

Press Release

19 February 2019

SMA-LL but Impactful Charity Art Exhibition at Balai Seni Maybank

Some 60 paintings by children with Spinal Muscle Atrophy (SMA) and other disabilities and guest artists were showcased at Menara Maybank's Balai Seni in conjunction with Maybank's charity art exhibition.

The event was aimed at creating awareness about SMA amongst the public as well as raise funds for the patients in support of WeCareJourney in its efforts to champion the SMA awareness cause.

The charity art exhibition was officially launched by Wan Marzimin bin Wan Muhammad, Maybank's Group General Counsel & Company Secretary and Shahril Azuar Jimin, Maybank Foundation CEO.

Speaking at the event, Wan Marzimin said that awareness of SMA in Malaysia is still low and Maybank together with its partner, WeCareJourney, embarked on an initiative to educate the public on the difficulties arising from this disability faced by those affected as well as their families.

"Among the key objectives of this art exhibition is to educate the public on SMA being the number one genetic disease leading to deaths among infants as it can affect their ability to move, walk, eat or breathe without assistance. We also want to raise funds to purchase equipments such as powered wheelchairs, standing frames and 'coughing machines' for those affected by SMA," Wan Marzimin added.

Besides artworks of special children, three well-known guest artists namely Yusof Gajah, Jane Yap and Nicholas Choong also displayed a total of nine art pieces which were created to represent the experience of a person living with SMA.

Visitors were also given the opportunity to join in a few 'interactive' activity sessions like moving about in a wheelchair while viewing the paintings (depicting mobility problems), painting using a brush with a dumbbell attached to it (depicting weak muscles) and blow painting with straws (depicting breathing difficulties).

In addition, visitors were also seen raising funds for charity by participating in two of the activities namely batik painting using a brush with a dumbbell priced at RM50 and straw blowing on an art canvas at RM30.

Prior to the event, Maybank Chairman, Datuk Mohaiyani Shamsudin also played her part by contributing an artwork - painting on a canvas using a brush with a dumbbell depicting muscle weakness syndrome which was also auctioned off to the highest bidder.

Today's charity art exhibition is a continuation to the earlier Maybank Global CR Day initiative held in September last year where employees of Maybank's Group Corporate & Legal Services helped to raise awareness on SMA as well as assist families and children that are impacted by SMA.

"By organising these types of events, we hope to get the message out and reach out to other families who may have members affected by SMA especially from the East Malaysia region, where we do not have any records," said Wan Marzimin.

A silent auction was conducted to sell all the artworks displayed and winners would be contacted on the final day for an update if successful. The proceeds from sale of the artworks, whose prices start from RM100, as well as other merchandise and various activities, will be channelled to WeCareJourney, with a certain percentage paid to the children and invited artists.

The Art for SMA-LL exhibition will run from 19-21 February and is open to the public from 10am to 5pm daily. Admission to Balai Seni Maybank which is located on the first floor of Menara Maybank is free.
