



Kok Yew Puah

Portrait of a Malaysian Artist

12 October 2021 — 3 April 2022

WELCOME BACK TO ILHAM!

We are very happy to be opening our doors again to welcome you to our new exhibition, *Kok Yew Puah: Portrait of a Malaysian Artist*, which will run at ILHAM until April 2022. The exhibition brings together over 60 artworks that the artist produced over nearly three decades.

For the safety and well-being of our visitors and staff, we have put in place some procedures including limiting admission to visitors who have been fully vaccinated, temperature checks, and mask requirements. Please help us maintain a safe environment for us all.

We will not be holding any public events in the gallery until later this year. However, we will be continuing our programming on our social media channels so please follow us [@ilhamgallerykl](https://www.instagram.com/ilhamgallerykl)

Thank you again for your support.

Rahel Joseph
Gallery Director

12 October 2021

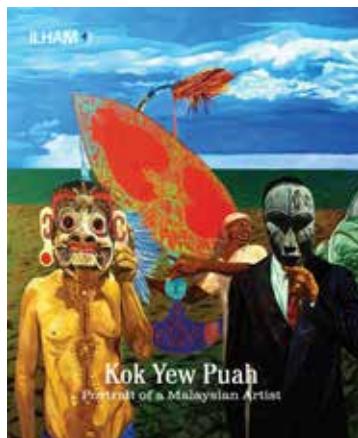
EXHIBITION RESOURCE MATERIALS

All videos, documentation, and other archival material included in the exhibition are available on ilhamgallery.com/resource-centre/kokyewpuah/

EDUCATION MATERIALS

Primary Student Worksheet
Secondary Student Worksheet
ilhamgallery.com/learn/tips/learning-online-resources

The exhibition catalogue *Kok Yew Puah: Portrait of a Malaysian Artist* is available at the ILHAM Gallery Gift Shop



SELAMAT KEMBALI KE ILHAM!!

Kami amat gembira dapat kembali membuka pintu untuk menjemput anda semua ke pameran terkini kami Kok Yew Puah: Portrait of a Malaysian Artist berlangsung sehingga April 2022. Pameran ini mengumpulkan lebih 60 buah karya-karya yang dihasilkan beliau sepanjang hampir tiga dekad.

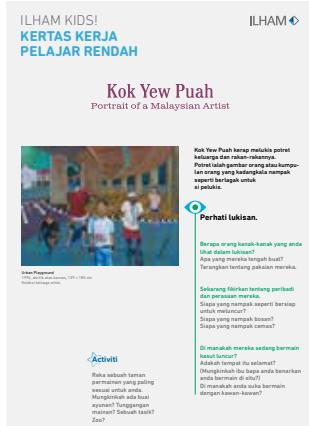
Untuk keselamatan dan kesejahteraan pengunjung dan staf, kami telah mengambil langkah pencegahan termasuk menghadkan jumlah pengunjung yang telah divaksin lengkap, memeriksa suhu dan pemakaian topeng muka. Kami memohon kepada anda untuk membantu kami menjaga persekitaran yang selamat untuk kita bersama.

Kami tidak akan mengadakan sebarang program awam di galeri sepanjang tahun ini. Walau bagaimanapun, kami akan meneruskan program di di saluran media sosial kami jadi sila ikuti kami @ilhamqallerykl

Sekali lagi, terima kasih di atas sokongan anda.

Rahel Joseph
Pengarah Galeri

12 Oktober 2020



BAHAN SUMBER PAMERAN

Semua video, dokumentasi dan bahan arkib lain yang disertakan di dalam pameran ini boleh didapati di ilhamgallery.com/bm/resource-centre/kokyewpuah/

BAHAN PENDIDIKAN

Kertas Aktiviti Pelajar Rendah
Kertas Aktiviti Pelajar Menengah
ilhamgallery.com/bm/learn/tips/

Katalog pameran Kok Yew
Puah: Portrait of a Malaysian
Artist boleh didapati di Kedai
Cenderamata Galeri ILHAM.



Kok Yew Puah

Portrait of a Malaysian Artist

12 October 2021 — 3 April 2022



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

Kok Yew Puah: Portrait of a Malaysian Artist reflects on the work of a Malaysian who chose to become an artist twice. Kok Yew Puah (1947–1999) first impressed the local scene when he returned from his studies in Melbourne as a bold hard-edge abstract printmaker in the early 1970s, one among many artists trying to find a direction in the fray of competing isms, ideologies and social politics of the time. After leaving art for several years to run a family business, he forged a new practice as a figurative painter, producing some of the most honest, human and subjective representations of the country's visual landscape of the late 1980s and 90s. He passed away at the age of 51.

Kok Yew Puah passionately believed in the potential and importance of art-making and artistic exchange. He was acutely aware of developments in global, regional and local ideas about art and culture, throughout his life actively seeking community and conversations with other artists, through running his own space, local art associations, and lecturing and mentoring students. He was also an artist deeply immersed in and concerned about his local environment and the social and cultural development of his country.

On one level, this exhibition attempts a portrait of the artist, tracing the development of his art practice and ideas through his works, essays, interviews, articles, and conversations with those who knew him about his personal history, character and interests. His own self-portraits, often humorous and made in different "postures", present some interesting ideas of what this "artist" might look like. Through the perspectives of others, he is seen in turns as a visionary, an artist, a husband, a father, a friend, a teacher.

The exhibition also presents a portrait of Malaysians. In his paintings, Kok Yew Puah mostly chose to use himself, his wife and two children, and their friends as models for his human portraits. They are identified as "Malaysians" through the use of familiar visual cues in the landscape, architecture, dress and "props" they appear with. Puah's paintings invite us to examine our ways of seeing each other, and to create our own meanings and stories around the Malaysian subject.

They are part of a larger, personal portrait of Malaysia, captured through the immediate experience of the artist's life in his hometown Klang as it transformed into an industrial hub. It is a portrait that speaks of anxieties about environmental damage, and the impact of rapid development particularly on younger generations, and their growing disconnection from history and culture.

Twenty-over years since his passing, as we review the works of Kok Yew Puah and what knowledge we can build around his life and times, what picture do we see of Malaysia, Malaysians and this Malaysian artist?

Curated by Beverly Yong & Rahel Joseph

Pameran Kok Yew Puah: *Portrait of a Malaysian Artist* membayangkan pengkaryaan seorang rakyat Malaysia yang memutus untuk menjadi artis sebanyak dua kali. Pertama kali Kok Yew Puah (1947–1999) menarik perhatian dunia seni tempatan ialah semasa beliau baru pulang dari pengajian di Melbourne sebagai seorang artis cetak abstrak hard-edge ketara pada awal 1970an, di antara beberapa orang artis lain yang sedang mencari arahan dalam kehebohan persaingan isme dan ideologi sosio-politik semasa. Seterusnya, setelah mengenepikan seni selama beberapa tahun untuk mengerjakan perniagaan keluarganya, beliau menempa pengamalan baharu sebagai seorang pelukis figuratif, yang menghasilkan sekumpulan karya yang paling ikhlas, berkemanusiaan dan subjektif dalam menggambarkan suasana landskap tempatan lewat 1980an dan 90an. Beliau meninggal dunia pada umur 51 tahun.

Kok Yew Puah ghairah akan potensi dan pentingnya pengkaryaan dan pertukaran pendapat dalam seni. Beliau amat menyedari perkembangan idea seni dan budaya pada peringkat global, serantau dan tempatan; sentiasa mencari penyatuan serta perbualan dengan artis lain, menerusi mengendalikan ruang seninya sendiri, persatuan seni tempatan, berkuliahan dan membimbing para pelajar. Beliau juga artis yang mengambil berat tentang persekitaran tempatan dan perkembangan sosio-budaya di negaranya.

Pada satu tahap, pameran ini berusaha memberi sebuah potret seorang artis, dengan mengesan perkembangan amalan dan fahamannya menerusi karya, esej, wawancara, artikel, dan perbualan dengan mereka yang mengenali sejarah, watak

dan minat peribadinya. Lukisan potret dirinya sendiri, ada kalanya lucu dan dalam berbagai lagak, memberi gambaran menarik tentang si artis. Menerusi sudut orang lain, beliau dilihat dalam berbagai watak – seorang yang berwawasan, seorang artis, seorang suami, bapa, sahabat, guru.

Pameran ini juga memberi sebuah potret rakyat Malaysia. Dalam lukisannya, Kok Yew Puah kerap mempari dirinya sendiri, isteri dan anak-anak, dan juga rakan-rakan mereka sebagai model potret manusia. Mereka dikenali "rakyat Malaysia" dari segi penggunaan tandanya visual yang lazim dalam landskap seperti bangunan dan binaan, pakaian dan "prop" atau "alatan pentas" yang mengiringi. Lukisan-lukisan Puah menjemput kita meneliti cara-cara kita melihat satu sama lain, dan membentuk makna-makna serta cerita berkaitan dengan Malaysia.

Ianya sebahagian daripada potret peribadi lebih besar tentang Malaysia, ditangkap menerusi pengalamannya di kampung halaman Klang semasa ianya berubah menjadi pusat industri. Ia sebuah potret yang menyuarakan rasa bimbang tentang pencemaran persekitaran, terutamanya impak pembangunan yang pesat keatas generasi muda, dan penceraian daripada sejarah dan budaya yang semakin meningkat.

Setelah lebih dua puluh tahun beliau meninggalkan kita, sambil kita mengimbas kembali pengkaryaan Kok Yew Puah dan fahaman yang diperolehi daripada riwayat hidup beliau, apakah gambaran yang kita lihat tentang negara Malaysia, rakyat Malaysia dan seorang artis Malaysia?

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Please share your photos and experiences at the exhibition with the hashtags #ilhamgallerykl #kokyewpuah #portraitofamalaysianartist

Find us on Instagram or Facebook

[@ilhamgallerykl](#)

APA PENDAPAT ANDA?

Sila kongsikan foto dan pengalaman melawat pameran dengan tanda pagar #ilhamgallerykl #kokyewpuah #portraitofamalaysianartist

Ikuti kami di laman Instagram atau Facebook [@ilhamgallerykl](#)

VISITOR GUIDELINES

To protect the artworks from damage, we ask that visitors please refrain from touching any of the artworks on display.

Food and drinks are not allowed in the gallery.

While we do not allow flash, we do encourage photography in the gallery! Please instagram your favourite artwork with the hashtag #ilhamgallerykl — so we can share it on our page as well.

GARIS PANDUAN UNTUK PENGUNJUNG

Bagi mengelak karya-karya seni daripada ditimpa kerusakan, kami meminta para pengunjung untuk tidak sesekali menyentuh sebarang karya yang dipamerkan.

Makanan dan minuman tidak dibenarkan dibawa masuk ke dalam galeri.

Walaupun kami tidak membenarkan penggunaan denyar (flash) kamera, namun kami menggalakkan orang ramai mengambil gambar di dalam galeri kami! Sila labelkan imej instagram mana-mana karya yang anda gemari dengan #ilhamgallerykl — agar kami dapat juga berkongsi imej tersebut di laman web kami.

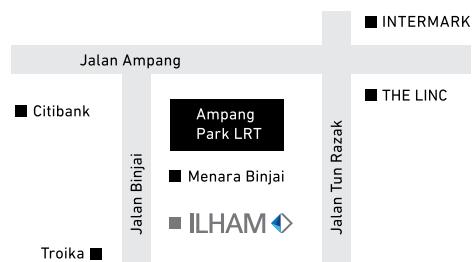
ILHAM 

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No. 8, Jalan Binjai
50450 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Opening hours:
Tue – Sat 11am – 7pm
Sun 11am – 5pm.
Closed on Mondays
and public holidays.

Waktu buka:
Selasa – Sabtu 11pg – 7ptg
Ahad 11pg – 5ptg.
Tutup pada setiap Isnin
dan cuti awam.

   ilhamgallerykl
[www.ilhamgallery.com](#)



Cover
Two Important Men
1993, acrylic on canvas,
118 × 168 cm
Collection of Charles Lok