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Virtuosos of Watercolour

Lim Cheng Hoe, Gog Sing Hooi & Ong Kim Seng

This latest exhibition at artcommune gallery features over 20 watercolours by three seminal Singaporean watercolour artists, **Lim Cheng Hoe (1912 - 1979)**, **Gog Sing Hooi (1933 - 1994)** & **Ong Kim Seng (1945 -)**. Lim Cheng Hoe and Gog Sing Hooi were pioneer watercolour artists whose artistic talents and dedication to the medium placed them in mentoring roles amongst younger local watercolorists participating in the Sunday Group during the 1940s - 60s, and eventually helped founded the Singapore Watercolour Society in 1969. The showcase focusses on their works from the period of 1950s - 1980s, allowing an examination of how these two pioneer artists localised aspects of British watercolour style and constantly improvised on techniques of light and shade to better reflect the unique qualities of Singapore landscapes. Ong Kim Seng, a self-taught artist who is today Singapore's top watercolourist and among the most acclaimed watercolourists in Asia, painted with the Sunday Group in his youth and has credited the informal guidance of Lim Cheng Hoe and Gog Sing Hooi in nurturing his early exploration of the medium. The exhibition includes Ong Kim Seng's earlier watercolours from the 1970s - 1980s and his later works from after the 2000s. These works will provide interesting comparisons in techniques and interests to the two aforementioned pioneer artists, and at the same time highlight the notable point of departure as his oeuvre matured over the decades.

Lim Cheng Hoe (1912 - 1979) was a self-taught watercolourist best known for his vibrant, atmospheric renditions of local landscapes in watercolour. He cultivated a strong interest in art during his education at the Raffles Institution and received guidance under Sir Richard Walker, the then Art Superintendent of Singapore Schools. A notable pioneer watercolorist and mentor to younger Singapore watercolourists, he was among the first of Singapore artists to capture the Malayan landscapes in painting. Despite choosing a civil occupation, Lim remained an avid watercolourist and continued to receive art instructions from Walker over the weekends for several years, often embarking on plein-air painting trips with Walker and a few other like-minded colonial artists till the outbreak of the 2nd World War in 1940s. Between the 1940s and 1960s, he led the Sunday Group which included Chen Chong Swee, Chia Wai Hon, T. Y. Choy, Choy Weng Yang, Ong Chye Cho, Thomas Yeo, Gog Sing Hooi, Ong Kim Seng, Loy Chye Chuan and several other artists for Sunday plein-air painting activities at places such as the Singapore River, Chinatown, Merdeka Bridge and Kampongs.

Widely recognised as one of Singapore's most talented pioneer watercolourists, **Gog Sing Hooi (1933 - 1994)** was known for his depictions of Singapore River, street scenes, Chinese temples and shophouses in the transparent watercolour as well as finely detailed ochre-toned style. From 1957 – 62, he studied at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA) while working as a teacher at the same time. Though for practical reasons he chose a career as a teacher and never became a full-time artist, he persisted in his watercolour pursuit and devoted much of his free time to perfecting his techniques. Between the 1950s – 60s, he was an active member of the Sunday Group painters (principally led by Lim Cheng Hoe) and subsequently co-founded the Singapore Watercolour Society in 1969.

Ong Kim Seng (b. 1945 –), *BBM. A.W.S. DF. N.W.S* is Singapore's best watercolour artist and one of the most highly-acclaimed watercolour artists in Asia. A full-time artist since 1985, he 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. Ong Kim Seng's watercolour paintings are remarkable for their atmospheric fluidity and lyrical expressiveness. His 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. His 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.

Exhibition Period

Date: 19 - 28 July 2019

Time: 12pm - 7pm daily

Venue: artcommune gallery (Pls refer to address below)

Contact Information

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Here are the images to some of the exhibits:



Lim Cheng Hoe, *Kampong Scene*, 1955, Watercolour on paper, 38 x 48 cm



Lim Cheng Hoe, *(Untitled) Seaside*, Undated, Watercolour on paper, 29 x 40.5 cm



Lim Cheng Hoe, *(Untitled) Construction Site*, 1955, Watercolour on paper, 38 x 48 cm



Gog Sing Hooi, *River City View*, 1979, Watercolour on paper, 52 x 70 cm



Gog Sing Hooi, *Cleaning up Singapore River*, 1985, Watercolour on paper, 52 x 70.5 cm



Ong Kim Seng, *Old Warehouse (Beside Green Bridge)*, 1978, Watercolour on paper, 52 x 72.5 cm



Ong Kim Seng, *Pekin Road*, 1986, Watercolour on paper, 53 x 73 cm



Ong Kim Seng, *Club Street*, 2014, Watercolour on paper, 53 x 73 cm