

CHUAH SIEW TENG

Chuah Siew Teng is a brilliant artist in the batik medium and he is acknowledged to be one of Malaysia's most celebrated artists. Born in 1944 in Penang, Malaysia, Siew Teng had won many art awards even before obtaining a formal art education at the Ravensburne College of Art and City & Guild Art School in England in 1965.

Siew Teng expressed a great interest in batik art at a very early age and was exposed to this art medium by the master of batik art, his father, Chuah Thean Teng. In 1961, 1962 and 1963, Siew Teng was the winner of the "Art Prize" in the open art competition held in North Malaysia. In 1964 he won the "Certificate of Merit" at the National Art Competition with his painting entitled "Joy of Living". The following year he was awarded a prize at the Malaysia Artist Competition for his painting "Outdoor".

While in London, during 1966, at the I.C.I. College of Art, Siew Teng lectured and demonstrated the batik technique. In 1975 he lectured and taught batik art in Australia at the West Australian Institute of Technology and at the Fremantle Art Centre.

Siew Teng's art is well recognized in the international as well as in Malaysian art circles. His batik painting entitled "The Monkeys" was chosen by the UNICEF (United Nations' International Children's Fund) for their greeting card selection in 1992. His paintings have been exhibited in many art shows including:

1966 Ravensburne College of Art, England
1967 One-man exhibition at the Lower Gallery, London, England
1968 Royal Exchange, London, England
1969 City & Guild Art School, London, England
1970 National Art Gallery, Malaysia
1971 World Art Associates, U.S.A.
1972 Dewan Sri Pulau Pinang, Malaysia
1972 Argyle Art Centre, New South Wales, Australia
1973 Travelling Art Exhibition, Tokyo, Japan
1974 International Art Exhibition, Basel, Switzerland
1975 Kanda Gallery, Tokyo, Osaka and Okinawa, Japan
1975 Travelling Art Exhibition, Melbourne, Sydney, Perth and Fremantle, Australia
1975 International Art Exhibition, Basel, Switzerland
1978 Representing Penang at the Adelaide Exhibition, Australia
1981 Georgetown Gallery, B.C., Canada
1986 Eva Chan Gallery, California, U.S.A.
1988 Alam Seni Fabrik Malaysia, National Art Gallery, Malaysia
1989 Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall, Malaysia

Currently on permanent exhibition at the Yahong Art Gallery, Penang, Malaysia.

Siew Teng's art continually receives outstanding reviews from art critics and his works have been featured in many art publications including: "Arts Review" (England, 1975), "Die International Kunstmesse" (Germany, 1975), "Art Look Magazine" (Australia, 1975), "Orientations" (1977), "Asia Magazine" (1983), "The Asian Expo '86" (U.S.A.), "Artist" (1989), "Yazhou Zhoukan" (1989), "Malaysian Tatler" (1991), "Wings of Gold" (Malaysian Airline System [MAS] in-flight magazine, 1992).

His unique style is successfully displayed in the "Contemplation" series. Siew Teng composed a hybrid of lines and usage of monochromatic colours that provide a bold new perspective in batik art. This series reveals and eastern philosophy which offers the mind boundless contemplation through subtle symbolism. His exploration of a distinctive style is manifested his Chinatown street scenes that expose the artist's sensitivity to the Malaysian traditional lifestyle against a background of quaint

Chinese shops.

Siew Teng excels in oil painting as well as in portrait representations. But it is in his batik paintings that there is an ambitious, contemporary study that emphasizes images of Malaysian life. His art focuses on modernist interpretation of Malaysian culture, it expresses a fluidity of style that captures meaning in an elegant manner.