

---

## NEWS RELEASE

### The 22nd UOB Painting Of The Year Competition

*Luis Lee's winning painting 'Packed' various elements  
into a harmonious central motif*

*Competition draws record entries,  
and overwhelming response for its new Photography Medium category*

**Singapore, 19 July 2003** - A record-breaking 945 entries from 475 artists were received for United Overseas Bank's Painting Of The Year Competition this year. Now in its 22nd year, the UOB Painting Of The Year Competition was launched in 1982 and ranks as the only premier annual art event organised and sponsored by a private sector company in Singapore.

A new dimension in this year's Competition is the introduction of a new Photography Medium category in the Open Section that attracted an overwhelming response. Of the total number of entries submitted, slightly more than half (476) was for this category. The inaugural success received for the Photography Medium category is heartening and augurs well for the development and growth of photographic art in Singapore. It also affirms UOB's continual efforts to open up additional creative opportunities for our local artists not only to exercise the mind but also to explore the medium.

The 16 prize winners in this year's Competition were announced at the Official Opening of the 22nd UOB Painting Of The Year Exhibition held at the Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay today (Saturday, 19 July 2003). Guest-of-Honour, Dr Lee Boon Yang, Minister of Information, Communications & The Arts, presented the awards to the winners.

In the Open Section, Fine Art Masters' student, **Mr Luis Lee Jin Min**, took home the top prize of S\$20,000 and the UOB Painting Of The Year Trophy for his painting entitled '**Packed**'. Inspiration for the winning bitumen and oil painting came while Luis was taking a break from creating a series of installations using corrugated boxes.

Explained the 29-year-old, "Each box is created for a different purpose, some for packing CDs, others for packing fridges. The different marks on the boxes are there for a specific purpose - to better contain the items. But I saw these marks as more than grooves for holding the items, and the images that I saw are reflected in 'Packed'. At the same time, the different marks also made me question if it was us who structure our possessions to fit the box or if it was the box that was structured to fit our possessions. 'Packed' is my depiction of this question."

Commented Dr Kenson Kwok, Chief Judge of this year's Competition, "The Painting Of The Year impressed us on different levels. In terms of form, there are many different elements incorporated in the central motif. These elements are harmonious and not jarring - in other words, the work has coherence and internal consistency. In terms of execution, we found the raw energy and vibrancy of the strokes very appealing. The message of this work is therefore about abstract qualities such as energy, speed and form. The convincing way in which this message is conveyed and the absence of any weakness in its execution gave it the edge over other contenders for the top prize."

The top prize in the inaugural **Photography Medium category** was won by professional photographer, **Mr Teo Chai Guan** with his entry entitled '**Lock**'. Explained Chai Guan, "Having grown up in a kampung, I was fascinated by the need to lock our doors once we moved into a HDB flat whereas previously, doors were always left open. To me, the locked gate represented a loss of freedom and a sense of restriction which I had not felt while living in the kampung."

The judges were also pleased with the high standard of entries submitted in the Junior Section for 18-year-olds and below. Noting the particularly strong quality in this Section for this year, the judges felt that a number of the entries would have been able to hold their own in the Open Section.

Seventeen-year-old **Mr Tan Han Kiong** was named this year's 'UOB Most Promising Young Artist' for his painting '**Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani**'. Observed Dr Kwok, "This is a powerful work, full of action and movement. It is painted from an unusual perspective, as though one is looking from above. Initially, one thinks it is a fight scene, but the title of the painting [meaning 'My God, My God, Why has thou forsaken me?' in English] suggests that there is an added spiritual perspective to this painting. That extra element - the content/meaning behind the painting, which can be interpreted in different ways - together with the dynamic composition makes this a winning piece."

## Results Of The Competition

For the full results of the Competition, please refer to the enclosed [Annex](#).

## Response To The Competition

This year's Competition, which closed on Saturday, 12 July 2003, attracted a total of 945 entries from 475 participants. The detailed breakdown is as follows:

<b>Number Of Entries</b>	
<b>Open Section</b>	789
comprising	
? Abstract Medium	131
? Representational Medium	150
? Traditional Chinese Medium	32
? Photography Medium	476
<b>Junior Section</b>	156
comprising	
? Abstract Medium	33
? Representational Medium	120
? Traditional Chinese Medium	3

## Judges

Judging for this year's Competition was carried out by a panel of two overseas and three local judges. They were:

### *Local Judges*

- Dr Kenson Kwok (Chief Judge)  
Director, Asian Civilisations Museum
- Mr Chandrasekaran S.  
Sculptor, Installation & Performance Artist  
Former Head of School of Fine Art, LaSalle-SIA College of the Arts
- Mr David Tay  
President, Photographic Society of Singapore

### *Overseas Judges*

- Dr Cheng Haw-Chien (from Malaysia)  
President, Central Academy of Arts
- Mr Jogen Chowdhury (from India)  
Professional Artist

### **The 22nd UOB Painting Of The Year Exhibition**

All 16 prize-winning and 34 highly commended entries from the Competition are on display at the 22nd UOB Painting Of The Year Exhibition.

The Exhibition, open to members of the public, is being held at Jendela, Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay from 19 July to 17 August 2003, 11.00 am to 8.30 pm (Tuesdays to Fridays), 10.00 am to 8.30 pm (Saturdays, Sundays & Public Holidays). The Exhibition is closed on Mondays. Admission is free.

From 12 to 17 August 2003, a collective display of the recent works of last year's Painting Of The Year winner, Mr Gong Yao Min, will also be on exhibit at the Exhibition.

---

### **For further information, please contact:**

Ms Lim Yin-Fern  
UOB Corporate Affairs  
Tel: 65-6539 3990  
Fax: 65-6538 2559  
Email: [Lim.YinFern@UOBgroup.com](mailto:Lim.YinFern@UOBgroup.com)

Ms Samantha Joy Yik  
UOB Corporate Affairs  
Tel: (65) 6539 3970  
Email: [SamanthaJoy.YikSY@UOBgroup.com](mailto:SamanthaJoy.YikSY@UOBgroup.com)