

News Release

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UOB Painting of the Year elevates artistic excellence in its 45th edition

An inaugural arts festival will be introduced to bring art closer to the community

Singapore, 4 May 2026 – Now in its 45th year, the UOB Painting of the Year (POY) competition continues to strengthen its standing as one of Southeast Asia’s most prestigious platforms for artistic excellence. Established in 1982, it is Singapore’s longest-running annual art competition and also held in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. UOB is elevating artistic excellence with enhanced criteria for the Established Artist category, to better recognise demonstrated artistic practice and engagement within the art ecosystem.

The revised prerequisites will raise the benchmark for established artists to be assessed alongside peers of similar experience, enabling the competition to celebrate artistic growth and commitment. Artists who plan to submit their artworks under the Established Artist Category will need to fulfil a minimum of three prerequisites below:

- Currently or have been represented by commercial art galleries.
- Sold artworks.
- Participated in a group or solo exhibition.
- Received a grant or commission to create artworks for commercial entities, institutions or any organisation.
- Is a recipient of art-related awards, locally or outside of Singapore.

Mr Wee Ee Cheong, Deputy Chairman and Group Chief Executive Officer of UOB, said, “Over the decades, UOB has played a catalytic role in strengthening communities across ASEAN by connecting people, businesses and opportunities across the region. Giving back to the community has long been an integral part of how we operate, with our efforts consistently focused on education, children and the arts. As the UOB Painting of the Year marks its 45th edition, we are launching an arts festival as part of our ongoing efforts to bring art closer to the community. We believe art bridges cultures, deepens mutual understanding and contributes to more inclusive communities.”





Inaugural arts festival to bring art closer to the wider community

To broaden outreach and deepen public engagement with the arts, UOB will launch an inaugural arts festival from end-August to early September. The festival will serve as a prelude to the 2026 UOB Painting of the Year Awards Ceremony and Exhibition in October, reinforcing the Bank's long-standing commitment to nurturing artistic talent and making art accessible to the wider community.

As a centrepiece of the festival, Emerging Category semi-finalists from UOB POY (Singapore) competition will gain public exposure through a curated exhibition showcasing their competition artworks. The festival will also feature a special showcase of works by UOB POY veteran artists, offering audiences insight into artistic journeys shaped by the competition over the years. Complementing the exhibitions, UOB also plans to host a series of art-related workshops and talks for customers and the broader community. Together, these programmes aim to inspire creativity, encourage dialogue, and foster meaningful connections between artists and the public.

For more than four decades, the UOB POY competition has served as a platform to uncover and celebrate artistic talent. To date, the competition has uncovered more than 1,000 artists across the region, of which, seven alumni in Singapore have received the Cultural Medallion award. As the competition marks its 45th year, UOB will continue to strengthen its standing in the region, to celebrate and uplift artists for long-term success beyond the competition, as they contribute to a strong, vibrant community across the region.

Calling for submissions for 45th UOB POY competition

UOB is calling for established and emerging artists to push their creative limits and participate in the 45th UOB POY competition in Singapore. Submissions for the 45th UOB POY (Singapore) competition are open from now till 31 July 2026. All Singapore citizens and permanent residents, aged 16 years old and above, are eligible to submit one artwork online for either the Established or Emerging Artist Category. More details of the submission criteria can be found at UOBandArt.com.

The five country winners from Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam will compete for the coveted UOB Southeast Asian POY award, with a prize award of an additional S\$13,000 on top of their respective country award prize, and a chance for an overseas





residency programme. All Singapore winners and the winner of the 45th UOB Southeast Asian Painting of the Year will be announced at an awards ceremony in October 2026. The winners from other countries will be announced separately in their own markets before the 2026 UOB POY Awards Ceremony and Exhibition.





About UOB

UOB is a leading Asian bank with a global network in Southeast Asia, Asia Pacific, Europe and North America. Operating through our head office in Singapore and banking subsidiaries in China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam, we have a global network of about 430 branches and offices in 19 markets.

Since its incorporation in 1935, UOB has grown organically and through a series of strategic acquisitions. Today, UOB is rated among the world's top banks: Aa1 by Moody's Investors Service and AA- by both S&P Global Ratings and Fitch Ratings.

For more than nine decades, UOB has adopted a customer-centric approach to create long-term value by staying relevant through its enterprising spirit and doing right by its customers. UOB is focused on building the future of ASEAN – for the people and businesses within, and connecting with, ASEAN.

The Bank connects businesses to opportunities in the region with its unparalleled regional footprint and leverages data and insights to innovate and create personalised banking experiences and solutions catering to each customer's unique needs and evolving preferences. UOB is also committed to help businesses forge a sustainable future, by fostering social inclusiveness, creating positive environmental impact and pursuing economic progress. UOB believes in being a responsible financial services provider and is steadfast in its support of education, children and art, doing right by its communities and stakeholders.

About UOB and Art

UOB's involvement in art started in the 1970s with its collection of paintings by Singapore artists. Today, the UOB Art Collection has more than 3,000 artworks, made up primarily of paintings from established and emerging Southeast Asian artists.

UOB plays an active role in communities across the region, most notably through its long-term commitment to art. As the leading patron of the arts in Asia, the Bank continues to make art accessible to a wider audience through a diverse range of visual art programmes, partnerships and community outreach across the region.

The Bank's flagship art programme is the UOB Painting of the Year competition, which was started in 1982 to recognise Southeast Asian artists and to offer them the opportunity to showcase their works to the wider community. The competition was extended to Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and in 2023, to Vietnam. It is now the longest running art competition in Singapore and one of the most prestigious in Southeast Asia.

Over the past 40 years, the competition has cultivated and advanced the careers of many artists in Singapore. Notable among them are Mr Goh Beng Kwan (1982 winner), and the late Mr Anthony Poon (1983 winner) and Mr Chua Ek Kay (1991 winner), who received the Singapore Cultural Medallion, Singapore's most distinguished art award.





The competition has also recognised talents from across the region through the UOB Southeast Asian POY award. Previous winners include Ms Jamilah Haji from Thailand in 2025, Mr Yong Wee Loon from Singapore in 2024, Ms Pratchaya Charemsook from Thailand in 2023, Mr Chomrawi Suksom from Thailand in 2022, Mr Saiful Razman from Malaysia in 2021, Mr Prabu Perdana from Indonesia in 2020, Mr Anagard from Indonesia in 2019, Mr Suvi Wahyudianto from Indonesia in 2018, Mr Sukit Choosri from Thailand in 2017, Mr Gatot Indrajati from Indonesia in 2016, Mr Anggar Prasetyo from Indonesia in 2015, Mr Antonius Subiyanto from Indonesia in 2014 and Ms Stefanie Hauger from Singapore in 2013.

Together with the UOB POY winning artists, UOB also runs art workshops for underprivileged and special needs children regularly. At these workshops, the young learn art techniques from art professionals and award-winning artists.

In recognition of the Bank's long-term commitment to art, UOB was presented with the Singapore National Arts Council's Distinguished Patron of the Arts Award for the 23rd time in 2025.

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