

ALMOST FORGOTTEN

A SOLO EXHIBITION BY
PATRICK TEO

Front cover

STRIDING OFF TO WORK

Acrylic on Canvas
39 in x 51 in
2014



ALMOST FORGOTTEN

A SOLO EXHIBITION BY
PATRICK TEO



GALLERY DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Eagle's Eye Art Gallery presents an exciting series of artworks by Singapore artist, Patrick Teo at The Elite Painters 2015 Art Exhibition- "Almost Forgotten". This series of artworks will feature the nostalgic Singapore scenes from the 50s and 60s. Patrick Teo is a revolutionary artist who illustrates traditional subjects in a novel way. He reinvents the coolies, samsui women, men and women from the 50s and 60s in a unique contemporary style.

Having lived in a tumultuous era of Singapore history and survived the Second World War, Teo has a radically different perspective of life. He looks inwards to discover a form of "self-expression" that offers him an individual voice in a world he once felt hostile and insecure about. The dramatic approach to his art-making allows him to explore the inner landscape of the soul.

From the happy faces of the children, the traders and joyful samsui women, it is evident that Teo celebrates life. What emerges from the collective artistic expression is Teo's testimony of the trials and triumphs of the tenacious human spirit.

The samsui women toiled thousands of miles away from their homeland during the 1950s in search of construction and industrial jobs. Teo illustrates the iconic samsui women of early Singapore in a light-hearted style, while imbuing them with the values of sharing, comradeship, hard work and resilience. Their faces are seen smiling in every painting despite their back breaking labour.

Teo sees the samsui woman as an exemplary social figure who triumphs against all odds. The manifestation of the human spirit is most acute under the harshest and trying social circumstances.

The future of Patrick Teo's shows great promise. His compelling creations evoke identification and trigger nostalgia. With each new painting that he creates, he proves to be an artistic genius.

JOY LOH
DIRECTOR, EAGLE'S EYE ART GALLERY

THE ARTIST'S REFLECTION



The Samsui district in the southern province of Kwang Tung in China suffered invasion by the Japanese military in World War 2. In the face of war and Japanese atrocities, drought, famine and parental pressure to enter into matched marriages, a group of intrepid Samsui women formed a sworn sisterhood, and sought a better life in Malaya and Singapore. They boarded Chinese junks and braved the hazardous waters of the South China Sea.

In the 1930s and 40s a large migration of hardy Samsui women arrived in Singapore. They settled in the heart of Chinatown, where their native Cantonese dialect was widely spoken. I have vivid memories of almost military motion in the early morning rush as the Samsui women boarded lorries

to be driven to various building construction sites. Clad in their scarlet and indigo uniforms, they resembled battalions of troops clutching weapons (their long-handled hoes and other equipment) and moving purposefully towards the battle front.

Their tough farm life in China enabled them to adapt to the scorching heat and hard physical labour carrying loads of bricks, stones, sand and cement and whatever else was needed for the construction of offices and houses.

In spite of remitting much of their earnings back to China, it is sad that in their twilight years when the Samsui women sought to return to their families in China, many of them found that they were not welcomed.

From the aesthetic standpoint, the Samsui woman is extraordinarily stunning in her scarlet head gear and deep indigo outfit. The vivid colours evoke a sense of vitality and strength in this manual labourer. However this image belies a life of hardship and misery as if destiny has pronounced a sentence of drudgery upon them.

The Samsui woman projects a tough demeanour and is always associated with incessant toil. Although I was intrigued by their resilience, I wanted to approach the theme of the Samsui woman in more light-hearted manner. I want to draw the viewer into their private worlds by sharing glimpses of intimate moments on canvas. The artworks have therefore, captured this very essence by presenting their

gentler and tender sides, their inclination to selflessly share simple pleasures amongst each other, thereby, forming a strong sisterhood. Their interactions with other people have also been taken into consideration.

To set a more effective tone, I injected humour by the use of exaggerated facial expressions and bodily gestures, amplifying these with my own meticulous technique of structured lines which has a three-dimensional effect. The artworks have also been infused with warm and soft hues to create this affable mood. "Almost Forgotten" also depicts other aspects of daily life in a bygone era which I remember fondly and vividly from my childhood. I hope that "Almost Forgotten" will serve as a reminder of our local heritage and humble beginnings.

EXCERPTS FROM THE EXHIBITION HALL

Title: GOLDEN LAUGHTER

Out of simple contentment with life comes a loud laugh, which reveals the flash and sparkle of a golden tooth.

Title: BETTING WITH FATE

Among the Samsui women in Singapore only a very small percentage got married to the local men, partly due to the low status of these women and their uncertainty about what the future would bring. Any suggestion to consult a fortune teller would be deemed a wise solution. However, as the painting shows, during the consultation fear mounts in one of the faces.

Title: COURAGEOUS ASSIGNMENT

When there is shortage of manpower at the work site, the Samsui women would readily step in to give a helping hand.

Title: JOYFUL BARGAINS

During a festive season, groups of Samsui women would crowd around an itinerant food hawker to buy supplementary food to be shared.

Title: MISSING HOME

Since most of the Samsui women workers were illiterate, how did they communicate with their families back in China? Fortunately, in Chinatown there was usually a letter writer nearby who would write letters as dictated, address the envelop and send off the letter. When a reply came, he would read aloud the contents in the addressee's presence.

Title: DIP FOR CLEANSING

Later, when house building technology became more sophisticated, manual labourers like the Samsui women were less in demand, so the brigades of Samsui women were split into small groups to perform new kinds of odd jobs. This painting depicts a Samsui woman

homeward bound after an offshore deck-cleaning job. She stops to clean her slippers. The artist imagined himself being under the water to present the scene from an unusual perspective.

Title: JOYFUL LUNCHEBREAK

In the late 1960s, the transistor radio became popular, and like many other Cantonese folk, the Samsui women were greatly entertained by the serialised stories broadcast over the radio by the well known story teller calling himself "Lay Tai Sor". Take notice of the three Samsui women being tickled by his humorous tale.

Title: PRECIOUS GRAINS

In times of poverty, there was still food to be got for free. Bum boats would berth along the banks of the Singapore River to unload all manner of goods unloaded from ships in the harbour, including sacks of rice. Some rice would fall out of the sacks and little children would pick up the grains to help feed their families.

Title: THE BEST PICK

The 1950s was a difficult time as employment was scarce. The artist was raised in a small rural village, a kampong, where coconut palms grew everywhere. Plucking ripe coconuts was a precarious occupation. A job the climber would bring a few cents to feed the family. My painting highlights the extrusion of the climber's torso, trying to reach the fruits. Eventually, that leaves a large gap for the sun ray to reflect a warm glow on his chest from the tree trunk. In this perspective, it creates the energy of amazing spectacle on the figuring.

Title: WILD CHASE

After World War 2, rickshaws were popular for short distance travel in the city. Stray dogs were everywhere and enjoyed chasing passing rickshaws. The rickshaw puller had to look out for this occupational hazard.

EDITED BY
MICKEY CHIANG



JOYFUL LUNCHTIME

Acrylic on Canvas
39 in x 47 in
2012



THOUGHTFULNESS

Acrylic on Canvas
35 in x 47 in
2012



BRING HOME A NEW MEMBER

Acrylic on Canvas
35 in x 43 in
2013



BLISSFUL CRAVING

Acrylic on Canvas
27 in x 35 in
2012



PRECARIOUS ASSIGNMENT

Acrylic on Canvas
33 in x 55 in
2013





MESMERISED BY THE SOUND

Acrylic on Canvas
35 in x 47 in
2013



GOLDEN LAUGHTER

Acrylic on Canvas
27 in x 27 in
2013



OFFSHORE DUTY

Acrylic on Canvas
51 in x 39 in
2013

HARD LABOUR

Acrylic on Canvas
23 in x 47 in
2013





DIP FOR CLEANSING

Acrylic on Canvas
39 in x 55 in
2013



CORDIAL RELATIONSHIP

Acrylic on Canvas
27 in x 30 in
2013





SHARING UNDER ONE LEAF

Acrylic on Canvas
47 in X 39 in
2013



JOYFUL BARGAIN

Acrylic on Canvas
35 in x 55 in
2013



MISSING HOME

Acrylic on Canvas
35 in x 39 in
2014



MERRIMENT AT LUNCHTIME

Acrylic on Canvas
43 in x 39 in
2014



BETTING WITH FATE

Acrylic on Canvas
35 in x 43 in
2014



STRIDING OFF TO WORK

Acrylic on Canvas
39 in x 51 in
2014



THE BEST PICK

Acrylic on Canvas
39 in x 39 in
2014



WILD CHASE

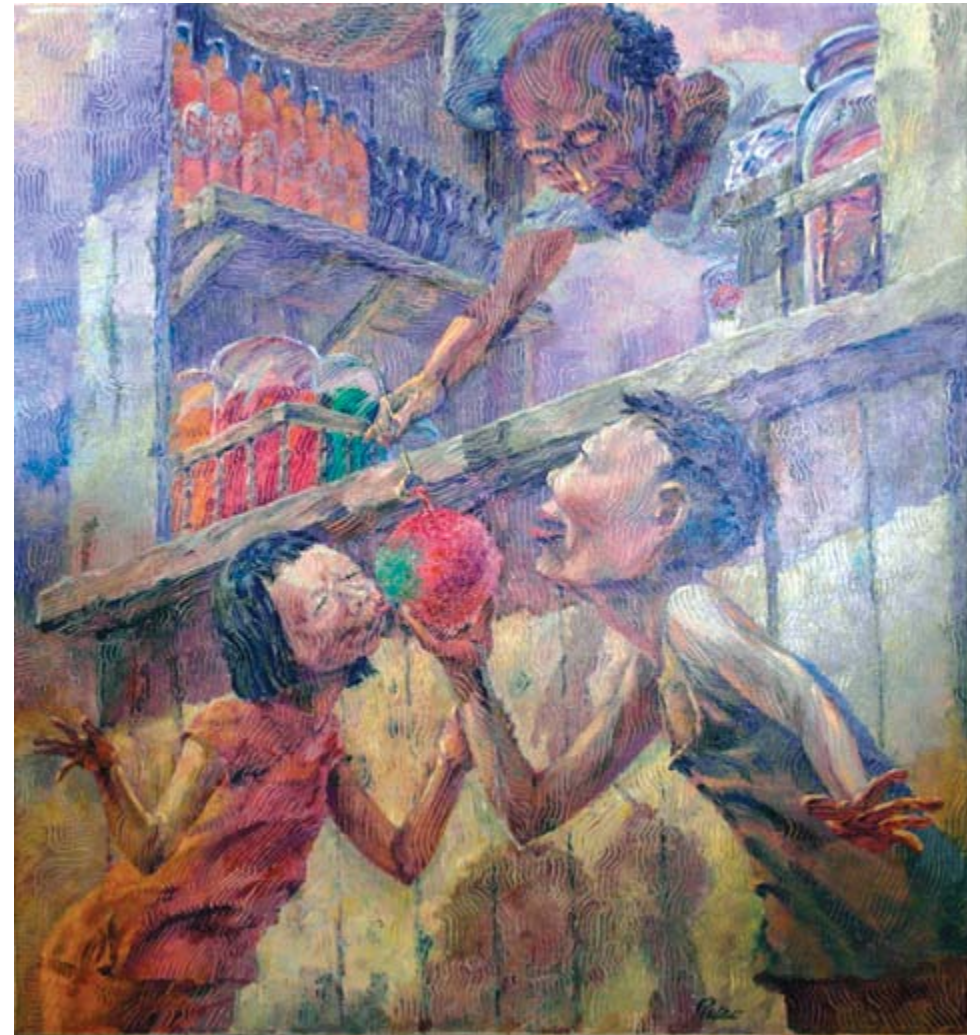
Acrylic on Canvas
51 in x 47 in
2014





PRECIOUS GRAINS

Acrylic on Canvas
35 in x 43 in
2014



ICY DELIGHT

Acrylic on Canvas
35 in x 40 in
2015





THE LOYAL ASSISTANT

Acrylic on Canvas
32 x 40 in
2015



SWEET GOLDEN GOODNESS

Acrylic on Canvas
30 in x 40 in
2013



FIGHTING SPIDERS

Acrylic on Canvas
30 in x 40 in
2011



BONDING

Acrylic on Canvas
20 in x 31 in
2015

BIOGRAPHY



Stepping into Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA) for his visual arts education in 1961 was the starting point for Patrick Teo's career in art and design. He had the privilege of being under the tutelage of Georgette Chen. During the impoverished period, although passionate about the visual arts, he directed his energy into Graphic Designing.

It was 20 years later that he sought for something more challenging and embarked into jewellery design in 1983. Before long, Patrick won prestigious awards at international competitions for his creations. He was even presented with the prestigious International Diamond Jewelry Award in 1990.

In 2004, Patrick, who loved to paint since he was a child, picked up his palette and brushes once again. However, it was not as easy as he thought. When comparing himself to peers who had pursued a career in the fine arts, he felt like he had been marooned in the middle of a jungle. Despite all these, he soon discovered the signature style of vibrant, fluid and semi-abstract acrylic paintings, using the linear relief effect.

2007 was a memorable year for Patrick. Galleries started recognizing his works and so did the media. Since then, he has become increasingly involved in the Singapore art community through memberships with Club NAFA, NAFA Alumni Association, the Singapore Art Society and the Singapore Chinese Art Society.

EXHIBITIONS

2015

ALMOST FORGOTTEN - A Solo Exhibition by Patrick Teo. Elite Painter 2015, Eagle's Eye Art Gallery

2014

AFFORDABLE ART FAIR (May), Featured artist for Eagle's Eye Art Gallery

2013

AFFORDABLE ART FAIR (November), Featured artist for Eagle's Eye Art Gallery

2013

SOUTHEAST ASIA ART SHOWCASE, LUXE Museum

2011

ENCHANTING MEMORIES - A Solo Exhibition by Patrick Teo, Element Art Space

2010

100% SINGAPORE, Tembusu Art Gallery, Singapore.

Singapore Art Society 60th Anniversary, Art Exhibition, Ngee Ann Cultural and Art Centre.

2009

ASIAN ART, Tembusu Art Gallery, Singapore.

Singapore Art Society Exhibition 60th Annual Exhibition cum Dr Tan Tsze Chor Awards 2009, MICA Building ARTrium, Singapore.

NAFA Alumni Association 34th Anniversary Exhibition, MICA Building ARTrium, Singapore.

2008

Singapore Art Society Exhibition 59th Annual Exhibition cum Dr Tan Tsze Chor Awards 2008, Ngee Ann Cultural and Art Centre, Singapore.

MEDIA

2008

Featured on Art Showcase, an Arts Central programme, by Mediacorp Singapore.

On Eagle's Eye Art Gallery

Eagle's Eye Art Gallery is Art Consultant and Supplier of Fine Art to Governments, Statutory Boards, Royalties, Diplomats and Multi-National Corporations. Our art pieces are marked with the seal of professionalism by Koeh Sia Yong, Chua Mia Tee, Tay Bak Koi, Goh Beng Kwan, Lee Boon Wang, Tan Choh Tee, Choo Keng Kwang, Thang Kiang How, Tung Yue Nang, Lai Kui Fang, Michael Tan, Wan Soon Kam, Choy Moo Kheong, Alex Leong, Lui Cheng Thak, Patrick Teo, Andrew Yeo, Lye Yau Fatt, Ching Kek How, Christine Mak and other artistic geniuses from Singapore and Asia. A fusion of eastern sensibilities and western aesthetics are seen in these oil, mixed media and watercolour paintings.

Eagle's Eye Art Gallery has a strong interest in the socio-cultural and historical aspects of Southeast Asia. We promote art that espouses the enduring values of humanity and our heritage. We have a collection from artists who are deeply entrenched in their Asian heritage and yet cosmopolitan in outlook. We are passionate about art with social narratives, which illustrate the joys and struggles of humanity. We believe that paintings imbued with culture and history can impart enduring legacies in children.



Eagle's Eye Art Gallery
#01-60, 15 Stamford Road, Capitol Piazza, Singapore 178906
Tel: +65 63398297
E-mail: art@eagles-eye.com.sg

ISBN: 978-981-09-5562-5

Copyright©Patrick Teo. All rights reserved.
No part of image from this publication may
be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system,
or transmitted, in any form or any means,
electronic, mechanical, photocopy or otherwise,
without prior permission
from the copyright holder.

CATALOGUE DESIGN Melissa Teo
just_melteo@yahoo.com.sg

Back cover

WILD CHASE
Acrylic on Canvas
51 in x 47 in
2014



SUPPORTED BY



PRESENTED BY



EAGLE'S EYE ART GALLERY
19 00 95