

## DATUK IBRAHIM HUSSEIN RED, ORANGE AND CORE



## ANTICIPATING ART AUCTION MALAYSIA 2012

+ EDUCATION Collecting Malaysian Art: Three Sides of A Story



## Penang Preview



Left to right: HBart Director Mr. Vincent Sim, Henry Butcher Malaysia Honourary Chairman Tan Sri Dato' Sri Kamal Hashim, Ministry of Tourism Senior Deputy Director Tuan Ramzi Abu Yazid, HBart Business Manager Ms. Linda Leoni.

## Singapore Preview



## Cohorts Club Night



## VIP Opening Night



# ANTICIPATING ART AUCTION MALAYSIA 2012

One of the biggest art events of the year in Malaysia is back! Much hype and anticipation has been surrounding Art Auction Malaysia 2012, with limelight shone on one of the finest and most significant works by Malaysia's world icon artist Datuk Ibrahim Hussein to ever appear at auction, titled *Red, Orange and Core*. This pictorial masterpiece is estimated at RM800,000 to RM1.2 million, and is set to break world auction record for the artist, as well as for any Malaysian work of art to date.

A tailored selection of over 30 works out of the total 86 lots were previewed in Galeri Seni Mutiara in Penang and Artspace@Helutrans in Singapore over two weeks back to back. The openings saw a gathering of familiar followers, while the appearance of numerous new faces was an encouraging sign.

The Penangites responded enthusiastically towards the works by pioneers and modern masters such as Yong Mun Sen, Khaw Sia, Abdullah Ariff, Chuah Thean Teng and Tan Choon Ghee, while the inclusion of a photography work for the first time also caused a stir, with Ismail Hashim's iconic hand-tinted silver gelatin print titled *Kedai Gunting*. Born and based in Penang, Ismail is one of the pioneering veteran artists who have helped elevate photography as a form of fine art in Malaysia. He was honoured with a retrospective exhibition at the Penang State Art Gallery and Museum recently in 2010.

Across the border in Singapore, the key piece *Red,*

*Orange and Core* was unveiled, drawing substantial interest and attracting both seasoned and novice collectors based in the island art hub of South East Asia. Singaporean pioneer artists (who were part of Malaya before 1965) namely Cheong Soo Pieng and Chen Wen Hsi are represented with one work each, which created much hype amongst collectors, many of whom eagerly registered for telephone and absentee bids, while others expressed interest to attend the auction in Kuala Lumpur. Given the close ties and shared history of the two countries, the strong selection and wide variety of works by Malaysian artists too appealed greatly to the Singaporean collectors.

When *Red, Orange and Core* was displayed at the Kuala Lumpur Full Viewing a week later at White Box in Publika, it became the talk of the town instantly. Acquired directly from the artist shortly after its creation, this precious gem has finally appeared on public view for the very first time.

The VIP Opening Night on Friday April 20 saw a large crowd of over 100 guests, where collectors, artists and family, gallery owners, dealers, critics, journalists and art lovers all gathered under one roof. The excitement was further heightened when the special 20-minute tribute video to the late Datuk Syed Ahmad Jamal was premiered, with the presence of the artist's son En. Syed Nurlhaq.

On the following Monday April 23, the auction was

officially launched by the Acting Director General of Tourism Malaysia, Y.Bhg. Dato' Hj. Azizan Noordin, on behalf of Tourism Minister Y.B. Dato' Sri Dr. Ng Yen Yen.

The Embassy Night on Wednesday April 25 received gracious attendance by Director General of our National Visual Arts Gallery Ambassador Dato' Mohd. Yusof Ahmad as well as both High Commissioners of Australia H.E. Miles Kupa and Singapore H.E. Ong Keng Yong, while distinguished guests from various embassies and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were delighted to immerse themselves in the art created by our local talents. On Monday April 30, a private viewing was specially organised for the Malaysian Art Friends (Cohorts Club) and their peers. The night turned into a gathering of old and new friends all enthusiastically discussing about art over food and wine right into the wee hours.

This year, the viewing has seen a sharp increase in visitor numbers, thanks to the strong and balanced selection of both modern and contemporary representation of Malaysian Art, the inclusion of several new names at auction as well as the debut of new media and Chinese ink works. A substantial amount of interest came from expats and the younger middle class, many of whom have already registered as bidders, ready to join the adrenaline rush and excitement on auction day Sunday May 6 at White Box in Publika, and to witness the breaking of a new auction record in Malaysia's art history.

## Official Launching



Left to right: HBart Directors Mr. Lim Eng Chong and Mr. Vincent Sim, Henry Butcher Malaysia Honourary Chairman Tan Sri Dato' Sri Kamal Hashim, Ministry of Tourism Acting Director General Y.Bhg. Dato' Hj. Azizan Noordin.

## Embassy Night



The Embassy Night was graced by the attendance of several Ambassadors and High Commissioners, including H.E. Ong Keng Yong, High Commissioner of Singapore (second from left).

## ART AUCTION MALAYSIA 2012

SUN 6 MAY 1 PM  
WHITE BOX, PUBLIKA

Registration 11am  
Artwork inspection 10am  
VIEWING 21 APR - 5 MAY

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## EDUCATION

# COLLECTING MALAYSIAN ART THREE SIDES OF A STORY



Prevailing Henry Butcher Art Auctioneers' educational initiative to create awareness and educate the public on Malaysian Art and general art knowledge, the second installment of this year's Public Art Programmes "Collecting Malaysian Art: Three Sides of A Story" was conducted on March 24 at White Box, Publika with a congregation of over 140 attendants.

Moderated by Rachel Jena, the talk discussed the various roles in the art industry as well as the channels in collecting art, from the perspectives of a gallery, an artist and a collector. We gathered three reputable names from the Malaysian art scene, namely Mohammad Nazli Abdul Aziz (Managing Director of Galeri Chandan), Jalaini Abu Hassan (Artist) and Bingley Sim (Private Collector) to discuss these issues.

With Malaysian Art gaining more international exposure and recognition, one cannot ignore the fact that there still seems to be a lack of forums on how one goes about collecting Malaysian Art. This talk allowed an overview of the art market today and insights into the various roles in promoting a healthy art market in Malaysia. All key points have been summarised and listed as follow:



Top: Rachel Jena (left) started the session with an introduction with the first speaker En. Nazli (right) beside her.

Bottom: Mr. Bingley responding to questions raised during the Q&A session.

### ARTIST

A person who expresses himself through a medium, who uses imagination, talent, or skill to create works that may be judged to have an aesthetic value. Intrinsically tied to the role of art, an artist creates art within a societal context, supported and buffeted by the conditions of the time – resources, technology, intelligence, knowledge, economic, political, social, cultural and religious or philosophical conditions of the moment of the creation. Art projects back to humanity knowledge and awareness of the reality, which in turn allows humanity to understand reality better.

### ART GALLERY

A room or series of rooms where various forms of art are displayed to the public, mostly for commercial purposes. Art galleries sell art. Their role is to stimulate, educate, inform, and entertain diverse audience by seeking out new talented artists. A good gallery often helps their artists develop and mature artistically and eventually bring their work to the attention of the buying public via strategic marketing and advertising of the works and artists they represent. A well curated exhibition is often coupled with a well written catalogue, as galleries seek inclusions of the art in scholarly articles and books.

### ART DEALER/ADVISOR

Economically conscious individuals specialising in a particular style, period or region, an art dealer seeks out works or artists to recommend either to galleries or directly to collectors. Equipped with vast understanding of the art market and trends, they are often able to anticipate market trends and influence the taste of the market. They are kept up to date with art happenings and often credited as figures to introduce new paintings on the auction map, while representing collectors and institutions in acquisition.

### AUCTION HOUSE

A business organisation that conducts sale by means of auction, income mainly from buyer's premium and seller's commission for its services and expertise advice. Evolved from making profit based entirely on auction, auction houses today act as dealmakers and low-key middleman. They provide a platform to feature masterpieces as well as a transparent and fair market transaction, often perceived to be a more objective pricing mechanism for artworks.

### ART FAIR

Art fairs are temporary spaces where galleries from all over the world bring artworks to sell. The art is bought by people visiting the fair, mainly dealers, collectors and gallerists. A showcase of the best of the best, an art fair congregates the gems of each participating gallery, allowing the works and artists an international exposure and recognition. It is also a good opportunity to spot trends and new developments in ideas and mediums. A string of fringe events are often held in the course of an art fair.

### TIPS TO KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR IN AN ARTIST

- Always read the artist bio
- Consistency in progress and development
- Strong technique and skills
- Proper management of artwork, not commercial and not overproducing
- Exposure and collector base
- Represented by professional galleries

### QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN VISITING A GALLERY

- Who is this artist? What is the work about?
- Ask yourself, what do you appreciate in the (particular) art? A good painting speaks and connects to you.
- Can I afford this? Not all good works are expensive, and not all expensive works are good. Shop within your budget, the idea is to enjoy the artwork, not enslave yourself for it.
- Would you look back and regret this in 3 years? The first three years of collecting may be the most uninformed. Make sure you make an informed decision.
- Would you like to grab a cup of coffee? Invest some time to speak to the gallery owner and the artist.

### HOW TO START A GOOD COLLECTION

- Do your homework. Find out more about the artist and his oeuvre. However, do not restrict yourself from falling in love with a piece of art once in awhile.
- Set a direction for your collection. Let your collection be a journey of your art endeavour!
- Itemise your collection. Keep count of your eggs (and where it has been).
- Proper art care and handling, art should be stored in a controlled environment. The condition matters, a lot!
- Follow up. Be in the know, know what the artist is doing, understand the development and if there is a change of direction in the artist's creation.
- Support your artist!

### MYTH BUSTED!

- Art is for the elitist. NOT EXACTLY. It is for everyone and anyone who is willing to spend their time in galleries to learn and appreciate the arts.
- If you buy art, you must be rich! WRONG. Most collectors end up pursuing their passion for arts and are rewarded with a home with walls filled with amazing artworks instead of Porches and Lamborghinis.
- An artist will only be famous if they are depressed, emotional, suicidal, a drama mama, or if they are dead. FALSE. Art is well received by both the younger and elder generations as it transcends age, language and culture, the only barrier is the price tag!
- Artists are eccentric. NO. Okay, maybe a little. They are more in touch with issues. It is due to their sensitivity to things that the public is numb to that inspires them.
- The gallery business is simple, just hang and exhibit. On the contrary, starting up a gallery is as tough as setting up for retail, if not tougher. A gallery not only services their client to satisfy their unique tastes and needs, but also hunts for potential artists to be introduced to the scene. Not forgetting their constant headache and pursuit to ensure the artists meet each deadline!