

Maybank inks 3-year MOU with the National Museum of Singapore to promote the art, culture and heritage of Southeast Asia

- Maybank launches first regional art exhibition in Singapore featuring weavers and artists

Maybank Foundation, the corporate responsibility arm of the Maybank Group has launched the “Entwine: Maybank Women Eco-Weavers meet Southeast Asian Artists” Travelling Exhibition at the National Museum of Singapore, making it the first Malaysian bank to feature a regional travelling art exhibition in Asia.

In conjunction with the launch of the exhibition, Maybank Foundation also signed a three-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the National Museum of Singapore, an institution of the National Heritage Board (NHB), Singapore. The MOU was signed by Chung May Khuen, Director-Designate of National Museum of Singapore, and Shahril Azuar Jimin, CEO of Maybank Foundation. It was witnessed by Jennifer Chan, Deputy Chief Executive of National Heritage Board, and Datuk Mohaiyani Shamsudin, Chairman of Maybank Group & Maybank Foundation.

Through the MOU, Maybank Foundation and the National Museum will work together to promote the art, culture and heritage of Southeast Asia, including the Southeast Asian art of textile weaving. The potential areas of collaboration are exhibitions and installations that may include co-curation, joint-commissioning and hosting of travelling exhibitions as well as in the areas of research, publications, information and technology sharing.

The art exhibition, an initiative by Maybank Foundation under its Balai Seni Art Series, showcases a collection of artworks created by six Southeast Asian contemporary artists after they completed short-term residencies at the various weaving centres with Maybank Women Eco-weavers across the region. The Maybank Women Eco-Weavers programme, one of Maybank Foundation’s flagship programmes, supports weavers’ livelihood through training, capacity-building and microfinancing. (Refer to Appendix for the Maybank Women Eco-Weavers’ Stories).

CEO of Maybank Foundation, Shahril Azuar Jimin said, “The Maybank Women Eco-Weavers programme, started since 2016, is an initiative that brings together ASEAN’s heritage through the ancient art of textile weaving to create a sustainable weaving industry. It continues to gain traction and reach, and is recognised at the ASEAN level as a programme that promotes textiles globally in a sustainable manner, whilst promoting economic independence and financial inclusion for women weavers across the ASEAN region.”

“We feel very humbled by this unique opportunity to showcase the Women Eco-Weavers programme as part of the Balai Seni Art Series 2019 at the National Museum of Singapore in conjunction with this year’s Singapore Night Festival. The concept of the exhibition fuses the diversity of textile weaving culture in Malaysia, Cambodia, Laos and Indonesia into one to showcase an ASEAN heritage full of identity and pride. This is in line with Maybank’s mission to humanise financial services and to support talents from across the region in their quest to reach greater heights of success,” added Shahril.

Chung May Khuen, Director-Designate, National Museum of Singapore, said, “Beyond presenting the Singapore story, we also take pride in showcasing our connections with the Southeast Asian

region. We are delighted to partner with Maybank in our joint endeavour to inspire visitors in preserving our heritage and culture.”

The event was also attended by Chairman of Maybank & Maybank Foundation, Datuk Mohaiyani Shamsudin; Group President & CEO Maybank, Datuk Abdul Farid Alias; Dato’ Paduka Lim Jock Hoi, Secretary-General of ASEAN; Jun Yamazaki, Ambassador of Japan to Singapore; Margriet Vonno, Ambassador of Netherlands to Singapore; Adrian Bernie Cabardo Candolada, Minister and Consul General at the Embassy of the Republic of Philippines in Singapore; Kim Jong Moon, Deputy Chief of Mission, Minister and Consul General at the Embassy of Republic of Korea in Singapore.

The exhibition was curated by renowned curator, Khairuddin Hori, Curatorial Director and Partner of Chan + Hori Contemporary in Singapore.

Celebrating ASEAN’s arts and culture

Maybank’s commitment to the arts has touched the lives of thousands of people with the artistic works of hundreds of artists in numerous exhibitions held since 1988 at Balai Seni Maybank in Malaysia. It has inspired and encouraged artists to pursue their dreams, whilst inculcating an appreciation of Malaysia’s unique, diverse and vibrant national heritage.

“Entwine: Maybank Women Eco-Weavers meet Southeast Asian Artists” showcases how the unique woven designs can be represented into visual contemporary art as well as the use of naturally-dyed and handwoven fabrics crafted from the eco-weavers. It is a celebration of collective ASEAN identity of the centuries-old textile weaving art, and the joys of appreciating the many iterations and interpretations of fine arts, as well as providing a platform for women weavers to showcase their textile weaving culture at an international level.

The exhibition features collaborative works from six contemporary artists, namely Sheryo from Singapore, Shahrul Jamili and Sharon Chin from Malaysia, Lugas Syllabus from Indonesia, Lyle Buencamino from the Philippines, and Ubatsat Sutta from Thailand; as well as weavers from Lao Sericulture Co., Ltd. (Mulberries from Laos), Penenun Dampungan ASPPUK from Indonesia, Color Silk from Cambodia and Tanoti Crafts from Malaysia.

Prior to the exhibition, the six artists were given the opportunity to travel to countries such as Laos, Indonesia, Cambodia and Malaysia for a week, to observe and be inspired in creating their art based on their interactions and observations of the weavers from those countries. The artists’ inspirations were then transformed into contemporary art pieces which portray the designs made by weavers.

At the exhibition, visitors have the opportunity to view weaving demonstrations, take part in a ‘hands on’ weaving tutorial as well as gain knowledge on the art of weaving by commissioned artists. The exhibition also caters for children where they will have the chance to experience storytelling sessions called ‘Weaving Tales’ conducted by Moonshadow Stories, a contemporary storytelling entity based in Singapore.

“Entwine: Maybank Women Eco-Weavers meet Southeast Asian Artists” exhibition at the National Museum of Singapore, The Concourse (Level 1), started on 21 August 2019, and will end on 8 September 2019. It is open to the public from 10.00am to 7.00pm daily. Admission to The Concourse of the National Museum is free of charge.

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