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## NEWS RELEASE

### The 20th UOB Painting Of The Year Competition

*Erzan B Adam's Winning 'It's Hip 2 B Square' Gives A Fresh Perspective On Heritage  
Other Competition entries included several outstanding renditions with the recurring  
theme of identity, culture and heritage*

**Singapore, 14 July 2001** - The 20th UOB Painting Of The Year Competition, organised by the United Overseas Bank (UOB) Group, concluded its second decade with an overwhelming 457 entries. A large number of the entries were of a high quality with a wide range of expressions. Indeed, the judges felt that the entries received in this year's UOB Painting Of The Year Competition could well be a representation of the current visual arts scene in Singapore.

An interesting theme that emerged in several works this year was one about identity, culture and heritage, demonstrating that the visual arts has become a more direct platform to express multiculturalism in contrast to language which is more culturally specific. The art pieces displayed the wonders of multiculturalism by being aesthetically convincing as well as conceptually vigorous.

Clinching the top prize of S\$20,000 in the Open Section of the Competition is 25-year-old **Mr Erzan B Adam**, a full-time artist. His winning bitumen, oil and enamel painting on a pre-primed canvas is entitled '**It's Hip 2 B Square**'. Using different types of fabric to represent a variety of cultures, Mr Adam's painting weaved in the fact that it is indeed possible to achieve harmony in the midst of multiculturalism.

Commented Mr Kwok Kian Chow, the Chief Judge for this year's Competition, "The richness of heritages in a multicultural environment is a great inspiration for contemporary living. The title of the winning painting suggests that it is trendy to be old-fashioned. But this state of being 'square' is by no means a formulaic conformity to traditions. Rather, it is a dynamic, vivid and inter-cultural symphony of individuality, cultural depth and multiplicity. Erzan B Adam's work manifests a fresh perspective on heritage. It convinces by the successful integration of traditional motifs, abstract forms and a strong presence of brushwork. The panel of judges was

also impressed by the layering of concept, formal expression, questions and answers, and sensitivity to traditions in the painting."

The judges were also extremely pleased with the outstanding originality in the entries submitted in the Junior Section for 18-year-olds and below.

Sixteen-year-old **Mr Yeo Zhixiong** emerged as this year's 'UOB Most Promising Young Artist' with his acrylic painting '**Reminiscence**'. In the words of the judges, it is a painting that is "whimsical and yet one had better pay attention to the disapproving stare of the father-looking figure. It is technically competent but it is not a usual academic painting. Rather, the painting is very personal in approach, suggesting a psychological intensity. The singular back-facing figure led one member of the judging panel to comment that while many people are doing the same thing, all it takes is for one to be different and we will have a different world. The use of colours in the work is also exemplary."

For the first time in the history of the UOB Painting Of The Year Competition, an outstanding Junior Section entry stood out among the top Open Section works to receive a Certificate Of Distinction Award in the Open Section.

Sixteen-year-old **John Lim Chung Li's** acrylic on wood piece entitled, '**Why I Sometimes Speak With An Accent**', received special mention from the panel of judges. His work, comprising two wooden panels or sections with a red band, suggested sound waves traversing from one section to another. The smooth surface and clearly defined band becomes ambiguous as it reaches the far end of the left panel. This abstract work, with its suggestive title and sense of speed and movement, is thought provoking.

### **Response To The Competition**

This year's Competition, which closed on Saturday, 7 July 2001, attracted a total of 457 entries from 294 participants. The detailed breakdown is as follows:

	<b>Number Of Entries</b>
<b>Open Section</b>	<b>308</b>
comprising	
• Abstract Medium	113
• Representational Medium	150
• Traditional Chinese Medium	45
<b>Junior Section</b>	<b>149</b>
comprising	
• Abstract Medium	36
• Representational Medium	100
• Traditional Chinese Medium	13

## Results Of The Competition

Award/Prize	Winner	Title Of Painting	Medium	Size (cm)
<b>Open Section</b>				
• <b>The UOB Painting Of The Year Award</b> S\$20,000 and The UOB Painting Of The Year Trophy	Mr Erzan B Adam	It's Hip 2 B Square	Mixed Media	152 x 152
• <b>First Prize: Abstract Medium Category</b> S\$8,000	Mr Ho Tzu Nyen	Entropy	Mixed Media	150 x 120
• <b>First Prize: Representational Medium Category</b> S\$8,000	Ms Mo Ni	When She Looks Back	Chinese Ink	168 x 137
• <b>First Prize: Traditional Chinese Medium Category</b> S\$8,000	Mr Chua Say Hua	Equatorial Storm	Ink & Pigment On Rice Paper	154 x 154
• <b>Certificate Of Distinction Awards</b> S\$1,000 each	• Mr Ardi Bin Abdullah	Square #2	Chalk Pastel On Paper	50 x 50
	• Mr Chen Wuji (Defa)	Holiday	Chinese Ink	217 x 80
	• Mr John Lim Chung Li (aged 16 years)	Why I Sometimes Speak With An Accent	Acrylic On Wood	61 x 81 (x2)
	• Mr Carey Ngai	Between I	Oil On Canvas	170 x 120
	• Mr Tee Kai Yin	Landscape _ Going For The Bird's Eye View	Mixed Media	125 x 90
<b>Junior Section*</b>				

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The UOB Most Promising Young Artist Award</b> S\$1,000 and The UOB Most Promising Young Artist Trophy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr Yeo Zhixiong (aged 16 years)</li> </ul>	Reminiscence	Acrylic	126 x 175
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Certificate Of Distinction Awards</b> S\$200 each</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr Goh Chee Keong (aged 16 years)</li> </ul>	Brotherhood	Soft Pastel	38 x 33
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr Koh Chaik Hong (aged 7 years)</li> </ul>	Big Cat	Oil	80 x 60
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr Liao Jiekai (aged 16 years)</li> </ul>	Where's My Home?	Oil On Canvas	100 x 80
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms Sng Wei Zhen (aged 17 years)</li> </ul>	My Apple!	Acrylic	75 x 100
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr Andrew Teo Say Chong (aged 17 years)</li> </ul>	System Breakdown	Acrylic	155 x 176

\* The Junior Section is open to all entrants aged 18 years and below (born on/after 1 January 1983)

### **Panel Of Judges**

This year's panel of judges comprises three local and two overseas judges. They are:

#### **Local Judges**

- Mr Kwok Kian Chow (Chief Judge)  
Director, Singapore Art Museum
- Ms Huangfu Binghui  
Gallery Director, Dr Earl Lu Gallery, LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts
- Mr Lo Kok Siong  
Board Member, Asian Civilisations Museum

#### **Overseas Judges**

- Mr Liu Xiaodong (from China)  
Artist, Central Institute of Fine Arts, Beijing
- Mr Panya Vijnthanasarn (from Thailand)

Artist, Art Lecturer, Faculty of Painting, Sculpture and Graphic Arts

Silpakorn University, Thailand

### **The 20th UOB Painting Of The Year Exhibition**

All 15 prize-winning and 37 highly commended entries from the Competition are on display at the 20th UOB Painting Of The Year Exhibition. The Exhibition also includes a collective display of the recent works of last year's Painting Of The Year winner, Mr Fan Shao Hua.

The Exhibition, open to members of the public, is held on the 1st, 37th and 38th Storeys of UOB Plaza 1, 80 Raffles Place, from 14 to 27 July 2001, 9.00 am to 5.00 pm daily. Admission is free.