

# face fiction

NIK M SHAZMIE

12 - 26 MAY 2018



A SOLO EXHIBITION

**face fiction**  
NIK M SHAZMIE



## INTRO

In a world that revolves around 'Fake News', 'Alternative Facts' and among any other thing, it is somehow hard for one to separate between reality and fantasy, the facts from the lies. For some, they are more likely to bite the pain of the truth with a grain of salt.

In 'Face Fiction', Nik M Shazmie plays a role as a narrator to showcase his body work that touches on various topics that interest him as an observer, as an artist and as a person. He injects his personal style of disfigured portrayal of characters in his painting as a nod to the beauty of imperfection. Just like the theme of exhibition that thrives on random storytelling by the artist.

Buckle up and enjoy this unadulterated fun.

## HIGHLIGHTED ISSUES AND PHENOMENON

'MH370 incident' that took place four years ago was more than a national catastrophe whereby costed presumably more than 200 fatalities in an air crash en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing. Undisclosed location of the incident gave birth to many theories since the investigation on the disappearance has yet to come as fruitful as all party would want to. 'Turn Back! It's a Trap!' portrays another view of the missing flight incident through the eye of conspiracy theorist whereby the incident was orchestrated by certain secret organization.

'**Makanan Bintang Lima, Harga Kaki Lima**' is the artist's critical view on misplaced value on education. The painting portrays an astronaut figure preparing local dish, 'satay' while being surrounded by other objects like launching rockets blazing through the sky and scattered sea urchin scattered on the side of the main subject. The disparity of those subjects demonstrate nonsensical expectations of society when it comes to putting value on people and having only education background as a base for their judgment.

Nowadays, access to information is no longer impossible with the help of streaming media of Internet which connect us all globally. Mind invasion as suggested in '**Pendaratan UFO Hitam**' piece by the artist is his thought on disadvantages of the misuse of technology. Not to say that the influence of the western world is bad but neglecting one's own culture by adapting others is something that is considered as long-term poor investment collectively as a nation.

Social media has taken over the need of having a close contact interaction among people in this day and age where most people often resort to having a virtual relationship than a real one which downplays the value of friendship and neighborly love that was once normally practiced. '**Unbroken**' portrays a pair of identical twins with a floating buoy surrounding the two figures which suggests human interaction is in jeopardy. Sink or swim, in the end we are all in this together.

'Bersih' rally is a huge event in Malaysia which seeks for cleaner and more transparent election. '**The Day the Bees Strike Back Its Hive**' portrays a huge portrait being surrounded by bee suggesting a respond by the people towards the higher authority that governs them. The metaphor of using bees attacking its hive is a rare occasion in nature but it symbolizes the power of the people in deciding whoever they wish to appoint as their leader.

Sometime, a personal choice in life is determined based on an observation on those who had gone through that very same path the one before them which is deemed safer. But as for thrill-seeking Nik M Shazmie, he chooses adventure over everything. '**Tiada Jalan Keluar**', or as translated 'No Way Out' is a reflection on his career path as an artist. It is safe to assume that the artist and perhaps his contemporaries would have been inspired by poet Robert Frost, particularly on the 'Road Not Taken' poem on their first read. To be fair, every choice in life has its own obstacles and limitations. However, to venture through a path which not much sampled after is courageous and admirable. Despite the negative connotation the title may project, it can be served as motivation for those who wish to stay committed in whatever thing they do in life.

'**The Crocodile's Lair**' is the artist's take on modern day slavery in fashion industry highlights the celebration of those models/talents from minority group for the hypocrisy of creating diversity in their catalogues. As far as we know, racial problem still exist either locally or internationally despite the false pretense which is portrayed in advertising pages.

Patriotism and national identity has always been a hot topic relatively around the celebration of Independence Day but not on any other normal day. Most people would only unite when their security and safety is being compromised. Sadly, that had happened way back when the whole nation fought against imperialism. Malaysian sees themselves as '**Harimau Malaya**' or Malayan Tiger as a symbol of bravery to commemorate their ancestors. Meanwhile, the artist sees this as parody just like a kid who coined his own nickname.

It is unfortunate to witness many power player in the art industry would prefer opting for making profit over the dead instead of taking a risk in investing on the living emerging talents. '**60 Years of Painting, Truly Paid Off!**' is a satirical way of looking into this matter by the artist. By any mean, people are entitled to his or her decision to make money but in order to ensure growth in the industry, seeds must be planted instead of focusing on reaping benefits from the grown tree.

The catchphrase 'Wolf in sheep clothing' is best suited to '**Setan Berbulu Zebra**' that discusses animal cruelty which is practiced by people. Animals are killed for fur not necessarily utilized for protection against cold weather but in the name of fashion instead. The artist questions the moral of those who supports the industry that engages in the wrongdoing.

## AFTER WILLIAM KENTRIDGE

'**Ribut di Rumah Auction (After William Kentridge's Art in The State Series)**' is sampled after artwork by one of South African's most celebrated artists or as suggested in the title of triptych paintings by Nik M Shazmie. William Kentridge thrives in much discipline including the likes of printmaking, animation film and theatrical play. The trace of dynamism of his charcoal drawn animated films can be seen through Nik M Shazmie's body of work. Unlike William who highlighted the political occurrence in Johannesburg particularly in pertaining to Apartheid and the racial bias rulings by the government at that time, Nik M Shazmie's favorite topic of interest varies and more focus on social commentary on the happenings specifically in Malaysia. To say the artwork does not carry the same serious message as 'Art in the State of Grace, Hope and Siege' by William Kentridge is an understatement despite the obvious visual reference that inspires Nik M Shazmie with his

piece. Similarity can be clearly seen in three main subjects in each of the paintings.

As an emerging artist in a relatively young age local art industry, the piece done by Nik M Shazmie portrayed the cycle of auction house system which allegedly exercises bad business habit. The triptych painting highlights art forgery cases that have affected the auction industry as well as those who are in the fine art world. The figure on the right piece portrays the mind behind the game that controls the game meanwhile the one in the middle piece is the one who instigate, speculate and propagate the misinformation which consequently received by the figure on left piece. The fish on the top signifies the bait that was given got hooked onto the recipient to devour. The face of the middle piece's subject remains hidden to conceal his/her identity. The fan outline on top of it is a metaphor to the role of the propagator. The mastermind figure dons a pirate insignia of hook that can be seen on his right hand and his other eye remains hidden from sight suggesting the antagonistic quality of the subject.



William Kentridge, Art in a State of Grace; Art in a State of Hope; Art in a State of Siege, triptych silkscreen on paper, 1988

## POST-GOD BLESS VEGAN

'Homecoming Dinner in Green' denotes the artist's first hand at installation art displaying a dinner party comprised of three red human-like figures having a seat at a table in the act of feasting on salad green dishes while donning animal prints clothing. The other side of the installation space lays a television that airs tutorial on vegetarian meal prepping videos. According to the artist, the installation is a continuation piece after his painting titled 'God Bless Vegan' back in 2017.

The display serves as a commentary on vegan diet practice which highly favors and focuses exclusively on excluding meat in their diet to denounce animal cruelty. The artist criticizes the misleading trend that has shifted their main goal of going against animal cruelty through diet intake per say which was never the solution in the first place. The artist believes that animal suffering are caused by misconduct in slaughtering method since farm animals are naturally bred for food unlike the mistreatment of certain exotic species which is for other gains.

## THE APPROACH

Nik M Shazmie often uses figurative subjects that may derived or inspired by his everyday life experience which more often than not are turned into caricature to heighten up the humor of the narrative despite the seriousness of the story that the artist wishes to tell. If anything, it shows that the artist is thoughtful, sensitive and observant type of person. He takes into account

every single minute detail that interest or amuses him to be inserted into his story telling.

His flair as a narrator can be seen through his choices of supplementary subjects that may appear nonsensical visually but makes complete sense as the story unfolds. Allegory and symbol is an interactive medium preferred by the artist or as practiced in Malay etiquette by the elders through 'reading between the lines' conversation. The visual portrayed throughout his current body of work are an ode to his dedication in the development of his artistry in presenting ideas.

One of the earliest forms deemed recognizable as his style was a tribute to the artist who are before him, Lampu Kansanoh as an example. All figures are realistically painted with an exception of an overblown head. Hence, answers the artist leniency on projecting humorous vibe through the earlier work. Fast forward to today, Shazmie has gone through a few phases of evolution as far as his style and career goes. The traces of his exploration can be tracked down to the year of 2015 whereby the artist has gone through the phase of understanding his figurative subject through dissection and disintegration. The decluttering of his subject was perhaps an homage to the great master Pablo Picasso.

## CONCLUSION

Despite the randomness of stories each painting hold, Nik M Shazmie has managed to articulate his narrative in a complete body of work. The experience of viewing the artworks piece by piece has given an insight to the artist's view on the world as far as his train of thought goes. Personally speaking, it almost feels like stepping into a carnival which is filled with wonderful and exciting rides during my process of indulging what has been presented by the artist. If anything, it shows that the artist is very versatile in presentation.

What can be deduced from all of this is a hope that the audience could somehow open up their creative eyes and sees the world differently. Perhaps not necessarily just in an amusing way per say but also positively.

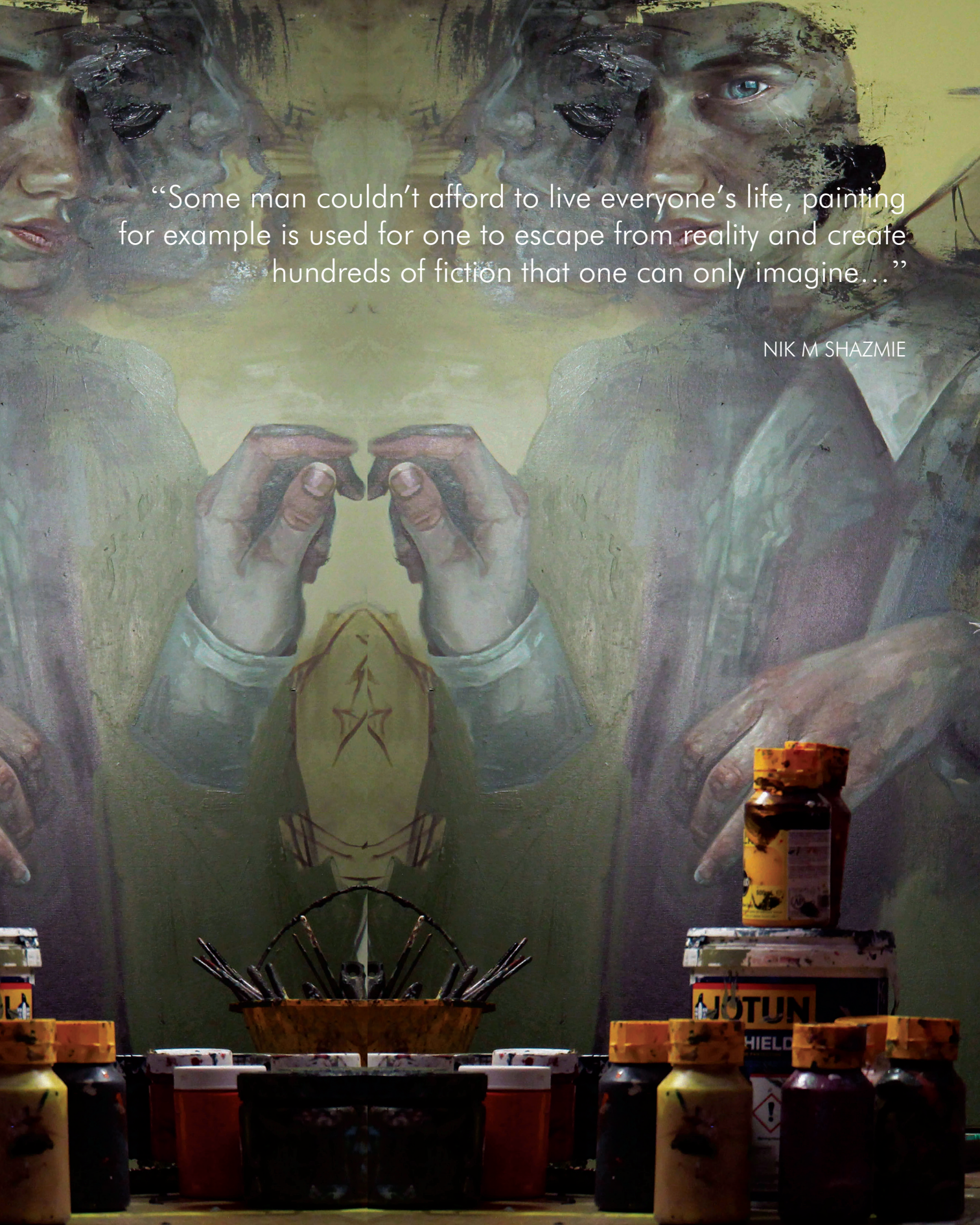
Wake up and smell the coffee.

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Nik M Shazmie is an aspiring artist from Tanah Merah, Kelantan. The artist is one third of the commercially known 'Nik Brothers' or 'Nik Trio' which is comprised of him and his, elder, Nik Mohd Hazri and younger brother, Nik Mohd Shahfiz who are also a collective of fine artists.

Graduated from Universiti Teknologi Mara and has been actively pursuing his passion in artmaking ever since the artist has finished schooling. One of his breakthrough performance in the industry when he was named the grand prize winner of 'Nando's Peri-fy Your Art' annual competition back in 2014 which later on granted a winner showcase exhibition for the artist. The artist also won prestigious UOB Painting of the Year Established Category Gold Award a year later. Nik M Shazmie now resides in Rawang.



A painting featuring two mirrored faces, one on the left and one on the right, both with a somber expression. The faces are rendered in a dark, textured style. In the center, two hands are shown holding a small, ornate, golden symbol. The background is a mix of dark and light tones, suggesting a studio or workshop. In the foreground, there are several paint containers, including a large jar of yellow paint, a smaller jar of red paint, and a stack of paint cans, one of which is labeled 'JOTUN'.

“Some man couldn't afford to live everyone's life, painting for example is used for one to escape from reality and create hundreds of fiction that one can only imagine...”

NIK M SHAZMIE











# ARTWORKS





**60 years of painting, truly paid off**

183 x 160 cm | Acrylic and silkscreen on canvas | 2018





**The Day The Bees Strike Back Their Hive**  
183 x 160 cm | Acrylic and silkscreen on canvas | 2018





**The Crocodile's Lair**

183 x 160 cm | Acrylic and oil on canvas | 2018



**Harimau Malaya**

183 x 160 cm | Acrylic and oil on canvas | 2018





**Setan berbulu Zebra**

183 x 160 cm | Acrylic, oil and silkscreen on canvas | 2018







**Tiada Jalan Keluar**

183 x 160 cm | Acrylic on canvas | 2018





**Turn Back ! It's a Trap**

183 x 160 cm | Acrylic and silkscreen on canvas | 2018





**Unbroken**

183 x 160 cm | Acrylic and paste on canvas | 2018





**Makanan Bintang Lima, Harga Kaki Lima**  
183 x 160 cm | Acrylic and silkscreen on canvas | 2018





**Pendaratan UFO Hitam**

245 x 160 cm | Acrylic and linocut on canvas | 2018











**Ribut di Rumah Auction ( After William Kentridge's Art I n The State Series)**

245 x 480 cm (Triptych) | Acrylic and stencil on canvas | 2018









**'Homecoming Dinner in Green'**

Variable Dimensions | Polyester resin figure, lightings, printed animal fabrics, wooden table, videos, organic materials and found objects | 2018







**'Homecoming Dinner in Green' ( Close up)**

Variable Dimensions | Polyester resin figure, lightings, printed animal fabrics, wooden table, videos, organic materials and found objects | 2018



**NIK M SHAZMIE**





Born 1991, Kuala Krai Kelantan, Malaysia

#### EDUCATION

- 2014 Bachelor (Hons) in Fine Art, Faculty of Art & Design, Universiti Teknologi MARA (Seri Iskandar), Perak, Malaysia
- 2012 Diploma in Fine Art, Faculty of Art & Design Universiti Teknologi MARA (Machang), Kelantan, Malaysia

#### SOLO EXHIBITION

- 2018 Face Fiction, G13 gallery, Malaysia
- 2015 Home Sweet Home Exhibition, Nando's (Winner Solo Exhibition), Malaysia

#### INTERNATIONAL SHOW/ART FAIRS

- 2017 Art Kaohsiung with G13 Gallery, Malaysia  
Art Expo Malaysia Plus 2017 with G13 Gallery, Malaysia  
Tranquility in Clamour with The Gallery, Shanghai, China  
Singapore Contemporary with Artemis Art Gallery, Singapore
- 2016 Art Kaohsiung 2016 with G13 Gallery, Taiwan  
Art Expo Malaysia Plus 2016 with G13 Gallery, Malaysia
- 2015 Art Kaohsiung Fair with G13 Gallery, Taiwan  
Art Expo with G13 Gallery, Malaysia

#### SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2018 Homecoming, Artemis Gallery, Publika, Malaysia
- 2017 Figure in a Room, The F Klub, Malaysia  
Bintang 5, Volume 1, Segaris Art Centre, Malaysia  
SENSATION, Segaris Art Centre, Malaysia  
Transit A1, MARS, Malaysia  
Artemis Art's 5th Anniversary Exhibition, Artemis Gallery, Malaysia
- 2016 Presence with Artemis Gallery, Malaysia  
Processus, Galeri Chandan, Publika, Malaysia  
A2 Transit, Hom Art Trans, Malaysia  
Youngsters, Hom Art Trans, Malaysia  
#Wearegen-Y, G13 Gallery, Malaysia
- 2015 Configuration: The Celebration of Human, G13 Gallery, Malaysia  
Art Trio: The Nik Brothers, G13 Gallery, Malaysia  
MERU Art Exhibition, Segaris Art Centre, Malaysia
- 2014 National Petron Art Exhibition, National Art

Gallery, Malaysia

- Penang Open Show "Hitam Putih", Penang, Malaysia
- 2013 M50 – Shades Of Malaysia, Artemis Gallery, Malaysia  
CARBON Group Exhibition, Artemis Art Publika, Malaysia  
Pameran Nando's Perify Your Art – Diversity, Malaysia  
Pameran Citra Terengganu (Karya Siap) Potret Terengganu, Malaysia  
Pameran IMCAT Tourism – Futurism, Malaysia  
Open Art Exhibition; 6' x 6' at MATIC, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
Pameran Poster 'Drugs Awareness' UiTM Perak, Malaysia
- 2012 Pameran Bank Negara Malaysia

#### AWARDS

- 2015 GOLD AWARD, UOB Painting of the Year 2015, CURATE, Malaysia
- 2014 Grand Prize Winner, National Petron Art Competition 'Promise', Malaysia  
Grand Prize Winner, NANDO'S Perify Your Art – Alive, Malaysia  
Gold Medal, IIDEX Malaysia, UiTM Shah Alam, Malaysia  
Consolation, Black & White: Penang Open Show, Malaysia  
JPA Best Scholars Awards, JPA Malaysia  
UiTM Best Graduate Awards, UiTM Perak Malaysia  
Vice Chancellors Award, UiTM Perak, Malaysia
- 2013 Grand Prize, NANDO'S Perify Your Art – Diversity, Malaysia  
Gold Medal, 3rd National Invention Innovation Design, UiTM Perak, Malaysia  
3rd Prize, Pertandingan IMCAT – Tourism Malaysia (Futurism), Malaysia  
Consolation Prize, Citra Terengganu – Potret Terengganu, Malaysia  
1st Prize, Pertandingan Melukis Poster Unit Kesihatan UiTM Perak, Malaysia



**About G13 Gallery:**

G13 Gallery identifies and collaborates with the artists that show potential, relevance, and depth in their works. The gallery aspires to develop synergy between artists domestically and internationally, and it achieves this through cross-border collaborations, residences, and exhibitions.

G13 Gallery aims to realize a greater appreciation for Asian art, has been actively participating in multiple regional art fairs over the past few years.

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