

CULT

REAL POLITIK

2/9/23 -
16/9/23

Ahmad Shukri Mohamed
Ain Rahman
Amani Azlin
Amar Shahid
Anurendra Jegadeva
Binti Amat/Mati
Chang Yoong Chia
Edroger Rosili
Faizal Suhif
Faiil Johari
Haslin Ismail
Haz Yusup
Jalaini Abu Hassan
Khairudin Zainudin

Lee Mok Yee
Leon Leong
Liew Kung Yu
Mohd Al-Khuzairie Ali
Ping
Poojitha Menon
Sharon Chin
Stephen Menon
Syahmi Syazwin
Syaman Anuar
Trina Teoh
Wong Ming Hao
Zulkifli Lee

CULT Gallery
IDA, Persiaran Bukit Tunku
Bukit Tunku, 50480 Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia

CULT

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any other means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information retrieval system without prior permission from the artist, writers and publishers.

PUBLISHER
Copyright 2023
© CULT Sdn Bhd
10A, Persiaran Bukit Tunku
Bukit Tunku
50480 Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia

PROJECT DIRECTOR
Suryani Senja Alias

COORDINATOR
Simone Tait

ASSISTANT CURATOR
+ WRITER
Dayang Aina

ESSAY
Amar Shahid

CONCEPT + DESIGN
Imaya Wong

PHOTOGRAPHY
artists

THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF POLITICAL ART

by Amar Shahid

Artists have always been seen (or wanted to be seen) as a rebellious bunch; an entity that defies categorisation or organisation. A beautiful semi-functioning anarchy. A romanticised existence that is distant but ironically interdependent, and often left wanting. Wanting for audience or peer recognition.

This therefore explains why artists are naturally drawn to controversial subjects such as political criticism. Political theatre and all its drama provides a treasure trove of subjects and low-hanging fruits ready for the picking. But these subjects are often time-sensitive. Observing the unfolding of events shows that a subject that may be interesting now will become irrelevant a week later when moves are made and new alliances are forged. This might explain why it seems a little difficult to produce major works as commentary. It demands time and careful consideration.

For example, works such as caricatures or periodicals are better suited for such political commentary. Serious paintings, however, could be positioned as a broader view of criticism. It is ill-suited as a mouthpiece for gossip and fast news.

Regardless, that should not deter artists from producing interesting works. In the case of Malaysia, previous single party dominance in the government might have deterred most as it lent to strong censorship and prevented sharp commentaries.

In the present however, we are poised to be in a unique period that may or may not

come again in the future—oppositional sides of political parties are forced to form a unity government or risk instability. All competing sides had to sit at the same table and work things out, however unpleasant it may be. This should leave us artists a very fertile ground, no matter which side we are leaning on.

Criticism on either side could not be deterred or censored as easily as it could risk rejection from another. Artists should be the ones most fortunate in these times, as we are able to freely comment on issues, with only our common sense and decency as deterrence. I am waiting to see a more sweeping response from Malaysian artists.

An art movement is often born from a response or reaction—i.e Dadaism is a response towards the Great War, and Pop Art is a response towards post-war consumerism. The lack of critical response towards local politics in Malaysia could have been partly due to censorship, but as we pointed out, we are living in different times with more fluid power dynamics. This current show invites artistic responses to the situation, to nudge, prod and provoke, into making visual art as a layer of socio-political commentary normal again, and not as an exception to the rule. Realpolitik is not just what is being said and done, but it is also about what is not being said or done, in the name of practical politics.

Though local politics can change on a whim, an encompassing narrative can be deduced. Malaysia and its plural society are not mere passive bystanders. We are active participants, absorbing and transforming events around the region and the world. Consider the possibilities of commentary on the greater geopolitical themes—from tensions

in the South China Sea, shifting powers in Asia with spotlights on Indonesia, Vietnam and India, climate emergency to concerns on AI dominating our lives. Observing them is like tuning into your favourite soap opera of the week. The challenge is greater, and the web of conflicting interests is even more treacherous—therein lies the challenge waiting to be answered.

* * *

On the point of artists wanting peer recognition: unfortunately, it could encourage a tribalist approach. In the case of political art, it encourages bias and makes it difficult to be assertively neutral. The situation becomes compounded by the fact that some artists may be on the payroll of certain vested interests due to whatever financial or personal reasons, thus preventing their work to be sufficiently critical regardless of the immediate issues.

Art that is safe (i.e bipartisan or not conforming to extremes) might also be interpreted as non-challenging. This also explains why it is so difficult to find good political artists that toe the central line. One such rare example that I can point out would be Mohammad Nor Bin Mohammad Khalid (Lat), a cartoonist that uses clever forms of subtle criticism through humour, particularly during his tenure in the New Straits Times under the premiership of (then) Dr. Mahathir Mohammad. His approachable cartoons comment on the issues of everyday people, risking his own position by responding to the upper echelons that may be slighted by his comments. Never once, however, were the comments expressed in a spiteful or unnecessarily derogatory way, reflecting his own

personality as an artist that sincerely wants to engage in meaningful conversation. Other cartoonists who do not shy away from politics like Zunar or Fahmi Reza often work with political satires which mock and criticise, but they may or may not necessarily trigger critical discussions.

In the current exciting background of political turmoil however, deafening silence on pressing issues is a reminder that no artist is purely free from existential forces. The reality is no one is living in a vacuum and art is never entirely free. Art has its own politics too, action or deliberate inaction can be based on practical considerations. This is the realpolitik of art.

In painting, the subject of choice itself could be a troubling thought. The usual approach is to critique strongly, rather than to flatter. It is almost impossible to be flattering in political art: a negative response towards an issue would be seen as a critique, but a flattering view of any policy could be deemed as propaganda. No art or write-up is free from bias, and that includes mine. I see propaganda is an illness of the mind, and not of art. We should remember, however, that art is also governed by aesthetics, regardless of message or politics. The art of Soviet and Chinese propaganda have shown us that good artists will always shine through their artwork, though the message it carries might not be the best of its time. The nature of politics may make political art seem impossible, but art makes it possible regardless.

AHMAD SHUKRI MOHAMED

(left to right)

Katak Emas 'Merah'

2023

Mixed media on wood

20 x 135 cm

RM 9,000

Katak Emas 'Hijau'

2023

Mixed media on wood

20 x 135 cm

RM 9,000

Katak Emas 'Biru'

2023

Mixed media on wood

20 x 135 cm

RM 9,000



AIN RAHMAN

Artist statement

In my artwork titled *Wake Me Up When the World Wakes Up*, I dive deep into the heart of being an artist-creator. Imagine a self-portrait where a woman rests peacefully, far from the busy, surrounded by striking black and white shades. She's like a mirror, capturing the complex picture of Malaysia's politics—a snapshot of our thoughtful moment in history. Inside her slumber, two stories unfold. One is a dreamland filled with whispers from everyday people, reflecting their shared hopes. The other is the quiet beat of Malaysia's past, grounding the portrait. The artwork's soft shades of colours show the loudness of politics transformed into tranquillity, like a safe space found in dreams.

Wake Me Up When the World Wakes Up is like a daydream on paper, expressing the wish for calm in a chaotic world. It's a hopeful plea to wake up to a peaceful reality, bridging the gap between creating art and the world's dynamic rhythm.



**Wake Me Up When the World
Wakes Up**

Charcoal on canvas

30 x 30 cm

RM 1,800

AMANI AZLIN

Artist statement

“I swear to tell the truth and nothing but the truth.”

The inability to distinguish the collection of images showcased on the board in comparison to the clear image of the artist taking her oath is a direct message to how she feels towards the position of trust and truth concerning the current political state she lives in. The idolisation of those in power seems to weigh more than the value and beliefs they represent and similarly the relationship that bonds stronger between the audience and the work relies more on first seeing and trusting the artist who swore to tell the truth—the rest of the work becomes secondary. The artist is in power, the artist is present.

The collection of images are a combination of old and new ones re-presented to form a new truth. Seeing it as a collaborative work between the lived experiences found in the artist’s surroundings (public) and her camera (private), she then reinforces them with writings of her own views while the *angkat sumpah* takes place in the work itself.



Right Hand in the Mud

2023

Inkjet photo transfer and photo
lustre paper on fibre board

58 x 35 cm

RM 2,500

AMAR SHAHID

Artist statement

For *Realpolitik*, I choose to show a positive reflection of history from the premiership of Tun Abdul Razak, Malaysia's former Prime Minister. His tenure started with the huge challenge of stabilising the economy and bridging the gap of the racial and economic tension. Yet he rose to the challenge, as illustrated in my work *Fields of Gold*. I personally believe that his premiership is dotted with great leaps in modernising the nation. His only lack is that his premiership ended too early, but not without great achievements inherited to the nation.



Fields of Gold

2023

Oil, gold and copper leaves on
canvas

91 x 137 cm

SOLD (commissioned by a
private collector)



Halo Hoop

2023

Oil and gold leaf on canvas

61 x 76 cm

SOLD (commissioned by a
private collector)

AMAT

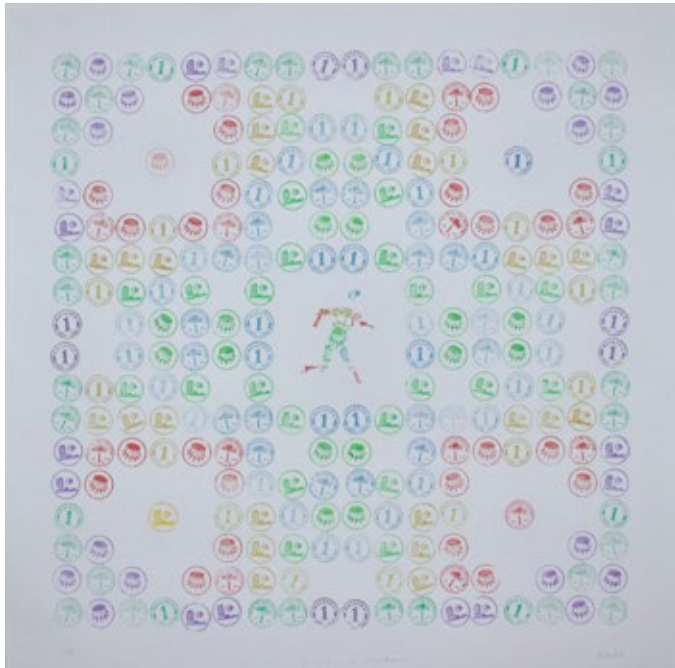
Artist statement

What's the difference between the money we have in our pockets and the ones we use in a board game?

Nilai, the Malay word for value, is a reflection on my relationship with money. Never enough. 1 cent coins are no longer of any value in Malaysia. If the notes face the same fate, they'll simply be pretty colours in our pockets.

Nilai (Murni) mirrors the social grouping of communities through how much of it you own. *Nilai (Diri)* is a self portrait representing myself as a part of this system and 1996, the year I was born into it. Majority of the human experience is replaced with the never ending cycle of rise, grind, hustle, bustle, eat, sleep, oh shit, repeat. And what is that value? What is my value? What are my values? What are yours?

You could make your own money, but you can't do that. That's illegal.



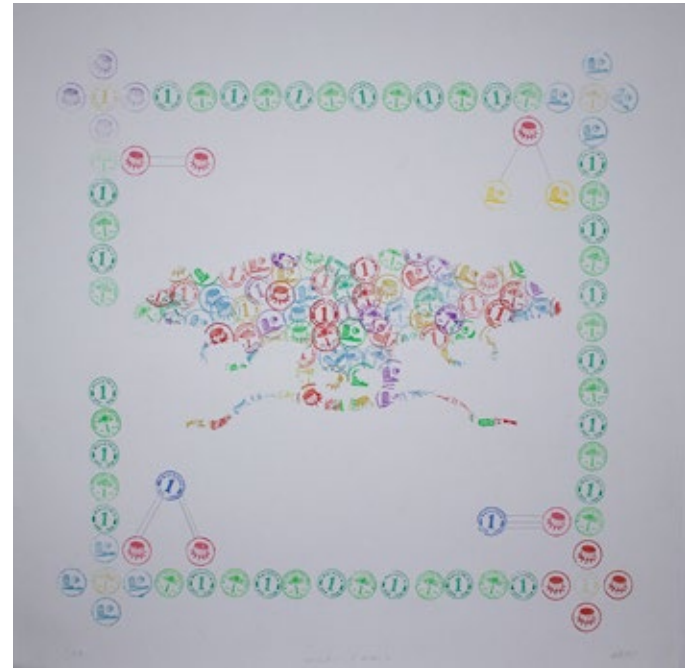
Nilai (Murni)

2023

Hand stamped acrylic on acid-free
paper

42 x 42 cm

R.M 1,500



Nilai (Diri)

2023

Hand stamped acrylic on acid-free
paper

42 x 42 cm

R.M 1,500

ANURENDRA JEGADEVA

Artist statement

“In her novel *Americanah*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie describes the predicament of new Nigerian migrants – especially men – from Brooklyn to Baltimore, who stare at their screens, huddled over political blogs from home.

They have opinions. They provide commentary.

They seem stuck in a rinse and repeat of irrelevance whether it is in the political shitstorms of their distant homeland or the impending fallout of the corrupt, broken system that had hiccupped their newly adopted country’s first black President. They lament the loss of the deep connections they have with home, that their children will never know.

He struggles with context in this new place but yet, is equally disconnected from the place he came from.

The women adapt – the men long for what they were at home, too arrogant to change, often unable to accept their new realities.

Too often, I feel this way.

My painting *Dark Brown*, portraits of my daughter, Rupa and the First Nations gold medalist Kathy Freeman with three packets of nasi lemak and three Supermarine Spitfires, made in the lead up to a national referendum in Australia for an Indigenous Voice to Parliament, attempts to convey all of this.

The picture explores how I fit, where Rupa belongs and who we usurp... in spite of our 'best intentions'."



Dark Brown

2023

Acrylic and collage on canvas

152 x 79 cm

RM 40,000

BINTI

Artist statement

Hakim Adam

Hakim Adam is named after both of my brothers, Hakim and Adam. Taking the Malay definition of the word Hakim, meaning Judge and the first man, Adam. This mirror is engraved with poetries written by both Hakim and Adam. Self-reflection as the start of positive change, regardless of status, age or background. Outer outcomes are birthed from inner perceptions. Aim to improve ourselves and the rest will follow.



Hakim Adam

2023

Hand engraving on glass mirror

and metal frame

100 x 100 cm

RM 5,000

Artist statement

Sara Amende

Sara Amende is named after my sister, Sara Amanda. The slang term 'Amende' in Malay is used as a marriage of the words 'Apa benda' that translates poorly to 'What thing' used in place of the English words, 'What the hell'. This diptych depicts the waves of contemporary globalisation with interest in Korean culture. Significantly, Sara lives in Korea. When back in Malaysia, K-culture remains inescapable in Malaysian everyday life. It is heavily endorsed and promoted by Malaysians and isn't the vice-versa when she is in Korea. Instant photos are used to take the portraits as opposed to a digital format as the happenstance of living in different countries does not allow us to be in the same space often, these portraits are to commemorate a raw, unfiltered and unedited close proximity. The Hangul alphabet in the centre frame translates to 'The Truest Love Is The One You Give Yourself'. The grass grows where you water it. My questions when it comes to this is of influence, culture, structures, sacrifices, areas of attention, additions, dilutions, enrichments and subtractions. Which is what I look to myself to ask, which is what I suggest you do too.



Sara Amende

2023

Watercolour, colour pencil and
collage on acid-free paper

104 x 23 cm

R.M 3,000

CHANG YOONG CHIA

Artist statement

“In my formative years of education, I embraced the foundational 3Rs (Reading, wRiting, and aRithmetic), which shaped my understanding of the world and my interactions with others. However, as of late, I find myself going through a process of re-education. The pillars of my old 3Rs have crumbled, replaced by the new 3Rs (Religion, Race, Royalty), elements I’m expected to accept unquestioningly.

To commemorate 42 years of my education, I’ve depicted my journey through stamps—symbolic of an outdated system, reminiscent of the values of my childhood. Through this artwork, I reflect on the evolution of my education and its impact on the way I perceive the world today.”



**Malaysia Commemorative
Stamp: 3R**

2023

Postage stamps and polyvinyl
acetate glue (collage)

21 x 29.8 cm

RM 19,000

EDROGER ROSILI

Artist statement

Our founding fathers. I always loved history, however they're written, myths or facts or conspiracy theories. I was in Langkawi in May 2023 when I watched "Milestone to Malaysia" on Finas' Youtube channel. The docu was very stirring, as if I was watching a heist movie (a political heist). One can see these characters on the film poster, and maybe speculate on their role in the heist, the mastermind and his crew. The rush we get every time there's political drama happening usually leads us to reminisce on how far we've come, and wonder where this nation is going.

PMX carved one major part in our political history, shouting out "Reformasi!". When the Madani logo was announced, I immediately connected the palm of the hand to the iconic photo of Anwar Ibrahim with his hand raised. One may admire his magnanimous attitude for forgiving what his enemies did to him in the past, but if what happened to him was really an injustice, where's the justice for that injustice now? I made the M red for Madani, Malaysia, Mahathir and apparently Maaf.



One Bold Move
2023
Acrylic on canvas
150 x 100 cm
RM 10,000



Reformasi

2023

Watercolour on 425gsm paper

50 x 40 cm

RM 2,000

FAIZAL SUHIF



Dihujung HARAPAN... I, II & III

2023

Collagraph and ink on 250gsm arches paper

38 x 28.5 cm (each paper size)

20.5 x 13 cm (each print size)

RM 3,900 (without frame)

FALIL JOHARI

Artist statement

Fifth Season

“As soon as I received the brief, I had a clear vision of an essential subject – the national flag. Inspiration came quickly and I immediately printed out several Wikipedia pages about it, with just enough information to recall how and why it was designed like so. Interestingly, the designer was also a fine artist who was trained as an architect: Mohamed bin Hamzah. The flag was not designed on a whim. Following the proclamation of Merdeka, a competition was held to encourage Malaysians to design our flag. Mohamed submitted four designs – one of which was accepted. But what values do the flag stand for, presently?

The visuals I came up with initially were a combination of what I have read as someone trying to understand our political climate. I had a vision of an inverted flag with inverted colours – colours that represent respect, courage, purity, and unity.

The final idea was concocted to visualise an *otherness* that Malaysia is facing – and what best to represent a country and its people but its flag, with mirrors? Deconstructed, scattered, yet remaining in a fixed place. The lines, the moons, and the stars on the mirrors are a direct analysis of the state elections that are divided by differences in values. Every state has a say until we are united once more. Each mirror consists of two deconstructed and scattered flags – coloured and white.

The coloured piece is a mix of the colours of the flag and an inverted version of it. It seems to me that in order to understand realpolitik, I also have to understand the *reality* of politics – that there will always be two sides of the same coin. Necessarily, they will be divided until there exists a merging (not always mutual) understanding.

I find it apt to say “*Cermin Muka Sendiri*” when we have to check ourselves on our habits or wrongdoings. Maybe I need another mirror devoid of life and values—still cluttered and deconstructed, stripped of the so-called respect, courage, purity and unity. Then what is the point of witnessing these bare, rigid structures as the supposed symbol of Malaysia? What is this visible and invisible separation that seems to overwhelm us as a nation, while we are still far from reaching ultimate unification? Of the last mirror, I only have myself to see. I only react to what I see, mimic what I do, and relook again to have an idea of what it feels like to be on the other side of the mirror.”

**Fifth Season**

2023

Vinyl die cut and acrylic on mirror

120 x 20 cm (each)

RM 2,500

HASLIN ISMAIL

Artist statement

“For me, politics is always about political satire. I’m using Dr Strangelove (1964) directed by Stanley Kubrick as a main reference for my work. This political satire black comedy film made the right point for me to think about attitudes such as the “missile gap” but it primarily directs its satire on the theory of mutually assured destruction (or MAD), in which each side is supposed to be deterred from a nuclear war by the prospect of a universal cataclysm regardless of who ‘won’.”





Devil His Due

2023

Acrylic and paper collage on
canvas

91.5 x 91.5 cm

RM 8,000



How I Learned to Stop Worry-
ing and Love the Bomb

2023

Acrylic on canvas

61 x 61 cm

RM 5,000

HAZ YUSUP

Artist statement

“Even if I did not want to, you marked me anyway.

With this piece, I wish to initiate a discussion on sexual assault and how this issue isn't given enough attention. Regardless of age or gender, sexual assaults continue to be considered taboo, and many victims are frequently stigmatised, or even sexualized. I firmly feel that the systems in place to lessen assaults and to inform society are still ineffective.

Nevertheless, XOXO since it's typically used as a playful method to show affection, I wanted to emphasise how the trauma may influence a victim's sexuality rather than dismiss it or advise them to move on.

I am advocating for an improved system to guard our people against these abuses in the future. Let's hope that the only Xs we have to cross are those on the ballots.”



Marked
2023
Oil on canvas
50.8 x 40.6 cm
RM 3,000

JALAINI ABU HASSAN



Mata-mata

2023

Acrylic and bitumen on paper

58 x 84 cm

RM 16,000

KHAIRUDIN ZAINUDIN



Gelar-gelar

2023

Acrylic and oil on canvas

69 x 158 cm

RM 7,500

LEE MOK YEE

Artist statement

Hang On for A While, Parliament

By using humble materials like wood, furniture parts, vinyl carpet and canvas print. The work is a composition studies of some prominent architecture in Kuala Lumpur. *Hang On for A While, Parliament* is inspired by Parliament building itself, creating shapes, forms and images from the architecture elements. Going through the process of assemblage, the work is a material study for the artist.

Newspaper I, II & III

Newspaper is a satirical series set during Malaysia's 2013 election. It draws inspiration from traditional Chinese praying methods to critique the role of newspapers in society. The artist questions the meaninglessness of burning Hell paper, transforming it into a routine lacking spiritual fulfillment. They subvert the gold paper content, replacing gods with politicians, political parties, and the Malaysian map. Using faithful Chinese idioms, the forms presents twisted realities hidden behind a façade of virtue, shedding light on the deceptive power of media and blind faith.



**Hang On for A While,
Parliament**

2023

Plywood, wood, digital print on
tarpaulin and vinyl carpet

120 x 70 x 48.5 cm

RM 5,500



Newspaper I

2013

House paint on canvas

74 x 86 cm

RM 3,000



Newspaper II

2013

House paint on canvas

74 x 86 cm

RM 3,000



Newspaper III

2013

House paint on canvas

74 x 86 cm

RM 3,000

LEON LEONG

Artist statement

“AISYALAM *The Tree Nation* is an allegorical take of a nation we know well, yet, in some ways, know so little about. The work taps into the psyche of a nation that was once reported as having its people live in trees, portrayed as little better than glorified savages talked about in hushed tones by those spared such indignities. The report has since been erased but the idea lives on in the consciousness of its people.

Could there be some truth in it?”



**aisyalam The Tree Nation -
Twister No. 4**

2020

Oil on canvas

80 cm (diameter)

RM 15,000



**aisyalam The Tree Nation -
Twister No. 5**
2020
Oil on canvas
80 cm (diameter)
RM 15,000



**aisyalam The Tree Nation –
Twister No. 6**

2023

Opaque watercolour and composition
gold leaf on Samarkand silk paper
12.3 cm (diameter of image)

RM 4,800



**aisyalam The Tree Nation –
Twister No. 7**

2023

Opaque watercolour and composition
gold leaf on Samarkand silk paper
12.3 cm (diameter of image)

RM 4,800



**aisyalam The Tree Nation –
Twister No. 8**

2023

Opaque watercolour and composition
gold leaf on Samarkand silk paper
12.3 cm (diameter of image)

RM 4,800

LIEW KUNG YU

Artist statement

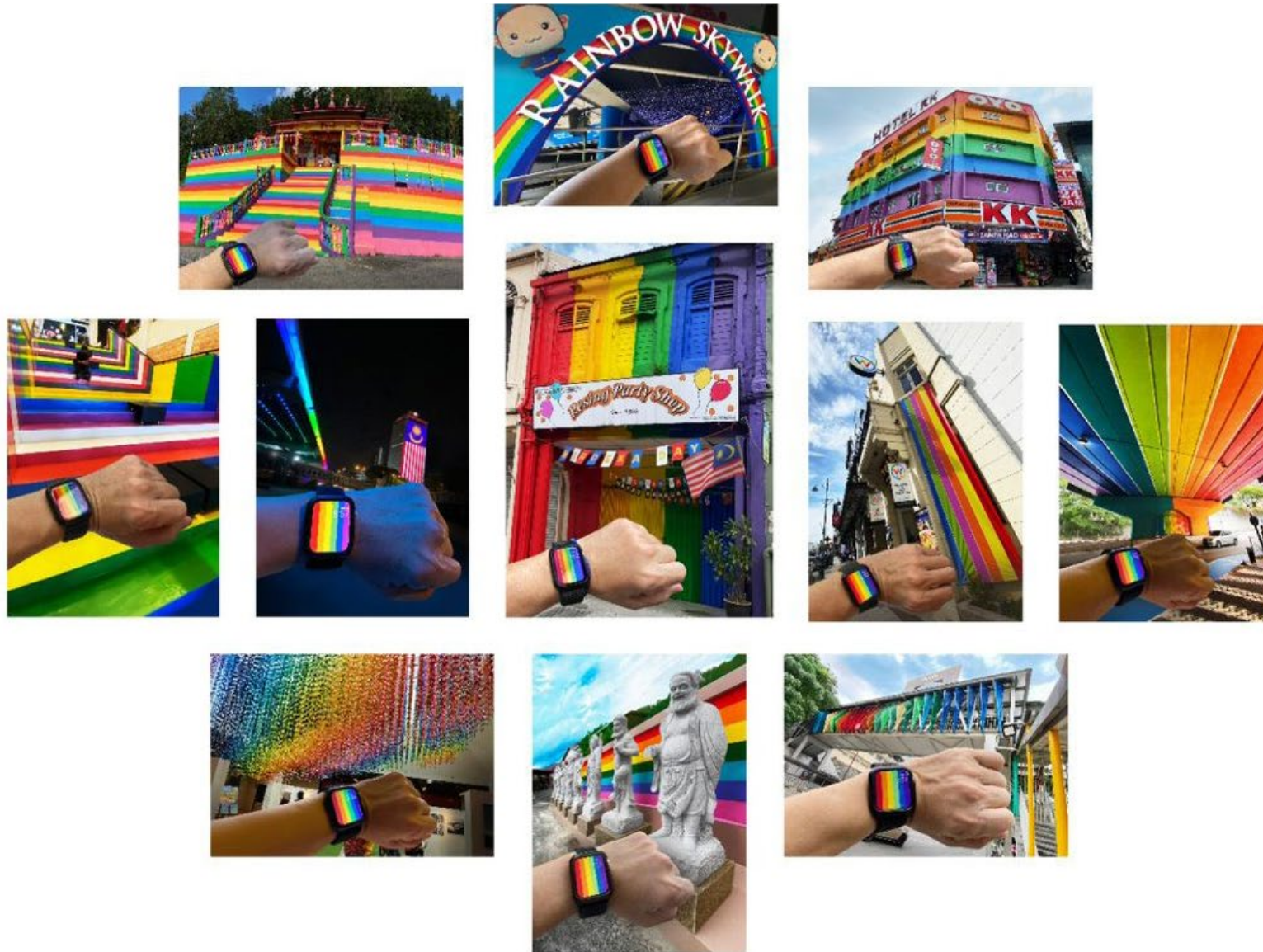
“In May 2023, the Home Ministry of Malaysia raided Swatch shops across the country, confiscating 172 watches under the brand’s Pride Collection from local stores.

Then in August 2023, just two days before voters in six states went to the polls, the Home Ministry announced that anyone who had in their possession a Swatch rainbow watch, a wrapper or even the box bearing the rainbow theme was committing an offence. Anyone found guilty of such an offence could be jailed for up to three years or fined up to RM20,000 under the Printing Presses and Publications Act 1984.

The act of confiscating and criminalising the sale of these Swatch rainbow watches raises questions about the role of the authorities in dictating what is acceptable within a society’s visual landscape. This is especially poignant when considering how governments may exploit such acts for political gain.

Moreover, this incident of singling out the LGBT community is just the latest in the Malaysian government’s long history of targeting minorities and other marginalised groups for political purposes.

With this series of work, I’ve travelled around the country hunting for various locations featuring the offending “Rainbow Theme” to turn the tables back on the Home Minister with a simple question, *HM, How Now?*



HM, How Now?

2023

Giclee on Hahnemühle Photo Rag Pearl Paper

56 x 40 cm (except for "HM, How Now?" Resing Party Shop - Party Universe, Jalan Petaling, Kuala Lumpur, which is 70 x 50 cm)

Edition of 3 + AP

AP: RM 38,000 as a set

Edition 1 to 3: RM 35,000 as a set



“HM, How Now?” Rainbow staircase, The LINC KL, Kuala Lumpur

2023

Giclee on Hahnemühle Photo Rag Pearl Paper, 56 x 40 cm

Edition of 3 + AP

AP: RM 3,800

Edition 1 to 3: RM 3,500



“HM, How Now?” Wonder Food Museum, George Town, Penang

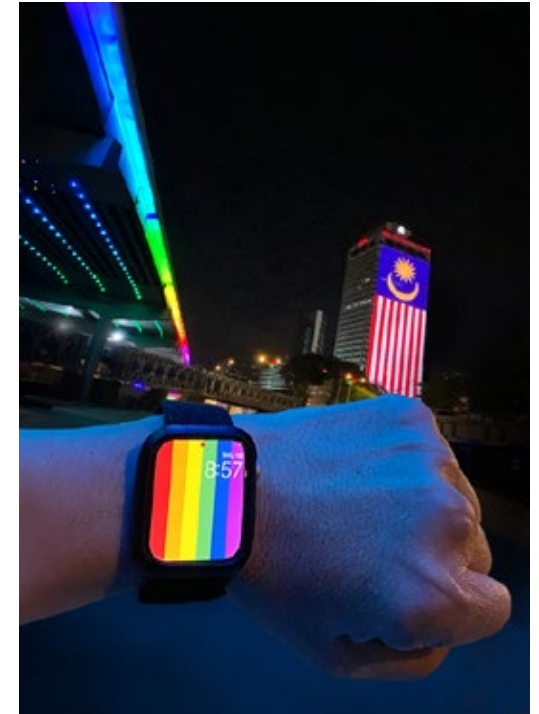
2023

Giclee on Hahnemühle Photo Rag Pearl Paper, 56 x 40 cm

Edition of 3 + AP

AP: RM 3,800

Edition 1 to 3: RM 3,500



“HM, How Now?” Jejak Pahlawan di Bulatan Dato Onn, Kuala Lumpur

2023

Giclee on Hahnemühle Photo Rag Pearl Paper, 56 x 40 cm

Edition of 3 + AP

AP: RM 3,800

Edition 1 to 3: RM 3,500



**“HM, How Now?” Lok Yam Kong
Chinese Temple, Jalan Chamang,
Bentong, Pahang**

2023

Giclee on Hahnemühle Photo Rag Pearl
Paper, 56 x 40 cm

Edition of 3 + AP

AP: RM 3,800

Edition 1 to 3: RM 3,500



**“HM, How Now?” Under path,
Jalan Raja Chulan, Kuala
Lumpur**

2023

Giclee on Hahnemühle Photo Rag Pearl
Paper, 56 x 40 cm

Edition of 3 + AP

AP: RM 3,800

Edition 1 to 3: RM 3,500



**“HM, How Now?” Resing Party
Shop - Party Universe, Jalan
Petaling, Kuala Lumpur
2023**

Giclee on Hahnemühle Photo Rag Pearl

Paper, 70 x 50 cm

Edition of 3 + AP

AP: RM 4,100

Edition 1 to 3: RM 3,800



“HM, How Now?” KK Hotel Jalan Pahang, Titiwangsa Sentral, Kuala Lumpur

2023

Giclee on Hahnemühle Photo Rag Pearl Paper, 40 x 56 cm

Edition of 3 + AP

AP: RM 3,800

Edition 1 to 3: RM 3,500



“HM, How Now?” Rainbow Skywalk, The Top Penang, George Town, Penang

2023

Giclee on Hahnemühle Photo Rag Pearl Paper, 40 x 56 cm

Edition of 3 + AP

AP: RM 3,800

Edition 1 to 3: RM 3,500



“HM, How Now?” Origami installation, The LINC KL, Kuala Lumpur

2023

Giclee on Hahnemühle Photo Rag Pearl Paper, 40 x 56 cm

Edition of 3 + AP

AP: RM 3,800

Edition 1 to 3: RM 3,500



**“HM, How Now?” Kuan Yik Kerk
Chinese Temple, Kuala Kubu
Bharu, Selangor**

2023

Giclee on Hahnemühle Photo Rag Pearl

Paper, 40 x 56 cm

Edition of 3 + AP

AP: RM 3,800

Edition 1 to 3: RM 3,500



**“HM, How Now?” Pedestrian
bridge, Jalan Ampang, Kuala
Lumpur**

2023

Giclee on Hahnemühle Photo Rag Pearl

Paper, 40 x 56 cm

Edition of 3 + AP

AP: RM 3,800

Edition 1 to 3: RM 3,500

MATI

Artist statement

Tak Kuasa is an ongoing series. This title holds a double meaning in the Malay language. Literally translating to 'no power' and in Malay an expression to mean, that someone has no willpower, no energy, no force, no time to face an issue at hand. Having no power over a circumstance, therefore, having no willpower to keep powering through.

'pokoknya, semua pokok sudah mati' a sentence meaning 'the point is all the trees are dead', serves as an opening piece and statement on subjects surrounding this series. A sentence strung by us mid-conversation with neighbours in Yogyakarta while discussing a recent logging that happened near the lodging where we stayed during our month-long artist residency. 'pokoknya, semua pokok sudah mati' is the piece chosen to open the 'Tak Kuasa' series and is presented on a comforter with alphabet cut-out of craft carpet grass to amplify this statement of a synthetic near-future. Made on a comforter, to represent both serene sleep and night terror tragedies. A comforter that holds the responsibility to nurture rest, embroidered with a restless statement in lowercase alphabets as a white flag admittance that one is tired of shouting.

The crippling cycle of issues that follow us into dreamscapes and how we best deal with it when we, in the greater sense and subjectivities of our circumstances, are powerless. Going to start a revolution from our beds, make friends with everyone in our heads instead: the point is, all the trees are dead.



Tak Kuasa

2023

Craft carpet grass, miniature
model figures on comforter

200 x 140 cm

RM 9,500

MOHD AL-KHUZAIRIE ALI



(left to right)

The Game of Clowns #1

2023

Ceramic, acrylic on canvas, image transfer and wood frame

45 x 17 x 10 cm

RM 2,500

The Game of Clowns #2

2023

Ceramic, acrylic on canvas, image transfer and wood frame

45 x 17 x 10 cm

RM 2,500



(left to right)

The Game of Clowns #3

2023

Ceramic, acrylic on canvas, image transfer and wood frame

45 x 17 x 10 cm

RM 2,500

The Game of Clowns #4

2023

Ceramic, acrylic on canvas, image transfer and wood frame

45 x 17 x 10 cm

RM 2,500



PING



On Balance

2023

Plaster, gypsum cement, canvas strips and EPS foam on cardboard base; 3D animation on LCD screen encased in acrylic and wood frame
22 (h) x 20 (w) x 20 (d) cm
(size of sphere)

18.5 (h) x 13.5 (w) x 4.5 (d) cm
(size of screen)

R.M 4,500

POOJITHA MENON

Artist statement

Kerusi PANAS (The Electric Chair)

“The Cambridge Dictionary defines Democracy (n) as – the belief in freedom and equality between people, or a system of government based on this belief, in which power is either held by elected representatives or directly by the people themselves. But in this definition, Democracy (n), can be appropriately (to the current scenario) defined as – The freedom to elect your dictators!

Now what’s the provided definition of Politics? (n) – The activities associated with the governance of a country or area, especially the debate between parties having power. But then, I came across this definition of Politics – (n)Poli (Many) + Tics (Bloodsucking creatures) = Many bloodsucking creatures.

With temperatures of moods and emotions soaring, who’s dictating it all? Or are there more than just one?”



**Kerusi PANAS (The Electric
Chair)**

2023

Coloured glaze on stoneware clay

1263°C, metal and acrylic sheet

42 (h) x 28 x 14 cm

RM 6,000

Artist statement

BADAN

“What’s a body but a fleshy mass of hopes and dreams to love and live? And if at its core function, all bodies are the same, then who decides how one loves?

When man-made religion, fear-mongering, and political shenanigans are at play; disguised in sheep’s wool, rainbows become enemies, love hides further in and the wolves come out to play.

This work talks about the uninhibited power of control and its many perils; fear, labels and preconceived judgments using the hope of a utopian heaven and the fear of hell.”

**BADAN**

2023

Rust glaze on stoneware clay
1263°C, Celuka board pedestal and
metal

166 (h) x 40 x 40 cm

R.M 17,000

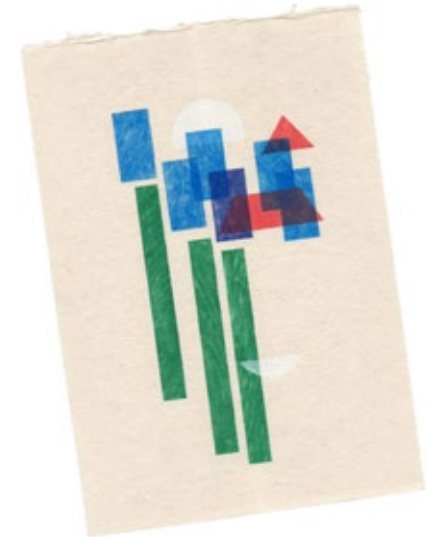
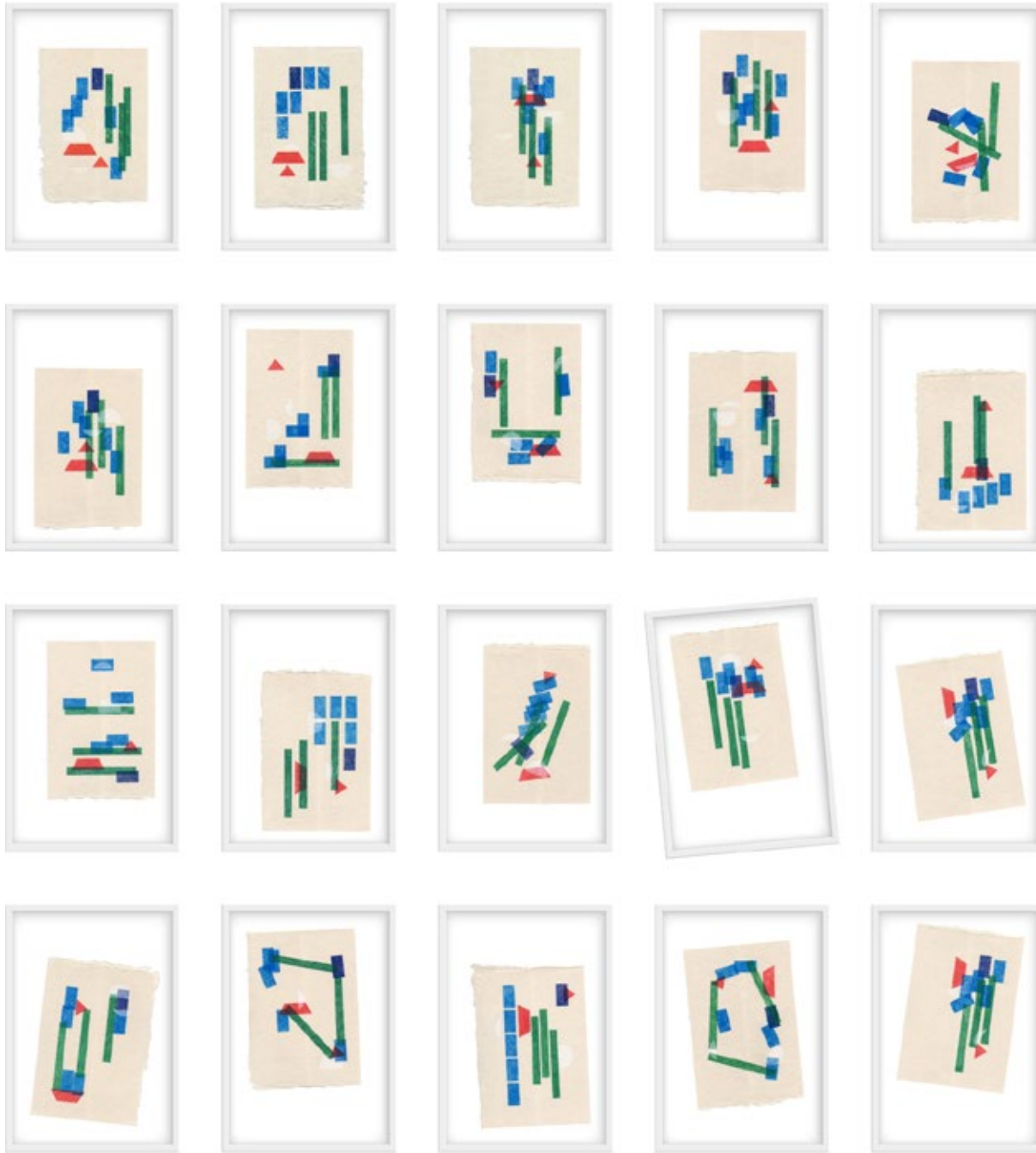
SHARON CHIN

Artist statement

“*Country Musik: Movements* is a series of 20 collagraph prints based on *In The Skin of A Tiger: Monument To What We Want (Tugu Kita)*, a work commissioned for Singapore Biennale 2019. Hung at the entrance of National Gallery Singapore, the installation consisted of 13 solid-coloured banners in geometric shapes, each constructed out of fabric reclaimed from Malaysian political party flags. It was a monument to change – a memorial for Malaysia’s 14th General Elections, which saw the ruling coalition voted out for the first time in the nation’s history in 2018. The work is also about expressing collective desire on a large scale: as a part of participatory performances in Malaysia, Singapore and New York, more than a hundred people have added their stitches to the banners.

Created during lockdown, *Country Musik: Movements* takes the original composition of the banners and plays it into 20 different configurations. The 20 compositions are a kind of music that reflects the massive shifts of 2020 – from the Covid pandemic to the fall of the Pakatan Harapan government in March, just before the nation went into its first lockdown. These movements therefore played out while we were enclosed in private spaces.

Here, the 20 pieces are presented in display-friendly frames, but they are off-centred. The works shake and stir in their confines, wondering whether the frames will do the same, and when. The 13 banners sit folded on a table, waiting and remembering.”



**Country Musik:
Movements #1 - 20**

2020-2022

Collograph on 120gsm acid-free
Saa (thai mulberry) paper

28 x 19 cm each (unframed)

RM 24,000

STEPHEN MENON



It's Alright, Ma (They Sold My Soul)
2023
Mixed media
Dimensions variable
R.M 9,000

SYAHMI SYAZWIN



The Owned Seater

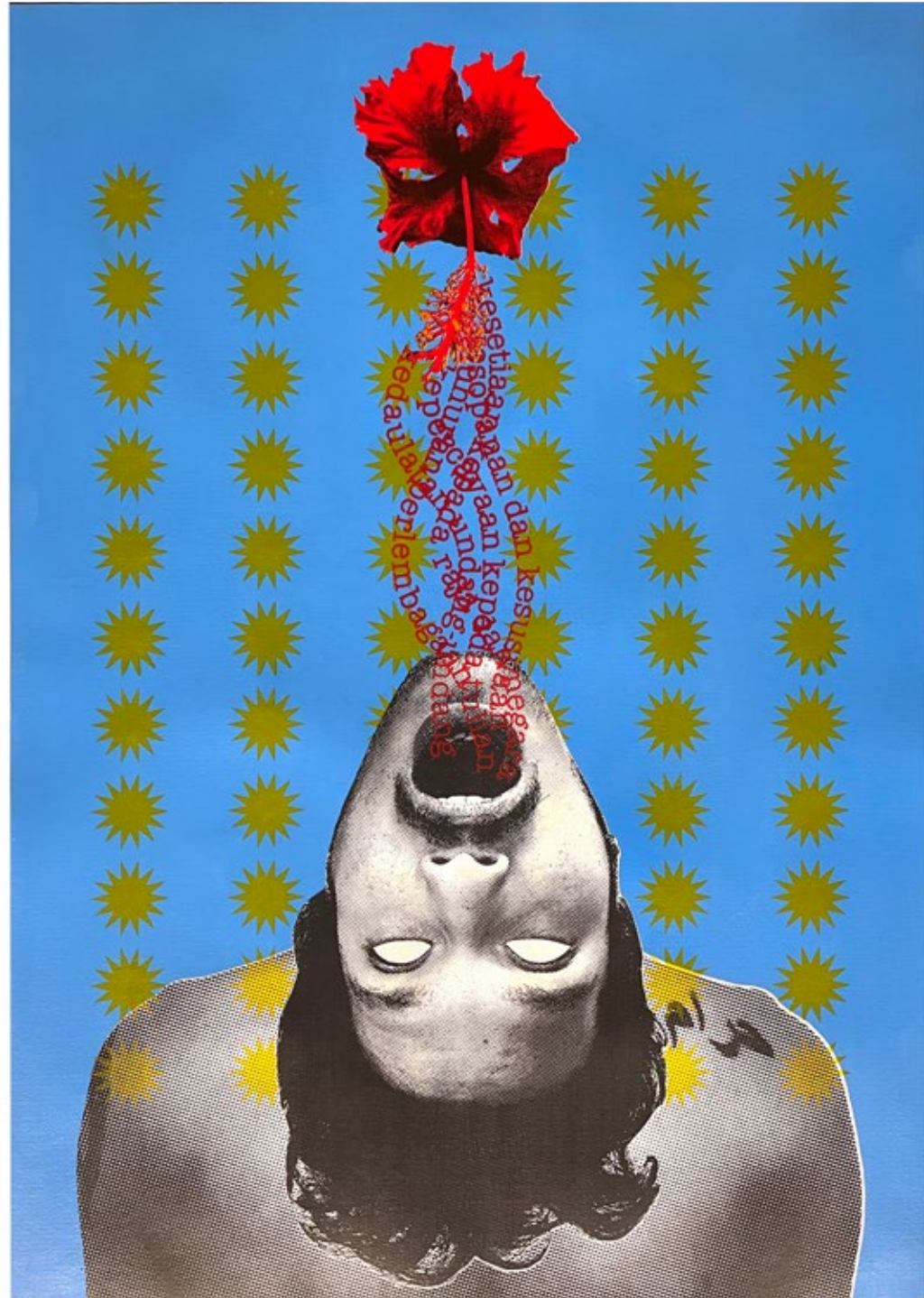
2023

Oil on canvas

176 x 152 cm

RM 8,500

SYAHNAN ANUAR



Rukun

2023

Acrylic, silkscreen on 300gsm
cotton paper

84.1 x 59.4 cm

Edition of 6 + 2 AP + 3 TP

AP: RM 3,500 (each)

Edition: RM 1,800 (each)

Test Print: RM 1,500 (each)

TRINA TEOH

Artist statement

Partymen/Rubber Stamp is inspired by the political term, “Rubber stamp”. This term means to endorse something without thought even though it is expected for the stamper to do so. This political term felt natural when used to describe the legacy of Malaysian politics.

The rubber stamp stands at 20 cm in height and 14 cm in diameter, this enlarged comical size is the first physical commentary that any rubber stamping used throughout the Malaysian government was mostly decorative. This artwork isn’t a direct commentary on the state of our new government, but it instead represents a broader perspective on the legacy of the Malaysian parliament.

The text-based work and the title embedded on the rubber stamp explores the idea that our politicians have used our government as a backdrop for play and hedonistic activities. The first line of the text reads, “I whisper in your ear”; this loosely summarises the Malaysian parliament. There is little to no transparency when communicating with the public, and a lot of major decisions about the state of our country are done in secret. Which allows the second part; “I tell you with no fear”, to provide an insight into the terrain of Malaysian politics. From the casual betrayal of one political party against another, the trustworthiness of any Malaysian Prime Ministers or even the bravado of a civil servant when deceiving their own people.

The prints, *Partymen/Rubber Stamp* commemorate the 66th year of non-stop partying and dubious activities within the Malaysian parliament.“



Partymen

2023

Dye ink on 300gsm acid-free UK
drawing paper

21 x 21 cm

Edition: 1/20

RM 500

RM 350 (without frame)

PARTYMEN / RUBBER STAMP

2023

Wooden rubber stamp

16 x 14 cm

RM 3,500

WONG MING HAO



My Dream Country

2022

Acrylic and foam board on wood
panel

122 x 180 cm

RM 8,500

ZULKIFLI LEE

Artist statement

“In this series of works, I explore the convergence of written language or typography with visual elements and materials to convey a message, evoke a sense of speculation and provoke contemplation.

These works are inspired by the powerful role of words in shaping narratives and influencing public opinion. Text can be used to control, manipulate, and oppress. However, I also believe that language can be used to empower, liberate, and create change.

I employ text fragments sourced from political party flags to create layered and expressive compositions, de-constructing and reconstructing it into other words. By doing so, these compositions are infused with contextual significance that encompass associations, ideologies, sentiments, and values tied to those specific sources.

The works consist of a jumble of texts collaged together to create Ambiguity, never arranged as a specific sentence. Rather than offering explicit commentary, my intention is to foster a space of open interpretation. With the sentiment the material has inherited, my aim is to challenge established norms, ideologies, and power structures.

Ultimately, my goal is to facilitate a medium where viewers can become active participants in the interpretation and reinterpretation of political language, empowering them to critically engage with the complexities and potential manipulations that underlie political messaging.”

Parti Gelak

“Onomatopoeia refers to the use of words or sounds that imitate or suggest the sounds associated with the object or action they represent. In the work titled *Parti Gelak*, the text ‘HA HA HA’ is an onomatopoeic representation of laughter. It can also be read as ‘HAH’, ‘AH’. The text is sourced from multiple political party flags, although it is predominantly dominated by Harapan Party flags. The question arises: what is the laughter for? Is it a laugh of happiness or laughter or a cynical one? And who is laughing?”

Manifesto Kata-kata

“The other work, titled *Manifesto Kata-kata*, uses text from Perikatan Party flags as the main source, while other party colours and text play a minor role. When combined, these elements create various words such as ‘kata-kata,’ ‘katak,’ ‘takat,’ ‘tak,’ etc.’ These jumbles of words evoke a sentiment of speculation and the ambiguity of the meaning that the words represent. Political language is a powerful tool that can be used to manipulate and control people’s sentiment and perception.”



Parti Gelak

2022

Collage of political party flags on
canvas

140 x 110 cm

RM 18,000



Manifesto Kata-Kata

2022



Collage of political party flags on
canvas

140 x 110 cm

RM 18,000



CULT

 [cult_gallery](#)
 [cult_gallery](#)

For enquiries, please contact
cultgallerykl@gmail.com

Opening hours
By appointment only