
NEWS RELEASE

28th UOB Painting Of The Year competition adopts regional palette

Residence programme tie-up with Japan's renowned Fukuoka Asian Art Museum gives winning artist exciting platform to showcase talent

Singapore, 8 May 2009 - United Overseas Bank Limited (UOB) is pleased to announce the launch of the 28th UOB Painting Of The Year Competition (POY). Painters and photographers in Singapore who wish to take part in the competition must submit their works on 28 June 2009 at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts. Winners will be announced on 4 July 2009.

This year, the Bank has partnered the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum (FAAM) to institute the UOB-FAAM Residence Programme. This will give the event a regional flavour and the artist an exciting platform to showcase his talent.

Under the three-year UOB-FAAM partnership, the overall UOB POY winner can attend a one-month Residence Programme at the FAAM to engage in the creation of artworks, run workshops with the locals and exhibit their works. As part of the collaboration, FAAM will also be represented on the POY judging panel.

The FAAM Residence Programme is highly regarded by artists in Asia as participants need to go through a selection process to attend the programme. The overall winner of the UOB POY, however, will get direct entry without having to undergo selection by FAAM.

Besides the UOB-FAAM tie-up, the prize money has also been fine-tuned to encourage greater participation. *(See attached Annex for details of the categories of prizes)*

Mr Kwok Kian Chow, Director of the Singapore Art Museum and Chief Judge for this year's POY said, "This year, we will see a more integrated approach to judging the entries, and will look for qualities in artworks not necessarily defined by conventions of the various mediums, but the transcending qualities and articulations, along with the dynamic forum of judges from Japan to Australia, from artists to curators. We will challenge the artworks just as the artworks will challenge us."

Mr Raiji Kuroda, chief curator of the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum said, "The UOB POY is a key event in the arts calendar in Singapore, and we are pleased to collaborate with UOB on the UOB-FAAM Residence Programme. The art residence programme is a key pillar of FAAM's activities and we are confident that this exchange and interaction with Singapore will contribute to the growth and diversity of Asian art and culture."

Mr Wee Ee Cheong, Deputy Chairman and CEO, United Overseas Bank, and Chairman of the UOB Art Committee said, "We are encouraged by the strong response to the POY over the last 27 years. We have added a regional dimension to the event in line with our mission to be premier regional bank. The UOB-FAAM tie-up is motivated by our desire to give outstanding local artists a bigger regional palette to hone their skills and showcase their works. The Fukuoka experience, with its different cultural and aesthetic settings, should help provide a richer source of inspiration for the winning artist's creations."

Besides the FAAM, long-time partner Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay is once again supporting the event by contributing exhibition space at the Jendela (*Visual Arts Space*), Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay.

About UOB Painting Of The Year Competition

UOB has been supporting the arts since 1973. Chief among its efforts is the UOB Painting Of The Year Competition (POY), which has become a significant event in the Arts calendar. The UOB POY was launched in 1982 and has been held annually since. The year 2009 marks the 28th anniversary of this premier art event in Singapore.

Through the POY Competition, UOB aims to promote a greater interest in local art, to further encourage artists in their creative endeavours and to provide a platform to recognise and exhibit the best creative works. The Bank believes that the Arts can inject vibrancy into society and contribute to the uplifting of a community.

Alumni of the UOB POY include Cultural Medallists such as Goh Beng Kwan, Thomas Yeo, the late Chua Ek Kay and Anthony Poon.

The UOB POY Competition is open to all Singapore Citizens, and employment, work-permit and student pass holders. There are no participation fees. Last year's POY experienced overwhelming response, with 1,200 entries submitted by over 820 participants. UOB is encouraged by the response and looks forward to the strong support from the public once again this year.

Entry forms and a copy of the rules and regulations of the Competition are available at uobgroup.com, all UOB branches, schools and art institutions.

All entries must be submitted at the Visual Arts Seminar Room, Level 2, Nanyang Academy Of Fine Arts Campus 1 (Wing B), 80 Bencoolen Street, Singapore 189655 on Sunday, 28 June 2009 between 1pm and 6pm.

All award-winning and highly-commended entries will be exhibited at the 28th UOB Painting Of The Year Exhibition to be held at Jendela (*Visual Arts Space*), Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay, from 5 July to 2 August 2009.

(Please refer to the attached factsheet for more information on POY.)

About United Overseas Bank

United Overseas Bank Limited (UOB) is a leading bank in Singapore with a strong presence in Asia. It 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, including banking subsidiaries in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and mainland China.

UOB also plays an active and meaningful role in the community, focusing on children, education and the arts. It has organised the prestigious Painting Of The Year Competition and Exhibition since 1982, and supports Very Special Arts Singapore which provides art programmes for the disabled. In recognition of its contributions to the arts, UOB has been conferred the National Arts Council's Distinguished Patron of the Arts Award for the third consecutive year.

About Fukuoka Asian Art Museum

The Fukuoka Asian Art Museum (FAAM) was set up in 1999 by Fukuoka City as part of the city's strategy for interaction with different Asian cultures. It is the only museum in the world that systematically collects and exhibits Asian modern and contemporary art. It has a collection of works by famous Asian artists like Cai Guo-Qiang, Subodh Gupta, Thawan Duchanee and Tang Da Wu. The FAAM has been hosting the renowned Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale, held every three years, since 1999.

Each year, applicants from 20 countries in Asia undergo a selection process out of which, four are chosen to spend up to 12 weeks in the FAAM Residence Programme. This programme lets them engage in the creation of artworks, run workshops with the locals and hold an exhibition.

The UOB-FAAM Residence Programme allows the UOB POY overall winner to attend the Residence Programme without having to go through the FAAM selection process.

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**The UOB Painting Of The Year Competition And Exhibition
Prize Categories**

- A. UOB Painting Of The Year Award** \$30,000 and a Trophy
In addition, a bonus prize of a one-month Residence Programme at the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum may be awarded to the UOB Painting Of The Year winner who, in the judges' opinion, has submitted an entry of exceptional standard.

Only entrants from the Open and Youth Sections are eligible for the UOB Painting Of The Year Award.

- B. Most Promising Young Artist Award**
- Youth Section \$2,500 and a Trophy
 - Junior Section \$2,000 and a Trophy

Previously, the winners of the Youth Section and Junior Section were awarded \$2,000 and \$1,500 respectively.

- C. Platinum Awards** \$10,000 each
The four Platinum Awards may be won by any Entrant regardless of Category (Abstract, Representational, Ink Painting and Photography) or Section (Junior, Youth or Open) of submission.

The four Platinum Awards replaces the four Category Awards in the Open Section, where a prize was awarded to each of the top works in the Abstract, Representational, Ink Painting and Photography categories.

- D. Highly-commended Awards for each Section**
- Three awards for the Open Section \$1,500 each
 - Three awards for the Youth Section \$1,000 each
 - Three awards for the Junior Section \$500 each

Previously, the winners from the Open Section, Youth Section and Junior Section received \$500, \$300 and \$100 respectively.

The UOB Painting Of The Year Competition And Exhibition

Fact Sheet

1. Introduction

The United Overseas Bank (UOB) Painting Of The Year (POY) Competition was launched in March 1982 and has been held annually since. The year 2009 marks the 28th anniversary of this premier art event in Singapore.

2. Objectives

The main objectives of the Competition are:

- to promote greater interest in local art;
- to encourage local artists to persist in their creative endeavours; and
- to provide recognition for the best creative works.

3. History & Development

Since 1973, the UOB Group has been supporting budding local artists by selectively purchasing their works of art. Through this purchase-support programme, the Group has, to date, acquired a large collection of artworks totalling more than 1,500 pieces. These paintings are displayed at the Group's Head Office at 80 Raffles Place as well as at its network of over 500 offices worldwide.

The UOB POY Competition is an extension of the Group's patronage of the arts. For its contribution to the arts, UOB was conferred the "Distinguished Patron of the Arts" award by the Singapore National Arts Council in 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008.

The first POY Competition - held in 1982 - was jointly organised by the UOB Group and the then Ministry of Culture (now called the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts).

Since 1983, the competition has been the sole effort of the UOB Group.

4. Structure of the Competition

Since its launch in 1982, the format of the Competition has undergone various changes. These changes, recommended by the panel of judges, were introduced to enhance the quality and prestige of the Competition.

- 1982: The first Competition was divided into two sections – an Open Section and a Young People's Section.
- 1983: The Competition was reduced to one section – the Open Section.
- 1984: The Competition was divided into three categories – Abstract Medium, Representational Medium and Traditional Chinese Medium – to attract participation from the widest range of artists.
- 1991: The Competition was again divided into two sections – an Open Section and a Junior Section. The Junior Section was introduced for those 18 years old and below to build on the Group's objective of nurturing young talents. Participants in the Junior Section were eligible to compete in the Open Section.

- 2003: A new photography category was added to the existing three, bringing the total number of categories to four.
- 2006: The Junior Section was further expanded into two separate categories – the Youth Section for participants aged 13 to 18, and the Junior Section for those aged 6 to 12.
- 2008: The prize money for the Painting Of The Year was increased to \$30,000. This was accompanied by increases in the prizes for the other awards.
- 2009: A partnership was formed with the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum (FAAM), where the winner of the Painting Of The Year award may receive a bonus prize of a one-month Residence Programme at the FAAM if he has submitted an entry that, in the judges' opinion, is of exceptional standard. In addition, four Platinum Awards, open to all artists regardless of Category (Abstract, Representational, Traditional Chinese and Photography) or Section (Junior, Youth or Open) of submission, will replace the Open Section Category Awards which were restricted to participants within each category.

5. Judges

Each year, the entries are judged by a panel of judges comprising renowned artists/art connoisseurs/art curators who are specially appointed by the UOB Group Art Committee. The panel includes prominent personalities from overseas to ensure objectivity in the judging.

6. UOB Painting Of The Year Exhibition

Each year, the award-winning and highly-commended paintings from the Competition are displayed at the UOB POY Exhibition. The aim of the Exhibition is to foster a higher level of art consciousness among the public.

Since 1985, the UOB Group has also concurrently staged a special exhibition featuring works by the winner of the preceding year's Competition at the Exhibition. The Group hopes to help local artists gain more recognition for their works and inspire them to achieve even higher standards through such sponsorships.

In 2007, UOB presented an exhibition called "The Best Of UOB" in conjunction with the Singapore Arts Show 2007, where the top painting from the first 26 POY Competitions were showcased.

7. Premier Event Status

The success of the UOB POY Competition can be seen by such healthy indicators as the good response over the last 27 years, the high standard of styles and mediums adopted, the extensive publicity enjoyed by the winners, and the wide recognition gained by the participating artists as a result of winning the Competition. The Competition is also now regarded as a yardstick in judging the standard of their works.

The POY Exhibition was included as a Fringe Event in the inaugural Singapore Biennale 2006, a cultural event that showcased international contemporary art.