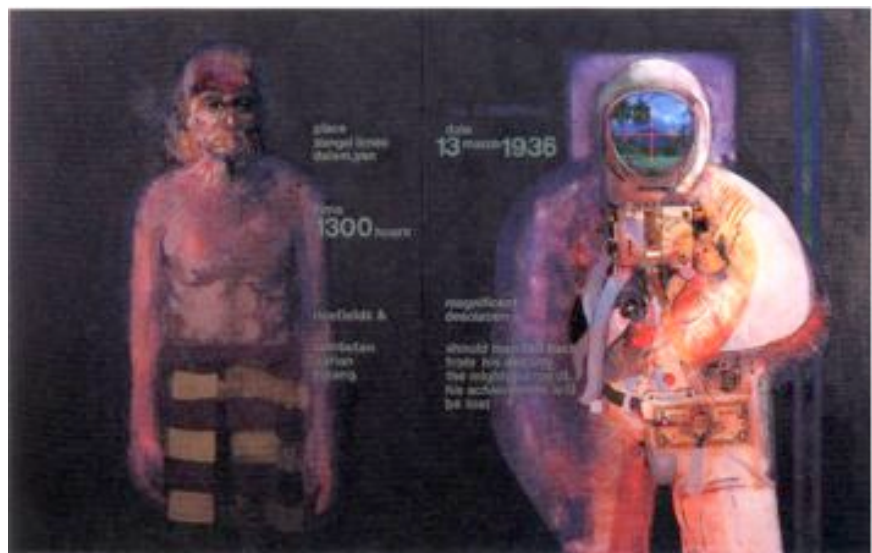
Lee Joo For, *Worksite*, circa 1960's

## Narratives in Malaysian Art

Syed Ahmad Jamal, *Winter Wind*, 1959



Latiff Mohidin, *Pago-Pago*, ca 1960s



Ibrahim Hussein, *My Father & The Astronaut*, 1970

## Narratives in Malaysian Art

Wong Hoy Cheong, *Islands/diPulaukan*, 1997



Ahmad Shukri Mohd, *Flavours*, 2004



Jalaini Abu Hassan, *My Father & The Biker*, 2005

## Introduction

Malaysian art is a rich and diverse field with a compelling history and a promising future. The creative visions of Malaysian artists offer us insights into many discourses - from stories in Malaysian art and its development, to pre- and post-Merdeka national narratives, as well as current social, political and cultural developments in the context of a globalised world.

However, the documentation and discussion of this vital aspect of our culture is still under-developed with only a limited bibliography available for interested arts, academic and general audiences. *Narratives in Malaysian Art* addresses this imbalance through a rigorously researched body of collected and commissioned writings by leading writers and academics in the field, in a 500-page soft-back publication in Bahasa Malaysia and English (in separate editions). The research undertaken for the project will also help to collate and preserve existing references for further research. It is a project by Malaysian art writers to begin a larger exploration of our artistic heritage for today's generation and for generations to come.

# Sponsor the Project

## Objectives

- To invigorate the debates and discourses around Malaysian art history
- To create a valuable resource for students, artists, curators, writers and members of the general public
- To support the tradition of critical writing in Malaysia by providing a platform for both established and emerging authors

## Sponsorship

This ambitious publication will present current views as well as re-publish historically seminal art writings to create a multiple perspective approach and as such, a rounded investigation of Malaysian art history and practice.

As a result, the editorial and production team are seeking dedicated sponsors, who believe in the urgency of such a project, to provide support in order to make possible the most dynamic and important publication on Malaysian art in over a decade.

Our aim is to raise RM332,000 in total by April 2010 to cover writing, translation, editorial, design, project management and production costs. All profits from book sales will go towards a Malaysian art research fund to be managed by Universiti Sains Malaysia.

We hope that this will be an opportunity for different members of the arts community and the community at large - institutions, corporations or individuals, to invest in knowledge and development in art.

Please contact [beverly@rogueart.asia](mailto:beverly@rogueart.asia) for details about how you can support Narratives in Malaysian Art, and details of the budget and sponsorship benefits.

## Publication Abstract

*Narratives in Malaysian Art* has selected as its starting point the pre-Merdeka period beginning in the early 1940s and will cover artistic practice and production, and their context up to today. It seeks to address the development of diverse visual art practices, movements and discourses, and their relationship to the Malaysian historical context, as well as to other cultural disciplines and phenomena.

The publication will include an introductory foreword and essay, as well as 30-40 collected and commissioned essays and interviews. Areas that have been selected to be researched, documented and discussed include:

1. The Journey between the Pastoral and the Urban, and the Building of a Nation
2. The Abstract and the Figurative in Painting and Sculpture
3. The Role and Influence of Religion, Folklore and Traditional Forms
4. Reactions – New Critical Strategies
5. The Infrastructure: Art Institutions, the Art Market, Art Education
6. The Malaysian Artist: Perceptions of the Artist; Artist Collectives
7. Discourses in Malaysian Art

### Editorial Team

#### Consultant Editor

**T.K. Sabapathy** has been widely acknowledged as one of Southeast Asia's foremost art historians. His contribution to the discussion and documentation of Malaysian art history as an editor, writer and educator is immeasurable. His many major publications and essays, often in collaboration with Redza Piyadasa, have constituted much of what we know about the subject today. Landmark publications he has edited and written for include *Modern Malaysian Artists* (with Reda Piyadasa, Dewan Bahasa & Pustaka, Kuala Lumpur 1983) and *Vision and Idea: Re-Looking Modern Malaysian Art* (Balai Seni Lukis Negara, Kuala Lumpur 1994). He is Director of the Contemporary Asian Arts Centre, Adjunct Assoc Professor at National University of Singapore and a lecturer at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore.

#### Chief Editors

**Beverly Yong** has written extensively on Malaysian art over the past ten years, and has edited a number of publications on local and regional art, including recently, *Between Generations: 50 Years Across Modern Art in Malaysia* (with Hasnul J Saidon, University of Malaya, Universiti Sains Malaysia & Valentine Willie Fine Art, Kuala Lumpur 2008). She wrote a regular art column for the Business Times, and the New Sunday Times from 2000-2003. She graduated in 1995 from Cambridge University reading History of Art and English Literature, and has a Masters in Archaeology from the School of Oriental and African Studies, London University. From 2000 to 2008, she was Managing Director of Valentine Willie Fine Art, a leading regional art gallery. She is now a Director, and co-founder, of RogueArt, an art consultancy based in Kuala Lumpur.

**Nur Hanim Khairuddin**, a Fine Arts graduate from Institut Teknologi MARA (now UiTM) (1994), is an Ipoh-based artist, curator, writer and arts and culture promoter. Since 1996 she has been Curator at Perak Arts Foundation, which coordinated Ipoh Arts Festival (1996-2000), and the principal mover of its social programmes and art, literary and cultural events. She owns Teratak Nuromar, an independent publisher that issues *sentAp!* magazine, a visual art bimonthly magazine for Malaysian art. She writes on arts and culture for online magazines kakiseni.com (Malaysia), ArtIT (Japan) and Universes-in-Universe (Germany), and is often invited as guest writer for exhibitions. In 2007 she received a research grant from the American Centre Foundation.

### Chapter Editors

**Hasnul Jamal Saidon** is Director of Muzium & Galeri Tuanku Fauziah at Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM). A visual artist, curator, writer, academic and educator, he is a central figure in the Malaysian art world. He received his formal training in fine art, from Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) (1984-88), going on to a Bachelors in Fine Art from Southern Illinois University and MFA in Electronic Arts from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in the USA. He is regarded as a pioneer in the field of new media art both as an artist and educator, locally and internationally. He has taught and headed art departments at UiTM, UNIMAS, CENFAD and USM. His essays have been published in books, exhibition catalogues, magazines, newspapers, journals, websites and seminar/conference proceedings. He was also editor of *Between Generations: 50 Years Across Modern Art in Malaysia* (with Beverly Yong, 2007).

**Anurendra Jegadeva** trained in Fine Art and Law in the UK in the 1990s, going on to his Masters in Fine Art at Monash University, Melbourne, and is currently working on his PhD in the area of the Social Narrative in South East Asian painting. He has played a central role within the Malaysian art scene, as an artist, writer and curator. As an artist he has exhibited regularly and widely in Malaysia and abroad. He worked as an art writer for the Sunday Star newspaper for ten years, and contributes to various local and regional publications. He has also curated major exhibitions such as *Figurative Traditions in Modern Malaysian Art and AKU 99 - The Self Portrait in Contemporary Malaysian Art* (1999). In 2006 he was a lecturer in Art History for Universiti Malaya's Masters program. From 2006 to 2008 he was Senior Curator at Galeri Petronas.

**Eva McGovern** is an independent curator and writer based in Kuala Lumpur. She has a BA in Art History from Nottingham University, UK and an MA in Contemporary British Art from the Courtauld Institute of Fine Art, London. Prior to living in South East Asia she worked at the Serpentine Gallery in London, on public programmes, exhibitions and publications, completing publications with Hans Ulrich Obrist, Rem Koolhaas and Richard Prince. She is currently developing independent arts projects and is Associate Curator with RogueArt, Kuala Lumpur. In 2009, she wrote and edited *Bank Negara Malaysia Art Collection: Selected Works*. She has guest lectured at the Sotheby's Institute, Singapore and contributes to *Off the Edge*, Malaysia, *Broadsheet*, Australia and *Timeout KL*, and is a Contributing Editor for *C-Arts*, Singapore and is Managing Editor of [www.arterimalaysia.com](http://www.arterimalaysia.com), writing broadly on South East Asian contemporary art.

### Contributors

The selection of writers for this publication represents the strength and diversity of Malaysian arts professionals, who include key artists, academics, writers, curators, and critics. Writers have been chosen for the sophistication, insight, commitment, criticality and strength of their written work to date that has appeared in numerous publications, catalogues, magazines and newspapers in Malaysia and the region.

Aside from the editorial team, contributors include institutional curators such as **Ahmad Mashadi** (Head, NUS Museum, Singapore) and **Zanita Anuar** (Director, Exhibitions, Balai Seni Lukis Negara), independent curators such as **Adeline Ooi** (Asian Public Intellectual fellow 2002-2003) and **Laura Fan**, artist-academics **Niranjan Rajah** (PhD, currently Assistant Professor at the School of Interactive Arts and Technology, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver) and **Ray Langenbach** (PhD, currently Professor of Artistic Research, Art History and Theory at the Finnish Academy of Fine Art and lecturer at Sunway University College). Other key contributors are specialists in traditional Malaysian art forms **Eddin Khoo** and **Siti Zainon Ismail**, and importantly, artists who also write and curate such as **Chai Chang Hwang**, **Rahmat Haron**, **Roopesh Sitaran**, **Shahnaz Said**, **Sharon Chin**, **Tan Sei Hon**, **Wong Hoy Cheong**, **Yap Sau Bin** and **Zainol Abidin bin Ahmad Shariff**.

The publication will also include seminal writings by **TK Sabapathy**, and iconic Malaysian artists, academics, thinkers **Redza Piyadasa**, **Sulaiman Esa**, **Ismail Zain**, and **Syed Ahmad Jamal**, as well as interviews with key figures about major events in Malaysian art history.

### Production Management

RogueArt is an art consultancy group based in Kuala Lumpur specialising in the creative, strategic and organisational management of art and cultural projects, exhibitions, collections and publications.

We believe that existing cultural institutions, and the private and corporate sector have much to give, and to gain, in supporting contemporary cultural production. At the same time, we hope to explore alternative modes of presenting, thinking about and looking at art and culture in the regional context.

# Publication Specifications & Schedule

## Editorial Team

Beverly Yong, Nur Hanim Khairuddin, Hasnul Jamal Saidon, Anurendra Jegadeva and Eva McGovern

## Production Specifications

Number of pages: 504

Size: 21(H) x 15(H) closed, soft cover with threadsewn binding

B/W text pages, with full-colour plates; approximately 300 colour plates

Copies: 1500 English edition, 1500 Bahasa Malaysia edition

## Contents

Foreword and introduction

Approximately 30-40 collected and commissioned essays and interviews

Approximately 300 colour illustrations

Extensive bibliography

Timeline guide; glossary

## Publication Schedule

July-October 2009	preliminary groundwork & strategy
5 December 2009	Talk the Walk: a Discussion on Narratives in Malaysian Art (for sponsors and art community)
30 April 2010	Deadline for collection of adequate funds to proceed with publication
May-December 2010	Writing in progress
November 2010 –March 2011	Translation & Edit in progress
March-May 2011	Production of publication
June 2011	Publication launch

## Companion Publication

A companion publication, *An A to Z of Malaysian Art*, will be published alongside *Narratives in Malaysian art*, as a light and informative quick introduction to the Malaysian Art scene, useful for newcomers and visitor. *An A to Z of Malaysian Art* will also introduce *Narratives in Malaysian Art* and highlight our sponsors' contribution to the project.

This publication will be offered exclusively to our sponsors, and later distributed for sale at bookstores.

### Contents of *An A to Z of Malaysian Art*

- An illustrated "A to Z of Malaysian Art", featuring an entertaining and enlightening flip through the movements, landmark events, national treasures and general issues of Malaysian art history by the editors and writers of *Narratives in Malaysian art*
- A directory of art institutions, galleries, alternative spaces, residency programmes, and art-related services
- A brief introduction to *Narratives in Malaysian Art* with excerpts and enlarged images from the book
- Information about our sponsors

### Production Specifications for *An A to Z of Malaysian Art*

Number of pages: 52

Size: 21(H) x 15(H) closed, soft cover with staple binding

Full-colour throughout; approximately 50 colour plates

Copies: 1000