
NEWS RELEASE

***What* wins top award at the 29th UOB Painting Of The Year Competition**

*Student's attempt to capture an artist's struggles during the creative process
wins her top prize*

SINGAPORE, 10 July 2010 – Many artists would have experienced a sense of loss and confusion when inspiration and ideas elude them at some point in their artistic careers. *What*, the top winning work of the 29th UOB Painting Of The Year (POY) Competition captures this poignant emotion.

The winner behind this piece of work is eighteen-year-old Bai TianYuan. She said, "It is such a great honour to win the top award at the UOB POY. This is definitely something completely out of my expectation! Winning the top prize in Singapore's premier art competition will serve as an encouragement for me to pursue my passion in art making."

On her winning work, TianYuan added, " 'What' was something I constantly asked myself throughout the decision-making process during painting. What was it that I wanted to express through this painting, what was the reason for painting this? So the question of 'What' accurately reflected my thought process. Art-making can be a rather painful process, when one has to come up with ideas significant and interesting enough to be worked on further, and to get those ideas conveyed effectively with meaningful compositions. It is not easy to make right choices in art, and sometimes one can be rather confused and at loss of what to do. My painting tried to depict this agonising state of mind."

Chief Judge Professor Robert Ely, a renowned arts and education consultant said, "*What is a well executed canvas divided into three distinct parts: the darker, less focused background lying in the past; the promise of a painting in the future foreground; and the search for truth and inspiration in the present, expressed by the central figure. Every artist knows the tyranny of the blank canvas and the burning desire to find a way of filling that space with meaning and purpose.*

Our wonderful city state of Singapore is changing, it is expressing itself in its art and in the beauty of its recent buildings; informed, as it is, by our traditions and culture. The emerging talents we witnessed in these works, particularly in our youth, is a promise waiting to be fulfilled. There was no doubt in our minds that this was the painting of the year.”

Gracing the prize presentation held at the Esplanade – Theatres on The Bay, Mrs Lim Hwee Hua, Minister in Prime Minister’s Office and Second Minister for Finance and Transport, presented the prizes and certificates to the winners. UOB gave away more than **\$100,000** in cash prizes.

“Nurturing, attracting and developing creative talents are vital to Singapore’s vision to become a leading global city and a regional hub for culture and the arts. The UOB Painting of the Year Competition has indeed grown over the years and has duly received recognition from the local and international communities for its role in nurturing the next generation of artists and creative leaders in Singapore,” said Mrs Lim Hwee Hua.

Mr Wee Ee Cheong, Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, United Overseas Bank, and Chairman of the UOB Art Committee said, “Through the years, we have seen the POY submissions grow in terms of range, expression and medium. This year, for the first time ever, UOB has also taken the Competition beyond Singapore. UOB (Thai) held the first UOB (Thai) Painting Of The Year Competition in Bangkok in June. International platforms and cross-cultural exchanges are important. They allow artists to obtain fresh ideas and learn from their peers. As we hit the 30-year milestone for POY next year, we remain committed to our support of the arts.”

Please refer to Annex 1 for the full list of winners.

The 29th UOB Painting of The Year Exhibition

All award-winning and highly-commended entries will be exhibited at the 29th UOB Painting Of The Year Exhibition:

Date: 11 to 25 July 2010

Venue: Jendela (*Visual Arts Space*), Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay

Time: 11.00am to 8.30pm (Mon – Fri)

10.00am to 8.30pm (Sat - Sun)

About United Overseas Bank

UOB is a leading bank in Singapore that provides a wide range of financial services through its global network of over 500 offices in 18 countries and territories in Asia Pacific, Western Europe and North America. It has banking subsidiaries in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and mainland China.

UOB plays an active role in the community, focusing on children, education and the arts. The UOB Heartbeat Staff Volunteerism programme was initiated in 2007. Through the UOB Heartbeat Run/Walk, UOB has raised funds for its named beneficiaries, including Very Special Arts Singapore which provides art programmes for people with special needs. UOB has also organised the prestigious Painting Of The Year Competition and Exhibition since 1982. In recognition of its contributions to the arts, UOB was conferred the National Arts Council's Distinguished Patron of the Arts Award for five consecutive years since 2005.

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