

## News Release

### **Indonesian Artist's Innovative Technique Wins the 34<sup>th</sup> UOB Southeast Asian Painting of the Year Award**

**Singapore, 4 November 2015** – United Overseas Bank (UOB) today presented the 2015 UOB Southeast Asian Painting of the Year award to Indonesian artist, Mr Anggar Prasetyo, for his painting titled *Exploitation of Fish*. It depicts the disregard for environmental consequences of overfishing, which has vastly depleted the ocean's reserves. The combination of different techniques such as moulding, spraying and acrylic painting results in an embossed design and a relief effect on the painting's flat canvas.

The painting impressed the judges with its innovative technique and strong narrative on the erosion of natural resources conveyed through the use of symbols. The 42-year old's winning painting was among the four winning entries from the 2015 UOB Painting of the Year country competitions held in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. This is the second consecutive year that an Indonesian artist has won the top regional award.

UOB's commitment to art began in Singapore more than 40 years ago, which later extended to across Southeast Asia as the Bank built its network in the region. Its flagship UOB Painting of the Year programme underscores this commitment. Now in its 34<sup>th</sup> year, the competition gives talented artists across Southeast Asia an avenue to showcase their artistic talent to a wider audience. It has also launched the careers of well-known artists such as Singapore Cultural Medallion winner Goh Beng Kwan, Anthony Poon and Chua Ek Kay.

Mr Wee Ee Cheong, Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, UOB Group, said that just as UOB has a long history of supporting the merchant community, the Bank has helped nurture and recognise emerging and established Southeast Asian artists.

"Southeast Asia is our home and where we first established our business. As UOB celebrates its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, we remain committed to supporting the region's economic, social and cultural development. Our support of art is one way we are giving back to the community as we believe that artists, through their art, can inspire hearts and minds, fostering a culture of creativity and innovation in our society."

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Mr Anggar Prasetyo, UOB Southeast Asian Painting of the Year winner said the inspiration behind his painting was mankind's duty to preserve the ecosystem and prevent exploitation of the ocean's resources.

"The ocean provides vast resources of biological diversity for mankind and it is everyone's responsibility to preserve it. We must not allow exploitation of the ocean and its ecosystem as our future generations deserve to enjoy a clean ocean and we should not leave them with a mere memory of it."

The regional panel of judges comprised representatives from each of the four participating countries: Mr Edwin Rahardjo, Founder of Edwin's Gallery from Indonesia; Dr Thomas Jakob Berghuis, Executive Director of Museum MACAN, Yayasan Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art di Nusantra, from Malaysia; Dr Bridget Tracy Tan, Director of the Institute of Southeast Asian Arts and Art Galleries, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts in Singapore; and Professor Vichoke Mukdamanee, National artist and lecturer at Faculty of Painting, Sculpture and Graphic Arts, Silpakorn University.

### **Established Artist Category: Mr Benjamin F. Cruz wins UOB Painting of the Year (Singapore) Award for his skilful draughtsmanship**

Mr Benjamin F. Cruz was presented the Singapore 2015 UOB Painting of the Year award for his acrylic on canvas artwork titled *Building....*. The painting depicts the construction of a building as it takes on shape and form, finally overshadowing its environment to become the subject. Mr Cruz is a retiree who divides his time between the Philippines and Singapore, and his winning piece *Building....* is symbolic of Mr Cruz's impression of Singapore and its transformation into a bustling metropolis. Among his list of artistic achievements are five commendations from previous UOB Painting of the Year competitions.

Mr Cruz's technique of using colour and textures on complex surfaces caught the judges' eye. The painting sized at 152 centimetres by 160 centimetres also pulls the viewer in to dwell on the different parts of the painting, drawing their eye back and forth between the lighter and darker hues. This sparks a tension between the concrete jungle and the fragile humanity that dwells within it.

### **Emerging Artist Category: Most Promising Artist of the Year (Singapore) invites viewers into his world of play, drawing and painting**

In the Emerging Artist category, 15-year old Mr Ezra Chan Yi, won the Singapore 2015 UOB Most Promising Artist of the Year award. Mr Chan's acrylic and oil on canvas piece titled *Play*, represents a

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world in which Mr Chan gets to play with all his favourite games while drawing and painting. Through the painting, he recalls the places he frequents, the logos and brands he sees and the sounds he hears.

Mr Chan started painting at the young age of four as a way to express his emotions and thoughts. Six years later, he enrolled in Very Special Arts (VSA), a charity that helps people with disabilities to access the arts for rehabilitation and social integration. Within a year, he contributed two artworks to raise funds for the organisation. He has participated in group exhibitions organised by VSA and Pathlight School and has had his designs adopted for merchandise.

The winners from the four participating countries received their awards at a ceremony held at the Capitol Theatre in Singapore. The Guest of Honour was Singapore's Mr Teo Chee Hean, Deputy Prime Minister and Co-ordinating Minister for National Security.

All winning paintings will be exhibited at the lobby of UOB Plaza 1 at 80 Raffles Place from 9 November 2015.

### **Winners of the 34<sup>th</sup> UOB Painting of the Year competition**

2015 UOB Southeast Asian Painting of the Year Award: Mr Anggar Prasetyo, *Exploitation of Fish*

2015 UOB Painting of the Year, Indonesia: Mr Anggar Prasetyo, *Exploitation of Fish*

2015 UOB Painting of the Year, Malaysia: Ms Tiong Chai Heing, *Stifling*

2015 UOB Painting of the Year, Singapore: Mr Benjamin F. Cruz, *Building...*

2015 UOB Painting of the Year, Thailand: Ms Thidarat Chantachua, *Jamaah 2*

### **Established Artist Category (Singapore)**

2015 UOB Painting of the Year, Singapore: Mr Benjamin F. Cruz, *Building...*

Gold Award: Mr Aaron Gan Ming Chern, *Starry Starry Night*

Silver Award: Ms Geraldine Martha Schubert, *Crossing Bridges*

Bronze Award: Mr Jose Maria Bustos, *Bull Market*

### **Emerging Artist Category (Singapore)**

Most Promising Artist of the Year, Singapore: Mr Ezra Chan Yi, *Play*

Gold Award: Ms Isabelle Soh Min Hui, *Room*

Silver Award: Ms Peck Hsiao Tyng, *Deconstructed*

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Bronze Award:

Ms Nada Ng, *Pleasure/Pressure*

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### About United Overseas Bank

United Overseas Bank Limited (UOB) is a leading bank in Asia with a global network of more than 500 offices in 19 countries and territories in Asia Pacific, Western Europe and North America. Since its incorporation in 1935, UOB has grown organically and through a series of strategic acquisitions. UOB is rated among the world's top banks: AA1 by Moody's and AA- by Standard & Poor's and Fitch Ratings respectively.

In Asia, UOB operates through its head office in Singapore and banking subsidiaries in China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines, as well as branches and representative offices.

UOB plays an active role in the community, focusing on art, children and education. It has, over more than three decades, held the longest-running art competition in Singapore, the UOB Painting of the Year, which has since been extended across Southeast Asia. In recognition of its contributions to the arts, UOB was conferred the Singapore National Arts Council's Distinguished Patron of the Arts Award for the tenth consecutive year in 2014. UOB also encourages its employees across the region to be involved in its regular volunteer activities. This includes the annual UOB Heartbeat Run which is held in China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand.

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