

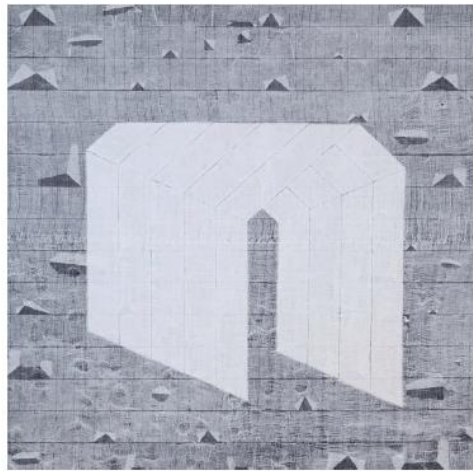
Artwork expressing serenity in isolation wins 2021 UOB Southeast Asian Painting of the Year

Bank marks 40th UOB POY Anniversary with a range of commemorative initiatives, including the launch of the UOB Digital Art Grant and a new iconic awards trophy



First row centre: President Halimah Yacob and Mr Wee Ee Cheong, Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, UOB, at the 2021 UOB Painting of the Year Award Ceremony, alongside winners from the Established Artist Category (Singapore)

Singapore, 26 November 2021 – Malaysian artist Mr Saiful Razman has won the 2021 UOB Southeast Asian Painting of the Year (POY) award for his artwork titled *Walk in Silence, Don't Walk Away in Silence*. Mr Razman's artwork was chosen from among the country winners of the 2021 UOB POY competitions held in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. His winning piece was selected from among a record high number of entries the competition has received in its 40-year history.



Walk in Silence, Don't Walk Away in Silence, Mr Saiful Razman, 2021 UOB Southeast Asian Painting of the Year

Walk in Silence, Don't Walk Away in Silence was inspired by the quietness and serenity of self-isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic. At the centre of the minimalistic and monochromatic artwork features a haven in the shape of a house that is pure and peaceful, while the surrounding dimensional landscape patterns symbolise mountains. The creative use of thin-rolled tissue paper and medical gauze on the artwork creates the delicate texture that reflects the current pandemic situation, captivating the panel of judges from the four Southeast Asian countries.

On winning the 2021 UOB Southeast Asian Painting of the Year award, Mr Razman said, “The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on many people around the world and has also led to feelings of isolation becoming more prevalent than ever. Through *Walk in Silence, Don't Walk Away in Silence*, I wanted to express the absence of sound and the sense of serenity experienced during self-isolation through using mixed media and highly contrasting shades of grey. I am honoured to win the 2021 UOB Southeast Asian Painting of the Year award and to represent Malaysia at one of the most recognised art competitions in this region.”

The judging panel for the 2021 UOB Southeast Asian Painting of the Year comprised the Chief Judges from each of the four participating countries: Dr Bridget Tracy Tan, Director, Institute of Southeast Asian Arts and Art Galleries, and Academic Advisor, Southeast Asian Arts, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, Singapore and who is also the Regional Chief Judge; Mr Agung Hujatnikajennong, Lecturer, Faculty of Art and Design,

Bandung Institute of Technology, Indonesia; Ms Bibi Chew, Art Advisor and Leading Malaysian Contemporary Artist, Malaysia; Emeritus Professor Parinya Tantisuk, Leading Thai Artist, Thailand. For this special anniversary year, UOB has invited Mr Eddie Hara, Leading Indonesian Contemporary Artist, well known for his colourful visualisation vocabulary in art, to be the Regional and Singapore Guest Judge.

Established Artist Category: Mr Keane Tan wins the 2021 UOB Painting of the Year (Singapore) Award



A Dramatic Cinematic for Our Century, Mr Keane Tan, 2021 UOB Painting of the Year (Singapore)

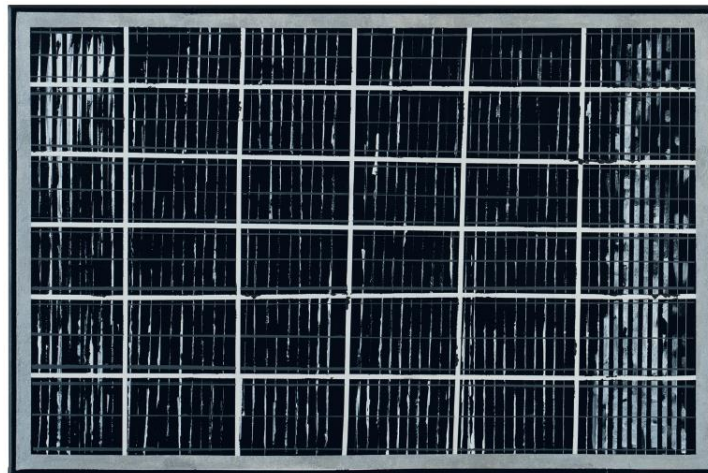
Mr Keane Tan, 22, was presented the 2021 UOB POY (Singapore) award for his painting titled *A Dramatic Cinematic for Our Century*. The three-time award recipient¹ of the competition illustrated a scene of Singapore's iconic Merlion Park, with crashing blue waves in a highly-graphic and dramatised style. Mr Tan took inspiration from Hokusai's *The Great Wave off Kanagawa* and the Merlion Park statue to tell the story of a Southeast Asia city. He draws the comparison of the flood to a purge of the society's excesses, with a time for reset that is eminent. The magnificent artwork uses image generation and machine learning technologies to create the base, followed by detailed finishing in oil paint.

Mr Tan graduated from the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, Singapore and his art practice focuses on metamodernist art, post-pandemic philosophy and macro aesthetics. His success in winning the top UOB POY (Singapore) – Established Artist Category award this year demonstrates the story of how UOB has

¹ Mr Tan is also the recipient of Gold Award, Established Artist Category, 2019 UOB Painting of the Year (Singapore) and Bronze Award, Emerging Artist Category, 2018 UOB Painting of the Year (Singapore).

nurtured his journey in art where he first won a Bronze award in the Emerging Artist Category four years ago.

Emerging Artist Category: 2021 UOB Most Promising Artist of the Year Award (Singapore)



Uncertainty of Photovoltaic Cells, Mr Brian Ko, 2021 UOB Most Promising Artist of the Year (Singapore)

Mr Brian Ko, 20, won the 2021 UOB Most Promising Artist of the Year Award (Singapore) in the Emerging Artist Category for his painting titled *Uncertainty of Photovoltaic Cells*. His abstract representation of a black solar panel in disrepair symbolises mankind's renewed efforts on and commitment towards driving sustainability, while reflecting the uncertainty that lies ahead. The misalignment of the shapes and lines embodies human fallibility in mankind's efforts to create a sustainable future where there is no simple or perfect solution to the existential threat of climate change. Mr Ko graduated from the School of the Arts, Singapore.

The 2021 UOB POY Virtual Awards Ceremony was broadcasted today on UOB YouTube. The winning paintings from across the region (see Appendix) will be exhibited at the UOB Art Gallery, UOB Plaza 1 in Singapore from 27 November 2021 to 28 February 2022 as well as virtually on www.UOBandArt.com.

As part of this year's anniversary programme, all country winners will attend a one-month residency programme at either the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum in Japan or the UOB Art Gallery in Shanghai, China.

Through the programme, these artists will have the opportunity to immerse themselves in the art culture of the host country and to learn about various approaches to art creation.

UOB POY celebrates 40-year milestone

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the UOB POY, the Bank's flagship regional visual arts programme. The UOB POY is the longest-running art competition in Singapore and has helped more than 1,000 artists across the region share their works on a larger stage. Many have gone on to define Southeast Asian art including Mr Goh Beng Kwan, the late Mr Anthony Poon and Mr Chua Ek Kay, who were also recipients of the Singapore Cultural Medallion, Singapore's most distinguished art award. The country winner of the 2010 UOB POY (Thailand), Ms Pannaphan Yodmanee, has also gone on to win the distinguished Benesse Prize², the official award of the Singapore Biennale, in 2016.

Mr Wee Ee Cheong, Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, UOB, said that the vital role of art in connecting communities has shone through from the very first year of the competition.

"We appreciate the special role artists play in society as they help to challenge, to inspire and to connect us all. Over the last four decades, the UOB Painting of the Year competition has helped to uncover and nurture our region's artists, making their artworks accessible to a wider audience. This year we have seen a record number of entries from across the region, each entry testament to the imagination and ingenuity of Southeast Asian artists to relate to their audiences. Our artists have once again pushed the boundaries of creativity by capturing the fortitude, compassion and resilience of people as they look beyond immediate concerns and find rays of hope for a better future."

To commemorate the UOB POY 40-year milestone, the Bank has introduced a new award trophy modelled after *Vitalità*, a bronze sculpture commissioned by UOB and created by foremost Italian sculptor, Ms Anna Chiara Spellini. Embodying the vital energy in the visceral line of this sculpture, *Vitalità* has been endowed with the vigour of being ready to move upward and forward. The new iconic UOB POY award trophy aims

² The Benesse Prize was established in 1995 by Benesse Corporation and it was first awarded at the Venice Biennale in the same year. It was created to recognise the artistic endeavours of outstanding artists and support those who embody the corporate philosophy of the Benesse Group, which is "Well-Being." Since 2016, the Benesse Prize has been the official award of the Singapore Biennale, presented in collaboration with the Singapore Art Museum.

to illuminate the passion of artists, inspiring their imagination and ingenuity as they express their artistic vision.

Next year, UOB will also host a special commemorative exhibition to feature past winning artworks from UOB Southeast Asian POY winners and UOB POY (Singapore) winners since 1982. The exhibition will be open to the public and attendees will experience how Southeast Asian art has changed over the years and at the hands of the competition's art luminaries. The commemorative exhibition will also hold virtual tours on www.UOBandArt.com.

Bank launches UOB Digital Art Grant to drive forward-thinking in visual arts

To mark the 40-year milestone of UOB POY, the Bank is launching the UOB Digital Art Grant in partnership with the National Arts Council Singapore (NAC) through a donation of \$200,000 to the Sustain the Arts (stART) Fund³. The UOB Digital Art Grant is part of the stART Fund, an initiative by the NAC, supported by the private sector to boost the long-term sustainability of small arts organisations and to nurture a culture of giving to the arts. The new grant aims to foster the use of digital technologies in art. Arts organisations interested to apply for the UOB Digital Art Grant can submit their proposals to the NAC at stART@nac.gov.sg.

Mrs Rosa Daniel, Chief Executive Officer, NAC and Ex-Officio, the stART Fund Committee, said, "NAC deeply appreciates UOB's generous donation as a Major Donor to the Sustain the Arts Fund with the launch of the UOB Digital Art Grant to support emerging digital artists and organisations in Singapore in sustaining and growing their practice. This gift will build greater awareness and appreciation of the digital art form among audiences through digital tools for creative expressions."

– Ends –

³ Refer to <https://www.nac.gov.sg/whatwedo/championing-the-arts/arts-philanthropy/The-Sustain-the-Arts-Fund.html> for more information.

Appendix:

Winners of the 2021 UOB Painting of the Year competition

Established Artist Category (Regional)

2021 UOB Southeast Asian Painting of the Year	Mr Saiful Razman, <i>Walk in Silence, Don't Walk Away in Silence</i>
2021 UOB Painting of the Year, Indonesia	Ms Meliantha Muliawan, <i>Even After Death, The Departed Lives Life</i>
2021 UOB Painting of the Year, Malaysia	Mr Saiful Razman, <i>Walk in Silence, Don't Walk Away in Silence</i>
2021 UOB Painting of the Year, Singapore	Mr Keane Tan, <i>A Dramatic Cinematic for Our Century</i>
2021 UOB Painting of the Year, Thailand	Mr Vachira Kornthong, <i>Land of Happiness</i>

Established Artist Category (Singapore)

2021 UOB Painting of the Year, Singapore	Mr Keane Tan, <i>A Dramatic Cinematic for Our Century</i>
Gold Award	Mr Lester Lee, <i>'Childhood'</i>
Silver Award	Mr Eugene Tan, <i>Deconstruction #03</i>
Bronze Award	Mr Wong Lip Chin, <i>The Dragon Sleeps No More</i>
Highly Commended	Mr Keith Teo, <i>Emphatic Circles, 2021</i>
Highly Commended	Mr William Goh, <i>Last Night</i>
Highly Commended	Mr Ben Puah, <i>Land of Good Fortune</i>
Highly Commended	Dr Lim Poh Teck, <i>Hope</i>

Winners of the 2021 UOB Most Promising Artist of the Year

Emerging Artist Category (Regional)

2021 Most Promising Artist of the Year, Indonesia	Mr Chrisna Fernand, <i>Leviathan (Giant)</i>
2021 Most Promising Artist of the Year, Malaysia	Ms Jaclyn Teh, <i>Hi</i>
2021 Most Promising Artist of the Year, Singapore	Mr Brian Ko, <i>Uncertainty of Photovoltaic Cells</i>
2021 Most Promising Artist of the Year, Thailand	Ms Jeanjira Khodchawat, <i>Standpoint No.2</i>

Emerging Artist Category (Singapore)

2021 Most Promising Artist of the Year	Mr Brian Ko, <i>Uncertainty of Photovoltaic Cells</i>
Gold Award	Ms Nur Sabrina Binte Abdul Razak, <i>Getaway Car</i>
Silver Award	Mr Arick Lee, <i>Home of Artists</i>
Silver Award	Mr Wong Yee Heng, <i>The Day After Tomorrow</i>
Bronze Award	Nil
Highly Commended	Ms Shen Jiaqi, <i>Sometimes, We Need to Make Good Things Happen</i>
Highly Commended	Mr Terry Wee, <i>Wild Chase within Ring-fence</i>
Highly Commended	Mr Mohamad Quthubdean Bin Mohamad Farooq, <i>Light Upon Light</i>
Highly Commended	Ms Kelly Ng Shah, <i>Cross Path n.5</i>
Highly Commended	Ms Jean Hong Ting, <i>Healing through Music (2021)</i>



Note to media:

About UOB and Art

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 2,500 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.

2021 marks the 40th anniversary of the Bank's flagship regional art competition. The UOB Painting of the Year (POY) competition started in 1982 to recognise Southeast Asian artists and to offer them the opportunity to showcase their works to the wider community. The competition was subsequently extended to Indonesia and Malaysia which are celebrating their 11th year of the UOB POY, while Thailand is celebrating its 12th year of the competition.

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 Prabu Perdana, Mr Anagard and Mr Suvi Wahyudianto from Indonesia in 2020, 2019 and 2018 respectively, Mr Sukit Choosri from Thailand in 2017, Mr Gatot Indrajati, Mr Anggar Prasetyo and Mr Antonius Subiyanto from Indonesia in 2016, 2015 and 2014 respectively 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 17th consecutive year in 2021.

About UOB

United Overseas Bank Limited (UOB) is a leading bank in Asia with a global network of around 500 branches and 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.

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