

Kok Yew Puah

Portrait of a Malaysian Artist



Urban Playground
1994, acrylic on canvas, 139 × 185 cm
Collection of artist's family.

Kok Yew Puah often painted portraits of his family and friends. A portrait is a picture of a person or a group of people who sometimes look like they are posing for the artist.



Look at the painting.

How many kids do you see in this painting?

What are they doing?

Describe how they are dressed.

Now think about their different personalities and emotions.

Who looks like he is ready to skate off?

Who looks bored?

Who looks nervous?

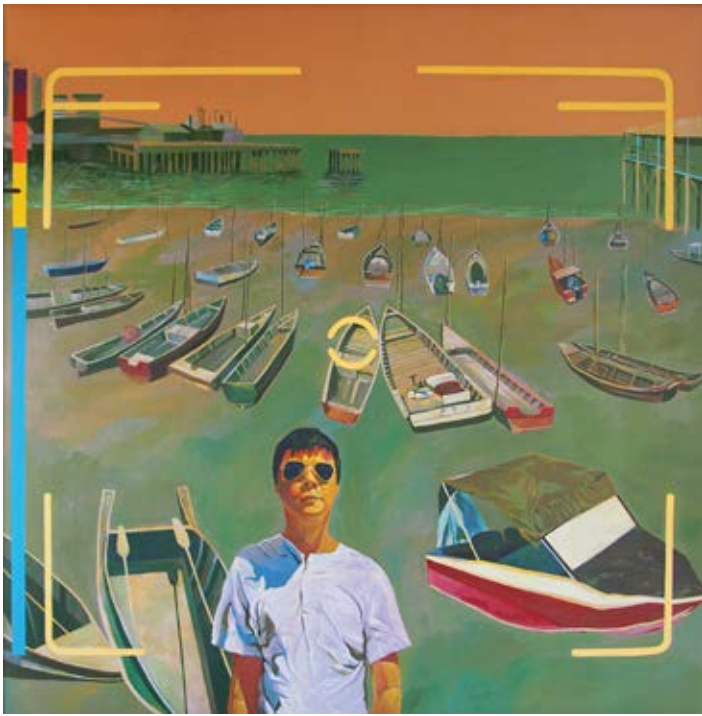
Where are they rollerblading?

Does this look safe? (Would your parents let you play there?)

Where do you like playing with your friends?

Activity

Design your ideal playground. Would it have swings? Fun rides? A lake? A zoo?



Camera View of the Artist
1993, acrylic on canvas, 141 × 141 cm
Collection of Kenneth Tan



This is a self-portrait of the artist. A self-portrait is a portrait the artist paints of himself. Just like a selfie!

If you made a painting of yourself what would you wear?

What would you do with your hands?

What would the background look like?



Kok Yew Puah loved painting his children and their friends. This is a portrait of two friends. Look at the way they are dressed and the way they are posing.

Do you think they are close?

Who do you think is more confident?

Who do you think is shy?

Why?



Untitled (Two Friends)
1998, acrylic on canvas, 127 × 152 cm
Collection of Charles Lok

Activity

Draw a picture of you with your siblings or your friends. Imagine how you would be dressed. What objects would you include in the portrait? Perhaps you would include a favourite game or something you all enjoy doing? If you like playing badminton, maybe you would include a badminton racket or net in the background. What hobbies do you all share?



Portrait of an Insurance Salesman in Pulau Ketam
1993, acrylic on canvas, 164 × 162.5 cm
Collection of Khazanah Nasional Berhad



Describe the man in the painting and copy his pose.

How is he dressed?

What job do you think he has?

Why do you think he is standing by the sea?

Where do you think he is going?

Does he look overdressed?

Look at the bright colours that the artist has used in this painting.

How does this painting make you feel?

Activity

Draw the salesman in the place you think he is going to work at. (office/city)

Kok Yew Puah made silkscreen prints during the 70s. He was inspired by his teachers, Alun Leach-Jones and Bea Maddock, at the National Gallery of Victoria Art School in Melbourne. He made this print during his time there.



Tao's Orbat Series Four (ed.5/10)
1971, silkscreen on paper, 91 × 117 cm
Collection of Charles Lok



Look at the colours he used in this print.

Can you count how many colours he used? List them out.

How many colours are primary colours? Circle them in the colour wheel.

How many colours are secondary? Circle them in the colour wheel.

Now using the colour wheel, find the opposite colours for each colour he used and write them next to each colour. (e.g Black – White, green – red)



Activity

Now colour in this version of the print using the opposite colours you found!

