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Disabled artists hold art exhibition at Balai Seni Maybank

A group of 24 disabled artists are showcasing their artistic talents in a special exhibition at Balai Seni Maybank in Kuala Lumpur. The exhibition, entitled “*Nukilan Jiwaku*”, features 48 paintings on the theme ‘Freedom’. It will be held until 20 December 2013.

‘Nukilan Jiwaku’ is a project which aims to provide opportunities for persons with disabilities (PWDs) from two organisations - namely United Voice and the Mouth & Foot Painting Artist Sdn Bhd - to express their artistic creativity as well as empower them to become economically self-sufficient. It is an initiative spearheaded by employees of Maybank’s Group Risk and Credit Management Department under the “Cahaya Kasih” employee volunteerism programme.

The exhibition was launched today by the Chairman of Maybank, Tan Sri Megat Zaharuddin Megat Mohd Nor in Menara Maybank.

Speaking at the event, Tan Sri Megat, said, “Today, the reason we are all gathered here is to honour the artists and their masterpieces. The artists in this room are remarkable. They represent the fact that art is without boundaries. It is there for everyone to enjoy and participate in, regardless of one’s background or disabilities. Art’s nature of being universally accessible just makes it that much more powerful as a communication tool, and that is what we are here to celebrate.”

Added Tan Sri Megat, “With the Malaysian Council for Rehabilitation and the National Visual Arts Development Board, we have found the right strategic partners to reaffirm our overall mission of humanising financial services in the markets we operate in. This Nukilan Jiwaku initiative is one of the top 20 best projects under our Cahaya Kasih Challenge programme.”

Following the opening ceremony, guests had the opportunity to view two talented PWD artists, Siti Aishah bt Yaacob and Mohd Khairuddin bin Che Rani displaying their artistic skills in painting using their feet. Siti Aishah is one of the artists whose works are on display at the exhibition.

Viewing hours for the Nukilan Jiwaku exhibition are from 8.45 am-5.45 pm, Monday-Friday and admission is free. Proceeds from the sale of paintings will be channelled to the artists and partly to United Voice to carry out self-advocacy movement activities.

From 16-20 December 2013, there will also be sales of handicrafts such as rattan products and household items from the Malaysian Mental Health Association, Petaling Jaya and the Malaysian Association for the Blind, Kuala Lumpur at the gallery.

Prior to the launch today, an art workshop was also organised at Menara Maybank on 30 November 2013, in which 17 PWD artists attended. During the workshop, Normah Nordin, a cultural activist conducted an ice-breaking session 'Making 3-Dimension Models for Stage'. A talk on the 'Art of Dyeing Shibori Style' was then conducted by second generation batik artist, Fatimah Chik. The workshop provided opportunities for the artists to experience different forms of arts and express their creativity through batik dyeing, which was the first time for them.

This is the second year running in which Maybank is organising such an exhibition. The first exhibition held at Menara Maybank in October 2012 saw over RM20,000 raised from the sale of paintings.

This art exhibition project is also part of Maybank's on-going commitment in supporting the arts. Balai Seni Maybank has been the venue for numerous art exhibitions since it was opened in the late 1980s. Some of the renowned Malaysian artists today had their beginnings at this gallery.