

39th UOB Painting of the Year launched in solidarity with ASEAN artists; UOB extends reach amid COVID-19 restrictions through digital submissions and virtual UOB Art Gallery

Singapore, 12 August 2020 – United Overseas Bank (UOB) today announced that artists in Southeast Asia will be able to submit their entries for the 39th UOB Painting of the Year (POY) competition digitally given the COVID-19 restrictions. The annual UOB POY competition, Singapore’s longest-running and one of Southeast Asia’s most prestigious annual art awards is open to artists in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand.

The UOB POY is the Bank’s flagship art programme that aims to uncover and to nurture artistic talent across the region. This year, the Bank is inviting emerging and established artists to share their impressions on the theme of ‘Solidarity’ and the importance of staying united in the face of adversity. UOB hopes to draw out artwork that showcases the resilience of the human spirit in overcoming COVID-19-related challenges.

Mr Wee Ee Cheong, Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, UOB said, “The process of making art can often be a solitary experience but the result of the artist’s effort can connect people across time, geography and language. In our current situation, bringing people together through art and fostering a sense of solidarity within the community helps lift our spirits and strengthen our resolve. As Southeast Asian artists will be able to submit their artwork digitally, we hope more of them will step forward to help us see through the current challenges and focus on the brighter days ahead.”

UOB POY submissions will open from 12 August to 11 October 2020. The winners will be announced at a virtual award ceremony in November. There, UOB will also announce the regional winner of the prestigious UOB Southeast Asian Painting of the Year award for the artist with the most outstanding work. More competition details can be found at www.UOBandArt.com.

Supporting artists during COVID-19

The UOB Art Gallery, which features the works of the competition's winners, is now also a virtual one. The online Gallery will enable UOB POY artists to connect with a broader audience and to reach more potential buyers with art exhibitions being cancelled and galleries seeing fewer visitors as people avoid public places¹.

Ms Lilian Chong, Executive Director, Group Strategic Communications and Brand, UOB, said, "Artists play a vital role in creating art that shapes how we view, feel and think about the world around us and it is important that we continue to support them, especially during this challenging time. By taking the UOB Art Gallery online we hope that it will not only drive greater interest in the artists' collection but also provide the community with more avenues to experience art as they stay safe at home."

The Bank will also promote the artworks exhibited at the virtual UOB Art Gallery through its social media channels and other online marketing initiatives such as electronic direct mail.

The first UOB POY alumni to be featured at the virtual UOB Art Gallery is Ms Stefanie Hauger, winner of the 2013 UOB Southeast Asian Painting of the Year, top winner of 2013 UOB POY (Singapore), and 2019 UOB POY (Singapore) Bronze Award, Established Artist Category.

Her works will be featured at the UOB Art Gallery as well as www.UOBandArt.com till 6 September 2020. Thereafter, the gallery will show the works of Ms Ho Seok Kee, 2018 UOB POY (Singapore) Silver Award, Established Artist Category followed by lecturer and artist, Mr Wong Tze Chau, top winner of the 2019 UOB Painting of the Year (Singapore).

– Ends –

Note to media:

About UOB and Art

¹ According to the COVID-19 outbreak in Singapore - Statistics & Facts report by Statista, as of July 7, 2020, 80 percent of Singaporean respondents stated that they are avoiding public places during the COVID-19 outbreak. Source: <https://www.statista.com/topics/6066/coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak-in-singapore/>

UOB's involvement in art started in the 1970s with its collection of paintings by Singapore artists. Today, the UOB Art Collection has more than 2,400 artworks, made up primarily of paintings from established and emerging Southeast Asian artists.

UOB plays an active role in communities across the region, most notably through its long-term commitment to art. As part of this, the Bank has led a wide range of visual arts programmes, partnerships and outreach initiatives across the region.

The Bank's flagship art programme is the UOB POY Competition, which was started in 1982 to recognise Southeast Asia's artists and to offer them the opportunity to showcase their works to the wider community. The competition was extended to Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand.

The competition has cultivated and advanced the careers of many artists in Singapore. Notable among them are Mr Goh Beng Kwan (1982 winner), and the late Mr Anthony Poon (1983 winner) and Mr Chua Ek Kay (1991 winner), who received the Singapore Cultural Medallion, Singapore's most distinguished art award.

The competition has also recognised talents from across the region through the UOB Southeast Asian POY award. Previous winners include Mr Suvi Wahyudianto from Indonesia in 2018, Mr Sukit Choosri from Thailand in 2017, Mr Gatot Indrajati from Indonesia in 2016, Mr Anggar Prasetyo from Indonesia in 2015, Mr Antonius Subiyanto from Indonesia in 2014 and Ms Stefanie Hauger from Singapore in 2013.

Together with past UOB POY winners, UOB also runs art workshops for underprivileged and special needs children regularly. At these workshops, the young learn art techniques from art professionals and award-winning artists.

In recognition of the Bank's long-term commitment to art, UOB was presented with the National Arts Council's Distinguished Patron of the Arts Award for the 16th consecutive year in 2020.

About United Overseas Bank

United Overseas Bank Limited (UOB) is a leading bank in Asia with a global network of more than 500 offices in 19 countries and territories in Asia Pacific, Europe and North America. Since its incorporation in 1935, UOB has grown organically and through a series of strategic acquisitions. UOB is rated among the world's top banks: Aa1 by Moody's Investors Service and AA- by both S&P Global Ratings and Fitch Ratings. In Asia, UOB operates through its head office in Singapore and banking subsidiaries in China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam, as well as branches and representative offices across the region.

Over more than eight decades, generations of UOB employees have carried through the entrepreneurial spirit, the focus on long-term value creation and an unwavering commitment to do what is right for our customers and our colleagues.

We believe in being a responsible financial services provider and we are committed to making a difference in the lives of our stakeholders and in the communities in which we operate. Just as we are dedicated to helping our customers manage their finances wisely and to grow their businesses, UOB is steadfast in our support of social development, particularly in the areas of art, children and education.



For media queries, please contact:

Eugene Sun

Group Strategic Communications and Brand

Email: Eugene.SunWQ@UOBGroup.com

Tel: +65 9229 1986

Eunice Seow

Group Strategic Communications and Brand

Email: Eunice.SeowHW@UOBGroup.com

Tel: +65 8432 8388

