



artcommune  
gallery

231 Bain Street Bras Basah Complex #03-39 Singapore 180231 | +65 6336 4240 | +65 9747 9046  
www.artcommune.com.sg | UEN 200909244C

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 2 AUGUST 2018**

## **Visions of Sojourns: Paintings of Ong Kim Seng**

artcommune gallery is pleased to announce **Mr. Ong Kim Seng's upcoming exhibition at The Arts House, titled, *Visions of Sojourns: Paintings of Ong Kim Seng***. Featuring around 25 works completed by the watercolour maestro between 2009 - 2018, the exhibition is on view daily from **25 August to 2 September 2018**.

Mr. Ong Kim Seng has recently been named as the **Top 25 Watercolour Artists in the World** during the Watercolour Festival in Greece in November 2017. This exhibition celebrates his latest achievement and showcases to the public a selection of work that reflects his journeys across Singapore and other parts of the world to capture architecture and landscapes at their unvarnished best. **The exhibition will be officially opened on Saturday, 25 August 2018, 3 – 4pm, at Gallery One of The Arts House. Mr. Melvin Poh, Founder and Managing Director of Fission Property Group, will officiate as the Guest-of-Honour. In conjunction with the exhibition, a new catalogue sharing the same title as the exhibition will also be launched during the opening.** Admission to the exhibition and its opening event is free and open to all.

In addition to an enthralling repertoire of Singapore scenes and travel landscapes, the exhibition features paintings done during the artist's overseas workshops and from rare projects undertaken earlier in his career. This includes a painting of Horsburg Lighthouse on the island of Pedra Branca (Mr. Ong has so far painted all the lighthouses belonging to Singapore, including the one on Pulau Pisang in the Straits of Malacca), and a painting of 38 Oxley Road (House of Mr. Lee Kuan Yew), which was among the paintings completed in 2017 when he was commissioned by the late Minister Mentor's family to paint 38 Oxley Road.

Mr. Ong's paintings in the California watercolour style require special mention in this exhibition. The California style of watercolour painting had emerged from American artists from the West Coast in the mid-1920s to mid-1950s, and is recognised as a distinct American watercolour style that permeated the global arts scene. With the application of a hyper-stylised colour scheme and strategic juxtapositions of warm and cool colours, these works are striking in their re-imagination of familiar scenes yet are sensitively rendered, representing the artist's quest in enriching his visual vocabulary over the years.

Experimenting with the California watercolour style since 1975, Mr. Ong explains, "When I was younger, I was a little apprehensive painting the California style with the Sunday Group which included Lim Cheng Hoe. This style sort of veered against the British transparent watercolour style, which was the norm in the 1970s. So I often painted alone when I wanted to explore it." His practice of sketching out a scene *en plein air*, then returning to his studio to devise a re-imagined palette in the California style is an intellectual exercise in and of itself, a fresh challenge in which the artist relishes.



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### About The Artist

Mr. Ong Kim Seng (b. 1945, Singapore – ), *BBM. A.W.S. DF. N.W.S* stands today as one of the most highly-acclaimed watercolour artists in Asia. A full-time artist since 1985, Mr. Ong was awarded the Cultural Medallion in Visual Arts by the Republic of Singapore in 1990 and is a recipient of 8 awards from the prestigious American Watercolour Society (AWS). In 1990, he became the first Asian outside of the U.S. to be awarded the AWS membership. He was conferred the distinguished Dolphin Fellowship by the Society in 2000.

Displaying fluid strokes and excellent attention to detail, Mr. Ong's watercolour paintings are remarkable for their lyrical expressiveness and poetic charms. Mr. Ong Kim Seng's paintings have been featured in numerous exhibitions around the world, including Singapore Art Museum, Agung Rai Museum and Neka Museum (Bali, Indonesia), and in other foreign missions and embassies of the Republic of Singapore. The watercolour maestro also counts Queen Elizabeth II of England, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of China, President of the Republic of Korea, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand, President of the Republic of the Philippines, Prime Minister of Japan, Prime Minister of India, the Governor of Hokkaido, and the Secretary-General of the United Nations amongst the long list of royal figures and luminaries who have come to be collectors of his artworks.

Mr. Ong has been an Art Advisor to the National Arts Council since 1998 and is a life Fellow of the National University of Singapore's Centre of the Arts. He previously served as the President of the Singapore Watercolour Society from 1991 to 2001 and is currently their Honorary President. The artist's most recent appointment was as Chief Judge for the International Watercolour Exposition held in China, among an international panel of judges from China, USA, Australia, Uruguay, Russia, France and Sweden.

### Official Exhibition Opening

**Date:** 25 August 2018 (Saturday)

**Time:** 3pm – 4pm

By Guest-of-Honour, Mr. Melvin Poh, Founder and Managing Director of Fission Property Group

### Exhibition Period

**Date:** 25 August – 2 September 2018

**Time:** 12pm – 7.30pm daily

**Venue:** The Arts House, Gallery One | 1 Old Parliament Lane, Singapore 179429

### Contact Information

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**Here are some of the images to some of the artworks on exhibit:**



*Street Stalls*, 2018, Watercolour on paper, 53 x 73 cm

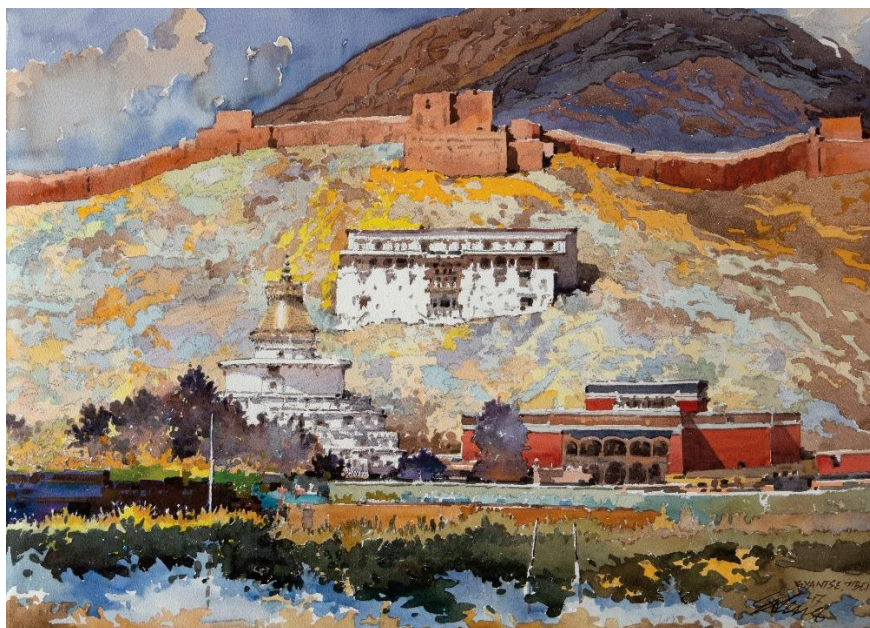


*Festival, Bali*, 2018, Watercolour on paper, 53 x 73 cm



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*Gyantse, Tibet, 2017, Watercolour on paper, 53 x 73 cm*



*New Road, Nepal, 2018, Watercolour on paper, 100 x 120 cm*



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*38 Oxley Road*, 2015, Watercolour on paper, 53 x 74 cm



*Horsburgh Lighthouse (Pedra Branca)*, Watercolour on paper, 53 x 73 cm



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*From JW Marriott, 2018, Watercolour on paper, 67 x 97 cm*