

Singapore Government

PRESS RELEASE

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SPEECH BY MR CHAN SOO SEN, PARLIAMENTARY

SECRETARY (PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE & MINISTRY

OF HEALTH), AT THE 18TH UOB PAINTING OF THE YEAR EXHIBITION OFFICIAL OPENING CUM
PRIZE PRESENTATION CEREMONY ON SATURDAY, 26 JUN 99, AT 10.30AM,

UOB PLAZA 1, 37TH STOREY, 80 RAFFLES PLACE

Good morning 

Mr Wee Ee Cheong

Chairman

UOB Art Committee

Dr Earl Lu

Chief Judge of the

18th UOB Painting of the Year Competition

Distinguished Guests

Ladies & Gentlemen

I am very happy to join you here this morning at the 18th UOB Painting of the Year Exhibition and prize-presentation ceremony.

The UOB Painting of the Year Competition was inaugurated in 1982 to discover, develop and recognise local artistic talents. This objective is as relevant today as 17 years ago. Over the years, the Competition has served as an excellent platform for our artists to showcase their talents, and has been a great source of encouragement and inspiration to the artists. The format of the Competition has also been modified to give greater emphasis to younger talents.

The Competition has helped local artists gain greater recognition for their works, inspired them to scale higher grounds, and fostered a higher level of art consciousness among the public.

Singapore's art scene has flourished a great deal since your first Competition in 1982. We are certainly not a cultural desert, some pessimists once said we were. We now have a rich and thriving arts scene. Some optimists are beginning to see Singapore as a potential regional hub for arts and cultural events. We hope they are right, and we want to work and make sure they are right. A flourishing arts scene is in line with our aspiration to be a world class city, with a creative and innovative people.

However, history tells us that a flourishing arts scene cannot be totally left with the free market. Patronage has always been important to the development of the arts throughout history. In ancient times, we had kings, emperors, aristocrats, and religious establishments who gave patronage to the arts. As there are fewer kings, emperors and aristocrats around today, we have the governments and businesses giving patronage to arts.

UOB Group has been strong and consistent in its support for the arts. Since 1973, UOB Group has been helping up-and-coming local artists by purchasing and displaying their works through the on-going purchase support programme. UOB Group has been a regular sponsor of the Singapore International Film Festival and Singapore Festival of Arts. It provides the unique service of offering the United Fine Art Insurance Policy. UOB Group's contributions were recognised and had been conferred the Distinguished Patron of the Arts Award in 1997 by the National Arts Council.

Most of us agree that we want a more gracious and compassionate Singapore in the coming century. Promoting arts is part of the effort in realising this. Hence, I would like to commend the UOB Group for consistently being a good patron of both the visual and performing arts. I also congratulate the winners and participants of

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the 18th UOB Painting of the Year Competition. Everyone is a winner as we develop Singapore into a cultural garden. We hope more entrepreneurs and private sector persons sponsor the various arts forms. I wish all of you many success in your future endeavours.

Thank you.

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