Soul + Form
1979 《Soul & Form 1》•LEE Kian Seng• Dye & resist technique •(1977-1979)
Under construction
An eye for resist and dye

From cracked lines and pointillist highlights, to resist and dye innovations, Lee Kian Seng’s batik art has truly evolved. OOI KOK CHUEN views his Soul and Form and Origin works.

THE batik story of artist provocateur Lee Kian Seng will finally be seen in full, and told.

For a start, his artist daughter, Hui Ling, just back from her Sarah Lawrence College studies in New York, used his “batik” works (from 1963-88), as illustrations in her talk entitled Batik: A Contemporary Art Form? at the Kuala Lumpur International Batik Convention and Exhibition last month at the Putra World Trade Centre(Malaysia).

Then, the full spectrum of Kian Seng’s resist-dyeing painting works were viewed for the first time at his Klang studio, by appointment, for five weeks after that. Batik art is not Kian Seng’s only forte. He has also pushed the envelope in painting, printmaking, mixed media and three-dimensional art (he made installation — the 1977 Of Image, Object, Illusion Off Series Mechanism — even before the word was coined for it).

His batik art started with the usual “cracked lines” stereotypes in 1962, progressing with a foreground-background play of Indian dancers and musicians using pointillist highlights in 1968.

In the early 1970s, he adapted the form to landscapes and urban street scenes, something difficult to accomplish given the constraints of the dyes and methods at that time.

He achieved these with different treatments of landmarks like the Sultan Abdul Samad Building (1972), and in 1989 even a silhouette effect of the chattris of the old Kuala Lumpur Railway
His erotic female forms appeared in the early '70s works, first with nubile maidens sometimes
with tattoos on naked bodies from his House of the Rising Sun (HORS) series, after the catchy
1964 song made famous by The Animals. Here, he combined the floral psychedelia of the
Sixties with an art nouveau kind of ornamentation.

His female forms became mysterious and fantasy-erotic later, when he became inspired by
Santana’s opiated Black Magic Woman. But they have become more like nymphs in pastoral
settings a la Boccacio than seductive vamps.

While he has already extended the picture-making possibilities of what was regarded as a batik-
based medium, his next installments of the “Soul and Form” (end-1976-1983) and “Origin”
(1986-88) are really phenomenal, blowing the mind away. (In between, there is a short branch-
out series depicting the hibiscus).

In discovery terms, it is like cracking the genomic code of humans. Yet batik is just a label, for it
really makes up only 20 per cent of what are resist/dyeing paintings.

For these staggering resist-dyeing innovations, he was awarded the Tokyo Creation Awards in
1993, by the Japanese whose prowess in this field is irrefutable.

For if batik doyen Datuk Chuah Thean Teng had transformed a batik craft tradition into the
modern pictorial format, it is Kian Seng who pushed it in quantum leaps to the true painterly
effects never thought possible.

**Evolving: The Soul and Form Series**

The doubting Thomases have charged that he had applied silkscreen for the mock-photographic
and mystifying “antique” surface aura. Some others even pointed to his early research in
Japanese silkscreens of katazome or yuzenzomei, and German lithography and dyes.

But no, it is not silkscreen, in any variation or form. Kian Seng would only say that his works are
inspired by photography and lithography techniques, besides applying modified tools.

In batik, the control of the wax and the elusive dyes, and the treatment of the materials like cloth
(cotton) and even water (with the right purity), are integral. But in Kian Seng’s hands, there is no
guesswork, no short cuts and no compromise. It has come to that.

He uses some 20 to 30 layers of overlaps, and meticulously paints on the images using wax.

But lest it be thought that techniques are the be-all and end-all, Kian Seng says: “While I invent
my own techniques, I am not controlled by them. When things become mechanical, it’s like
construction.”

He confides that he did experiment with the Japanese techniques, but found them too formulaic.

“There’s too much grammar, but it’s not writing,” he insists.

“An artist has to be individualistic, based on humanitarian thinking that is sometimes universal. I
believe in producing works that can last, that can advance some things to people.”

As he has oft intoned: “Artists are closer to contemporary truths than social scientists.”

When viewing his Soul and Form and Origin works, one tends to get too caught up by the sheer sensual textures and tones — the dark, foreboding mystique of Soul and Form, and then the iridescent hues with positive-negative shades of his Origin.

What is important, perhaps more so, is the resonance of the more spiritual message of the transient worldly desires and human value systems.

In his Soul and Form works, he has a nude soft feminine form juxtaposed against Buddhist or Hindu statuaries (including the dancing Siva with ominous fireballs of redemption and damnation).

Interestingly, the use of nude female forms has its parallels in the works of his contemporaries, like in Sulaiman Esa’s 1977 print, Waiting For Godot; the late Joseph Tan’s 1968 batik-acrylic Love Me In My Batik; and Datuk Ibrahim Hussein’s 1975 printage/acrylic Hari Ini Kita Dewasa.

The yet earlier pieces are more symbolic, with the use of the boat bangau (ornamented prow) and kerawang (wood carvings) lintel motifs, representing a tradition, identity and cultural roots.

Some works are also infused with Islamic elements, like a visual strains of the azan reverberating from the intricate mocarabes of the cupolas of Nasrid architecture.

The textural frieze gets turned into a colourful fugue in Origin (of life), with a brilliant play of the clam-shells, with its womb-like shape, and stunning symmetry and serrated patterns. The hard, obdurate shells, through the mesmeric kaleidoscopic blend of colours, become something organic like an outer skin.

Unfurled in mock sequential mode, the clams become a lotus, a symbol of purity that has been adopted by Kian Seng as his trademark. At its crudest, it even resembles the sail-like thrusts of the Sydney Opera House.

“I never go for material gain. Although the environment may be against me, not appreciating and not recognising what I do, I don’t play safe. I always go for challenges.”

“Some call me a gambler, doing things without knowing what’s next, but life’s like that.”

That’s Kian Seng, whose life is dedicated to art since he won the third prize in the national Joy of Living competition in 1964, at the age of 16 and who was given his first solo by the Art Council of Malaysia two years later.

Abundant treasures in Penang’s Batik Museum by Ooi Kok Chuen
Contemporary art practices by Ooi Kok Chuen
At 23, Lee Hui Ling is the youngest KLIB presenter. Hui Ling graduated from Sarah Lawrence College in New York with a Bachelor of Arts degree. Her work, "The Teahouse at Sarah Lawrence College" won the Commencement Artwork competition. She has already had a few solo exhibitions, namely "Little Book of Days" in Kuala Lumpur, and "Pictorial Journal" at Sarah Lawrence. She was awarded the Sarah Lawrence College Board of Trustees Scholarship and the Gaylord Donnelly Family Scholarship. Her first solo art exhibition of Paintings from 1992 to 2001 was at the JW Marriott Hotel Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. She was awarded the Sarah Lawrence College Board of Trustees Scholarship to pursue Liberal Arts studies from September 2001 onwards.

Born in 1948, full time, self-trained, multi-media artist Lee Kian Seng has consistently received recognition at home and abroad. His submission entitled "Joy of Living" won the 3rd prize in Category B of a 1964 competition organized by the Art Council of Malaysia - when he was just 16. This was followed by a string of national art awards from 1966 through to major exhibitions in the 70s. Kian Seng's principal research area is "Comparative studies in dyeing art", covering technical aspects of etching, silkscreen and lithography. His explorations and innovations in the dye and resist technique (batik) medium won him the Tokyo Creation Award (Overseas Prize) in 1993. He has held 21 solo exhibitions since 1966 and been part of too many joint exhibitions to mention, winning many awards along the way. Lee has been one of the most consistent, productive and dedicated artists on the Malaysian art scene over the past 40 years. Website: www.leekianseng.com

Abstract
In this paper, Lee Hui Ling discusses the emergence of batik as a modern art form and to challenge the limitations, stereotypes and assumptions about batik as a traditional craft. The batik trade and its place in the Western art market will be discussed with regards to comparisons to traditional Western aesthetics. Lee Kian Seng will contribute the visual materials for this presentation.
伝統芸術であるバティックペインティングの現代化（マレーシア）

【受賞者】
李　健省 殿
（Lee Kian Seng）

東京クリエイション大賞

（excerpted from the catalogue of the Tokyo Creation Award 1993）
In the forefront of creativity

Artist Lee Kian Seng has bagged many awards for originality and creativity, his latest being the Tokyo Creation Award Overseas Prize. OOI KOK CHUEN reports...

For over 30 years, Lee Kian Seng has been at the cutting edge of Malaysian art. Whether working in paintings, batik, print-making (lithography) and sculpture, his is a model of consistency, innovation and excellence. Many a time, the 45-year-old artist has been recognised with awards for originality and creativity.

His latest accolade is the Tokyo Creation Award Overseas Prize, presented by the Tokyo Fashion Association of the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Created in 1967, the award, with stringent standards under a selection panel headed by Tatsukichi Ishii (professor of the Kanagawa University), is a sort of "lifetime achievement award".

Lee Kian Seng received it in Tokyo on Oct 25, just two days after being invited to present his works in the Malaysia Solo Exhibition 2001 at Raffles City Art Gallery, Singapore.

"The combination of traditional and modern techniques, Lee Kian Seng has further developed both into a modern art and has made known worldwide built-up/ready made," he said.

"His "Ling" sculptures, Hammer And Nail, are powerful social statements, yet using only hand-drawn tools.

The works are also "extended" into limited edition prints, and reproduced on T-shirts.

Awards such as the Creation Award are not only recognition for Lee Kian Seng’s high standards and self-discipline, but also a great motivation to set new goals and face new challenges.

"Exploring new expressions is a lonely, lonely path, and sometimes takes years. An artist has to be sincere and true to himself to produce something that is contemporary and lasting, without material considerations."

Lee Kian Seng attributes the award to the "three Ps". He says, "Patience, passion and perseverance".

"An artist has to be sincere and true to himself to produce something that is contemporary and lasting, without material considerations."

"I am happy that there are people out there who realise this too."

STANDING PROUD...the master and his work.

It won the first prize for the graphic section of the 1977 Open Art and Graphic Print competition, in sculpture, at the 1977 World of Stars and Stars in Jakarta. His "Batik" sculpture weighing 70kg is on display at the National Art Gallery in Jakarta.

Lee Kian Seng's works are exhibited at Rubika Art Gallery, Kuala Lumpur and in galleries in the USA, Japan, Europe and Indonesia. His "Batik" sculpture weighing 70kg is on display at the National Art Gallery in Jakarta.

Three years later, he turned this sculpture into limited edition pew-
In the forefront of creativity by Ooi Kok Chuen The New Straits Times Malaysia, 1993-10-31

Artist Lee Kian Seng has bagged many awards for originality and creativity, his latest being the Tokyo Creation Award Overseas Prize. Ooi Kok Chuen reports...

For 30 years, Lee Kian Seng has been at the cutting edge of Malaysian art. Whether working in paintings, batik, print-making (lithography) and sculptures, his is a model of consistency, innovation and excellence.

Many a time, the 45-year-old artist has been recognized with awards for originality and creativity.

His latest accolade is the Tokyo Creation Award Overseas Prize, presented by the Tokyo Fashion Association of the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Created in 1987, the award, with stringent standards under a selection panel headed by Takemochi Ishii (professor of Keio Gijuku University), is a sort of "lifetime achievement award".

Kian Seng received it in Tokyo on Oct 25. It came with a medal, certificate of merit and cash prize of 500,000 yen (about RM 12,000).

Kian Seng's citation read: "(With) His creativity, original approach with the application of modern techniques, Lee Kian Seng has further developed batik into a modern art and has made known worldwide batik/dyes painting.

"The amalgamation of the traditional art with modern technology he has developed and created and subsequent new developments would certainly demonstrate a potentiality and a future hope for progress in the Southeast Asian countries and make a great contribution to raising the morale of the peoples in the region."

Says Kian Seng: "I'm moved by the honour, and the award is also an honour for Malaysia for it is its environment that inspires me to excel."

"Artists are closer to contemporary truths than even social scientists."

Kian Seng epitomises the artist as both creator and thinker. As he once declared: "Artists are closer to contemporary truths than even social scientists."

His life, as well as that of his artist wife, Shoko Lee, is devoted to excellence in art.

Kian Seng began to show flashes of his precocity when he was only 16, winning the third prize in the oil category of the Joy of Living competition organized by the Arts Council of Malaysia in 1964.
In 1968, he bagged a “double” of third prizes in sculpture and in mixed media in the first Salon Malaysia competition, besides winning honourable mention in the batik section.

For one only self-taught in sculpture, his reinforced concrete sculpture, The Pair (1968), showed up his remarkable sensitivity in handling form and materials.

Kian Seng was recently commissioned to do a public sculpture called Vision 2020 at Public Bank’s Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) headquarters, Taman Wawasan (Vision Gardens).

In painting, Kian Seng creates a mystical fugue in his Soul and Form and later Origin series - a result of years of painstaking research into batik (Malaysia, Indonesia, China and Egypt) and innovative dye techniques

His Soul and Form series could be traced back to 1972 when he won the major award in the Malaysian landscape national art competition (National Art Gallery Malaysia) where there were traces of the bangau and the traditional Malay door.

Sources as diverse as the Borobudur, Siva the destroyer, sleek advertising exploitation of women, ethnic crafts and local flora (hibiscus and lotus) complete his backcloth of Asiatic cosmogony.

Often his trademark conch would appear, acting as a unifying force.

The spiritual essence lies somewhere between the flaming desires and shamanistic totems.

In graphic art, Kian Seng’s lithographs stand for their rich humanistic symbolism, his yin-yang (positive-negative) dualism, and high technical quality.

His controversial 1977 work “Of ‘Image, Object ,illusion’ series mechanism” (which had the Malaysian flag in reverse) - was arguably one of the first installations in the world, though at that time there was no name to that kind of work.

As it defied categorisation then, it won the first prize for the painting section of the 1977 National Open painting and graphic print competition (National Art Gallery Malaysia)

In sculpture, Kian Seng’s monumental works of stainless steel stand in Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur, while others like Mankind (1972, mild steel plate, 160x220x140cm) and Resumption And Consumption (1975, wood, 130x130x15cm) have been collected by the National Art Gallery.

Kian Seng is always setting new frontiers. In 1984, he erected the mild steel sculpture weighing 1250 kg called Peace ,Harmony and One as part of the Asean Square Sculpture Symposium in Jakarta.

Three years later, he turned this sculpture into limited-edition jewellery pendants set in gold (18K) and silver, weighing approximately 5.25g and 36g respectively.
It is an important development of the function of a sculpture from the monumentality and one using the creative space to an everyday wear item, in this case, a ready-to-wear "costume" sculpture.

His "living" sculptures, Hammer and Nail, are powerful social statements, yet using only handyman tools.

The works are also "extended" into limited edition prints, and reproduced on t-shirts.

Awards such as the Creation Award are not only recognition for Kian Seng's high standards and self-discipline, but also a great motivation to set new goals and face new challenges.

“Exploring new expressions is a lonely, lonely path, and sometimes takes years. An artist has to be sincere and true to himself to produce something that is contemporary and lasting, without material considerations.”

"Exploring new expressions is a lonely, lonely path, and sometimes takes years," he says.

“An artist has to be sincere and true to himself to produce something that is contemporary and lasting, without material considerations.”

“I am happy that there are people out there who realise this too.”

The New Straits Times Malaysia, 1993-10-31
【马来西亚星洲日报张启华专访 1993-11-12

峇迪与染色手法创新 著名艺术家李健省荣获东京创作大奖

（吉隆坡十一日讯）现年四十五岁的著名艺术家李健省，最近荣获东京创作大奖（oversea-prize）海外奖，成为在亚洲艺术领域中首个获得上述奖项的外国艺术家。该奖项是表彰在环境、工业、文化领域有创造力的人士或企业团体。

李健省是通过现代技术，致力于创新峇迪/染色的表现手法，使之提升及发挥于现代艺术领域，因而获世界的认同和肯定。

廿五年来致力于峇迪/染色创作研究的李健省，为峇迪赋予新的创作泉源，这无疑为南亚洲甚至世界的未来艺术发展方向与士气的提高，做出了积极的贡献。

14/25_Lee Kian Seng 李健省_lee_Batik
他说在受访时对多年来的工作获得肯定感到欣慰。不过他表示：「名誉不是我追求的终极目标，我用世界的题材，以宇宙观的方式处理意境，把世界固有的文化遗产带到更高艺术境界。」

对李健省而言，击败了亚洲一百廿三名提名参赛者，赢得上述创作大奖，不啻对他高水平作品的一种体认，同时也鞭策与鼓舞着他迈向新的目标与挑战。

创作手法革新

根据史实，峇迪与染色是世界文明的产物和人类共有的文化遗产，它们并不只囿于友族或东南亚的疆域中，在古埃及、印度、中国等文明古国，已有峇迪/染色的记载。

李健省表示，峇迪/染色的创作，其空间是无限的，引申至其他的传统性创作媒介，道理也是一样，关键的问题是要如何去开拓它而已。

峇迪/染色除了是李健省的其中一种创作媒介，其他创作媒介是版画、水彩、油画、雕塑等。在艺术的广阔空间里，不论是何种媒介，李健省的创作手法都是大胆革新、挥洒自如的。

询及今后会在哪一个创作领域开创新局面时，他表示：「新的创作领域是不能预期和刻意去追求的。我所能做的，只有尽我的一切能力。」

「探寻新的创作空间，所走的是一段孤独于崎岖之旅，有时必须经年累月才有结果。」

荣获多项殊荣

「艺术家甚至要比社会科学家更接近当代的事实」，这是李健省所一直强调的。他认为，一名艺术家必须忠于自己，不以物质为考量的情况下，才能创出永垂不朽的作品。李健省自十八岁开始，就在我国和国际艺坛中崭露头角，荣获国内和国际的多项殊荣。他于一九七七年以宇宙观方式处理的「铁钉与铁锤雕塑系列」，强烈地展示了当代人性最深处的感觉与潜在元素，情趣横溢地表现现代人的七种心态，籍此传达了热爱和平的讯息，而震撼我国和国际艺坛。」

（星洲日报：张启华 1993-11-12）
李健省

李健省对“艺术史被质疑”事件是不会像这样一笑了之的。

人类的共同遗产

李健省的画作也展示了他对艺术史的态度，李健省说：“就像作家一样，语言是千变万化，谁能有创作；然而，他一直构思而无技艺底子来呈现也是徒然。”
Lee scores big for Malaysia

The fact that the world-renowned international publisher Walwa Worldwide Travel Publications, has selected Malaysia for its 'Welcome' series of books, speaks volumes for tourism in the country.

This colourful hard-cover publication features the length and breadth of Malaysia at its historical, geographical and cultural best, as well as its exciting cuisine and shopping attractions.

Welcome To Malaysia was released in 277 first-class hotels in 18 countries throughout the world last month.

Translating into terms of potential readership, Welcome To Malaysia will be available to some 1.5 million readers worldwide.

Wining the distinction of being on the cover of such an exceptional publication is a 1972 painting of the Sultan Abdul Samad building. The painting is the work of world-renowned Malaysian artist Lee Kian Seng, who was one of the earliest to realise the beauty and value of Malaysian architecture.

The fact that Mr Lee was actively sought by the Australian publisher underscores his distinction.

At age 18 Mr Lee held his first one-man art exhibition. At 28 he became the first and youngest artist to receive the Japan Foundation Professional Fellowship in recognition of his outstanding qualities and devotion to art.

He has also achieved the rare distinction of having 12 works hung in the National Art Gallery's Permanent Collection.

In recognition of his artistic excellence, Walwa Publishers have found it fitting to devote an entire chapter to him.

It is a rare honour indeed, for the artist himself and for the homeland which inspires him to excel — MALAYSIA.

(Reprinted from Welcome to Malaysia: p.35-38)

Malaysia's Modern Master

Lee Kian Seng's work is a unique world. His first major solo show in 1976, which virtually sold out within three days, was a breakthrough for the young artist. It was a significant moment in the history of the National Art Gallery.

To his imagination, clarity, colour and technique, he brings a wealth of media. This is an artist who works comfortably with painting, book, and printmaking, each with their own distinct vocabulary. His works have been well received at various international and regional exhibitions and are in the private collections of high calibre individuals.

In recognition of his outstanding qualities and contributions, Lee Kian Seng was awarded the Japan Foundation Professional Fellowship in 1978, at the age of 26, the first and youngest artist to receive such honour. Lee Kian Seng's works have been exhibited in Japan, Europe and the United States. He has been commissioned to paint for the 1980 Olympic Games in Japan.

Lee's works are admired and collected by many. His creative process is unique. He draws inspiration from the natural world, which enables him to emerge as a master of contemporary and traditional art.
Archanty is well known for his batik paintings and he is also a sculptor. The work 'Peace,' which is a relief sculpture, represents the harmony and unity of the people, symbolizing the importance of peace in the society. The batik work 'Peace, Harmony and Unity' is a representation of the artist's wish for a peaceful and harmonious society.

Kian Seng was born in 1919 in Singapore and he is considered a pioneer in the field of batik art. He has received numerous awards for his work, including the prestigious UNESCO Award for Cultural Diversity in 1990. His work is characterized by its vivid colors and intricate designs, which reflect the cultural heritage of Malaysia.

Kian Seng’s work reflects his commitment to preserving the beauty of the batik art form. His paintings and sculptures are not only aesthetically pleasing, but also carry a deep meaning. The batik work 'Peace, Harmony and Unity' is a symbol of the artist's desire for a world where peace and harmony reign. It is a testament to the power of art to bring people together and create a sense of unity.

In conclusion, Kian Seng's work is a celebration of the beauty of Malaysia and its rich cultural heritage. His batik paintings and sculptures are not only works of art, but also a reflection of the artist's deep connection to the land and people of his homeland.
Lee Kian Seng – The Prize Winner and Innovator

At the grand old age of 18, he held his first exhibition to critical acclaim. At 28, he became the first Malaysian and the youngest ever artist to receive the Japan Foundation Professional Fellowship (to research on “Comparative study of dyeing-art”) in recognition of his outstanding talent and contribution to art. In a career that has spanned almost 40 years, he has received awards—both local and international (too many to list here)—which recognise his innovation and creativity not just in the batik medium, but also in oil painting, sculpture and lithography.

In 1993, he won the prestigious Tokyo Creation Award (Overseas Prize) presented by the Tokyo Fashion Association to “leaders from all walks of life and all fields”. His unique and creative ideas in the exploration of batik dye techniques for modern art, the Japanese admitted, “were far more advanced than ours…by 16 or 17 years at least.” He was also the first artist to receive the award.

He is, of course, world-renowned Malaysian artist, Lee Kian Seng.
Lee was born on the isle of Kimmon but moved with his family to Singapore when he was five and subsequently settled down in Klang (Malaysia) a year later. With the family dire straits during most of his early years, young Lee had nothing but imagination and passion to stoke the fire of artistic fervour burning in him.” I was too poor to pay for the membership fees to the local school’s art club, so I painted on my own.” One of the boyhood pieces that has remained in Lee’s collection (it can be viewed on his web-site), Klang River (1959)- painted when he was all of 11 years- bears testament to the huge raw talent that the young Lee had.

In retrospect, not being able to afford his club’s membership fees must have been a blessing in disguise. Lack of a formal art education has, in many ways, unshackled the free spirit within, enabling him to explore ideas freely, unencumbered by known schools of styles or art movements.

“I have never been constrained by any methods of work nor influenced by any artist..(of) whatever paradigms- Western or Eastern…the idea overcomes medium and expression,” explained Lee.

To speak only of his batik art is doing the man a great injustice, for his talent and art encompass several media. Hailed as the father of installation art by P.G.Lim, the former Malaysian Ambassador to the United Nations and one of the founding members of the National Art Gallery (Malaysia), Lee has, incredibly, achieved outstanding, (awe-inspiriting even) results in every artistic sphere that he chose to dabble in.

To document all of Lee’s work, however, would require a lot more pulp. For now, we will have to contend with his batik art, which, according to Lee, “only accounts for 20 per cent of my work.” Small volume notwithstanding, great beauty and depth permeate Lee’s batik works. Visually stunning and exquisitely executed, they are the works of a visionary.

An artist once praised by the National Art Gallery director Datuk Syed Ahmad Jamal for his immaculate craftsmanship, aesthetic sensitivity and innovative creativity, Lee is deeply committed to his craft. After years of painstaking research into dye techniques, he produced his Soul and Form series—a collection of artwork with subjects as diverse as Borobodur, Japanese ukiyo-e erotica and ethnicity.

Lee’s researched dye techniques range from the katazomei and yuzenzomei, to various German methods (Lithograph) as well.

Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad, which houses the country’s Federal Court and Court of Appeal, also seems to be another source of inspiration. Its aesthetic beauty was encapsulated in Lee’s Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad, which is an extension of the Klang series and the Kuala Lumpur series done in the 60s and early 70s respectively. The piece was done in conjunction the visit Malaysia 1989 campaign, though it must be said that the vehicles in it seem to be of another era.

Combing Hair and the Indian Dancers illustrate Lee’s versatility within the realm of batik painting. In these pieces, he set out and succeeded in transforming ordinary scenes into extraordinarily beautiful and lively artwork. Indian Dancers, against a background of vibrant hues, particularly mesmerises with the performers’ graceful figures and expressive hands.
Another painting shown here is **Spring (1973)**, one of Lee’s earlier pieces. Covering an impressive expanse of cloth, it shows two mystical flame-haired goddesses, surrounded by a whirlwind of birds, signaling the arrival of spring. Arresting and vivid, the piece transfixes.

In his art, Lee has consistently striven to be revolutionary, more likely to ask ‘why not’ than ‘why’. His growth as an artist has always, as the influential Frank Sullivan, the then Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the National Art Gallery said, “.. run simultaneous (ly) with almost every crucial stage in the chronology of Malaysian art history.”

To define Lee, therefore, will be an exercise in futility for he is truly in a class of his own.

To find out more about his works, please go to [www.leekianseng.com](http://www.leekianseng.com)

---Story by **Ping Long**

Art should be a free-flow of one's own will—artist

BY HOO BAN KHEE

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues.—Ten years in art and 21-year-old Lee Kian Seng is still looking as "square" as when he was a schoolboy.

With his 'porcupine' hair he looks more like a construction labourer than a refined and polished young artist.

Why doesn't he sport a Beatle-hairdo like so many young artists?

Here he let the cat out of the bag.

"I don't wish to look like an artist in order to be an artist."

"I sell my works not by my appearance," he said, equally as stubborn as he is with his hair.

Kian Seng was speaking on the eve of a joint exhibition to be opened by the Sultan of Selangor at the Klang Club, Klang, at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday.

The exhibition will show a collection of his works in the last 10 years with main emphasis on his latest cre-
Lee Kian Seng is one of the big names in the Malaysian modern art scene. **“Ying Yang Series: Soul and Form”,** (1973), was produced using the batik-based medium. The work depicts erotic and sensual images of a woman and a man. The contrasting effects between these two images fit in perfectly with the concept of Ying and Yang that underlies this series.

Lahir pada 1948, China; Menetap di Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. 
Born in 1948, China; Lives and works in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
LEE Kian Seng • 1973 • Dyes and resist technique • 288 cm x 102 cm
Permanent collection of the National Art Gallery Malaysia.
### Bibliography (on Dyes and resist technique / batik only)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>&lt;An eye for resist and dye&gt; story by Ooi Kok Chuen. / New Straits Times, Malaysia / 25/ Jan /2006.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>&lt;LEE Kian Seng – The Prize Winner and Innovator &gt; story by Ping Long / inaugural Edition Batik Guild Magazine/ Published by Batik Guild Sdn.Bhd.-Malaysia 2004 (“Spring” was produced in 1973)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>&lt;In the forefront of creativity &gt;story by Ooi Kok Chuen / The New Straits Times, Malaysia / Sunday Style/31 Oct 1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>&lt;Art should be a free-flow of one’s own will &gt; story by Ho Ban Khee/Eastern Sun/ 9 October 1968. (Early experiment with batik.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>&lt;Home Scene- Symbiosis of an artist and his hometown&gt; page 135-139/The New Straits Time Annual 1991 Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>&lt;25 years Malaysian Art&gt; published by the by the National Art Gallery Malaysia 1982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Catalogue of Tokyo Creation Award 1993 (p.8-9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Tokyo Fashion Association No 34, 1994 (p 4-5, 11-15).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Exhibition brochure of solo exhibition in Tokyo in 1975. “Spring” was also featured in Tokyo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>&lt;Klang artist wins Tokyo award for batik techniques&gt;The Star, Malaysia /01/ Nov/1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Utusan Malaysia 22 September 1983 (Seni &amp; Hiburan) “Spring” was exhibited at the National art gallery Malaysia in 1983.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>&lt;Lee Kian Seng - Batik - A Heritage of Mankind &gt;story by Wong Su Fa/ Nanyang Siang Pau, Malaysia. /18/Dec/2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>&lt;Lee scores big for Malaysia&gt; New Straits Times Malaysia/Newsfront/ 9, August 1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>&lt;Welcome to Malaysia&gt; cover of the publication/ &lt;Malaysia’s Modern Master&gt;p.36-38/ published by Waivata International Ltd, Australia in 1989.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>&lt;Yin Her1981&gt; cover of the publication, p.19-20/ KDN 0261/81/published by Star Publication Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>&lt;Rupa - Form and Beauty&gt; book cover of the publication /greeting cards/ Published by Bank Negara (National Bank Malaysia) in 1992 p.41. )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>&lt;The Malaysianess of Malaysian Art: The question of Identity&gt; published by the National Art Gallery Malaysia 1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>One of the Advisory Panel for &lt;Malaysian Batik-Crafted for the World&gt; 2003 (appointed on 6 Nov 2003)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Art should be a free-flow of one's own will—artist

By HOO RAN KHEE

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. — Ten years in art and 21-year-old Lee Kian Seng is still looking as "square" as when he was a schoolboy.

With his "porcupine" hair he looks more like a construction labourer than a refined and polished young artist.

Why doesn't he sport a Beatle-hairdo like so many young artists?
Here he let the cat out of the bag.

"I don't wish to look like an artist in order to be an artist."
"I sell my works not by my appearance," he said, equally as stubborn as he is with his hair.

Kian Seng was speaking on the eve of a joint exhibition to be opened by the Sultan of Selangor at the Klang Club, Klang, at 5.30 p.m. on Thursday.

The exhibition will show a collection of his works in the last 10 years with main emphasis on his latest cre-

ation. The Intaglio.
It will also mark his last show here before he leaves for Tokyo for further studies early next year.

Kian Seng has always been a creative and adventurous artist.

With the creation of Intaglio — an oil paint on a curved-out hardboard — he manages to bring painting to a three-dimensioned beauty while still retaining the rhythm beauty of the hardboard.

A total of six such paintings will be shown at the coming exhibition.

Kian Seng also excels in bac-tar but, as other good artists, he is always critical of his own works.

Decorative

He said: "I know there is something wrong with bac-tar paintings. Something, somewhere. I can't tell.

"Perhaps, it is too decorative."

"I hope I would be able to learn, to compare and to improve them when I am in Japan," he said.

He is also one who persistently refuses to bow to other styles and influences.

He said: "Art should be a free-flow of one's own will."

"There is no point of doing anything at all if it is merely a copy-work."

He hoped to put up several shows in Taiwan, Hong Kong while on his way to Japan.
Lee scores big for Malaysia

The fact that the world-renowned international publisher Waivata Worldwide Tourist Publications, has selected Malaysia for its ‘Welcome’ series of books, speaks volumes for tourism in the country.

This colourful hard-cover publication features the length and breadth of Malaysia at its historical, geographical and cultural best, as well as its exciting cuisine and shopping attractions.

Welcome To Malaysia was released to 277 first-class hotels in 10 countries throughout the world last month.

Translating this into terms of potential readership, Welcome To Malaysia will be available to some 1.5 million readers worldwide.

Winning the distinction of being on the cover of such an exceptional publication is a 1972 painting of the Sultan Abdul Samad building. The painting is the work of world-renowned Malaysian artist Lee Kian Seng, who was one of the earliest to realise the beauty and value of Malaysian architecture.

The fact that Mr Lee was actively sought by the Australian publisher underscores his distinction.

At age 18 Mr Lee held his first one-man art exhibition. At 28 he became the first and youngest artist to receive the Japan Foundation Professional Fellowship in recognition of his outstanding qualities and devotion to art.

He has also achieved the rare distinction of having 12 works hung in the National Art Gallery’s Permanent Collection.

In recognition of his artistic excellence, Waivata Publishers have found it befitting to devote an entire chapter to him.

It is a rare honour indeed, for the artist himself and for the homeland which inspires him to excel — MALAYSIA.
Lee Kian Seng is one of Malaysia's most prominent artists, having his first one-man show in 1966 while still only 16 years old. For more than 20 years now he has been working consistently and actively within the Malaysian art scene and has achieved the rare distinction of having 12 works in the Permanent Collection of the National Art Gallery.

Noted for his innovative creativity, aesthetic sensibility and immaculate craftsmanship, he works in a wide range of media. He is as comfortable with painting, batik, and print-making as he is with his extraordinarily beautiful sculptures. In each case he produces works of high artistic excellence.

In recognition of his outstanding qualities and devotion to art, Kian Seng was awarded the Japan Foundation Professional Fellowship in 1976, at the age of 26, the first and youngest artist to receive such an honour.

Kian Seng's works transcend cultural barriers, and he seldom stays on one theme for long. He is however, steeped in ancient philosophy of Yin and Yang, the eternal enigma of unity and interdependence. A modernist in the true sense, he still deeply admires the works of Renaissance master Leonardo da Vinci. Kian Seng believes the artist must also be a thinker, and in many ways is closer to contemporary truths than most other people.

According to Kian Seng, "The modern man is my concern. Since I'm a Malaysian working in Malaysia, I use local elements, such as the Malaysian flag. If I were in Japan, I would use the Japanese flag. I project the dilemma of the contemporary man in a universal setting."

Like most artists, Kian Seng started out as a recorder of life around him and later, as a result of further studies and exposures, moved into other areas. For some time now he has been preoccupied with his YinYang series. The hammer-and-nail presentations, for instance, have become universal symbols of YinYang Interactions. One of his best known works is the metal sculpture 'Man and the World' which stands near the entrance to the National Art Gallery.
As harmony is essential to the basic concepts of Yin and Yang, so it is to Kian Seng. Everything is ‘one whole’, which exists not in antagonism to each other, but in an effective, creative partnership. Contemplative, provocative works are his concern, as is the subject of peace. As a recognition of his achievement in sculpture, Kian Seng was selected to represent Malaysia at the ASEAN Square Sculpture Symposium in Jakarta in 1984. The theme of his sculpture is ‘Peace, Harmony and One’.

Kian Seng says that Peace in this case is not a counter against war, but denotes harmony between man and the environment (whether natural or man made). Many of his works emphasise the importance of harmony in a multi-racial society. In making his sculpture in Jakarta, he made use of machine to cut and bend the thick steel plate, thus stressing harmony between art and machine.

Lee Kian Seng’s creative versatility has contributed to the enrichment of the Malaysian art scene. He has represented Malaysia throughout the world, and his energetic, unflinching spirit and sheer dedication make him an inspiration to other artists. In all his works he projects creativity, intellectual content and the highest possible standards of professionalism. Not content with his numerous awards, Kian Seng continues to create and recreate, and both live and work in, a world dedicated to harmony.
In the forefront of creativity

Art

Artist Lee Kian Seng has bagged many awards for originality and creativity, his latest being the Tokyo Creation Award Overseas Prize. OOI KOK CHUEN reports...

For 30 years, Lee Kian Seng has been at the cutting edge of Malaysian art. Whether working in paintings, batik, print-making (lithography) and sculptures, his is a model of consistency, innovation and excellence.

Many a time, the 45-year-old artist has been recognised with awards for originality and creativity.

His latest accolade is the Tokyo Creation Award Overseas Prize, presented by the Tokyo Fashion Association of the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Founded in 1987, the award, with stringent standards under a selection panel headed by Takeuchi Ichiro (professor of the Keio Gijuku University), is a sort of "lifetime achievement award".

Kian Seng received it in Tokyo on Oct 25. It came with a medal, certificate of merit and cash prize of 300,000 yen (about RM12,000).

The only other Malaysian to have won it is cartoonist Lat.

Kian Seng's citation read: "With his creativity, original approach with the application of modern techniques, Lee Kian Seng has further developed batik into a modern art form and has made known worldwide batik in its totality.

"The amalgamation of the traditional art with modern technology he has developed and created, and subsequent new developments would certainly demonstrate a potentiality and a future hope for progress in the Southeast Asian countries and make a great contribution to raising the morale of the people in the region."

Says Kian Seng: "I am moved by the honour, and the award is also an honour for Malaysia for it is my environment that inspires me to excel."

"Exploring new expressions is a lonely, lonely path, and sometimes takes years. An artist has to be sincere and true to himself to produce something that is contemporary and lasting, without material considerations."

STANDING PROUD ... the master and his work

library pendants set in gold (18K) and silver, weighing approximately 5.25g and 3g respectively.

It is an important development of the function of a sculpture from the monumentality and one using creative space to an everyday wear item, in this case, a ready-to-wear "costume" sculpture.

His "living" sculptures, Hammer And Nail, are powerful social statements, yet using only handyman tools.

The words are also "extended" into limited edition prints, and reproduced on T-shirts.

Awards such as the Creation Award are not only recognition for Kian Seng's high standards and self-discipline, but also a great motivation to set new goals and face new challenges.

"Exploring new expressions is a lonely, lonely path, and sometimes takes years," he says.

"An artist has to be sincere and true to himself to produce something that is contemporary and lasting, without material considerations.

"I am happy that there are people out there who realise this too."

"Artists are closer to contemporary truths than even social scientists."

Kian Seng epitomises the artist as both creator and thinker. As he once declared: "Artists are closer to contemporary truths than even social scientists."

His life, as well as that of his artist wife, Shoko Kobayashi, is devoted to excellence in art.

Kian Seng began to show flashes of his precocity when he was only 16, winning the third prize in the oil category of the Joy Of Living competition organised by the Arts Council of Malaysia in 1964.

In 1968, he bagged a "double" of third prizes in sculpture and in mixed media in the first Salon Malaysia competition, besides winning honourable mention in the batik section.

It won the first prize for the graphic section of the 1977 Open art and graphic print competition.

In sculpture, Kian Seng's monumental works of stainless steel stand in Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur, while others like Manhood (1972, mild steel plate, 160x220x140cm) and Resonance And Composition (1975, wood, 180x130x15cm) have been collected by the National Art Gallery.

Kian Seng is always setting new frontiers. In 1984, he erected the mild steel sculpture weighing 250kg called Peace, Harmony And One as part of the ASEAN Sculpture Symposium in Jakarta.

Years later, he turned this sculpture into limited-edition jew-
伝統芸術である
バティックペインティングの
現代化（マレーシア）

◆表彰理由
元来、伝統芸術をさらに視覚的な美術品として利用されてきた伝統的な材料（ふらし）を利用した新しい能率化と融合させ、モダンアートに
て高め、世界的に「バティックペインティング」を認知させた。

南アジア諸国にとって、伝統芸術が
外国の技術と融合し新たな価値を見出
たことは、国民性格の発展の可能性と持
地への希望を感じさせ、国民の高揚に
も大いに寄与している。

【受賞者】
李 健省 殿
(Lee Kian Seng)

◆解説
「バティック」は、日本語で「染
む、染めます」の意味を持つもので
ある。その起源は元々、伝統芸術
として広く認識されてきたが、現代
芸術の中で新しい技法として再発見
され、その美しさと独自性が再評価
されるようになっている。

李健省氏は、その技法を生かし、伝統芸術の
現代化に貢献している。彼の作品は、伝統から
モダンに至るまで、多様な表現が見られるが、
特にバティックペインティングの技法を基にした
新しい表現手法が注目されている。

彼の作品は、南アジアの文化遺産の重要性を
再認識し、その可能性を拓くためにも重要な役割を
果たしている。
峇迪與染色手法創新
著名藝術家李健省
榮獲東京創作大獎

張啓華
本報專訪

(吉隆坡一日記)現年四十多歲的
著名藝術家李健省，最近榮獲東京創
作大獎的殊榮，成為在藝術領域中首個
獲得上述榮譽的海外藝術家。李健省
的創作僅表現在現代、工業、文化領域
有創造力，

李健省是通過現代
技術，致力於創造出黑／
白色彩的表現手法，使
之能與現代藝術相
融合，這成為他獨創的
特點。他

廿五多年来专注于
峇迪／染色創作研究的李
健省，為了賦予新的
創作靈感，他常常為
尋找各種可能
的創作素材，並
嘗試將不同的
材料及技術
結合在一起。他

根據史料，峇迪與
染色是文書的
傳統手法，且
在現代的文書
中仍被廣泛
使用。然而，李
健省在創作
中，將傳統
手法與現代
材料及技術
結合，創造出
新的藝術
風格。

李健省表示，他
的創作靈感
來自於對
傳統文化的
熱愛及尊重，他

通過其獨特的創
作手法，讓
傳統文化
得以現代化

李健省的創作
風格獨特，他

不僅在文書
上表現出
傳統文化
的精髓，
同時也

採用現代
材料及
技術，

使 ...

Klang artist wins Tokyo award for batik techniques

INTERNATIONAL artist Lee Kim Seng's 20 years in developing
traditional batik techniques for modern art has earned him the
Tokyo Creation Award.
The award by the Tokyo Fashion
Association of Tokyo Chambers of
Commerce and industry is for
remarkable contributions by
individuals and organisations
in any

Lee, 45, of Klang is the first artist
to win the award.

This year's grand award was
for excellence in the field of creation.

Lee, a well-known artist who
had won many awards and prizes
locally and internationally during his
30-year career, said the award was a
recognition for his contributions as a
whole.

Lee, who attributed the
achievement as an honour for
the country, said he was touched. He
was presented the award on Oct 25
in Tokyo.

He said although he had won many
awards in the past, this was the first
one which was awarded for his
all-time contributions.

"My other prizes were for
particular art pieces so this award is
very unique and special," he said.

Lee received a trophy and cash
prize.

The silver trophy entitled Man
Looking Towards The Future was
sculptured on a black marble base
designed by Mr Toyo Okamoto.

He said the award came as a
surprise since he was notified about it
only in early October.

Lee said the award gave him
encouragement to further his
experiment using batik dye
techniques for modern art.

Besides the batik and dyes, Lee is
more popularly known for his
sculptures, oil paintings and
lithography.

ELEGANT
...
Lee admiring
his trophy.
a travel award to attend and exhibit at the prestigious Third Asia Pacific "Tiempo held at the Queensland Art Gallery in Brisbane, Australia, she chose her extremely large work. Prosperity which features a mountain-like shape amidst a collage of colourful ethnic-styled strips. To Timah, mountains are not only the spiritual centres described in Malay legends but also symbolise achievement and hope.

Apart from traditional motifs, Timah is also inspired by the Tibetan meditative concept of mandala. In Tibetan Buddhism, a mandala is an imaginary palace contemplated during meditation, and is often illustrated with four gates facing the four corners of the earth. Imagine a colourful cosmic plan seen from the top. The mandala influence is most apparent in Timah’s Temple and Meditation series.

With her numerous awards, successful solo exhibitions, intricate works in the National Art Gallery’s permanent collection and more than 30 years of creating art, one would think Timah would be happy to rest on her laurels. Not so for this petite powerhouse. Currently tenured to a local university’s art and design school, her heart has to teach and share her knowledge and experience with young ingratiating minds.

And her future plans? “To open a batik school and establish Malaysia as a centre of batik learning. We have a wealth of talent here and they should be nurtured and encouraged.”

Fatimah Chik can be contacted c/o tel 022-634 9457 – Ping Long

LEE HAIN SENG
The Prize Winner and Innovator
At the grand old age of 87, he held his first solo exhibition to critical acclaim. At 28, he became the first Malaysian and the youngest ever artist to receive the Japan Foundation Professional Fellowship in recognition of his outstanding talent and contributions to art.

In a career that has spanned almost 40 years, he has received awards – both local and international (too many to list here) – which recognise his innovation and creativity not just in the batik medium, but also in oil painting, sculpture and lithography.

In 1993, he won the prestigious Tokyo Creation Award (Overseas Prize) which was presented by the Tokyo Fashion Association and Tokyo Chamber of Commerce and Industry to “leaders from all walks of life and all fields”. His unique and creative ideas in the exploitation of batik dye techniques for modern art, the Japanese admitted, “cannot be more advanced than ours” by 16 or 17 years at least.” He was also the first artist to receive the award.

He is, of course, world-renowned Malaysian artist, Lee Kim Seong. Lee was born on the island of Kinabalu but moved with his family to Singapore when he was five and subsequently settled down in Klang a year later. With the family in financial dire straits during most of his early years, young Lee had nothing but imagination and passion to stoke the fire of artistic fervor burning in him. “I was too poor to pay for the membership fees to the local school’s art club, so I painted on my own.” One of the boyhood pieces that has remained in Lee’s collection (it can be viewed on his website), Klang River (1959) – painted when he was all of 11 years – bears testament to the huge raw talent that the young Lee had.

In retrospect, not being able to afford his art club’s membership fees must have been a blessing in disguise. Lack of a formal art education has, in many ways, encapsulated the free spirit within, enabling him to explore ideas freely, unencumbered by known schools of style or art movements.

“I have never been constrained by any methods of work nor influenced by any artist... (of) whatever persuasion – Western or Eastern... the idea overcomes mediocrity and expression,” explained Lee.

To speak only of his batik art is doing him a great injustice, for his talent and art encompass several media. Hailed as the father of installation art by P.G. Lim, the former Malaysian Ambassador to the United Nations and one of the founding members of the National Art Gallery, Lee has, incredibly, achieved outstanding, (awe-inspiring) even results in every artistic sphere that he chooses to dabble in.

To document all of Lee’s work, however, would require a lot more pulp. For now, we will have to content with his batik art, which, according to Lee, “only accounts for 20 per cent of my work.” Small volume notwithstanding, great beauty and depth permeate Lee’s batik works. Visually stunning and exquisitely coloured, they are the work of a visionary.

An artist once praised by the National Art Gallery director Datuk Syed Ahmad Jamal for his immaculate craftsmanship, aesthetic sensitivity and innovative creativity, Lee is deeply committed to his craft. After years of painstaking research into batik dye techniques, he produced his Soul and Form series – a collection of artwork with subjects as diverse as Barokah, Japanese ukiyo-e woodcuts and ethnicity.

Lee’s researched dye techniques range from the katazomei (Japanese ukiyo-e) and yuzen, to various German methods as well.

Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad, which houses the country’s Federal Court and Court of Appeal, also seems to be another source of inspiration. Its neoclassical beauty was encapsulated in Lee’s Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad, which is an extension of the Kuala Lumpur and Kuala Lumpur series done in the 60s and early 70s respectively. The piece was done in conjunction with the Visit Malaysia 1989 campaign, though it was not said that the vehicle in its time seems to be of another era.

Combining Hair and Indian Dancers illustrate Lee’s versatility within the realm of batik painting. In these pieces, he set out and succeeded in transforming ordinary scenes into extraordinarily beautiful and lively artworks.
LEE HUI LING AND LEE KIAN SENG
Artists

Topic: Batik: A Contemporary Art Form?

Bios
At 23, Lee Hui Ling is the youngest KLIB presenter. Hui Ling graduated from Sarah Lawrence College in New York with a Bachelor of Arts degree. Her work, "The Teahouse at Sarah Lawrence College" won the Commencement Artwork competition. She has already had a few solo exhibitions, namely "Little Book of Days" in Kuala Lumpur, and "Pictorial Journal" at Sarah Lawrence. She was awarded the Sarah Lawrence College Board of Trustees Scholarship and the Gaylord Donnelly Family Scholarship. Her first solo art exhibition of Paintings from 1992 to 2001 was at the J W Marriott Hotel Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. She was awarded the Sarah Lawrence College Board of Trustees Scholarship to pursue Liberal Arts studies from September 2001 onwards.

Born in 1948, full time, self-trained, multi-media artist Lee Kian Seng has consistently received recognition at home and abroad. His submission entitled "Joy of Living" won the 3rd Prize in Category B of a 1964 competition organized by the Art Council of Malaysia - when he was just 16. This was followed by a string of national art awards from 1966 through to major exhibitions in the 70s. Kian Seng's principal research area is "Comparative studies in dyeing art", covering technical aspects of etching, silkscreen and lithography. His explorations and innovations in the dye and resist technique (batik) medium won him the Tokyo Creation Award (Overseas Prize) in 1993. He has held 21 solo exhibitions since 1966 and been part of too many joint exhibitions to mention, winning many awards along the way. Lee has been one of the most consistent, productive and dedicated artists on the Malaysian art scene over the past 40 years. Website: www.leekianseng.com

Abstract
In this paper, Lee Hui Ling discusses the emergence of batik as a modern art form and to challenge the limitations, stereotypes and assumptions about batik as a traditional craft. The batik trade and its place in the Western art market will be discussed with regards to comparisons to traditional Western aesthetics. Lee Kian Seng will contribute the visual materials for this presentation.

A "WÖRPF" EFFECT: Kian Seng and his wife creating one of his Soul and Form works.

From cracked tiles and paintstain highlights, to resist and dye innovations, Lee Kian Seng’s body art has truly evolved. OOI KOK CHUEN views his Soul and Form, and Origin works.

The title story of artist Kian Seng, look at his Soul and Form and Origin works being transformed into resistance art. The artist, who is also an author, works with cracked tiles, paintstain highlights, thin paper and resist techniques, to create his unique body art. OOI KOK CHUEN goes inside the artist's studio to talk to him about his latest work, which he calls "Wörf", or "Wörf Effect". He explains how he uses traditional Chinese techniques, such as line and brush, to create his works, which are then transformed into resistance art, or "resist dye". The artist's latest work, "Wörf", is created using cracked tiles and paintstain highlights, which he applies to his body art to create a unique effect. OOI KOK CHUEN asks the artist how he came up with the idea for his latest work, and he explains that he wanted to create a piece that was both traditional and modern. He also talks about the process of creating his works, which involves a lot of experimentation and trial and error. The artist is passionate about his craft and believes that it is important to continue to push boundaries and innovate. He hopes that his latest work, "Wörf", will inspire others to try new techniques and to experiment with different materials. OOI KOK CHUEN asks the artist what he hopes people will take away from his work, and he says that he wants people to see the beauty in the unexpected and to be open to new ideas. He also hopes that his work will inspire others to think differently and to challenge the status quo. The artist is grateful for the support he has received from his family and friends, and he is looking forward to what the future holds for him and his work. Overall, OOI KOK CHUEN's article is a great read for anyone interested in art, innovation, and pushing boundaries.
李健省

虽然防染工艺看似简单，不过要将之化为艺术，李健省说：“就像作文章，就语法步步为营，难能有创作；然而一著构思而无技艺底子来呈献也是徒然。”

人类的共同遗产

配合吉隆坡国际艺术年会，李健省将特地展出《自 1963 年的演化》系列。曾于本地三次元装置艺术的开拓者，他的创作媒介多元，曾获 11 项国家奖及 2 项国际奖。防染技术占了他创作总量的四分之一。

防染虽然属工艺领域，不过要将之化为艺术，李健省说：“就像作文章，就语法步步为营，难能有创作；然而一著构思而无技艺底子来呈献也是徒然。”他曾遇一位 70 岁的白发老人，告知他虽从事防染工作多年而深感不解，李氏是如何创作出如此高难度的作品。“这就是工艺家与艺术家之分。”他说防染艺术创作可不是平面填色，轻易成作。

“防染是人类的共同遗产，不要将之政治化。”他透露，欧阳文风曾为他撰写成集，挖掘李氏在艺术圈子里面对的挑战。“虽然艺术在本地的发展出现了断层，3 间代表性的艺术学院也停滞不前，带动不了艺术潮流。”可惜，李健省至今还未公开其防染超凡技艺。“我正等着相等层次的艺术家将之传授，或在适宜的时机进行交流互相激荡。”

《舞乐齐扬》

时间：2005 年 12 月 12 日至 2006 年 1 月 22 日

电话：03-33723351
网页：www.leekianseng.com
《Absurd(c)ity》@The National Art Gallery Malaysia 2013-2014. Photo by LEE Hui Ling