



## KLAS ART AUCTION 2020

### MALAYSIAN & SOUTHEAST ASIAN ART

SUNDAY, 6 SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 1PM AUCTION VENUE: KLAS@JALAN UTARA

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BY HIRANMAYII AWLI MOHANAN

Coming off the heels of its auction on July 12, 2020, KL Lifestyle Art Space (KLAS) slates its third art auction despite these unprecedented times. Encouraged and motivated by the reception of its art auctions, KLAS remains motivated to present a finely curated array of artworks for enthusiasts. The auction house's third auction of the calendar year takes place on Sept 6, at its gallery in Jalan Utara. The Modern and Contemporary Art Auction features an array of Malaysian and regional artworks by masters of the craft. Boasting a total of 89 lots, art connoisseurs can look forward to works by big guns such as Rafiee Ghani, Khalil Ibrahim, Chen Wen Hsi, Yusof Ghani, Datuk Sharifah Fatimah, Tay Bak Koi, Lee Man Fong, Raphael Scott Ahbeng, Ismail Abdul Latiff and many more. An array of works by Chinese artists such as Yang Keshan, Zhao Gang, Huang Yan, Sheng Qi, Lu Hao and Gu Wenda will also be showcased during the auction. Feast your senses on these beautiful works.



**Chuah Thean Teng, Dato' B. China, 1914 - 2008**  
Village Scene  
Batik 45 x 119 cm  
RM 30,000 - RM 70,000

Known as the Father of Batik Painting in Malaysia, Dato Chuah Thean Teng earned his stripes from his use of batik as a medium of fine art since 1953. Although batik painting has been around for hundreds of years, it is remarkable that no one before Teng had ever thought of adapting this age-old craft as a medium of fine art. His artistic proclivities includes landscapes, people and even animals, often a cultural education of the way of life in a particular community, their relationships and beliefs. This piece is as its name indicates, a village scene that depicts three wooden houses on stilts and villagers about their daily antics.



**Awang Damit Ahmad B. Sabah, 1956**  
Marista Sisa Semusim IV, 1996  
Mixed media on canvas 135 x 120 cm  
RM 40,000 - RM 75,000

The title hints at what this painting might be about. Different shapes and forms are scattered all over the canvas, with a space largely consisting of the colour grey takes precedence over the rest of the objects. Those familiar with Awang Damit's work are provided with the knowledge that his works are inspired by his memories, most of which are scattered, symbolic and garlanded with numerous emotions. Even this series, dubbed 'Marista' means "to talk about the past" in Brunei's Malay language. This is a piece about broken and lost memories, one that is strewn around a grey area, as bits and pieces only remain.

Born and brought up in Kuala Penyu, Sabah, he spent most of his teen years learning painting from various artists whilst traveling around the state. He initially came to Selangor to work as a technician for Telekom Malaysia, but found that art was something he truly was passionate about. He eventually left the telecommunications company, and took his Diploma in Fine Arts in Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) and Masters Degree in the United States. A painting of his, Nyanyian Petani Gunung, won the 1991 Salon Malaysia Award. PETRONAS bought it and is, until this day, exhibited at the gallery.



**Sharifah Fatimah Syed Zubir, Dato' B. Kedah, 1958**  
Untitled, 1987  
Acrylic on canvas 102 x 106 cm  
RM 35,000 - RM 70,000



**Yusof Ghani B. Johor, 1950**  
Siri Tari 14/91, 1991  
Oil on canvas 122 x 122 cm  
RM 75,000 - 150,000

Yusof Ghani's renowned and highly coveted series, the Siri Tari portrays the movements and lines of people in subtle yet vibrant hues that are visually appealing. He captures the fluid motions and elegance using dance painting to portray the human behaviour. After Yusof Ghani moved on from his Protest Series, many had assumed that his paintings have undergone a complete makeover, from sinister and edgy to orchestrated and graceful. Yusof Ghani, however, refuted this. This work from the Tari Series did not change course, it still revolved around social remarks. In this series, he uses dance paintings to portray human behaviour and to experiment with lines, movement and colour. "Life is sometimes like dancing – we move about with no purpose but we get lots of pleasure out of it," said Yusof. Despite how elegant this painting of dancing looks, it was never intended to be graceful. The lines and sketches on this artwork were executed freely and spontaneously in a frenzied and haphazard manner. It is perhaps, the play of colours, that gives this painting that polished, fluid air.

This piece resonates vibrancy, liveliness and vivacity. It is done in her usual loud-on-loud and contrasting colours, featuring daring streaks, blocks and lines to handsomely frame the bold-coloured fragments and shapes. It is a discourse between nature and man, and it can be likened to seeking solitude in nature, the greens, blues and warm washes of red each representing different types of the elements of flora and fauna. Not one to shy away from colours, the artist's works are often described as lyrically symbolic featuring a myriad of colours.



**Abdullah Ariff B. Penang, 1904 - 1962**  
Tree by a River, 1955  
Watercolour on paper 33 x 56 cm  
RM 28,000 - RM 60,000

Meticulously illustrated, this painting is Abdullah Ariff's narration of a large canopy of a tree perched at the river bank. Painted in an almost dream-like scene, the entire mood quiet and tranquil. The artist's virtuosity in wet-on-wet and dry-on-dry watercolour skills are shown through the way he portrays movement in the waters and the tree. His works are more 'European' in terms of looks and approach, and they are more heaving in its details.

Abdullah Ariff was an art teacher at the Anglo-Chinese School in Penang. He, along with fellow artist Yong Mun Sen were the forerunners of watercolour painting in Malaysia. They were also the only two local members the Penang Impressionists club, an art group whose members were made up of European colonials. In 1947, he worked for the Straits Echo newspapers in Kuala Lumpur as a cartoonist. He held his first few solo exhibitions at the Mint Museum, the Ownbey Hall and the Malayan Embassy in the United States. A road in Air Itam, Penang, is named after him, making him the only artist to ever receive such an accolade. His personal philosophy was, "Art has no obstacles".



**Chen Wen Hsi B. China, 1906 - 1991**  
Carp  
Ink on paper 34 x 43 cm  
RM 18,000 - 30,000

Soft in sight with graceful subtlety, Chen Wen Hsi brings forth his depiction of a school of Japanese carps sauntering through its natural habitat, varying in appearance. Using Chinese ink on paper for this masterpiece, the artist illustrated his Nanyang-style forte with immaculate brushstrokes.



**Chia Yu Chian** B. Johor, 1936 - 1997  
Paris Street Scene, 1962  
Oil on canvas 76 x 52 cm  
RM 25,000 - RM 55,000

Born in Johor in 1936, Chia Yu Chian studied at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts in Singapore and graduated in 1958. He was known for being the first artist from the Straits Settlement to receive a French Government scholarship at Ecole Nationale des Beaux Arts in Paris and was commissioned by the Malaysian High Commission in Paris to paint a mural painting called Life in Malaysia. He received a Honourable Mention by the Salon des Independent and Societe des Artistes Francaise. He passed away in 1991.

This work, illustrating the street scene of Paris was executed in Chia's maverick manner. The scene of the painting is at nightfall hence the employment of darker hues to portray the night sky. At the centre of this piece, the Parisian bistros' sun shade are painted in red, with hints of yellow to illustrate light from the eatery.



**Gu Wenda** B. China, 1955  
Untitled from the series Mythos of Lost Dynasties  
Ink on paper 96 x 59 cm  
RM 25,000 - RM 45,000



**Yusof Ghani** B. Johor, 1950  
Segerak I, II & III, 2004  
Mix Media on canvas 50 x 25 cm x 3 pieces  
RM 25,000 - RM 50,000

It's rather easy to fall in love with Yusof Ghani's paintings at first sight, and the Segerak I, II & III are no exceptions. Over the years, his works have shifted from something dark and enigmatic to one that is cheery and alluring. Yusof's Segerak Series have always produced a seamless flow of lovely colours integrating with one another and amalgamating. Not intentionally meant to look aesthetic and flowing, the initial lines and sketches were rough, chaotic and arbitrary, to portray the human behaviour of being wild and free.

Yusof Ghani was born in 1950 in Johor and used to frequent a small movie theater as a young boy, where he developed a predisposition towards painting. He received a scholarship to study art at George Mason University, USA, where he studied Graphic Art and proceeded to pursue his Master's in Fine Art at Catholic University, Washington. Upon returning to Malaysia, he began lecturing in Universiti MARA Institute of Technology. Most notably known for Abstract Expressionism, his other popular series are Topeng, Wayang, Segerak and Biring.

Gu Wenda, a contemporary artist from China was born in 1955 in Shanghai. He lives and works in Brooklyn Heights, New York City with his wife, interior designer Kathryn Scott, while also maintaining studios in Shanghai and Xi'an, China. His works predominantly revolve around the traditional Chinese calligraphy, poetry and has been said to work with human hair. Gu is among the most well-known and extensively exhibited and published contemporary Chinese artists in any medium. He has extended the boundaries of landscape painting, subverted meaning in Chinese calligraphy and raised provocative questions about what it means to be a Chinese artist in the modern world.

Gu Wenda studied and later taught at the Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts (Now China Academy of Art). He rejected the landscape painting style of his well-respected advisor Lu Yanshao and instead pursued semi-abstract ink painting. Crowned as the master of ink painting, Gu plays around with Chinese calligraphy characters and words, removing or combining strokes which contribute to a landscape of compositional elements — one that is uniquely his hallmark. This painting, an Untitled work from the series Mythos of Lost Dynasties is evident of such composition, challenging the authority of Chinese tradition.



**Ong Kim Seng** B. Singapore, 1945  
Cleaning Jars - Beach Road off Sultan Gate 12th December, 1982  
Ink and colour on paper 73.5 x 53 cm  
RM 14,000 - RM 28,000

Entitled 'Cleaning Jars — Beach Road off Sultan Gate', this work is as humble as it is beautiful. Ong with his mastery, depicts an array of stored away clay urns and jars. An earthy palette becomes the painting, with meticulous portrayal of details. In a distance, a subject is seen in the midst of an act. There is a simplistic beauty to this work.



**Tay Bak Koi** B. Singapore, 1939 -2005  
Village in the Hills, 1970's  
Gouache on paper 60 cm diameter  
RM 12,000 - RM 20,000

The Singaporean landscapes in Tay's paintings thrive on a palette dominated by neutral colours. Their complexity and richness both in texture and form far surpass those of his earlier paintings. Progressing from the bold and abstract, Tay's works subsequently embodied a dreamlike quality, often blurring the lines between fantasy and reality, emitting a sense of tranquillity, and even timelessness. As portrayed in this gouache on paper piece, there's a sense of tranquility that surrounds this work. This circular artwork is something one dreams of, depicting a small village set among nature, with undulating hills as its backdrop and a small river is seen near the village, with a raft docked at the bank.



**Rafiee Ghani** B. Kedah, 1962  
Still Life, 1994  
Acrylic on canvas 154 x 96 cm  
RM 15,000 - RM 35,000

Rafiee Ghani's works are known for their loud and dynamic colours and brush strokes, featuring his Intimism style. He is known to produce paintings of still life that depicts all types of objects of everyday life including the likes of vases, stools, chairs, mugs, flower, food and fruits, as depicted in this painting. Aesthetics form an important part of Rafiee's paintings where he uses balance and composition to their fullest potential, often producing artwork, which are both aesthetically pleasing and artistic.



**Yusof Majid** B. England, 1970  
High Hopes, 2017  
Acrylic on canvas 150 x 110 cm  
RM 12,000 - RM 22,000

From an early age, art has been a part of Yusof Majid's life. He grew up in England, and had an appreciation for art at a young age. Born in 1970, Yusof Majid's creative work was predominantly inspired by the 1980s. The artist attended the Chelsea School of Art, England from 1988 to 1993. Yusof sees his paintings as a naive surrealist extension of his inner self, emptiness and euphoria in landscapes of memory and dreamscapes. In this work, two trees are depicted at the centre of the work, against the sky and mountains. Symbolising hope, these trees seem to have grown so tall and high that it might actually touch the sky.



**Seah Kim Joo** B. Singapore, 1939  
Two Fishermen  
Batik 90 x 60 cm  
RM 10,000 - RM 20,000

Born in 1939 and raised in Terengganu, Seah Kim Joo was exposed to the process of traditional batik-making very early in his career as an artist. It was the environment of his hometown that first introduced him to the notion of batik. Subsequently, in the 1950s, when the Penang-based artist Chuah Thean Teng first pioneered painting using the batik medium, Seah was drawn more into batik painting. It also resulted in Seah being an ardent follower of the late Chuah and his works, since the manifestation of contemporary themes in a traditional medium was regarded as a direct expression of Nanyang regionalism. Seah's works is nature and people, apart from occasional abstract pieces. Perhaps it was the cultural background of his hometown in Terengganu that influenced his choice of subject matters. Ever equipped with an ethereal quality, 'Two Fishermen' is a batik work rendered in an orange hue, with fishing boats floating in a distance and in the foregrounds, two fishermen are portrayed with a cloth around their head and dressed in sarong and shirt, tending to their nets.

**Lye Yau Fatt** B. Kedah, 1950  
Crossing the River, 1983  
Mixed media on canvas 70 x 50 cm  
RM 15,000 - RM 35,000

Eyes immediately dart to the ladies captured in the act of crossing the river, enveloped by foliage, one clad in nothing but a sarong while the other has an infant strapped on her. In the background, two other ladies are seen wearing straw hats and about their antics. Lye Yau Fatt's artworks are always bedecked with rich and earth tones, creating a homey ambience and mood, where viewers may find peace in. He never fails to evoke a feeling of familiarity and warmth, and security, in a way. His motifs always revolve around the rustics in a rural setting, with intricate designs running along his canvas, discernible if seen closely. Lye Yau Fatt was born in Kedah in 1950, he studied printmaking in New York. He held his first solo exhibition in 1979 at the Sum Art Gallery and has then gone on to win the Open Art Sculpture Award, the Malaysian Watercolour Society Award in 1987 and the PNB Watercolour Landscape Award.

Abdul Latiff Mohidin is an artist that likes to invent his own rules to create new things. The Gelombang is strong and dramatic, yet has an elegant feel and sophistication. The jagged colours take you on a journey through the artist's mind, beckoning the viewer to understand what the motif of the painting and reflective of its aloof nature. Latiff was born in 1941, and is as well-known a poet as an artist as well.



**Abdul Latiff Mohidin** B. Negeri Sembilan, 1941  
Gelombang, 1993  
Mixed media on paper 18 x 27 cm  
Signed "Latiff 93" on lower right  
RM 13,000 - RM 20,000



**Liu Kang** B. China, 1911 - 2004  
Still Life Flowers, 1961  
Oil on canvas 49.5 x 59.5 cm  
**RM 10,000 - RM 18,000**

Born in Fujian Province, Liu Kang (1911-2004) received his formal training in Shanghai Academy of Fine Art, where he was exposed to Chinese paintings. In 1928, he went to Paris where he was influenced by art movements such as Fauvism and Post-Impressionism. Not only was he one of Singapore's pioneer artists, he was also a leading figure in the Society of Chinese Artists and the Singapore Art Society. In 1970, he was awarded the Public Service Star for his contributions in the field of art. Mainly an oil painter, Liu started using pastel during the Japanese Occupation as oil paints were not available then. He found the luminous quality of pastel attractive and used it first for portraiture and later for other genres such as still life, as depicted in this work.



**Tay Mo Leong, Dato** B. Penang, 1938  
Two Balinese Ceremonial Dancers, 1970s  
Watercolour on paper 74.5 x 55.5 cm  
**RM 7,000 - RM 12,000**

Tay creates this arresting vision of two Legong Dancers, majestically clad in traditional outfits. It is a spectacle of gentle hues that is both charming and exquisite, engaging the viewer for long moments before they comprehend that this piece is an encapsulation of the charm of the rustics. Executed in the medium of watercolour, the artist cleverly combines the elements of space, form and colour to work magnetically with one another, as he captures a dancer holding a paper fan and while the other is gazing into the distance, portraying her side profile. The work is a demonstration of the artist's adeptness in the delicate medium that is watercolour. It is certainly a poetic piece.



**Chang Fee Ming** B. Terengganu, 1959  
Fishermen - Narathiwat, Thailand, 1998  
Watercolour on paper 9.8 x 14 cm (2 pieces)  
**RM 6,000 - RM 12,000**

Born in a rural coastal town in East Malaysia, Chang Fee Ming is one of Asia's most renowned water colourists. His richly detailed and vibrantly coloured paintings of life in idyllic, rural scenes have established his reputation as a sensitive observer of culture and promoter of culture. Chang expertly transforms colours into wondrous snippets of life. The artist has developed a collection spanning more than two decades, depicting rural people, culture and landscapes of countries in Asia and beyond. His acclaimed artwork is exhibited and collected throughout the world, and has appeared regularly at Christie's auctions since 1995. Several books have been published about his work, including *The World Of Chang Fee Ming* (1995), *Mekong* (2004) and *Imprinted Thoughts* (2009) which was published in conjunction with his exhibition at Singapore Tyler Print Institute (STPI).



**Mohd Raduan Man** B. Pahang, 1978  
Wayang Kulit, 2009  
Oil on canvas 90 x 90 cm x 2 (Diptych)  
**RM 6,000 - RM 12,000**

A brilliant, eye-catching diptych, Mohd Raduan Man employs a metallic green hue across the canvas, accompanied by shades of black and tinges of yellow. At the heart of the painting, the wayang kulit character is decked in all gold. Mohd Raduan Man is a Malaysian visual artist who was born in 1978. To this young artist the production of his artworks are dynamic movements that possess strong statements that must be conveyed to his audience. He hopes that his artworks are substantiated enough to be included in future dialogues on visual art. Raduan's paintings stand out for their movement. His techniques are undeniably flawless. He dabbles in various art techniques including printing onto large canvases using wood as his blocks, the end result is truly unique. Woodcarving is the technique of engraving lines that are defined, and this enables Raduan to assess an object in its elemental and basic form, and it thus depicts elemental strength. Inspired by the wayang kulit, this artwork comprises seven separate pieces that unfolds a story told through Raduan Man's eyes, through his chosen medium.



**Khalil Ibrahim** B. Kelantan, 1934 - 2018  
East Coast Landscape, 1989  
Watercolour on paper 15 x 21 cm  
**RM 900 - RM 2,000**

Khalil's adoration for the East Coast prevails with this piece. The artist's enigmatic and stylised technique using watercolour is an illustration of his strong connection and love for the land of his origin. A serene scene of nature — majestic mountains that are almost one with the sky, lush trees and foliage, and in the centre, a wooden kampung house.

The late Khalil Ibrahim graduated from the prestigious St. Martin's School of Art & Design, United Kingdom in 1964. Thereafter, he became a full-time artist and had been for 60 years. He held solo and group exhibitions in Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Switzerland, with most of his works centred around figures and were heavily influenced by East Coast fishermen and women.



**Kwan Chin** B. Kuala Lumpur, 1946  
Playing with Birds, 2003  
Batik 100 x 109 cm  
**RM 5,000 - RM 12,000**

Kwan Chin, ever the story teller tells his tale of observations through the batik medium with a touch of Nanyang style. This particular artwork depicts a congregation of villagers, all huddled under the trees, seeking shade away from the blazing sun. A flock of birds also seem to be accompanying these villagers. Kwan Chin's works are vibrant, and undoubtedly attention grabbing, which is his hallmark.

Born in Kepong, Kuala Lumpur in 1946, Kwan Chin attended the Nanyang Academy of Fine Art in Singapore during which he learned how to use traditional art materials. Shortly thereafter, he delved into the world of advertising but once he was introduced to batik, it instantly changed his career path. His batik pieces are rich in colour and his work is known around the world, having been exhibited in London and Miami.



**Hoe Say Yong** B. Johor, 1956  
Interaction I, 2010  
Oil on canvas 100 x 100 cm  
**RM 12,000 - RM 22,000**

Hoe Say Yong was born in Batu Pahat, Johor, Malaysia and obtained his Diploma at the Kuala Lumpur College of Art (1975 to 1977) and in 1982, he had his first solo in Johor. He won the Asia Art 2011 award organised by the Korea Culture Art Research Institute and followed it up with an exhibition 24 Solar Terms, at the Seoul Metro Art Centre in South Korea.

The combination of cool blue mixed with a generous some red thrown in gives the impression of a myriad of emotions involved during the execution of this piece. It moves and flows ever so gently, as a gentle breeze blows. The water's surface has become his canvas in exploring different realities of unexpected harmony, fluidity and an imaginative colour play.

**Sharifah Fatimah Syed Zubir, Dato'** B. Kedah, 1958  
Untitled 1999  
Acrylic on paper 38 x 28.5 cm  
**RM 3,000 - RM 7,000**

"We live our true lives in the depths of our hearts, not in the superficial masks of personality which we show to the world," said Dato' Sharifah.

She is an artist who translates her thoughts, emotions, feelings onto her abstract works, which usually results as a motley of aesthetic mayhem. Through this piece, the artist showcases true matters of the heart, mind and soul, as well as the incessant though processes while exhibiting their garish colours deep within. It's a piece that says although you seem calm and collected, there is a flurry within.



**Mohd Khairul Izham** B. Pahang, 1985  
Seketika, 2019  
Acrylic on canvas 135 x 152 cm  
**RM 3,000 - RM 7,000**

Born 1985 in Maran, Pahang, Khairul Izham approaches broad subject of past and memories with complex layering and conscious masking, leaving the audience with residue from the process of recollection. His brushes of colour create rough silhouettes in an expressionistic manner with details, contours and crevices accurately captured. At mere glance, this piece portrays foliage. But at closer look, it discloses a motley of sketches that include a chair, buildings, flower, butterfly, dragonfly and many more. It's a stunning piece, executed brilliantly.



**Ahmad Zakii Anwar** B. Johor, 1955  
Untitled, 2002  
Mixed media on paper 81 x 55 cm  
**RM 6,000 - RM 12,000**

Sensual and enigmatic are two words that fit this painting well. The artist captures here a profile of a nude male figure, his face undisclosed. The piece oozes absolute allure, sophistication and depth, as well as spirituality. "It's painting the body from the inside out," Ahmad Zakii Anwar says. "One of the most important things in my work is the sense of something absolute. I want to reflect the order of life, as well as internal beauty," he said. "I want to paint something more spiritual. I want people who look at the work to feel inner peace."