

KLAS CELEBRATES 9 ILLUSTRIOUS YEARS IN 2020

REVISITING REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL WORKS SOLD BY KLAS

BY HIRANMAYII AWLI MOHANAN

Over the span of nine years since KL Lifestyle Art Space's (KLAS) inception, it has carved a distinctive name in the vibrant Malaysian art scene, having promoted and sold over three thousand artworks by established local and regional artists including numerous renowned masters.

KLAS's introductory auction in 2012 saw the featuring of Malaysian and Indonesian artworks, with venerable names such as Jaihan Sukmantoro and Srihadi Soedarsono leading the pack. With KLAS art auctions and the Malaysian visual arts scene growing

in tandem, more and more works of senior artists from neighbouring countries were secured.

In 2013, Filipino artists began to pervade KLAS, led by Ang Kiukok, Malang Santos, Benedicto Cabrera and much recently, Jose Joya. 2014 was the year Singaporean artworks began making its way into the KLAS art auction, which in turn opened KLAS to a new market of art buyers in Singapore.

Eager to satisfy aficionados' hunger for beautiful and brilliant works, soon, an extensive variety of works from maestros such

as Chen Wen Hsi from China, Laxman Pai and B Vithal from India, John Coburn and David Bromley of Australia, Sujarit Hirankul of Thailand, Min Wae Aung of Myanmar and many more descended upon KL Lifestyle Art Space.

Throughout the eight years in the art industry, this gallery and auction house has seen a multitude of magnificent and beautiful works by famed artists that went on to fetch astounding prices. Fresh off its 39th auction, KL Lifestyle looks back at the regional and international works auctioned off.



Srihadi Soedarsono B. Indonesia, 1931
Bedaya Ketawang - Beauty of Soul, 2015
Oil on canvas 150 x 150 cm
SOLD RM 354,000.00
KLAS Art Auction 24 May 2015

Srihadi Soedarsono graduated from Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB) in 1959 and later completed his master's degree at Ohio State University in 1962. Soedarsono has exhibited extensively since 1955, selected exhibitions include Biennale de Sao Paolo (1969), Contemporary Asian Art (Fukuoka Art Museum – Japan, 1980), Asia Pacific Contemporary Art Triennial (1993),

Asian Modernism: Diverse Development in Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand (Japan Foundation Forum, Tokyo – Japan; Metropolitan Museum of Manila – Philippines; National Gallery, Bangkok – Thailand; National Art Gallery, Jakarta – Indonesia; 1996), Indonesian Modern Art and Beyond (Davos – Switzerland, 1997), Indonesian Biennial XI (1998), Visions and Enchantment: Southeast Asian Paintings (Singapore Art Museum, 2000). The artist lives and works in Bandung, Indonesia.

Like elevating poetry, Srihadi's paintings use flowing colours and light to depict the spirituality and richness of folk culture as well as the confidence and inner beauty of the Indonesian people, with the influences of Zen Buddhism. Srihadi's dancers are archetypes of femininity, embodying beauty, grace and elegance. The artist achieves a sense of harmony and balance through the symmetry of the composition, built up through a triangular formation of the dancers' arms. The purity of the colours conveys the energy and atmosphere of the scene. For the audience this is a profoundly spiritual experience.

Srihadi is well known for his achievements in illustrating the lively movements of dancers on canvas. Because of this exceptional ability, he became the only artist who was granted the opportunity by the Solo Sultanate Palace in Central Java to paint the royal "Bedhoyo Ketawang" dance ceremony. "Bedhoyo Ketawang" is only performed during the coronation of a new sultan or his birthday.

"I am also pleased to have the opportunity to work on that ancient and great royal culture, Bedhoyo Ketawang. Well, this is just a metaphor actually, the figures or the dancers in there, the metaphor. I have to express their inner quality and whether it is physically visible, but we have to put them as one to be a work of art, the accumulation of creative power, feeling and intention. And after putting them as a creation, that reflects the spirit which is seen on my work," said the artist.



José Joya B. Philippines, 1931 – 1995
Prelude to Violence, 1972
Oil on board 120 x 79 cm
SOLD RM 940,800
KLAS Art Auction 29 September 2019

Born in Philippines, in 1931, **Jose Joya** was a multifaceted, pioneer, modern and abstract artist active in painting, printmaking, mixed-media and ceramics. He was regarded as the main artist who spearheaded the birth, growth and flowering of abstract expressionism in

the Philippines. The artist's mature abstract works have been said to be characterised by calligraphic gestures, linear forces, and a sense of colour vibrancy emanating from an Oriental sensibility. The robust hues of the Filipino landscape inspired Joya's sense of

colour and his use of rice paper in collages demonstrated an interest in transparency.

His innate talent flourished at the age of eleven. At a young age, he became passionate about studying architecture, but learned that he did not have the aptitude for the math and science that architecture would require. While attending the University of the Philippines, he was introduced to the paintings of Fernando Amorsolo, and that marked his study of painting. He was initially schooled in the traditional standards had been set by Amorsolo and Tolentino, but he gradually leaned towards American abstraction and the emerging trends in Philippine modernism. He studies under the mentorship of Guillermo Tolentino, Ireneo Miranda, Domindaor Castaneda and Virginia Agbayani.

Joya graduated from the University of the Philippines (UP) in 1953 with a Bachelor's Degree in Fine Art, earning the distinction of being the university's first Magna cum Laude. In 1954, the Instituto de Cultura Hispanica of the Spanish government awarded him a one-year grant to study painting in Madrid. After returning from Spain, Joya pursued a Master's Degree in Painting in 1956 at the Cranbrook School of Art in Michigan, USA with the assistance of a Fulbright Smith-Mundt grant.

When the artist returned in 1962, served as the President of the Art Association of the Philippines, together with Napoleon Abueva, represented the Philippines in the prestigious Venice Biennale – the first time that the Philippines had participated. The late 60's garnered grants from the John D. Rockefeller III Fund and the Ford Foundation, which allowed him to paint and study at the Pratt Institute in New York between 1967 and 1969.

Joya's works utilised a variety of techniques, including controlled drips, impasto strokes, and transparent layering. "In creating an artwork, the artist is concretising his need for communication," the artist has said of his practice. He has an irresistible urge to reach that level of spiritual satisfaction and to project what he is and what he thinks through his work. His artworks, often inspired by the tropical wildlife of his home country, were painted with bold, vibrant colours. In this 1970's, 'Untitled' work, he paints loose, gestural strokes using a harmonious earthy palette of beige, brown and orange – an abstract beauty that transcends foreign influences.



Ong Kim Seng B. Singapore, 1945
Heart of Kathmandu, 1994
Acrylic on canvas 130 x 180 cm
SOLD RM 168,000
KLAS Art Auction 24 November 2019



Cheong Soo Pieng B. China, 1917-1983
Two Sisters, 1978
Oil on canvas 65 x 65 cm
Private Collection



Lee Man Fong B. China, 1913 – 1988
Rojak Seller
Oil on board 103 x 51 cm
SOLD RM 369,600
KLAS Art Auction 24 November 2019



Sujarit Hirankul B. Thailand, 1946 – 1982
May, 1976
Acrylic on canvas 81.5 x 61.3 cm
SOLD RM 5,824
KLAS Art Auction 29 September 2019



Yoshitomo Nara B. Japan, 1960
Cosmic Girl (Eyes Open), 2008
Offset lithographic poster printed in colours on wove,
from the edition of 500 72 x 52 cm
SOLD RM 28,000
KLAS Art Auction 7 July 2019



Benedicto Cabrera
B. Philippines, 1942
Balinese Dancers, 2001
Pastel on paper
46 x 78 cm
SOLD RM 12,100.00
KLAS Art Auction
10 November 2013



Min Wae Aung B. Myanmar, 1960
Monks on Morning Round IV, 2005
Acrylic on canvas 93 x 62.5 cm
SOLD RM 16,800
KLAS Art Auction 29 September 2019



Ang Kiukok B. Filipino 1931 - 2005
Cow / Dog, 1978
Oil on canvas 23 x 88 cm
SOLD RM 22,000
KLAS Art Auction 10 November 2013



David Bromley B. England, 1960
Chanela, 2017
Acrylic on canvas with metal leaf gilding
150 x 120 cm
Private Collection



Zao Wou-Ki B. China, 1921-2013
L-Orchidee, 1986
Silkscreen after a watercolour on porcelain plate
25 cm diameter
SOLD RM 22,000.00
KLAS Art Auction 6 April 2014



Damien Hirst B. England, 1965
For the Love of God - Beyond Belief, 2007, Edition 180/300
& For the Love of God, 2007, Edition 180 / 300
Etching on paper 34 x 52 cm
SOLD RM 7,616
KLAS Art Auction 7 July 2019



John Coburn B. Australia, 1925 – 2006
Phoenix, 1971
Gouache on paper 55 x 76 cm
SOLD RM 25,000
KLAS Art Auction 23 September 2018



Yayoi Kusama B. Japan, 1929
Pumpkins (2)
Painted cast resin multiples
Each height 10.2 cm
SOLD RM 6,496
KLAS Art Auction 24 February 2019



Senaka Senanayake B. Sri Lanka, 1951
Farmers
Oil on canvas 93 x 93 cm
SOLD RM 33,600
KLAS Art Auction 23 September 2018



Malang Santos B. Manila, 1928
Vendor, 1997
Acrylic on canvas 13.5 x 17.5 cm
SOLD RM 14,653.60
KLAS Art Auction 31 January 2016

KLAS ART AUCTION 1 MARCH 2020

KL Lifestyle Art Space kicks off the year 2020 with its first art auction for the year, on March 1, at its gallery in Jalan Utara. Its 39th installation sees a beautiful array of works from the region as well as internationally, besides local legends such as the late Khalil Ibrahim, Yusof Ghani and Datuk Ibrahim Hussein to name a few. Singaporean heavyweights like Choo Keng Kwang and Ong Kim Seng's works are featured alongside Chen Wen Hsi and Lee Man Fong's paintings that represent the Chinese art sphere. New contenders to the scene are Li Song and Huang Yan from China, the late Australian artist, Emily Kame Kngwarraye as well as Barbara Tribe, one of Australia's most significant 20th century sculptor.



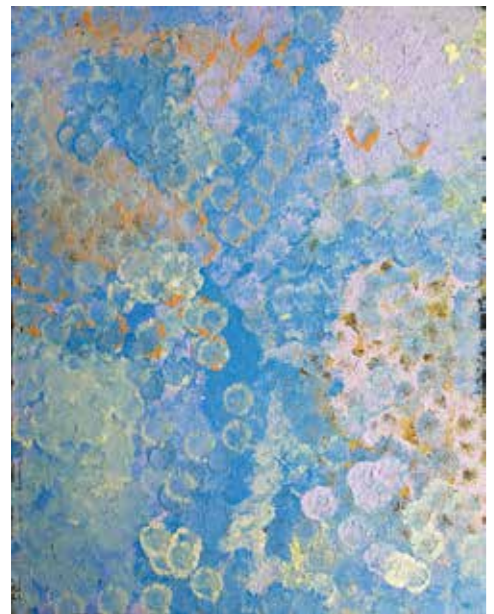
Jeihan Sukmantoro B. Indonesia, 1938 – 2019
Mariam, 2011
Oil on canvas 70 x 70 cm
RM 7,000 – RM 10,000
KLAS Art Auction 1 March 2020



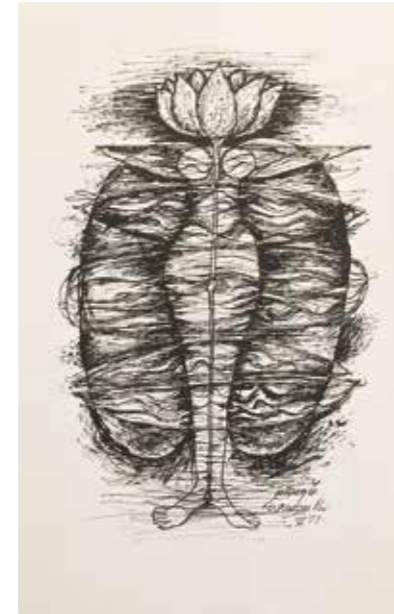
Huang Yan B. China, 1966
Chinese Landscape - Marilyn Monroe
from the Celebrity Series, 2009
Oil on canvas 99 x 79 cm
RM 20,000 - RM 50,000
KLAS Art Auction 1 March 2020



Suhas Roy B. India, 1936 – 2016
Landscape with Flowers and Bird, 1971
Mixed media on canvas 99 x 99 cm
RM 8,000 - RM 16,000
KLAS Art Auction 1 March 2020



Emily Kame Kngwarraye Australian, 1910 – 1996
Untitled
Synthetic polymer paint on canvas 45.5 x 35.5 cm
RM 12,000 - RM 20,000
KLAS Art Auction 1 March 2020



Laxman Pai B. India, 1926
Lotus Flower, June 1973
Pen and ink on paper mounted on card
56 x 38 cm
RM 3,000 - RM 7,000
KLAS Art Auction 1 March 2020



B. Vithal B. India, 1935 – 1992
Ganesha
Bronze sculpture 10 x 7 cm
RM 18,000 - RM 30,000
KLAS Art Auction 1 March 2020



Li Song B. China, 1965
Portraits - Ai Weiwei, circa 1990 & Wang Gangyi, circa 1990
Oil on canvas 34.3 x 26.7 cm
RM 12,000 - RM 20,000
KLAS Art Auction 1 March 2020



Ong Kim Seng B. Singapore, 1945
Market Kathmandu, 1991
Acrylic on canvas 58 x 72 cm
RM 25,000 - RM 50,000
KLAS Art Auction 1 March 2020



Chen Wen Hsi B. China, 1906 – 1991
Hérons
Ink on paper 65 x 68 cm
RM 60,000 - RM 90,000
KLAS Art Auction 1 March 2020

Born in 1906 in China, **Chen Wen Hsi** was renowned for his avant-garde Chinese paintings. Regarded as a first-generation artist, Chen was in the forefront of the Chinese avant-garde movement in Singapore during the 1950's. He was a member of a group of five prominent artists that founded the Nanyang style, a landmark in the art history of Southeast Asia. Chen was a highly esteemed painter and art educator who played a significant role in developing the art community in Singapore.

The artist was heavily influenced by traditional Chinese paintings, early Cubist works of Pablo Picasso and Paul Klee, paving the way for Chen's own repertoire and identity, which he later trademarked. From 1923 to 1992, Chen had conducted 38 one-man exhibitions within Singapore and countries such as Taiwan, Malaysia, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and Hong Kong.

Chen was adept at both traditional Chinese ink and Western oil painting. His Western-style works in the early 1950's were realistic depictions, infused with post-impressionism and expressionistic elements. He experimented with various styles and techniques ranging from Fauvism to Cubism as well as acrylic, viscous paints and sand on canvas. He had great interest in human figures and depicted them as a pattern of images. He was also keen on nature and animals.

In this masterpiece, Chen Wen Hsi portrayed his abstract mastery using ink on paper, but in a muted tone. This flock of heron is portrayed in a flurry, looking for food in the wilderness. Here, a medley of Western and Nanyang influences are discerned, evidence of his flawless technique.



With a quiet yet passionate vision, Lee's works are a fusion of Chinese brushwork and Western techniques which resulted in a richly sentimental yet elegant paintings. Still Life Flowers, 1940's, is an example of said elegance. Lee used a muted-hued background, which in result, brought forth the vibrant bouquet of hibiscus flowers. Armed with great artistic prowess, the artist captured the minute details that make up the flower, right to its pollen.

Lee Man Fong B. China, 1913 – 1988
Still Life Flowers, 1940s
Oil on canvas 74 x 61 cm
RM100,000 - RM 150,000
KLAS Art Auction 1 March 2020

LEE MAN FONG

Prolific Chinese-Indonesian Artist

Lee Man Fong was a Chinese-Indonesian painter who had his training in China and Western Europe, and lived most of his life in Indonesia, developing a particular style that amalgamated his teachings with a quiet yet passionate vision. His works are highly coveted by many for the fusion of Chinese brushwork and Western techniques which resulted in a richly sentimental yet elegant paintings. A leading painter and curator of his time, the artist pioneered the Nanyang style in the 20th century in Indonesia.

Lee was born in November 14, 1913 in Guangdong, China, to a family of ten children. Fong moved to Singapore in 1917 and studied at the Anglo-Chinese School until 1929. After his father's death, it was up to Lee to help support his family, so he began producing images for advertisements. The family moved to Singapore but eventually settled in Jakarta in 1930, where Lee secured a job at Kolff, a Dutch printing company. He was married to Lie Muk Lan – a pianist – and his son Lee Rem, born in 1938, also became a painter who would later exhibit jointly with his father.

His six-year sojourn in the Netherlands from 1946-1952 earned him the prestigious Malino scholarship to study in the Netherlands for three years based on the recommendation of the Dutch Viceroy Hubertus van Mook, for whom Lee had produced a portrait for.

At that point, Lee became the first non-Dutch artist to be invited to provide works for an exhibition organised by the Dutch East Indies Association. During this time, he was introduced to the techniques employed by the Dutch masters, thus expanding his repertoire of artistic skills beyond classical Chinese painting. Lee, a Rembrandt aficionado loved the works of the legendary artist, especially that of chiaroscuro, and sought to incorporate it into his own works. Dutch genre paintings which portrayed the simplicity of daily life and amplified the beauty of quotidian happenings, also made an impression on the artist. After 1940 Fong devoted himself full-time to painting. He visited Bali, working briefly there, and held solo shows in Jakarta and Bandung. Lee quickly gained recognition for his paintings of Balinese subjects, many influenced by the work of



Lee Man Fong B. China, 1913 – 1988
Still Life Flowers, 1940s
Oil on canvas 74 x 61 cm
RM 100,000 - RM 150,000
KLAS Art Auction 1 March 2020

Willem Hofker. He then held a solo show in Jakarta in 1941, after which he was interned by the Japanese.

With his growing success, Lee consistently and successfully sold his works at the Hague and the Salon in Paris. Upon the artist's return to Indonesia in 1952, he touched down with an evolved artistic style which integrated Western, Chinese and Indonesian traditions in bold yet delicate compositions. From 1955 to 1961, Lee served as the chairman of Yinhua Meishu Xiehui (Society of Chinese Artists in Indonesia).

In 1961, his long-time friendship with the late former President Sukarno (also an admirer and collector of his works) earned Lee the position of consultant to the Presidential Palace and chief curator of its art collection for six years. The late Presidents' extensive collection of Lee Man Fong's works inspired the artist and Lim Wasim, to assemble a 5-volume edition of the Soekarno Collection. During this period, Lee was awarded an Indonesian citizenship. In 1967, when Soekarno fell from grace, Man Fong, who was considered close to



Lee Man Fong
B. China, 1913 – 1988
Satay Seller, 1958
Pastel on paper
69 x 42 cm
RM 15,000 - RM 25,000
KLAS Art Auction 1 March 2020



Lee Man Fong
B. China, 1913 – 1988
Rojak Seller, Undated
Watercolour on paper laid
on masonite board
65 x 40 cm
RM 15,000 - RM 25,000
KLAS Art Auction 1 March 2020

Sukarno, and alleged to have communist inclinations, and this resulted in the artist's decision to move to Singapore in 1970. His career continued to thrive, and he was often given lucrative commissions by Chinese businessmen who wanted him to paint animals of the Chinese zodiac.

Circa 1970's, Lee's tarriance to Cairo, Egypt was when the artist started dabbling in oil paintings. His time there inspired him to produce scenes of the Egyptian landscape and thenceforth, a prolific variety of oil paintings.

Lee continued to exhibit within Indonesia and was heralded as a major artist of the period. In the 1980's Lee Man Fong suffered from kidney and heart disease, and became increasingly private. His final solo exhibition at the National Gallery in Singapore was a major success, and he donated its proceeds to the National Kidney Foundation. Lee died in Jakarta on April 3, 1988 at the age of 75.