

# LONG THIEN SHIH

BY HIRANMAYI AWLI MOHANAN

*Long Thien Shih studied art in Atelier 17 and Atelier de Lithographic, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, both in Paris, under a French government scholarship. Thereafter, he moved to London to study at the Royal College of Art. He has won awards such as the First Prize in the 1961 Young Malayan Artists Competition in Kuala Lumpur and the 1992 Prints Prize in Salon Malaysia. Thien Shih is known among the contemporary artists of the early generation through his subjects and themes ranging from eroticism, environment concern, satires as well as his careful observations of local and international culture and politics.*

*He presented a retrospective exhibition titled Man Of The Times at National Art Gallery, Kuala Lumpur in 2014. In 2018, he participated in a group exhibition titled The Art Of Printmaking: Lasting Impressions, which was held at Bank Negara Malaysia Museum and Art Gallery, Kuala Lumpur.*

*The artist's proclivity for illustrating scenes of yesteryear is endearing and evokes a flood of memories, evident in Long's pieces. His landscapes boasts explorations of colours, contours, crevices and shapes, and translates his adoration for scenes onto canvas.*



**Long Thien Shih**  
Kampung Hailam, 1963  
Watercolour on paper, 40 x 63 cm

## **Kampung Hailam, 1963**

This painting, entitled Kampung Hailam, 1963 is especially endearing as Long Thien Shih's have relatives who live in Kampung Hailam in Port Klang and Pulau Ketam. The artist used to spend his school holidays there with them during his childhood. "When I began to learn drawing, I noticed many artists have been painting fishing villages using the oil and watercolour medium," said Long. This inspired him to incorporate similar subjects as part of his works, and more so, because these subjects and scenes are endearing, as well as familiar to the artist.

"During my formative years as an artist, from 1960 to 1964, I painted many fishing villages in all sorts of styles, and initially, I took cues from veteran artists like Cheong Soo Peng or Lim Cheng Hoe or Yong M n San, but later I develop my own style by using palette knives to render lines in watercolour, which was never done by any one before me. I know the essential features of the fishing village and boats, which I would then employ the palette knife with watercolour easily to render the subjects in my own way," said Long about his style of painting.



# KLAS ART AUCTION

## SUNDAY, 26<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2023

Ever devoted to bring art enthusiasts the best of modern and contemporary art, from the local, regional and international sphere, KLAS PLUS, under the banner of KL Lifestyle Art Space (KLAS) is set to host its inaugural art auction of the year. Scheduled for Feb 26, 2023 at its gallery at 150 Jalan Maarof, Bangsar, the modern and contemporary art auction features an array of Malaysian and regional artworks by masters of the craft.

Art connoisseurs can look forward to works by big guns such as Datuk Chuah Thean Teng, Khalil Ibrahim, Kwan Chin, Ismail Abdul Latiff and many more. Patrons can also look forward to works by Indonesian artist Raka Suasto, Indian artists Laxman Pai, M. Sivanesan, and the late Sunil Daswill also be showcased during the auction. Feast your senses to these beautiful works and if you're lucky, it could be yours.



**Ismail Mat Hussin**  
Weaving Silk, 2004  
Watercolour on paper, 56 x 76 cm  
**RM 3,500 - 5,000**

### Ismail Mat Hussin, Weaving Silk, 2004

It's well established that Ismail Mat Hussin has a knack for depicting scenes, infusing colours, wonder and nostalgia onto canvas. He is one of the prominent artists who incorporates batik into his paintings and infuses his entire being into his work, making the feel as if they know the artist himself just by looking at the painting. It is both endearing and warm. This endearing work takes one on a journey to the rural kampungs where ladies make a living off weaving fabric. This piece presents tranquility, reminisces the past and daily experiences of people in the East Coast. The calm and soothing earth tones are something Ismail Mat Hussin has a proclivity for, using them often in his works.



**Ismail Mat Hussin**  
Mandi Bersama Ibu, 2004  
Watercolour on paper, 56 x 76 cm  
**RM 16,000 - 25,000**

### Ismail Mat Hussin, Mandi Bersama Ibu, 2004

Born in 1938, in Pantai Sabak, Kota Bharu, Kelantan, Ismail Mat Hussin's art depicts everyday rural scenes from the East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia. He developed an interest in painting at 12 and took up weekly art painting classes at Padang Garong Malay School under the tutelage of Cikgu Nik Mahmud Idris between 1954 and 1955. In 1968, he took the plunge and took up painting full-time. At that time, experimentation with batik painting among artists in Malaysia was gaining momentum. This endearing piece by Ismail Mat Hussin embodies exactly what its title suggests, which is translated to bath time with mother. Two female figures are depicted donning sarongs and a small boy is illustrated naked in his bathroom, awaiting his mother to give him a bath. Ismail's batik paintings may be found in the art collections of the National Art Gallery Kuala Lumpur, Petronas, Bank Negara Malaysia, ESSO Malaysia and Maybank among others, including a clutch full of notable individuals.



**Kwan Chin**  
Sunshine Girl, 1998  
Batik, 74 x 74 cm  
**RM 5,000 - 9,000**

#### Kwan Chin, Sunshine Girl, 1998

Kwan Chin has a penchant for the Malaysian country life, setting and people. The lines and details of the batik are very clear and evident here, proving to the audience how much of an expert Kwan Chin is with his detailing when it comes to batik. The lovely display of colours sets a cheerful, sunny mood for the viewer, at the same time showcasing the complexity of batikmaking. 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.



**Seah Kim Joo**  
Dayak Girl, 1970's  
Batik, 63.5 x 45.5 cm  
**RM 3,500 - 7,000**



**Kwan Chin**  
Mother & Children / Three Siblings  
Batik, 29 x 28 cm / 30 x 29 cm  
**RM 2,000 - 5,000**

#### Kwan Chin, Mother & Children / Three Siblings

Featuring two pieces of paintings within one lot, Kwan Chin concocts a calm, peaceful atmosphere in the Malaysian suburbs, the first, a mother with a flower adorning her hair with her children and the second, siblings of three in an embrace to show their affinity for one another. Here, Kwan Chin capture the relationships of family and the simple life of yesteryears, together with their closeness to nature.



**Tay Chee Toh**  
Resting 2, 1970  
Batik, 49 x 75 cm  
**RM 8,000 - 18,000**

#### Tay Chee Toh, Resting 2

Painter, sculptor and Cultural Medallion recipient Tay Chee Toh has been creating art for almost half a century. Tay's artistic practices is driven by his consistent quest to challenge himself and to advance fresh forms of artistic expressions. Tay's artistic prowess is evident in this body of work. Here, dark, vivid colours are employed throughout the batik work, and in Tay's manner, he illustrates two subjects adorned in the traditional sarong and top resting. Seeking solace, they rest on a tikar and use an umbrella to create a shade from the sun. The subjects are portrayed in a unique juxtaposition of reality and fantasy.

#### Seah Kim Joo, Dayak Girl, 1970's

Seah Kim Joo was introduced to the process of traditional batik-making very early in his career as an artist through the environment of his hometown. In the 1950s, when the Penang-based artist Chuah Thean Teng first pioneered painting using the batik medium, Seah Kim Joo was then drawn even more into batik painting. This made Seah a passionate 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. His work entitled 'Dayak' uses soothing tones of the sun, accompanied by highlights of nature as two-dimensional shapes overlay and fades into one another when met.



**Seah Kim Joo**  
Fisherfolks  
Batik, 90 x 60 cm  
**RM 10,000 - 18,000**

#### Seah Kim Joo, Fisherfolks

It was Seah Kim Joo's hometown in Terengganu that exposed him to batik in his early days. His passion for batik painting only grew in the 1950s, when the Penang-based artist Chuah Thean Teng first pioneered painting using the batik medium. 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 are about 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, 'Fisherfolks' 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.



**Tan Choon Ghee**  
Mosque in Penang, 1982  
Watercolour on rice paper, 46 x 68.5 cm  
**RM 5,000 - 10,000**

#### Tan Choon Ghee, Mosque in Penang, 1982

Tan Choon Ghee was a master in capturing buildings, shops, landscapes and tiny, miniscule details. By infusing the Chinese classical paintings' calligraphic brushstrokes and the British watercolour approach, Tan Choon Ghee created pieces that are ethereal, desirable and unmitigated in its exquisiteness. With gentle brushstrokes and the way the ink blends into the white background gives it that faint, misty glow that provides his pieces with an air of nostalgia. Tan Choon Ghee was considered one of the most established Malaysian artists.



**Mohd Akhir Ahmad**  
Ada yang Tertinggal, 2013  
Mixed media on canvas, 91 x 91 cm  
**RM 1,000 - 2,500**

#### Mohd Akhir Ahmad, Ada yang Tertinggal, 2013

Even before one can discern what the subject truly is, this painting gives off the air of enigma, of something kept secret and hidden. As the eyes roam around the canvas, the understanding that comes to mind is it is of a bed, a mink shawl or coat is tossed onto the bed of rumpled sheets and rumpled pillows. The duvet droops over to the vivid, red and black carpet where a blink-and-miss-it pearl earring lay forgotten on the floor. It immediately hints at a lovers' rendezvous, a late night and sordid affair and a lovers' meeting. In a shadowy yet realistic way, the artist paints a piece that is able to create mood and tell a story without bringing in too many subjects, relaying the message with perception and technique.



**Tong Chin Sye**  
Market in Boat Quay, Singapore  
Watercolour on paper, 37 x 51 cm  
**RM 10,000 - 18,000**

#### Tong Chin Sye, Market in Boat Quay, Singapore

Born in Singapore, Tong Chin Sye is a renowned multi-media artist trained in both Western and Chinese art. His dynamic oeuvre includes watercolour, oil, Chinese ink and mixed media paintings. Chin Sye was previously a part-time lecturer in Western Art at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and has participated in numerous local and overseas exhibitions over the years. He clinched the first prize in the Port of Singapore Authority Open Art Competition in 1987 and represented Singapore at the Flemish Watercolour Days held at Zaventem, Belgium in 1988.



**Koeh Sia Yong**  
Market Scene, 2005  
Oil on canvas, 50 x 60 cm  
**RM 13,000 - 22,000**

#### Koeh Sia Yong, Market Scene 2005

Born in 1938, Koeh Sia Yong is a second-generation Singaporean artist who has dedicated his life to creating spectacular art capturing his environment and its occupants. An acclaimed artist, Koeh's works are highly sought after by collectors, including the Singapore Art Museum, National Museum of Singapore, UOB and Hong Kong & Shanghai Banking Corporation. Nanyang Academy of Fine Art graduate Koeh was a key member of the now-defunct Equator Society, whose members promoted social realism in Singapore and often produced work that drew attention to the everyday conditions of the working class and the poor. Koeh has been an illustrator and artist for over 50 years. Known for his unique artistic style and excellent painting techniques, he is one of Singapore's most outstanding artists today. His work is widely exhibited, and he is involved in the commercial development of art through magazines, art catalogues and political cartoons. The artist is most known for his oil painting depictions of rich culture scenes of Southeast Asia through bold and unrestrained brushstrokes.



**Raka Suasto**  
Bali 1, 2006  
Mixed media on paper, 46 x 34.5 cm  
**RM 1,000 - 3,500**

#### Raka Suasto, Bali 1, 2006

Raka Suasto is an Indonesian artist known for his unique blend of traditional and contemporary styles. His artworks often depict scenes from everyday life, using a vibrant colour palette and bold brushstrokes to create dynamic compositions. One of his most recognisable series is the "Kampung" series, which features scenes from rural villages in Indonesia. In these paintings, Suasto captures the bustling energy of village life, with people going about their daily activities set against a backdrop of lush greenery and traditional architecture. The use of bold colours and thick brushstrokes gives these paintings a sense of movement and vitality.



#### Raka Suasto, Bali 4, 2005

Overall, Raka Suasto's artworks are known for their bright colors and dynamic compositions, capturing the energy and vitality of everyday life in Indonesia. His unique blend of traditional and contemporary styles has made him one of the most sought-after artists in Indonesia.

**Raka Suasto**  
Bali 4, 2005  
Mixed media on paper, 27 x 37.5 cm  
**RM 1,000 - 3,500**



**Chen Wen Hsi**  
Two Gibbons  
Chinese ink and watercolour on paper, 33 x 44 cm  
**RM 28,000 - 45,000**

#### Chen Wen Hsi, Two Gibbons

The black of the Chinese ink in Chen Wen Hsi's works is sometimes accompanied by subtle shades of brown that make up tree trunks or the skin of gibbons showing through black fur. Oftentimes, dabs and strokes of the occasional green of leaves, interrupt the monochromatic aspects of the works. All these muted tones come together to suffuse the ink works with a harmonious feel. It is easy to get lost in Chen Wen Hsi's skilful handling of the brush in depicting the gibbons' fur. The artist alternates between fine and broad brushstrokes as well as between wet and dry ones, all to different effects. Sometimes, all these different brush strokes can be found on the body of a single gibbon, enhancing its three-dimensional quality. At other times, they are applied separately on different gibbons.

#### Chuah Thean Teng, Bullock Cart Carriage, 1970's

Dato' Chuah Thean Teng was born in China in 1914, where he studied at the Amoy Art School. Teng first started in this medium in 1953 and therefore he can be considered the father of Batik Painting in Malaysia. He says, "Art is the vision of the artist, his creation, imagination and expression reflecting the artist's many degrees of feeling. It is an interplay of both emotional and visual expression where the illusions created convey the statements across. And through the different modes of expressions, we are compelled to seek some standard of value to enable us to distinguish between them. This distinction is called the transformation of things." According to Frank Sullivan, "His (referring to Dato' Chuah Thean Teng) productivity in batik painting is enormous never satisfied, he is always experimenting, seeking to give new depth and range to his batik art."

**Chua Thean Teng**  
Bullock Cart Carriage, 1970's  
Batik, 59 x 44 cm  
**RM 14,000 - 22,000**



**Chuah Thean Teng**  
Datuk Mother and Child - Durian Seller (1970's)  
Batik, 89 x 61 cm  
**RM 45,000 - 80,000**



**Chuah Thean Teng**  
Datuk Mother and Child - Durian Seller (1970's)  
Batik, 89 x 61 cm  
**RM 45,000 - 80,000**



**Yusof Ghani**  
Siri Ombak  
Acrylic on canvas, 34.5 x 45 cm  
**RM 3,500 - 7,000**

### Chuah Thean Teng, Mother and Child-Durian Seller (1970's)

Datuk Chuah Thean Teng is a renowned Malaysian artist, known for his striking batik paintings. His "Mother and Child" series is one of his most iconic works, which is characterised by its tender and emotional depiction of the bond between a mother and her child. The series features a variety of compositions, but all of them depict the intimate relationship between a mother and her child in a serene and peaceful setting. The mother is often shown holding her child close, with a look of love and tenderness on her face. The children, on the other hand, are shown with a look of contentment and trust in their mother. In this painting, the mother, who is a durian seller, appears to have her son strapped to her back, while she tends to customers.

### Khoo Sui Hoe, Two Standing Between Leaves, Jan 1979

Khoo Sui Hoe was one of the earliest and courageous people who took the plunge of becoming a full-time artist. Through his Alpha Singapore Gallery and Alpha Utara Gallery in Penang, he has played a vital role in nurturing other artists. Khoo Sui Hoe has also won various awards, among which are the First Prize for the 1965 Malaysian art competition, an Honourable Mention in Salon Malaysia 1969 and the Asian Arts Now Awards (twice) given by the Las Vegas Museum.

'Two Standing Between Leaves' is a sublime body of work with two silhouettes of subjects in the epicentre are illustrated amid nature, represented the leaves. Peace also seems to be the underlining theme with the artists use of green and his hallmark of rounded lips on the subject.

### Yusof Ghani, Siri Ombak

Aptly named the Ombak Series, it depicts a mighty and wrathful rolling waves. One can observe the intricacies in the movements of the waves as it gains in dimension and about to unfold itself onto the shore. The waves represent the most recent three phases of Yusof Ghani's journey, namely: destruction, humanity and awakening. This series brings us back to his roots in abstract expressionism. His earlier works showcase his curiosity and search for something more spiritual through the series of 'Tari', 'Topeng', 'Wayang', 'Segerak', 'Hijau', 'Biring' and 'Wajah'. Yusof Ghani is a painter who always gives depth to his paintings by equipping them with an underlying meaning.



**Chung Cheng Sun**  
Indian Lady - Mother and Child, 1975  
Ink on paper, 136 x 65 cm  
**RM 5,000 - 12,000**

### Chung Chen Sun, Indian Lady-Mother and Child, 1975

Chung Chen Sun, born in 1935 in Malacca, is an internationally famed and recognised artist as well as art academician. He graduated from Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, Singapore under the tutelage of artists such as Chen Wen Hsi, Chen Zhong Rui and Cheong Soo Pieng. In 1964, Chung obtained a masters degree in Public Administration and Management from Los Angeles University. He is an artist and educator who is well-versed in the melting pot of multiculturalism. The artist is widely regarded as the "Father of Malaysian Modern Art Education" and "The Father of Malaysian Modern Ink Painting". Chung's forte lies in ink painting and he is very diverse in his subject matters, creating works of landscape, figures and still life. This particular ink iteration sees a subject clad in traditional Indian attire called the saree, and is seen tending or playing with her child.