

*"Aqueous Waves" Acrylic on canvas 182 x 182 cm*



# Anthony Poon

THE PRECISION OF ABSTRACTION IN SINGAPOREAN ART

Anthony Poon Kin Soon was born in 1945 in Singapore, during a period of dramatic political and social change in the region. The post-war years and the rise of national consciousness provided a complex backdrop to his early artistic growth.

From canvas to monumental public sculptures, his career spanned over four decades, and his legacy endures as a cornerstone of Southeast Asian modernism.

Initially, Poon attended the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA), an institution known for fostering a generation of artists who would come to define Singapore's modernist movement.

At NAFA, he was exposed to the Nanyang Style, characterized by a fusion of Chinese ink traditions with Western techniques and Southeast Asian themes.

While many of his contemporaries embraced figurative painting and depictions of local scenes, Poon would chart a different course. He had a distinct affinity for structure and order — elements that would later dominate his artistic vision.

Determined to broaden his horizons, Poon furthered his studies at the Byam Shaw School of Art in London from 1968 to 1971. This time in the UK was instrumental in shaping his formalist sensibilities.

Immersed in the theories of European abstraction and exposed to the works of constructivists and color field painters, Poon became increasingly interested in the purity of line, the rhythm of form, and the play of light and shadow. His London years catalyzed his transition into the realm of non-representational art.

Upon returning to Singapore in the early 1970s, Poon embarked on what would become his most iconic body of work — the Wave Series.

This series was a radical departure from conventional painting at the time. It introduced sculpted reliefs made from shaped canvases, meticulously constructed and painted to create the illusion of undulating movement.

Using primary colors and clean geometric lines, Poon's wave paintings were visually rhythmic, bordering on optical illusion.

The works invited the viewer to move, to interact with the changing perception of depth and surface. The sculptural quality of the shaped canvas challenged the traditional notion of two-dimensional painting, placing Poon squarely at the forefront of Southeast Asian abstraction.

Unlike some contemporaries who shifted toward more politically driven or narrative art forms, Poon remained resolutely abstract. His commitment to non-representation was not a retreat from social engagement but a philosophical stance. In Poon's worldview, beauty, structure, and discipline were inherently meaningful. His work offered a refuge of calm and clarity, a counterpoint to the chaos of modern life.

Over the years, Poon exhibited widely in Singapore, the region, and beyond. His works were shown in the 1973 São Paulo Biennale, and he represented Singapore at the 1983 Venice Biennale, a significant moment that placed the country on the global art map.

By the 1980s and 1990s, Poon expanded his practice beyond canvas. His exploration into three-dimensional forms and public sculpture further cemented his role as a leading figure in contemporary Southeast Asian art.

Sculpture, for Poon, was a natural extension of painting. Just as his wave paintings had a tactile, sculptural quality, his freestanding works maintained a strong connection to geometric purity. Works like *Success* (1995), situated in front of the UOB Plaza, exemplified his ability to translate abstraction into monumental form. Here, sweeping curves and interlocking shapes conveyed motion and growth, aligning perfectly with the corporate and civic ideals of modern Singapore.

Another notable work, *Harmony* (1990), located at the National Library (former location), used interlaced forms to symbolize balance and unity. Poon's public sculptures were not just decorative embellishments — they were thoughtful, site-specific interventions that engaged with their environments and communities.

Poon's work is often described as "mathematical" — not in a sterile or formulaic way, but in its pursuit of precision and order. He approached each composition as a carefully calculated equation, where color, form, and space needed to achieve perfect balance. His mastery of the shaped canvas and his architectural awareness gave his works a timeless, almost meditative quality.

In the story of Singapore's modern art development, few names stand as prominently as Anthony Poon. Known for his disciplined exploration of geometric abstraction and his seamless blending of form, color, and structure, Poon was a pioneer whose art echoed the evolution of a young nation striving to define its own identity.

Anthony Poon passed away in 2006 at the age of 61, but his legacy lives on in more than just his artworks. His disciplined approach to abstraction paved the way for a new generation of Southeast Asian artists to embrace non-figurative forms. In a region where much of the earlier art was narrative or didactic, Poon's work offered a new vocabulary — one based on formalism, aesthetics, and the sublime power of order.

The Singapore Art Museum and other institutions have preserved his legacy through retrospectives and archival work, ensuring that his contribution to the nation's cultural development is not forgotten. Younger artists who now experiment with installation, kinetic art, or digital forms continue to find inspiration in Poon's clarity of vision and technical rigor.

In today's increasingly noisy and fractured world, Poon's commitment to purity and order feels almost radical. His art invites viewers to slow down, to observe the nuances of form and color, and to find meaning in simplicity. As contemporary art increasingly grapples with complexity, identity, and disruption, revisiting Poon's work offers a reminder of the meditative and contemplative power of abstraction.

Anthony Poon's journey was one of dedication, innovation, and quiet mastery. In a career that defied trends and resisted easy categorization, he developed a body of work that continues to resonate with audiences across generations.

# KLAS Art Auction

A PREVIEW OF EXCEPTIONAL ARTWORKS AT KLAS

Get ready for an extraordinary auction at KLAS, where a curated selection of remarkable paintings will take center stage. This exclusive event showcases a diverse range of masterpieces, each with its own unique story and artistic significance. Whether you're a seasoned collector or an art enthusiast, these highlights offer a glimpse into the stunning works that will soon be up for bidding. Stay tuned as we unveil the captivating pieces that define this highly anticipated auction.



## YUSOF GHANI

Siri Wayang-Ketulan II, 1997/98  
Oil on canvas 122 x 92 cm

Latiff Mohidin, a prominent Malaysian artist, has explored the theme of landscapes throughout his illustrious career, producing several notable series that delve into the abstraction of natural forms. His "Landscape" series, for instance, reflects his analytical studies of plant life, mountains, and beaches, translating these elements into abstract compositions. One such work, "Landscape (2)," exemplifies this approach by presenting an abstract interpretation of nature without a definite reference point.

In 2014, Latiff introduced the "New Landscape Series," marking a continuation of his exploration into abstract landscapes. This series was showcased in a solo exhibition at The Edge Galerie, further cementing his reputation for innovative interpretations of natural scenery.

Following the "New Landscape Series," Latiff unveiled the "Seascape Series" in 2014 and "Modern Sculptures" in 2016, both presented in solo exhibitions at The Edge Galerie.

The Wayang series by Yusof Ghani is a powerful exploration of identity, tradition, and the theatrical essence of human existence. Deeply rooted in Southeast Asian cultural motifs—particularly wayang kulit (shadow puppetry) and traditional theatre—this evocative body of work captures the spirit of performance and ritual through abstract expressionist forms. Created between 1996 and 1998, Wayang marks a dynamic evolution from Yusof's earlier Topeng (Mask) series. While Topeng emphasized the static symbolism of identity through masks, Wayang steps into a more fluid, expressive dimension, where gesture and movement take center stage.

The term wayang, meaning "shadow" or "imagination" in Malay, refers to a traditional form of puppet theatre widely performed across Southeast Asia. Drawing inspiration from this age-old art, Yusof reimagines it with bold brushwork, layered compositions, and vivid color palettes. His paintings feature totemic, abstracted figures in motion—often appearing to interact, clash, or perform—mirroring the emotional complexity and layered roles that define human nature and social dynamics.

Employing a non-linear narrative style, Yusof allows form, color, and gesture to speak louder than literal storytelling. The works showcase elongated limbs, swirling lines, and overlapping silhouettes that evoke the fluidity of identity and the performative roles we adopt in life. This series also highlights the artist's long-standing interest in theatre, film, and traditional performance, fused seamlessly with his background in modern abstraction.



## ABDUL LATIFF MOHIDIN

Green Landscape II, 2019  
Oil on canvas 122 x 153 cm



## KHOO SUI HOE

4 Clouds Landscape, 1971  
Oil on canvas 87 x 100 cm

Yusof Ghani's Biring series is a powerful exploration of movement, energy, and emotion, drawing inspiration from the spirited nature of gamecocks (biring in Malay). Known for his abstract expressionist style, Ghani captures the essence of struggle, power, and survival through bold brushstrokes, dynamic compositions, and layered textures.

The Biring series is often interpreted as a metaphor for human conflict, resilience, and the raw energy of life itself. The depiction of gamecocks in motion suggests combat and competition, reflecting both the physical and psychological battles individuals face. Through a mix of chaotic yet controlled strokes, Ghani conveys a sense of tension, aggression, and survival instincts.

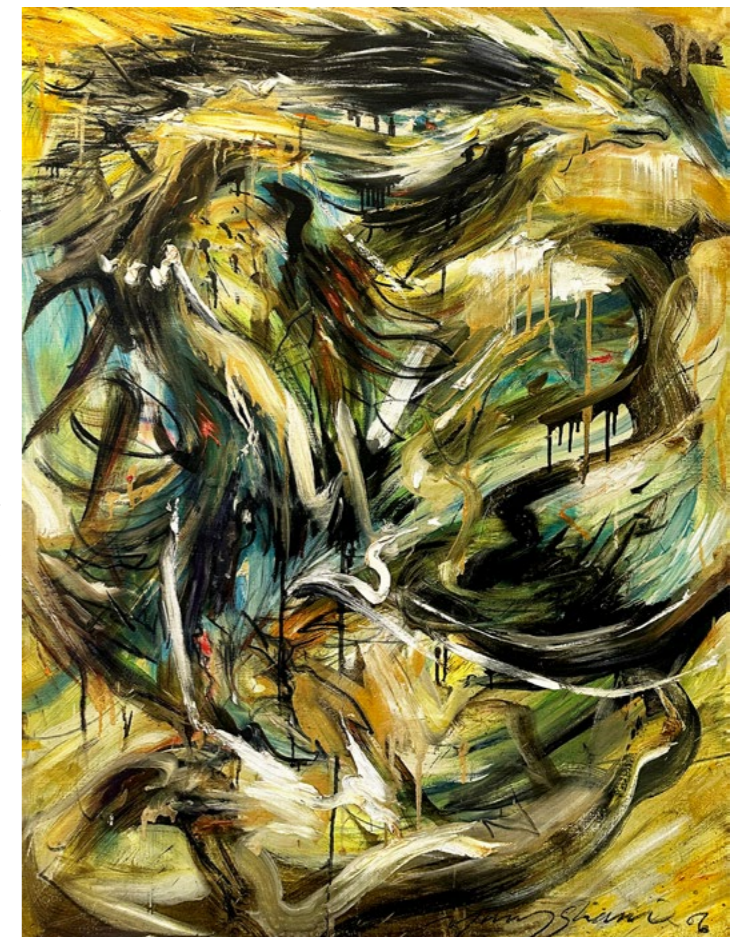
The use of sweeping, gestural strokes creates movement and intensity, a signature of Ghani's artistic approach. Deep earthy tones—browns, yellows, greens, and blacks—are contrasted with vibrant accents of red and white, enhancing the painting's visual impact. The buildup of paint, drips, and overlapping forms adds depth, giving the artwork a raw and organic quality.

Ghani's Biring series shares thematic similarities with his earlier Siri Tari (Dance Series), where he explored the fluidity of movement and human expression. While Siri Tari focused on the grace of dance, Biring shifts toward a more intense and primal representation of struggle. The artist's journey through various series—ranging from socio-political commentaries to explorations of culture and identity—demonstrates his evolving artistic vision.

Khoo Sui Hoe is a prominent Malaysian contemporary artist known for his distinctive, dreamlike style and significant contributions to Southeast Asian modern art. Born in 1939 in Port Weld, Perak, Malaysia, Khoo studied at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts in Singapore before furthering his education in the United States at the Pratt Graphic Center in New York.

His work is often characterized by vivid colors, abstract human figures, and poetic landscapes that evoke emotional depth and philosophical reflection. Khoo's paintings blend elements of surrealism, expressionism, and symbolism, often portraying themes of solitude, childhood, memory, and the human condition. His visual language is uniquely his own, marked by a quiet introspection and a lyrical, almost meditative quality.

Khoo Sui Hoe has held numerous solo exhibitions across Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and the United States, and his works are part of many esteemed public and private collections. He is considered one of Malaysia's leading modernist painters and continues to be an influential figure in the region's art scene.



## YUSOF GHANI

Biring Series XI, 2006  
Oil on canvas 122 x 91 cm



### CHUAH THEAN TENG, DATO

Penang Malay Kampong Scene, 1970's  
Batik 87 x 39 cm

This exquisite batik painting by Dato' Chuah Thean Teng captures the vibrant and rustic charm of a traditional Malay kampong (village) in Penang. Rendered in rich earth tones, warm browns, and deep reds, the composition presents a detailed and lively portrayal of rural life, showcasing the daily activities of the villagers.

At the center, a large tree with intricate patterns spreads its roots and branches, symbolizing nature's connection to the community. Surrounding it are various figures engaged in traditional practices—tapping rubber, harvesting coconuts, tending to livestock, and socializing under the shade of stilthouses.



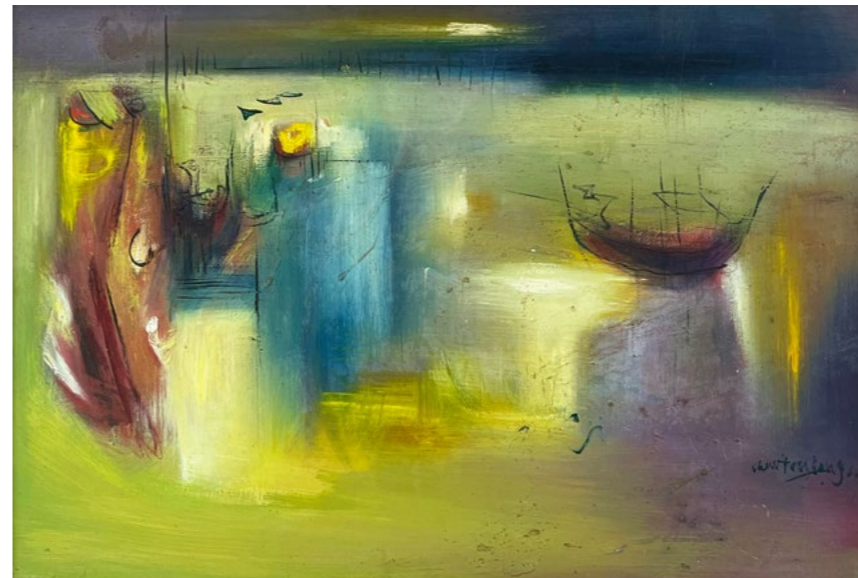
### KHALIL IBRAHIM

1987  
Watercolour on paper 19.5 x 20 cm

This delicate watercolor painting by Khalil Ibrahim, created in 1987, beautifully captures a coastal scene infused with his signature impressionistic style. The composition portrays a group of figures engaging in daily activities on a sandy beach, set against a backdrop of swaying palm trees, distant boats, and an inviting seascape.

The artist's use of soft, translucent washes creates a sense of lightness and atmosphere, giving the painting a dreamlike quality. The figures, dressed in traditional attire with bright headscarves and sarongs, appear to be fishermen preparing for their work, possibly setting up or returning from a day at sea. Their poses and interactions convey camaraderie and a deep connection to their environment.

Khalil Ibrahim, known for his depictions of rural Malaysian life, often celebrated the harmony between people and nature. This piece exemplifies his mastery of watercolor, where fluid brushstrokes and a warm, earthy palette bring life to an everyday moment. The scene evokes a sense of nostalgia, reflecting the simplicity and beauty of traditional coastal life in Malaysia.



### CHEW TENG BENG

At Dusk, 1966  
Oil on canvas 61 x 88 cm

"At Dusk" (1966) by Chew Teng Beng is a deeply atmospheric oil-on-canvas painting, measuring 59 x 87 cm. The artwork captures the quiet, reflective mood of twilight through a rich blend of abstract forms and expressive brushwork. The composition transitions smoothly from warm, earthy tones on the left—rich reds, yellows, and ochres—to cooler hues of blue and green at the center and right, creating a visual journey that mirrors the fading light of dusk. Above, deep blues and greys suggest the onset of nightfall, setting a contemplative tone across the canvas.

The painting is marked by a sense of fluidity and emotional depth. Chew Teng Beng's technique blends abstraction with subtle figuration. On the right side, faint outlines of a boat or ships are delicately sketched, floating on what appears to be a glowing body of water. The use of thin, linear strokes gives these elements a ghostly, transient feel. To the left, loosely defined shapes may represent figures or architectural forms—perhaps a dock or shoreline—imbuing the scene with a subtle human presence.

"Siri Segerak – Nightwalkers II" (2005) by Yusof Ghani is a powerful chalk and charcoal on canvas composition, measuring 125 x 110.5 cm, that captures movement, tension, and emotion through abstracted figuration. Rendered almost entirely in shades of black, white, and gray, the piece exhibits Ghani's signature energetic linework and gestural strokes, which together create a dynamic interplay of motion and form.

The artwork presents fragmented, overlapping human figures—likely dancers or performers—caught in the midst of expressive, almost chaotic movement. Their limbs twist and intersect with raw, angular lines that blur the boundaries between bodies and space.

The dark background, streaked with vertical textures and layered shading, enhances the sense of depth and urgency, while the luminous white highlights carve out forms and suggest momentum. Despite the abstraction, there's a visceral sense of physicality—bodies strained, lunging, collapsing, or rising—imbued with a dramatic intensity.

The title, "Nightwalkers II," adds a poetic undertone, suggesting figures emerging or moving through darkness, possibly navigating inner or collective struggles. It ties closely with the broader Siri Segerak (Movement Series), in which Ghani explored themes of conflict, resistance, and the human condition through kinetic abstraction.



### YUSOF GHANI

Siri Segerak - Nightwalkers II, 2005  
Chalk & Charcoal on canvas 122 x 107 cm

## Previous Auction Results

We are pleased to share the results from our most recent auction, which took place on 23rd March 2025. The event brought together an enthusiastic group of collectors, art lovers, and bidders, resulting in a dynamic and successful sale. Below are the highlights and outcomes from this memorable auction.



**ABDUL LATIFF MOHIDIN**  
Blue Pago Pago - New York, 1969  
Mixed media on paper 16 x 16 cm  
**SOLD RM 31,360**



**TAJUDDIN ISMAIL, DATO**  
Balinese Garden, 2003  
Acrylic on canvas 188 x 182 cm  
**SOLD RM 56,000**



**YUSOF GHANI**  
Siri Tari III 1984/85  
Oil on canvas 163 x 219 cm  
**SOLD RM 806,400**



**CHUAH THEAN TENG, DATO**  
Mother and Child, 1960's  
Batik 55 x 43.8 cm  
**SOLD RM 42,560**



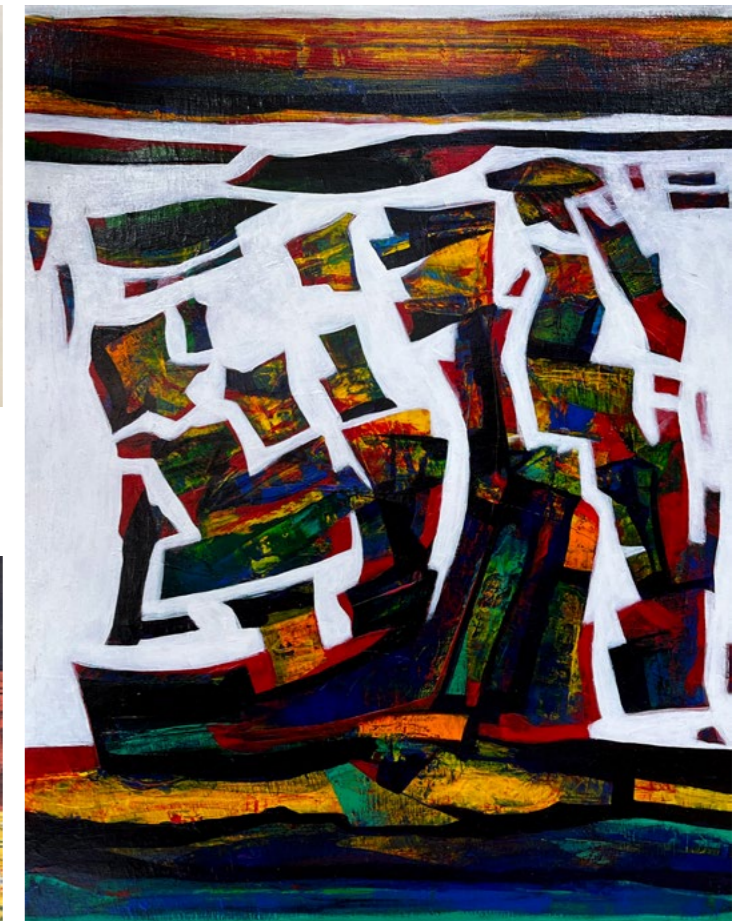
**SYED AHMAD JAMAL, DATUK**  
Hijrah/Hegira, 1999  
Acrylic on canvas 122 x 213 cm  
**SOLD RM 414,400**



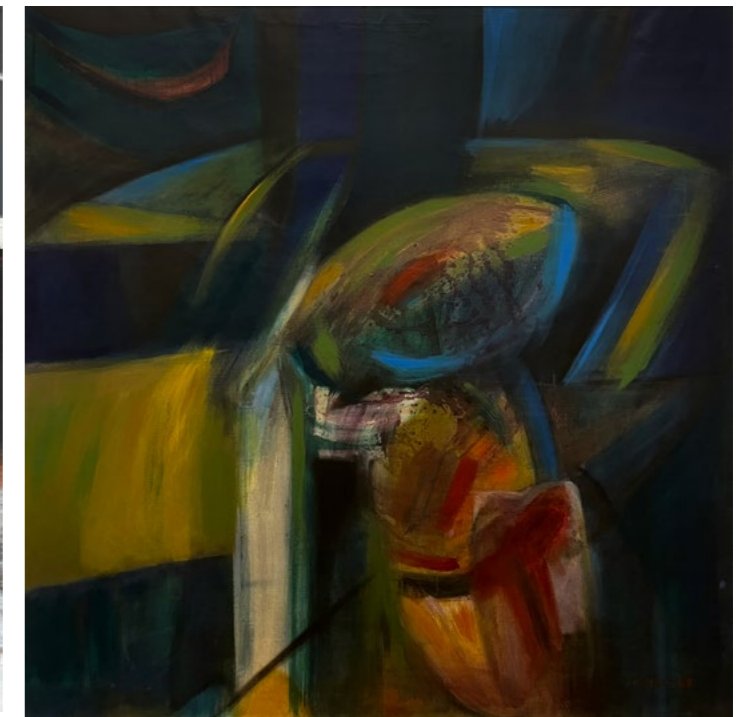
**KWAN CHIN**  
Sunday Afternoon, 2002  
Batik 85 x 142 cm  
**SOLD RM 10,080**



**AWANG DAMIT AHMAD**  
Iraga Jejak Waktu (Siri II), 2010  
Mixed media on canvas 120 x 120 cm  
**SOLD RM 42,560**



**SHARIFAH FATIMAH, DATO'**  
Image SF 2, 2012  
Acrylic on canvas 72 x 56 cm  
**SOLD RM 23,520**



**YEOH JIN LENG**  
Human Rot, 1969  
Oil on canvas 100 x 100 cm  
**SOLD RM 112,000**