

News Release

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**Bringing art closer to the community through Art x Fashion at the
42nd UOB Painting of the Year competition launch**

UOB's flagship art competition expands to the fifth country, Vietnam, this year.



Mr Tan Chuan-Jin, Speaker of Parliament and Advisor to the National Council of Social Service, and Mr Wee Ee Cheong, Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, UOB, with UOB Painting of the Year artists and JOURNEY artists at the 42nd UOB Painting of the Year launch event

Singapore, 3 May 2023 – Art meets Fashion with a collection of 36 limited edition art wearables introduced at a fashion showcase for charity sale as UOB officially launched the 42nd edition of its flagship UOB Painting of the Year competition at National Gallery Singapore this morning.

Doing right by the community through art for good

The UOB Painting of the Year Art x Fashion showcase featured wearables co-designed by 10 artists, comprising UOB Painting of the Year artists and artists with disabilities from JOURNEY by TOUCH Community Services. In collaboration with local fashion label ANS.EIN, the unique pieces are a culmination of a three-month partnership where UOB Painting of the Year artists were paired with artists with disabilities to paint their passion on canvas, and transforming them



into wearable art for charity sale¹. Mr Tan Chuan-Jin, Speaker of Parliament and Advisor to the National Council of Social Service, was the Guest-of-Honour at the event.

Mr Wee Ee Cheong, Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, UOB, said, “Appreciating and creating art can help uplift spirits and connect communities. Our showcase this year illustrates how art can be present in our everyday lives, including in fashion. I am heartened to see that our UOB Painting of the Year artists are bringing their talents into the community to collaborate with artists with disabilities from TOUCH Community Services, bringing the joy of art to a wider audience. In line with our Purpose to build the future of ASEAN, UOB is pleased to expand our flagship competition to Vietnam this year for many more to uncover their passion for art.”

Mr Tan Chuan-Jin said, “The partnership between the public and private sectors is vital in uplifting different communities. As we strive towards nurturing a more caring and inclusive Singapore, I am encouraged to see UOB, the UOB Painting of the Year artists and TOUCH Community Services, coming together to raise funds and awareness for the differently-abled community, and devoting their time and resources to equip JOURNEY’s artists with useful art skills that they can use to fuel their passion for art.”

In line with the opening of this year’s UOB Painting of the Year competition, all showcased art wearables will be on sale from 31 May via JOURNEY’s website (www.journeyspecial.com). All proceeds will go to TOUCH Community Services to support JOURNEY’s work in Art and Education for special needs groups.

Mr James Tan, Chief Executive Officer of TOUCH Community Services said, “Art is a universal language through which humanity speaks. We are honoured to be working alongside UOB and ANS.EIN to launch this fashion-for-a-cause initiative. We hope this will shed light on the creative talents of our special needs artists under the JOURNEY brand, who co-created the artworks with given themes such as 'Oriental' and 'Floral'. We are heartened by the support of our collaborative partners towards this cause, and look forward to seeing these artworks donned by members of the community.”

¹ Details of participating artists can be found in Appendix A.



Programme identity design for the 42nd UOB Painting of the Year competition

Programme identity design for 42nd UOB Painting of the Year competition

The programme identity design for the 2023 UOB Painting of the Year competition was unveiled by Mr Tan Chuan-Jin and Mr Wee Ee Cheong at the launch event. Inspired by the 2022 UOB Southeast Asian Painting of the Year winning artwork, *Dystopia* by Thai artist Chomrawi Suksom, the evolving sphere symbolises our world in a constant state of change and renewal, represented by different cultures and identities. This is aligned with the Bank's long-term commitment to constantly evolve and stay relevant, and to do right by the community. In line with this, UOB's flagship competition will expand its reach and launch in Vietnam this year.

Call for entries and the enhanced prize awards for Emerging Artist Category

As the leading patron for the arts in Asia, the UOB Painting of the Year competition has uncovered more than 1,000 established and aspiring artists across the region over the last four decades. The 42nd UOB Painting of the Year competition is open to Singapore citizens and permanent residents, who can submit their entries digitally at UOBandArt.com. Submissions are open from 3 May 2023 to 31 July 2023.

The five country winners from Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam will compete for the coveted UOB Southeast Asian Painting of the Year award, with a prize award of S\$13,000 on top of their country award prize, and a chance for a residency programme at the renowned Fukuoka Asian Art Museum in Japan. In addition, to further support the pursuit of art by aspiring artists in the region, UOB has raised the prize money for the Emerging Artist



Category, with the Most Promising Artist of the Year winner receiving S\$5,000, up from previous years².

The Singapore winners and the winner of the prestigious regional award, the UOB Southeast Asian Painting of the Year will be announced at an awards ceremony at Victoria Theatre on 8 November 2023.

Three-time award winner Lester Lee presents solo exhibition at UOB Art Gallery

As part of the series of activities lined up for the 42nd UOB Painting of the Year Call-for-entries campaign, the solo exhibition titled *Randomness* by Lester Lee, 41st UOB Painting of the Year (Singapore) top winner, will be launching on Friday, 12 May 2023 at the UOB Art Gallery, located at the ground floor of UOB Plaza 1. Through this exhibition, Lester presents his latest body of work that expresses his experiential discovery process to find new directions and to make a statement.

Established in 1982, the UOB Painting of the Year competition is the longest-running annual art competition in Singapore and one of the most prestigious in Southeast Asia. Past winners include Singapore Cultural Medallion winners Mr Goh Beng Kwan, Mr Anthony Poon and Mr Chua Ek Kay, as well as 2016 Benesse Prize winner, Thai artist Ms Pannaphan Yodmanee.

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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 2,600 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 the leading patron of the arts in Asia, the Bank continues to make art accessible to a wider audience through a diverse range of visual art programmes, partnerships and community outreach across the region.

The Bank's flagship art programme is the UOB Painting of the Year competition, which was 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 extended to Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and in 2023, to Vietnam. It is now the longest running art competition in Singapore and one of the most prestigious in Southeast Asia.

² More details can be found at UOBandArt.com and in Appendix B.





Over the past 41 years, 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 Chomrawi Suksom from Thailand in 2022, Mr Saiful Razman from Malaysia in 2021, Mr Prabu Perdana from Indonesia in 2020, Mr Anagard from Indonesia in 2019, 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 the UOB POY winning artists, 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 18th consecutive year in 2022.

About UOB

UOB is a leading bank in Asia. Operating through its head office in Singapore and banking subsidiaries in China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam, UOB has a global network of around 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. Today, 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.

For nearly nine decades, UOB has adopted a customer-centric approach to create long-term value by staying relevant through its enterprising spirit and doing right by its customers. UOB is focused on building the future of ASEAN – for the people and businesses within, and connecting with, ASEAN.

The Bank connects businesses to opportunities in the region with its unparalleled regional footprint and leverages data and insights to innovate and create personalised banking experiences and solutions catering to each customer's unique needs and evolving preferences. UOB is also committed to help businesses forge a sustainable future, by fostering social inclusiveness, creating positive environmental impact and pursuing economic progress. UOB believes in being a responsible financial services provider and is steadfast in its support of art, social development of children and education, doing right by its communities and stakeholders.

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APPENDIX A: Profiles of participating artists in UOB Painting of the Year Art x Fashion showcase

UOB Painting of the Year artists

	<p>Lester Lee: Lester is a multi-disciplinary artist. He graduated from Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, Singapore and holds a Master of Arts from the University of Huddersfield, United Kingdom. His works have been shown in both solo and group exhibitions in Singapore and overseas. Lester has won many art awards, including the Gold Award, Established Artist Category in 2021 and 2013 UOB Painting of the Year (Singapore), and 1989 Outstanding Artist Award from the Ministry of Communications and Information.</p>
	<p>Khairulddin Wahab: Khairulddin has participated in various local and international group exhibitions since 2010. He graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts from the LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore in 2014 where he also won the Winston Oh Travel Research Art Award.</p>
	<p>Wong Lip Chin: Lip Chin is trained in printmaking at LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore and has held many solo and group exhibitions with galleries and museums globally. At present, he is pioneering a neo-Nanyang style to bring about a cultural turn to the local and regional art scene.</p>
	<p>Tan Woon Choor: Woon Choor is a self-taught artist and a designer who spent 20 years in the fashion industry, where he received several design awards before retracing his steps to uncover his artistic interest. He aspires to create art that showcases beauty expressed through the handmade. He hopes to encourage the</p>
	<p>Karina Simon: Karina is a contemporary artist, specialising in photorealistic pencil drawing. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Fashion and Retailing and worked as a fashion designer. As Karina continues to develop her coloured pencil technique, she decided to pursue an art career in 2019. Her artworks have been showcased in international exhibitions in Italy, France, and Indonesia. In 2021, she received the XIII Florence (Italy) Biennale, Lorenzo il Magnifico, Bronze Award, Drawing Category; and the MUSA International's Woman Art Award 2022.</p>

JOURNEY artists

	<p>Say Kim Han: The city life in Singapore is a source of fascination for Kim Han, who is diagnosed with intellectual disability. He enjoys jogging and when jogging, Kim Han often thinks of his favourite Singaporean landmarks, such as the Marina Bay Sands and Raffles City. He excels in sketching intricate details in his artwork, reflecting the methodical way he thinks.</p>
	<p>Wong Jun Quan: Jun Quan, who has Down Syndrome, is a huge movie and television series buff. He loves watching action films, especially if they are kung fu related. Passionate about art, Jun Quan sketches in his free time and hones his craft before going to bed every night. Jun Quan also has a keen interest in technology and enjoys drawing IT-related memorabilia, such as computers and smartphones in his artwork.</p>
	<p>Emily Chua: Emily who is diagnosed with Down Syndrome, loves animals, especially cats. Felines hold a special appeal for her as she finds them graceful and mysterious. Emily also enjoys creating art to express her feelings and perspectives. Being exposed to different art forms has helped Emily develop a better appreciation of colours in her art. She hopes her paintings can bring joy to viewers.</p>
	<p>Shennie Yang: Shennie's love for her family and parents are often her inspiration for art. As an artist with intellectual disability, Shennie gravitates toward animals and nature. She enjoys inventing art patterns using the alphabets in her name.</p>
	<p>Natalie Yap: Natalie, who is diagnosed with Down Syndrome, partial hearing and speech impairment, enjoys desserts and baking. As an artist, circles and ovals are the hallmarks of her work due to her fascination with these shapes. Natalie is diagnosed with Down Syndrome, partial hearing impairment, and partial speech.</p>

APPENDIX B: Increase in award amounts for Emerging Artist Category from 2023

Award	New from 2023	Previous
Most Promising Artist of the Year	S\$5,000	US\$3,000 (S\$3,998)
Gold Award	S\$3,500	US\$2,000 (S\$2,665)
Silver Award	S\$2,500	US\$1,500 (S\$1,999)
Bronze Award	S\$1,800	US\$1,000 (S\$1,332)