



MUCH ADO
ABOUT
DRAWING



CORE
Design Gallery

MUCH ADO ABOUT DRAWING

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About Us

Core Design Gallery is an exclusive boutique art gallery that is committed to promoting and developing Malaysian contemporary artists to achieve international standard and global recognition for their quality artworks.

With its main philosophy of holding major shows of critical value and museum quality, Core Design Gallery aims to create massive awareness on the significance of Malaysian contemporary art through solid art management and important publications.

SCARLETTE LEE CURATOR

Drawing out the Background

The role of drawing changed enormously in the 20th century (Duff & Davies, 2005), with drawing being no longer necessary or sufficient for attainment or acclaim in art school or the art-world. In the recent years, there has been a growing concern within the art ecosystem, which consists of the artists, collectors and academicians, regarding formalistic skills among younger artists. There has been anecdotal evidence indicating a deterioration in drawing abilities as well as an emphasis on them, despite it being one of the most fundamental skills in the practice of art.

The title ***Much Ado About Drawing*** parodies the famous Shakespeare's play. There are two layers to this title. On one hand, it seems to imply that drawing should be a principal skill in a fine art artist - something given, thus there is no need to fuss over it. On the other hand, it seems to suggest that it is perhaps time to pay a little more attention to processes which up until now have been largely ignored, such as thinking and the practice of drawing. It is through *Much Ado about Drawing* that we hope to inspire academia and institutions to look more seriously into the research that will set the stage for future forums, symposiums and supporting exhibitions, promoting in depth exploration of the possibilities of thinking through drawing and its practice with knowledge.

Drawing on the Curatorial Direction

Much Ado About Drawing was not set up with any specific approaches of drawing in mind. Instead of presenting a preconception of how a drawing exhibition should be, artists from different genres of mixed media, painting, ceramic, printmaking, calligraphy and so on, were invited to surprise us with their unique interpretation of the idea of drawing. We've made many interesting discoveries in the final stages of the curatorial process through these interpretations; such as the reason and manner in which the concept of drawing is incorporated into their final artworks. They provide valuable

insights that will be useful for future studies on this subject. This exhibition also prompted a great deal of research into the various theories of drawing, as well as the increasing concern regarding the drawing skills of artists everywhere. As mentioned earlier, this exhibition aims to spark awareness in various institutions and inspire academic forums as well as research to further discuss the importance of drawing within the context of Malaysian contemporary art.

Drawing the Different Theories and Findings

According to research on various drawing theories, I must say I concur with the statement "drawing is impossible to define" due to its rich etymological past. Some theories inquire into observational drawings while others explore drawing in broader views through performative or gestural drawing as well as the interpretation of drawing as visual thinking and situated cognition. One of the earliest and most well-known theories is observational drawing by the renowned art and social critic, John Ruskin. In his book published in 1857, *Elements of Drawing*, he advocates strongly the importance of capturing an observation with the naked eyes as it forces the eyes to capture details. John Berger also used a justification similar to that of John Ruskin (1857), who said "*Drawing... forces the artist to look at the object in front of him, to dissect it in his mind's eye and put it together again.*" (Berger, 2005)

Faizal Suhif is among those who rely greatly on their cognitive recognition and memory in drawing. He immerses himself in his surrounding landscape, observing the tiniest details. In this close observation of things, he develops an appreciation for all his subjects of observation. One example he often quoted when he observes the details surrounding tiny termite mounds, he found the view to be as beautiful as a Chinese ink painting of mountainscape. Using this cognitive skill, he combines his observation and imagination of the landscapes into surreal pieces of drawing. Similarly Husin Othman and Khairul Izhah also manifest their daily observations through



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the drawing of lines via situated cognition where they do drawings from their knowledge and their learning process often revolves around their surroundings, culture or even their social happenings. "A line implies the coming together of two planes, or any two things, or events, so every line is already charged with implication. We may not see the parts, but we can see their relationship within the line they share. the middle of one thing is often the edge of something else." (Moore, 2011) In both artists, the expression of lines seems messy and ambiguous, which allows room for all kinds of interpretation and exploration. Most importantly, it promotes the birth of new ideas, a concept that can be found in Husin Othman's *Random Access Memory*, where smaller imageries connect and intertwine with the bigger representational figures.

Drawing can be interpreted and responded to in many different ways other than observational drawing or even the ones demonstrated by the artists participating in this exhibition. It can be, and is, in fact, about many other things: ideas emerging through the drawing process, the manner in which the intensity of expressions changes the lines and form in drawing, the idea that drawing itself is a performative act or pure experimentation on different mediums.

One of the important aspects of drawing is, according to Fitch, "how ideas emerge through the drawing process". For him, "drawing fleshes out thought" - it is a way of "seeing things that don't exist yet". (Fitch, 2011) *Aku...dalam Mencari Rukun Working Drawings*, the set of 28 drawing sketches on paper by Husin Hourmain is about capturing his thinking process, "First I think and then I draw my think." (Gill, 1940). It was through the act of drawing that thoughts were allowed to manifest, he said and as his hand moved, he became increasingly conscious of those thoughts, which took shape on the canvas. The process was almost like a conversation between the artist and the drawing itself, bringing into consciousness ideas and thoughts not yet given to form. It is through these initial conceptual sketches that Husin Hourmain solidified the idea of his upcoming solo 2018 *Aku... Dalam Mencari Rukun*.

Drawing itself is a performative act, which transfers raw expressions of the mind to the gestural moves of the hands

to mark the surface. "Intensity of feeling can be realized through intensity of form. Actions precede observation, observation precedes reflection, and reflection stimulates imagination, interpretation, and meaning." (Moore, 2011) In the artworks of Haafiz Shahimi, the artist saw a representational figure emerging from the confluence of printed rust lines (he created rusted metal blocks to be printed on the surface of the canvas). The artist then proceeded to go into his unconscious mind to use gestural actions to mark the canvas with fire instead of controlling the way he draws. Subsequently after he sees the image forming from the accidental effects, he then slowly starts to "flesh" out the representational form on the artworks.

In New Zealand, the 2017 premier award for drawing was not one made with pencil, charcoal on paper or any other traditional medium for drawing; it was a carpet cut into straps. Is cutting drawing, or rather, is creating a three-dimensional installation with lines considered a part of drawing? Should drawing be recognised only in its traditional forms? Fauzin Mustafa believes that his drawing abilities have allowed him to form the moulds for his paper mache, which he collages on his canvas, and that even composing them is part of the formalistic aspects of drawing. Mohd Al-Khuzairie Ali too relied on his drawing abilities to form the moulds for his baby ceramic series. The process of drawing on ceramics and then glazing them is itself a challenging drawing exercise. Masnoor Ramli Mahmud also experiments his drawing abilities on an interesting medium like aluminium sheet.

Drawing the Conclusion

Drawing has been traditionally defined as a form of visual art where an artist uses various drawing instruments to mark paper or any other two-dimensional medium. In this Much Ado about Drawing exhibition, there are artists who interpret drawing through applying lines, space, perspective, form and proportion in their two-dimensional artworks. There are also artists who do not create the literal form of drawing but choose instead to express the idea through moulds of a print, ceramic or even the unconventional method of drawing via pyrography burning. The most important finding is that

all the artists involved in this exhibition agree that drawing skill is the most fundamental process for the underlying development of one's artistic and formalistic skills. Yet the ability to think through drawing and practice the skills with knowledge in this contemporary era is what differentiates drawing from being viewed or labelled traditionally as mere "craft" or "skill". Instead drawing can be an intrinsic part of the complex and layered process of making an artwork, where the use of lines and marks on surfaces are ways of constructing ideas and simultaneously works as an avenue of artistic expressions.

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LEE KHAI

COLLECTOR

Drawing is a sophisticated means of thinking and communicating, essential to our existence as intelligent beings. With a history longer than writing and an origin that stretches as far back as the dawn of human civilisation, it remains to this day a fundamental means for the visualisation and development of creative ideas.

Drawing is the primary visual language, essential for communication and expression. Images transcend the barriers of language, and enhance the communication and interaction of communities and individuals in a globalised world.

Drawing is pivotal to the work of artists, animators, designers, architects and those in the performance and the communication industries. It is widely used in many fields and professions to explore, develop, plan, explain, and document.

Drawing is the foundational skill of artistic practise. Most if not all textbooks on the fundamentals of art invariably start with a discourse on 'form', the elements of which include

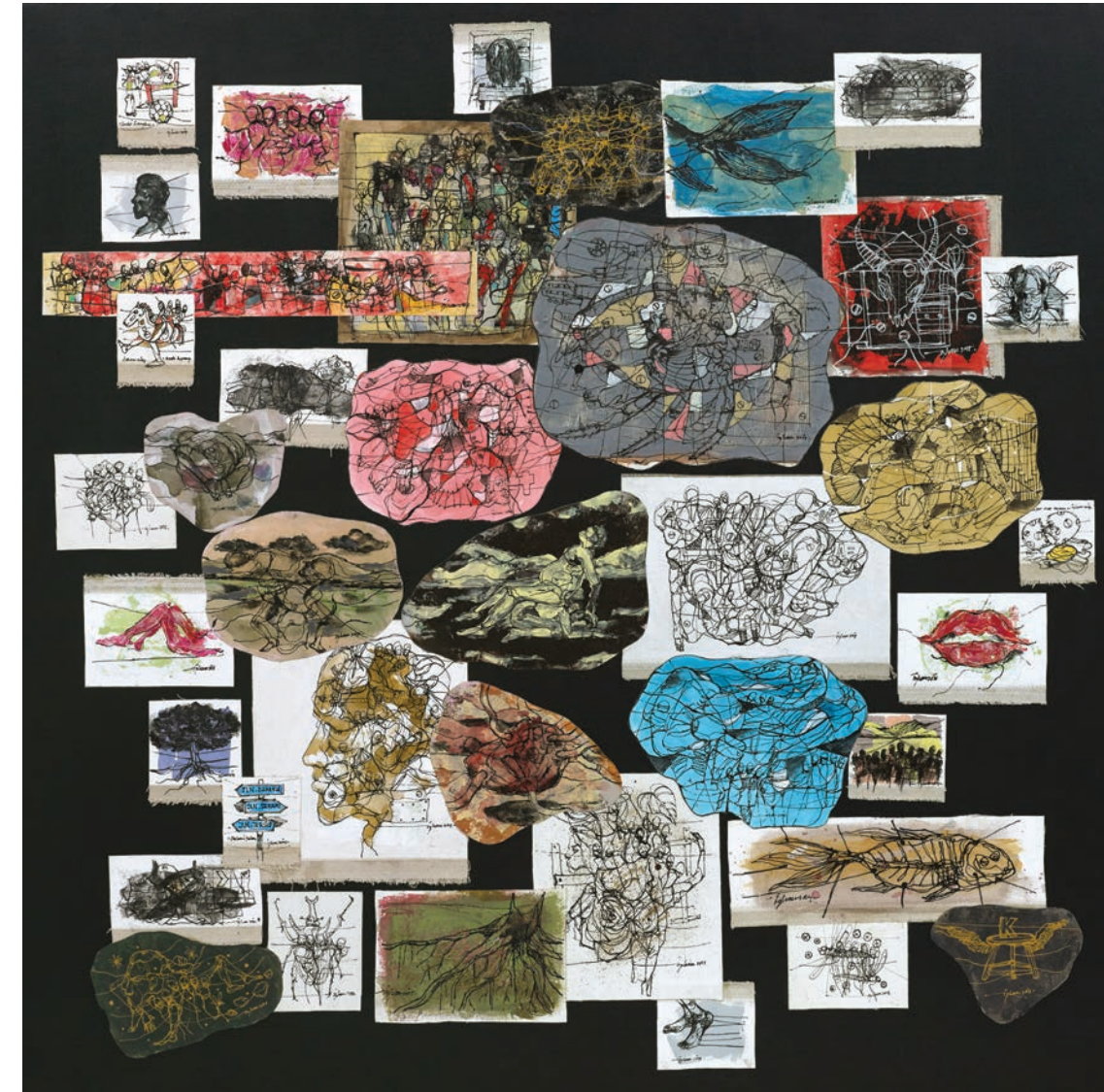
line, shape, value, texture and colour. Line and shape, essentially, give form to 'drawing'.

Drawing is a touchstone of creative activities, the cornerstone of fine art.

As I see it, drawing requires discipline and perseverance, which are rare traits in this day and age. The importance of drawing in art has been, unfortunately, eroded by postmodernism i.e. the world of contemporary art we are in. In the name of pluralism and diversity, the adage of postmodernism is 'anything goes' and 'no one can say I am wrong', which in my opinion was what ultimately deteriorated the emphasis on drawing in fine art.

I am most glad that Core Design Gallery has chosen 'Much Ado About Drawing' as the title of this exhibition, bringing together ten contemporary artists who are strong in the fundamental skill of drawing. But above all, I am pleased to see this age-old craft alive and well in these ten artists.

Enjoy this fabulous show!



Khairul Izham
Self Portrait
Mixed Media on Canvas
153cm x 153cm
2017

KHAIRUL IZHAM

Self Portrait

Of all the artworks present, Khairul Izhah's *Self Portrait* proves to be the most instinctive work of the show...adopting a more brute approach towards the overall concept of the show. *Self Portrait* is a clear and unadulterated response of the artist towards the basic essence of drawing.

Never before seen, this artwork clearly mirrors the many faces of the artist Khairul Izhah, a clear contrast from the Khairul Izhah that we know today. A detailed compilation of his sketches and study works from 2013 to 2017, *Self Portrait* belies not only the many studies of the artist but also of his life's journey through the years.

Composed, the artist quietly shares his mixed feelings of belonging for the urban and village life. Fishes and flowers make their appearance through the artwork, unveiling an earnest yearning for the peace and tranquillity of Mother Nature. Now settled down in the urban city of Selangor, the artist curiously shares his fond memories of insects that is depicted within his work. Sketches of insects belie his earlier days when he had just moved into the studio that he is currently working out from. Then feeling out-of-place and lonesome, these insects were his companions through the nights while at work on his art. Portraying a worrying time, a clear sketch of the human heart makes an appearance within the work as the artist shares the trying time when his brother was afflicted with heart problems.

In essence, *Self Portrait* is compilation of his sketches that are his studies and experimental platform for his many artworks. It does not form the basis of any particular artwork but portrays the multi-facets and talents of Khairul Izhah never seen before as he unveils his texture and figurative studies. *Self Portrait* is a clear testament to the fine drawing skills of the artist and his earnest commitment to bring his art to the next level. The artwork takes on a more personal note as it bears the life journey of Khairul Izhah as a man, genuinely unveiling his emotions and yearnings that thoroughly adds to the significance and rarity of this artwork.

...observational drawing

Undoubtedly, drawing is an essential element to my art. Drawing is crucial as it helps with experimenting with new ideas, understanding of space and depth and guiding the composition of an artwork. In raw terms, drawing is a scratch and/or engraving on surface. For me, my drawings are an emotional expression of myself on paper. While it is not commonplace for me to have sketches before the execution of my final painting or artwork, the act of drawing remains vital to me as it works as the base of generating ideas and are records of my artistic and creative expressions.

Capsule

Yet again, artist Khairul Izhah showcases another of his artistic flair as he presents his abstraction within this latest artwork titled *Capsule*. While adopting a literal approach to the show's concept, Khairul composes his abstract background sketches in a highly minimalistic setting.

Simply defined as a small case or container that is particularly cylindrical in nature, the word 'capsule' is versatile where it may be adopted for various purposes be it as a non-organic object, for biological or even botanical means. Thus *Capsule* is a befitting title for this latest work as the canvas encapsulates Khairul's abstraction strokes, duly transforming the sketches into a timeless wonder...of anything and of everything.

Capsule further attests to Khairul's artistic skills. The composition of the overall artwork or even a single sketch on a piecemeal basis exudes his masterful play with space and colours. The white space and monochromatic colours when composed together grants a landscape of many possibilities, perhaps suggestive of a simple wintry landscape, of the banks of the sea set against a mountainous landscape and perhaps even suggestive of life's ups and downs.

Simply for the artist, he merely envisions a quiet mountainous landscape within *Capsule* as he quietly yearns for the nature surroundings back in his kampung.

Khairul Izhah

Capsule

Acrylic on Canvas

41cm x 213cm

2017



FAIZAL SUHIF

Di Hadapan Bukit...

Faizal Suhif is a Malaysian contemporary artist that deals in the fine art of printmaking. *Di Hadapan Bukit...* essentially embraces the essence of fragility in its entirety. Coming from a farming family, Faizal has always had a profound love for the lands. As such, it comes as no surprise when Faizal maintains his working studio in Ulu Langat. While still largely untouched, sights of development and encroachment into the lands within Ulu Langat are on a gradual rise. Faizal speaks to the wonder of 100-year-old trees in the area and the anguish as these age-old trees make way for urban development.

Measuring 4.5 feet by 4.5 feet, *Di Hadapan Bukit...* is an abstract landscape rendition by Faizal of this global concern for urban development. Employing charcoal and oils, he further manipulates these mediums to mould the hilly landscape. A sheet of breezy canvas takes form, enshrouding the landscape in black, so akin to the canvas sheets strewn across many tiers of newly cleared lands to prevent erosions and landslides. A cave takes shape in the centrepiece of the work, darkened in its walls of anguish. Amidst the anguished wails that Faizal observes, he is beckoned to question...should we destruct or construct?

Faizal clearly affirms his skills in drawing as he is able to mould the hilly landscape to life with his ease. However it is critical to consider that exceptional drawing skills is a key underlying pre-requisite for any printmaking artist. In order for the effective execution of printmaking work, one needs to plan extensively which would require considerable amount of sketches prior to execution. Thus drawing proves to be the core underlying element that precedes the art of printmaking and even prior to the same, will require continuous drawing to understand the forms and effects that their prints may evolve to become.

...drawing as situated cognition

As a printmaker, I cannot stress more again and again that drawing is crucial in everything I do. Drawing is crucial as it involves the development and enhancement of our psychomotor skills which is crucial for our everyday life. Consequently it further aids in the execution of the various printmaking techniques that I employ. In support of the beginnings of my printmaking art, drawing provides us the avenue to understand forms and drafting of our creative ideas. Sketches are keen prerequisites for my works, granting me with the opportunity of not only to record my ideas but to develop these ideas further.

Faizal Suhif
Di Hadapan Bukit
Monotype, Oil and
Charcoal on Canvas
138cm x 138cm
2017





A Piece of Land: Dry Season

Onset from 2010, Faizal Suhif has worked on *A Piece of Land: Dry Season*, stemming from his ardent love of Mother Nature and the lands around him. For a period of 7 years, Faizal has continuously worked on this drawing, drawing from his life experience and of the happenings around him. Coming from a farming family, experience with dry seasons is not uncommon.

Time and time again, Faizal places his touch to the work, continually developing his idea further direct on the canvas. As dry twigs and stony crevices come to form, a grasshopper slowly takes shape...camouflaged in its very essence amongst the dry landscape. Small and unsuspecting as a grasshopper may be, its effect and consequences may be detrimental where swarms of grasshoppers or locusts

plague farm fields. History records the Great Famine of Mount Lebanon in 1915 – 1918 as a clear iconic disaster that claimed thousands of lives. Following a time of drought, these tiny insects had swept the lands of Syria devouring the limited food and grains, leaving the country in famine. Unexpected and unpredictable, Faizal ponders on this and urges us to be mindful of our actions and of the little things in life.

Taking inspiration from the renowned Malay proverb "*Udang di sebalik batu*" which translates to "Nothing is as it seems", a lobster takes form within the right panel of the work and poses as a literal symbol for the proverb. Whilst the grasshopper and lobster are two very different creatures of the land and sea respectively, they are not large in size yet may bring about larger-than-life consequences.

Faizal selects these two seemingly harmless creatures as a metaphor for us to consider the Laws of Nature. *A Piece of Land: Dry Season* serves as a stark reminder for us to be grateful for our blessings; that everything and all things in life have a meaning and a role to play.

A Piece of Land: Dry Season firmly attests to Faizal Suhif's exemplary drawing skills, of his deep and thorough understanding of forms and composition. Against the dull pale tones of canvas, he masterfully executes his detailed forms across the diptych. Drawing semblance to the dry fields, he lightly smears blue acrylic across the canvas, suggestive of a land that was once rich in minerals and produce.

Faizal Suhif

A Piece of Land Dry Seasons
Charcoal and Acrylic on Canvas
76cm x 326cm (2 panels)
2010 - 2017

FAUZIN MUSTAFA

White Garden

From his early days, renowned artist Fauzin Mustafa garnered much recognition for his artistic vision namely The Young Contemporaries 1988 award of Malaysia's National Arts Gallery upon his graduation and subsequently a mention within the renowned regional Philip Morris ASEAN Art Awards 1994. As one of the founding members of the notable *Empat Persepsi* art collective that initiated the beginnings of Malaysian mixed media art coupled with the contemporary visionary that he is, it is evidently clear that Fauzin Mustafa is one of the rare pioneers of Malaysia's mixed media art movement.

Fauzin's artworks are a clear epitome of the grass roots of the Malaysian native identity. He actively employs symbolism and leaf iconography within his earlier works, clearly celebrating nature's sovereignty. From his recent highly-successful solo *Life Between the Dots* early this year, the series within the mentioned solo attests to his artistic and highly contemporary vision that appeals to people of different generations then and now.

Inspired by a recent family visit to the cemetery to pay respects to a loved one, Fauzin was captivated by the serenity of the surroundings and the lush shrubs of Jasmine flowers blooming wild in abundance. Looking down at the field of tombstones, he wonders one from another the significance of each life, of what happened leading to their death, of what lies after death.

In this newly developed series *Siri Bunga Putih Di Pusara*, *White Garden* proves to be the first artwork of this series. Adopting the Jasmine flower as the main motif for this work, Fauzin develops a fresh mould for his prints, employing a fitting choice of untainted colour of white in a bid to further extend the work with a sense of innocence while paying respectful homage.

White Garden is a clear articulation of mixed media drawing.

For Fauzin, drawing lies as an essential element within his professional practise. And through this work, the elements of drawing are reinforced time and again extensively across the canvas. Fauzin begins his artistic process with a detailed sketch of the fondly known '*bunga melor putih*' or otherwise known as the Jasmine flower.

While lines and brushstrokes build up to a drawing and painting respectively, Fauzin applies his prints and gauzes across the canvas to draw the imagery that he desires, so akin to the role of pencil or brush. Consequently *White Garden* is a further attestation to Fauzin's exceptional drawing skills. Two minutely raw drawing of the flower bears striking resemblance to the flower prints while the central focus paints a larger sized Jasmine flower of accurate proportions, duly affirming the artist's keen observation and understanding of his subject matters.

The favoured Jasmine flower is appreciated across the global for its purity and simplicity. Standing as a national flower for various countries namely Hawaii, Thailand and Indonesia amongst others, its significant role is unquestionable where its functionality carries across cultures, acting as a key role player within religious rituals and even as a preferred choice for tea-lovers around the world. A flower of diversity and intricacies, Fauzin utilises the Jasmine flower as a metaphor of choice within the calming *White Garden* work. Capturing a plentiful array of flowers across the canvas, it symbolises the deeds in the life of a being.

Our lives are a makeup of a long line of achievements and failures, of promising ventures and culpable mishaps. As life is all about choices, the artist bids us to consider our daily actions and of what that we may bring to the afterlife. While afterlife is not certain and remains an arguable topic, various cultures and religions around the globe speak to it. Ancient Egyptian civilisation firmly believes in the matter of afterlife and rigorously maintained strong rituals surrounding the death of a person in preparation for the

deceased's afterlife. Christians and Muslims broach on the matter of life in heaven and hell after death while Buddhists contemplate on reincarnation. In essence, they speak of a certain consciousness within a being...that there still lies an awakening within a being free of its bodily form. In lieu of this consciousness, perhaps it is more important to consider our lives' choices to focus on more non-worldly matters. After all, all the money in the world cannot be brought to the afterlife but it is the consideration of our life experiences, our blessings and achievements that may enrich our awakening in preparation for the thereafter.

In the signature trademark of Fauzin Mustafa, the gold dots make their appearance within *White Garden*. Dots of gold, a colour viewed widely as a 'pure' colour, are sparsely spread out across the canvas, duly suggestive of the experiences and learnings that may be adopted for our life thereafter. With this in mind, *White Garden* in all its purity and innocence subtly presents itself as a memorial tribute to the those that have passed on and serves as a living reminder to consider our spiritual pursuits as opposed to the mere worldly desires that are short-lived in nature.

...mixed media drawing

Drawing, as a basic element to the artistic process, can be in many forms. Within my practise, drawing is a daily affair and remains the very starting point for every work of mine. To draw incessantly is not only to develop one's skill further. However it is through drawing where one may develop a creative idea and execute the concept for the artwork. Through a simple drawing of sketch, it allows one to detect any anomalies or distortions within the work prior to the final execution of the work. Therefore it allows us to understand the forms, proportions and depths of the subject matter. On the onset of every successful artwork or artistic practise, it is first and foremost to maintain a precise understanding of forms, proportions and depths.

Fauzin Mustafa
White Garden
Mixed Media Drawing on Canvas
120cm x 183cm
2017



HAAFIZ SHAHIMI

The Holy Descendants and Lust for Eden

As apparent as it can be, artist Haafiz Shahimi's latest works *The Holy Descendants* and *Lust for Eden* are unmistakably the most destructive pieces within the show. Crafted with fire, *The Holy Descendants* and *Lust for Eden* carry illuminating images set against a seemingly age-old scroll paper.

A printmaking artist by profession, the core concept and practise of Haafiz Shahimi is that he draws with fire. In his first ever solo *RAGE – Raising Awareness towards Greater Existence* 2014, he introduced perhaps the first ever pyrography printmaking technique to the world. Not an artist that is stalwart and satisfied with his art, the young artist continues to develop, innovating new techniques to produce his artworks. During the X Canvas show end 2015, Haafiz ended the year presenting *The Reminder: A Sign from Destruction* where he introduced this first-ever work made from play of chemicals and rust. Simultaneously during these years, he experimented with various art techniques, essentially developed his 90-degree inverted burn technique that primarily syncs with the very core of Haafiz Shahimi as he torches his canvases on fire and manipulates the fire to draw the imagery of choice to life.

Following from the recent ground-breaking show *Faizal v Haafiz: Dawn of Extended Printmaking*, Haafiz Shahimi first delved into the beginnings of mankind. From the show, *Remember Our First Sin* was the first-ever collaborative work between the two artists (Faizal Suhif and Haafiz Shahimi) and stood as the main centrepiece of the said show. The mentioned work seeks to mark the beginnings of Adam and Eve and the corresponding fall of man upon succumbing to the temptation of the forbidden fruit.

A staunch Muslim, the young artist follows his religious studies closely revolving around the teachings of the many Prophets from the Quran, namely Prophet Muhammad, Prophet Nuh, Prophet Musa, Prophet Adam amongst others. As he delves deeper, he maintains his awe and respect for the holy Prophets for the many helpful teachings that he practices in his daily life. Inspired, Haafiz carves a portrait of the holy descendant of Adam, the first Man created by the Almighty God, from his imagination. With no point of reference, the portraiture is ambiguous, faded...a personal reflection of the artist.

The Holy Descendants and *Lust for Eden* are a culmination of the young artist's one-of-a-kind signature artmaking techniques; pyrography printmaking, 90-degree inverted burning and chemical wash technique all in one single artwork. The artworks are treated with chemical wash to produce the rusted fossilised effect on the jute canvas, suggesting a time since the beginning of Man. To create the portrait image, Haafiz douses the canvas with petrol and lights it on fire, consequently controlling the fire to draw the portrait.

To complete the composition of the said artwork, Haafiz introduces his first-ever leaves print as he stamps his pyrography print of leaves across the canvas. The choice of leaves and earthy tones of the jute canvas were an obvious match, hinting on the natural background surrounding Adam at a time when God created Man from the earth.

Paying homage and tribute to the holy Prophets, *The Holy Descendants* is a firm testament to the drawing skills of young Haafiz Shahimi. His thorough understanding of forms and proportions are due accurate, duly evidenced through

his freehand manipulation of fire to draw the image that he requires.

Illuminated with a minimal touch of white acrylic, *Lust for Eden* comes alive through the realistic imagery drawn by Haafiz's fire. Depicting the moment of Man's fall to temptation, the age-old symbol of evil is reflected vividly through the fanged serpent. As the serpent slithers through the foliage of leaves, *Lust for Eden* calls for caution in our daily lives, be it an evil thought, a single whisper of untruth may bring about destruction of apt proportions, perhaps larger than imaginable.

Akin to Faizal Suhif as a printmaker, Haafiz reinforces the need for the development of psychomotor skills through drawing. Perhaps more so than others, printmaking practitioners requires not only the due creativity and artistic skill but also prioritises on their psychomotor skills. While artists work to further finetune their painterly skills, printmaking artists doubles their effort to plan and multitask to handle their medium of choice and in doing so, continually develop their metacognitive skills to masterly execute, refine and perhaps even innovate their techniques further. Haafiz attests to this with his continual development of the varying art techniques.

Employing a destructive medium such as fire as his principal medium, Haafiz Shahimi destroys to construct works of art. In a minimal span of three years since his solo debut in 2014, the young artist has garnered significant progress within his art, frequently innovating his techniques and art further. Enshrouded in the smoke following the aftermath of his fire burning, hauntingly we are in awe and curious anticipation of what lies ahead for his art...

...drawing with fire

Drawing is not meant for merely visual arts. It is applicable to everyone, used as a common form of communication. For artists, it may be to record a creative idea but for the layman, it may be used to record an event. Drawing lies as a process to communicate and transfer a single life experience through the use of a medium be it charcoal, paint or in this case, fire.

For me, drawing is an important element as to continually develop my psychomotor skills. It allows me to draw up my memories and prepares the mind for the execution of my physical artwork. As an artist practicing the art of printmaking, it is an art that requires tedious planning and more so, when I deal with the direct burning of fire on canvas. Too much fire causes the canvas to be beyond repair. For my art, it is always essential to start with a simplistic sketch followed by a test print. It is only when I am satisfied with the effects and results of the test print, do I execute the work physically.

Drawing to me is a record and mark of experiences. Whenever I can, I would go for a motorbike ride through the woods. While on my rides, I am always keenly interested in exploring unmarked and uncharted terrain through the woods. Often said that this marks the label of a true rider, my choice of profession as an artist was one of a natural progression as it is the challenges and obstacles surrounding the production and development of my art that consistently motivates me to leave my mark on paths where none has gone before.



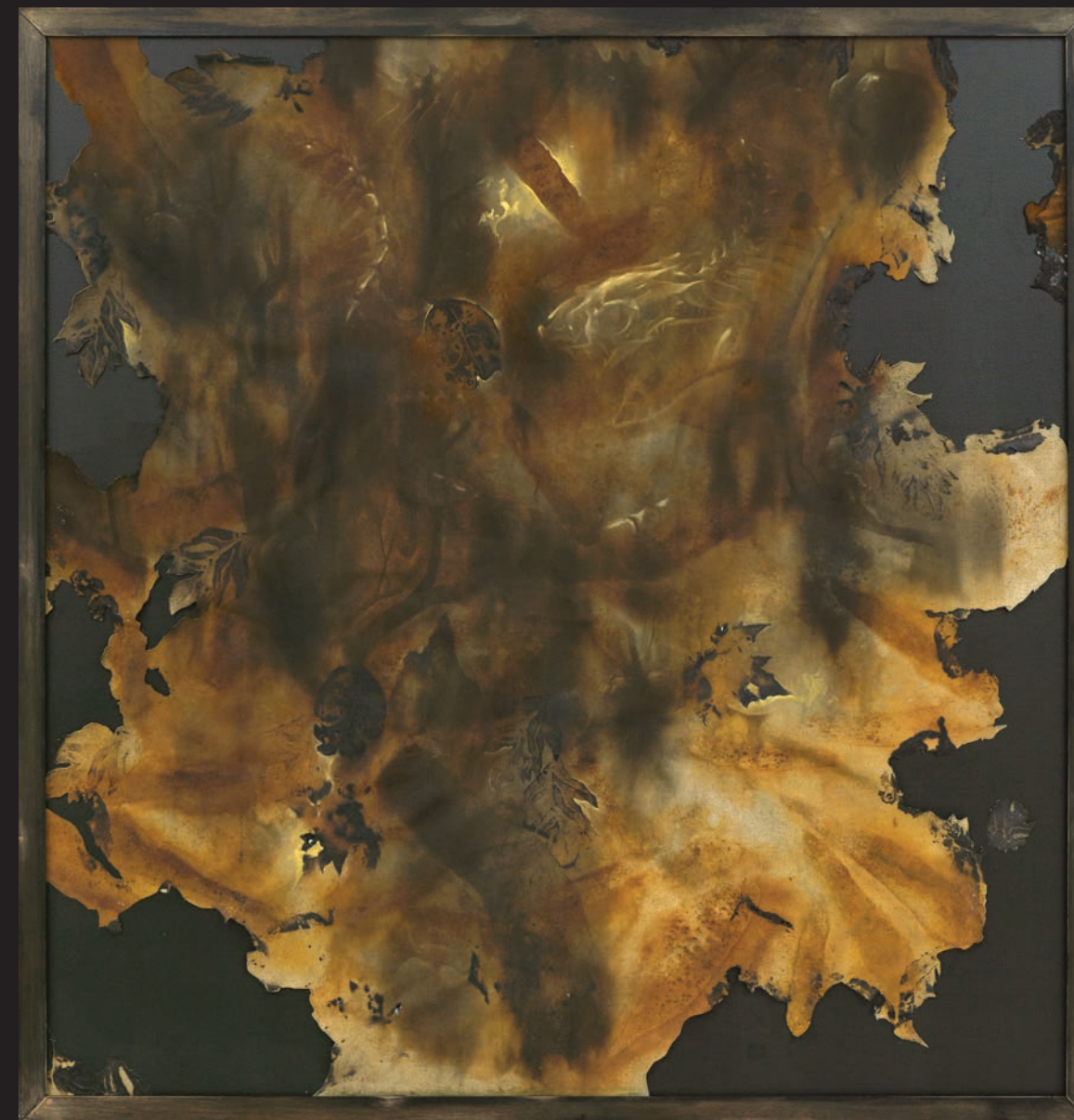
Haafiz Shahimi

The Holy Descendents

Pyrography Print, 90-degree Inverted
Burn, Rusted Chemical Wash and
Acrylic on Jute finished with 2K Gloss
Paint

180cm x 174cm (with frame)

2017



Haafiz Shahimi

Lust for Eden

Pyrography Print, 90-degree Inverted Burn, Rusted
Chemical Wash and Acrylic on Jute finished with 2K
Gloss Paint

180cm x 174cm (with frame)

2017

HASLIN ISMAIL

Dark Souls

Dark Souls is seemingly the starkest raw work of the exhibition. At the turn of entering the gallery's lobby, brusque figures creep about at the corner of one's eyes. Recognisably of human form, the beings are peculiar in form yet unique from each other. Nevertheless, the beings carry a sense of uniformity in their forms through the brown tones and its bodily makeup. *Dark Souls* is Haslin Ismail's representation of our future...of perhaps the artificial intelligence that would make up our world of tomorrow.

Dark Souls is a work on a more personal tone for Haslin. His self-portrait of sorts, Haslin speaks to the impending growth and reliance that we place on technology. In our current technological era, technology takes on an important stance within our society. While technology has granted us with much convenience...where the internet has provided us with readily available information, the vast web of technology too hints on the negative sides of the coin; of growing scams and digital crime.

Imagining a time post apocalypse, Haslin ponders on the ways of the world in such a time. Metaphorically, the artificial intelligence forms within *Dark Souls* are reflective of his emotions, his worry...of the many sides of Haslin Ismail. A young father of two, he carves a looming dark figure in the background duly denoting the fear that resides within him for the uncertain future of his family, a sense of fear that resides in every one of us...a natural sense of fear that resides in any father for the wellbeing of their children.

Primarily working with mixed media, *Dark Souls* is Haslin's answer to the overall drawing concept of the show. The artwork represents his individualistic mark-marking – a raw mixed media drawing on paper where we are privy to his intricately detailed drawings, achieved through his freehand application of the ink pen. Concurrently, Haslin further expresses his mark through an alternate form of media; his renowned paper-cutting skills to draw the imagery

of choice. Curious and studious, Haslin is an artist that is always interested in new ways and techniques for his art. In the essence of drawing, *Dark Souls* stands as his learning process as he works to refine his paper-based works and due experimentation with carbon powder.

As brut-looking as it may be, *Dark Souls* relates to every one of us, be it of the growing threat of technology or of the many faces of one self. There lies a dark side within us...of whether the dark side is being managed appropriately or unleashed. For Haslin, the many pieces of forms are afloat throughout the canvas, coming together as a complete form...alluding to a new beginning...the beginnings that is impending in his upcoming show *Selfies: A Mixed Media Project* by Haslin Ismail.

...cutting as drawing

The very basic definition to drawing is through mark making... to leave a mark. Drawing is an essential process for me, a process that is present and continual throughout my life, be it whether in preparation for an artwork or a sketch or a mere record of ideas. I draw consistently and incessantly to allow the flow of images on paper and even to sustain the creation of new ideas. Drawing can be achieved through various mediums and simply cannot be defined definitively. My learning process is through drawing; it provides me with an avenue to understand my forms and ideas, to elaborate on my ideas, to draft new forms, to foresee problems and develop my solutions around it.

Haslin Ismail

Dark Souls
Acrylic, Carbon Powder, Ink, Paper
Cutting and Collage on Paper on
Wooden Board
128cm x 107cm
2017





The Irregular Anatomist

The Irregular Anatomist represents an alternate form of drawing by Haslin Ismail. The human anatomy has frequently been a fascination for the artist from a young age. While the human anatomy is by nature more scientific or biological based, Haslin delves in the human anatomy, learning the forms and structure to precision, utilising it as the base for the progression of his drawing skills. This is a common practise applied by many artists. One key historical figure is Leonardo da Vinci, an exemplary artist that has marked the history of art with his famed *Mona Lisa* which till this day continues to hold its appeal, drawing masses to the walls of The Louvre for a mere viewing of the work. Famed for his art, Leonardo da Vinci is equally widely known for his sketches and drawings of the human anatomy. His anatomical drawings were exceptional for the wealth of detailing contained within as well as the accuracy of its proportions and forms. Coupled with his keen study notes, till this day, the drawings remain a point of reference for many. A renowned work of his would be the iconic *Vitruvian Man* that continues to lend its significance to many artistic references, movies amongst others.

With his intricate understanding of the human anatomy, it comes as no surprise for the select anatomical images as

the base of *The Irregular Anatomist*. Here, he breaks down the human anatomy into pieces and selects his preferred image. He works to cut the pages to carve and draw the form from his mind. Consequently, Haslin applies the principles of construction and deconstruction as the base of his drawing principle, to ultimately build the image onto the canvas.

Adopting the basis of the early 20th century art movement of Cubism, *The Irregular Anatomist* is a clear signature of Haslin's surrealistic imagination. Leaving much to one's imagination, the figures within *The Irregular Anatomist* are organic in nature and seemingly in a metamorphosis cycle. From his regular prolific backgrounds in a wealth of colours, *The Irregular Anatomist* carries a more simplistic background, suggestive of perhaps a turning point within the work of Haslin Ismail.

Through this work, Haslin hints on the endless possibilities of drawing and of one's imagination. Through simple illustration books, one's imagination can be easily triggered and granted with a wealth of ideas. The artist draws this out within *The Irregular Anatomist*, effectively shedding another pointer on the importance of drawing and of understanding the elements behind drawing.

Haslin Ismail

The Irregular Anatomist
Acrylic, Carbon Powder and Paper Collage on Canvas
153cm x 122cm
2017

HUSIN OTHMAN

Three Local Stooges

As in the trademark concept of young artist Husin Othman, he masterfully transports his viewers back in time to a time when local funfairs were the prime hangouts in town...the vibrant colour play of lights and rides where children and adults alike looked forward to go to. *Three Local Stooges* draws on his childhood memories at the local funfair with his siblings.

For young artist Husin Othman, he often paints from his observations of the world around him. Thus far, Husin remains true to his concept as he frequently draws and paints scenes and stories from his childhood. Coming from a large family in the villages of Perak, running wild around his *kampung* with his siblings was a common affair. Now all grownup and faced with the urban realities of life, he wonders where the simple pleasures in life such as a game of *congkak* or a day at the funfair have gone. With this in mind, he works his artistic talent to skilfully marry the times that-once-was in the contemporary manner of today while concurrently marking his mark as a contemporary artist that provides a documentary narrative of the Malaysian society then and now.

In this work, the young artist skilfully works his colour palette with vibrant colours of the funfair and the notably Nusantara hues of the small towns of Malaysia, bringing the colour notch one tone down to masterfully create a nostalgic feel to the overall painting. Set against the bright blue sky, an evident feeling of light-heartedness and fun is clearly projected which is atypical of a fun day at the local funfair in Malaysia.

Husin adds an unexpected comical twist into this work as he paints his three key characters of vastly different personas;

that of a pirate, a policeman and a superhero. Admittedly so, it is highly improbable for such three characters to be mingling together, much less enjoying a carousel ride together. Drawing inspiration from the local Malay proverb "Rambut sama hitam tapi hati lain-lain" which translates to "The hairs are all similarly black but the hearts are not as one", the painting takes on a literal approach as he works to highlight how different each of us are as individuals while we may all have the same black hair.

As one sits back to revel in the painting, one cannot help but recall the days where local travelling funfairs were commonplace. Such funfairs truly brought communities together in a single platform where all the different cultures and facets of society come together to have a day out. In the heydays, our skin colour or stature did not matter...it was all about coming out together, being at peace with our differences to have a simple fun day out.

With the recent historical mark of our 60th Independence day and the upcoming Malaysia day, Husin beckons us in consideration of setting aside our differences albeit our race, colour or religion. Where our multi-cultural society sits together under the one roof of the country we call Malaysia, let's work together in peace and harmony to achieve the vision of Malaysia that we want to attain.

...drawing with lines

Uncontested, drawing is a vital process for the development and articulation to my final work of art. I draw to record my creative ideas and through continuous drawing, it facilitates the execution and composition of my final artwork. Prior to any artwork, it is a common practice for me to sketch my ideas before executing the final work of art.



Husin Othman
Three Local Stooges
Acrylic, Charcoal and Pencil on Canvas
153cm x 138cm
2017

Random Access Memory (RAM)

It is an evident fact that the start of any drawing begins with a line. And thus this is clearly exemplified within Husin Othman's latest work titled *Random Access Memory (RAM)*.

Taking the cue from the renowned Rubik's cube, young Husin Othman arranges his first ever puzzle artwork to life. Contrary to the familiar 3 x 3 panels of the Rubik's cube, Husin captures varying scenes from his memories into the 4 x 4 panelled artwork. In totality measuring at 6ft by 6ft, each panel carries with it a story to tell, of a scene that holds dear to young Husin. Largely unrelated, each scene is randomly presented as a narrative to his life as he paints his schooldays, of his endearing childhood games to the random scene at the kampung hangout to his current ever-familiar night view behind the wheels as he travels back and forth to his hometown where his young family now resides. Depicting the ups and downs in life, an empty bedroom scene comes to light betraying feelings of loneliness while away from home while another panel of warmth and ease.

At the very heart of every Rubik's cube where all panels of the same colour come together, *Random Access Memory* comes together in a two-dimensional form to reveal a singular image above the 16-panelled work. In achieving the overall concept behind the Rubik's cube, Husin masterfully works his pure undulated lines freehand across the panels, duly merging and assimilating the puzzles into one. In line with the essence of drawing, the young artist executes his lines in fervent ease, cutting across panels to create a singular image while keeping the scene within each panel intact and undisturbed.

For those not familiar with Husin Othman, his works primarily are reflections of the nostalgic ways of our Malaysian society. Following from his success at UOB Painting of the Year 2014 where he garnered the title of Most Promising Artist of the Year within the Emerging Artist category, his works were then primarily re-enactment of his childhood memories.

At a single glance, *Random Access Memory* is seemingly rushed and chaotic. With deeper scrutiny, each panel is carefully composed and duly exemplifies his exceptional realist skills. His keen observation and artistic understanding tantamount to his apparent figurative skill where each component are noticeably detailed and in accurate proportions. Seemingly out-of-place, a human leg is randomly depicted within this panelled artwork, accurately proportioned while Husin grants his finishing touches with shades of colours to immerse this scene in harmony with the others. His lines now take on a more definitive tone, clearly showing progressive developments in his artistic career.

Random Access Memory by Husin Othman is an attestation to the concept of drawing to every artist. Within this single artwork, it testifies to the simple practice of drawing and sketching to document ideas and observations in a gradual build-up and attempt to develop and finalise the final work of art. This painting duly supports the importance of drawing as by drawing, one notices or observes more keenly than to gaze absentmindedly, granting a deeper understanding of an object or matter. Here, Husin Othman affirms to this age-old theory as drawing of the scenes within each panel has granted him further insight and understanding to craft images within another.

Husin Othman
Random Access Memory (RAM)
Acrylic, Charcoal and Pencil on Canvas
183cm x 183cm
2017



MASNOOR RAMLI MAHMUD

Masnoor Ramli Mahmud

Be(lie)vers

Mixed Media on Aluminium Sheet

121cm x 121cm each panel (Set of 4)

2017

Be(lie)vers

Be(lie)vers speaks to technology savvy Malaysian society today. Today we are in the technologically rich world availed with a wealth of information at our fingertips. At the swipe of our mobile screens and a tap of the Google Chrome app, thousands of search results floods our mobile screens, providing a relentless loop of information from scholars, layman, research studies, news portals etc. Similarly we are engulfed with the latest political news, divorce scandals, historical discoveries and even traffic updates through our constant beeping of notifications via social media and news portals. The network of connectivity today is extensive, even limitless. Technology of today has now become a lifeline, evolving with humankind and entwined deeply within our DNA. After all, how many of us can still shout out that one can leave our homes without our mobile phones?

To this end, *Be(lie)vers* is an acute reflection of the far-reaching networks across the globe and its apparent connectivity with Man. Providing the work with internet mapping of the incessant links across the world wide web, Masnoor Ramli embeds the evolution of Man within the network, duly affirming mankind's intricate and extensive dealings with technology. From birth to adulthood, we are inextricably influenced and affected by artificial intelligence.

Herein the artist provides us with an alternate insight into importance of drawing. With purposeful precision and composition, the artist hand draws the Internet-sourced reference images directly on the rarely-used base of aluminium. He keenly studies the selected images prior to its final execution. It is important to note that computers and even website information are a product of Man. To this effect, technological aids or references does not directly provide the artist with the ability to develop a fine piece of art. It falls back to the artist to provide the right depth and composition for the artwork. It is henceforth the human

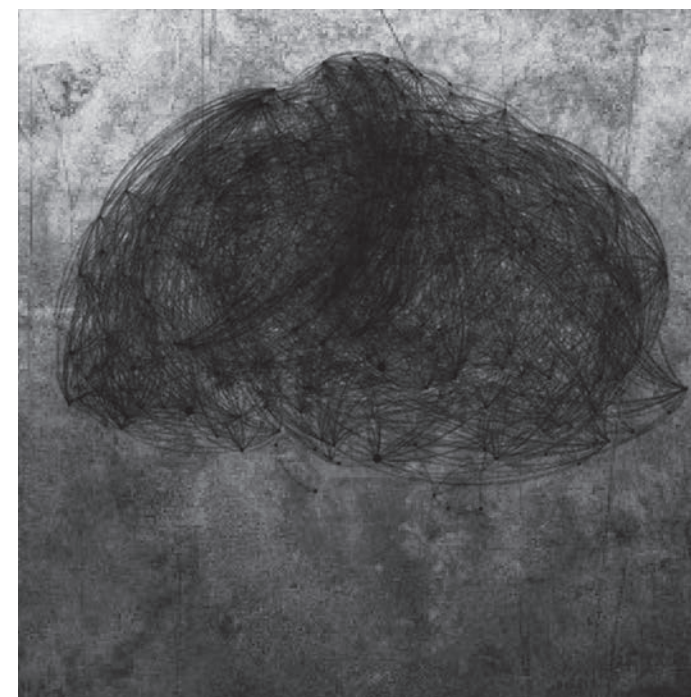
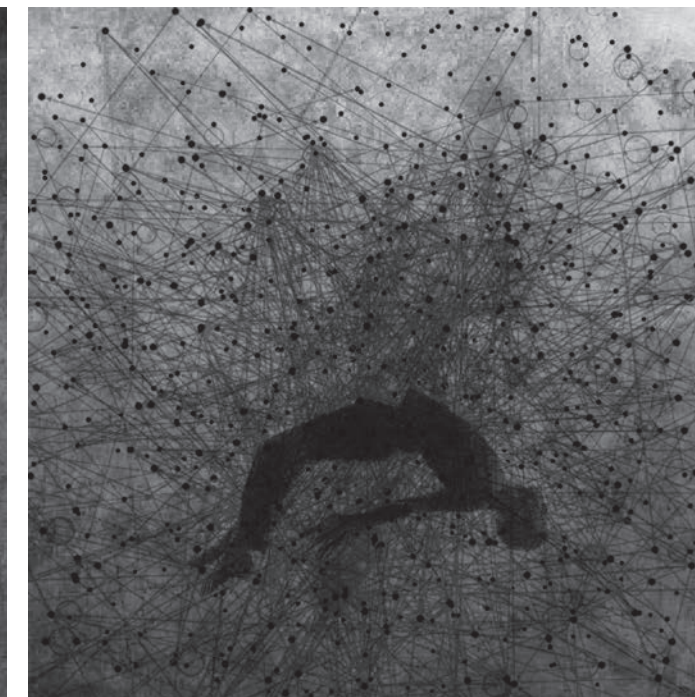
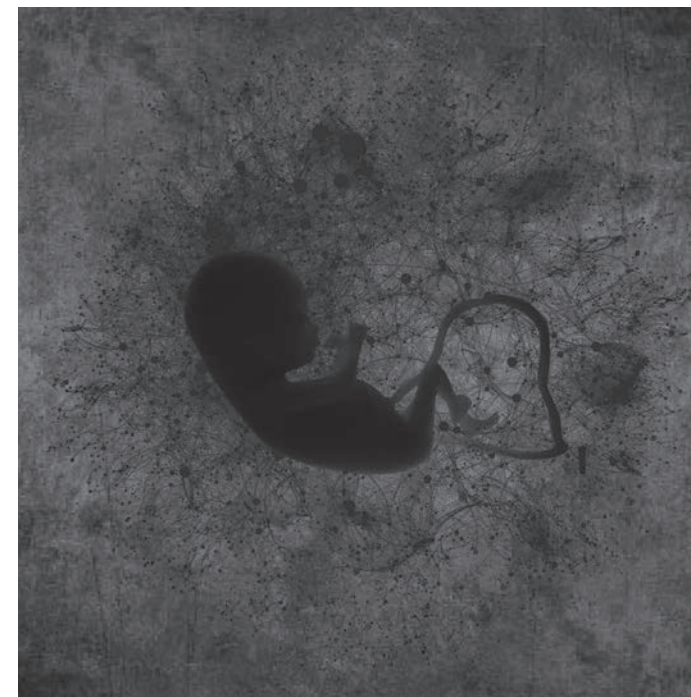
mind that produces a good piece of artwork and not that of a computer software. In conclusion, a beautiful piece of art is not merely a simple visual aesthetic that can be produced merely with the press of a button. A beautiful piece of art is produced premised on a strong concept through skilful manipulation of techniques and mediums with an effective application of thorough formalistic understanding of arts.

Be(lie)vers bears a message of concern of the adversities surrounding the intricate web of technology. Flooded incessantly with unexamined information and news, we are spun around an intricate web of powerful information, flaws and deceit. Now at the brink of an era of blurred and questionable information, there lies a saying 'Truth is not important; it is only important for you to believe that it is true'. Coupled with the increasing amount of digital crimes, scams and identity thefts, *Be(lie)vers* hints of a time where the society is inexplicably drawn into an era of half-truths, serving as a genuine reminder to consider the truths behind our beliefs.

...drawing the internet age

It is difficult to define drawing. From my student days till now, there has been numerous debates and discourse surrounding the exact definition of drawing. To this date, it remains as a debatable topic. Nevertheless drawing has critically evolved as Man progresses. In the current era of technology, it is not uncommon that most artists of today would subscribe to the computer as an aid for their art.

While I may subscribe to the computer to aid in the development of my artwork, principally I would start with a simple sketch at hand. For my work *Be(lie)vers*, I have developed my concept and critically commenced my process with a sketch. By conceptualising my idea and executing the work onto computer to produce a draft work, undoubtedly it still lies as my work of art where the definitive hand-drawn lines and composition remain as an artwork principally of my creation.



MOHD AL-KHUZAIRIE ALI

Addicted

Consisting of 5 sculptures, *Addicted* is the first-ever ceramic sculpture of Mohd Al-Khuzairie that takes on the form of a baby. As adorable as babies can be, the life-sized sculptures of Mohd Al-Khuzairie just naturally puts a smile to one's face. Sucked up on pacifiers, the babies are dressed loudly in diverse iconic wear and further accessorised with glitters and blings. One cannot help but to notice the whimsical mood of the artist...as the cute babies look back at you indifferently. However inconspicuously, these babies are reflective of the materialistic society of Malaysia today.

Cute as they may be, babies come into this world pure and clean. Babies are essentially an open mould, taught and guided by the people around them, fed with the highest quality produce and brand that can be afforded to them. Using the babies as a metaphor, young artist Mohd Al-Khuzairie outlines his key observations surrounding the Malaysian society in recent times, in keen reflection of Malaysia's progress following up to our recent 60th Independence Day mark. As Malaysia develops well into the technological era, materialism within the society continues to gain a stronger foothold within all ranks of our society. Status and importance of a person are defined by the brands that one carries. Through the World Wide Web, the internet users around the world shares ideas and thoughts, good and bad. Through the continuous flooding of unsubstantiated information and perhaps negative commentary, it has crippled many to sometimes unscrupulous scams and undesirable circumstances, albeit the advantageous knowledge that the Internet provides.

In keen observation as any good artist is, Mohd Al-Khuzairie denotes a weakening culture within the society. More often than not, foreign practices are embraced and

adapted wholeheartedly without any concern or question of its suitability within our culture. To this effect, as an aspiring young artist, he questions the appreciation of our society towards our own products; or perhaps of Malaysian contemporary arts and of ceramic art.

Addicted represent the artist's narrative of the Malaysian society today, beckoning us to consider and analyse the effects of globalisation and perhaps to re-evaluate the many commentaries and information that we receive through our social media networks.

Addicted comes across as an alternate form of drawing wherein Mohd Al-Khuzairie begins the core of his process with a simple sketch representing the base of his idea. Substituting the mediocre pen or charcoal, the artist manipulates the ceramic material to draw and sculpt the three-dimensional baby to life. He adds on his touch of the literal drawing element through his raw drawings of the baby's features, duly showcasing the first-of-its-kind finishing for his ceramic sculptures thus far.

...to sculpt is to draw

As a sculpture artist, sketches are by far minimal in comparison to painters and sketch artists. Nevertheless for every new sculpture that I produce, I begin with a simple drawing that may develop to further sketches as I continue to refine the visuals for the model sculpture that I would like to produce. In producing these sculptures, my mind is trained to visualise the three-dimensional perspective to the model, however I am still highly reliant on my initial drawings prior to producing the final sculpture model. Critically though, it has to be noted that it is the drawing practice that has trained my mind for the visualisation of my sculptures.



Mohd Al-Khuzairie Ali

Addicted

Ceramic Emblem and Wood Frame

41cm x 34cm each

(Set of 5 pcs)

2017

HUSIN HOURMAIN

Aku...Dalam Mencari Rukun... - Working Drawings on Paper

As the foremost Islamic calligraphy contemporary artist in Malaysia, Husin Hourmain continues on his artistic journey to develop his art further along the lines of his Islamic faith, that purely resonates with the Malaysian Muslim that he is. His highly successful *Awal Hurouf Asal Hurouf* 2013 exhibition marks him out as the foremost Islamic calligraphy contemporary artist within the local arts scene. He now continues on his journey, marrying his Islamic calligraphy art with his early abstract expressionist brushstrokes, to take his art to a new level of aspiration.

Following from the tantalising charms of *The Cube* which was primarily focused on the 5 Pillars of Islam, Husin Hourmain currently works to develop his works for his upcoming solo titled *Aku...Dalam Mencari Rukun*. A fourth solo show for Husin, *Aku...Dalam Mencari Rukun* focuses on his personal life journey within his Islamic practise around the 6 Pillars of Faith in Islam.

Commencing his study since 2015, Husin produced a set of 75 sketches; that of his working drawings on paper. These set of drawings lies as the foundation and development for his final works of art in the upcoming solo, granting us an exclusive preview to *Aku...Dalam Mencari Rukun*.

Within this set of works, we are bearing witness to the heart of the artistic process of every artist. Thus far through interviews with artists, every artist has stressed time and again on the importance of drawing. These paper sketches clearly testify to the importance of drawing as a critical foundation for every artist.

Herein the drawings belie the very thoughts and art-making process of Husin Hourmain. For Husin, his sketch books are abundant, quietly he shares that he carries with him almost 10 sketchbooks that supports the research behind the show *Aku...Dalam Mencari Rukun*. The sketches on display

are a culmination of his ongoing thoughts and a record documentation of his creative ideas. By putting these thoughts on paper, it works as a clear visual aid to allow him the flexibility to develop his creative ideas further while simultaneously working to perfect the forms and shapes of his visuals.

Sketches of cubes in thin lines and bordered lines are amass within the works. The cubes are pictured vertically, horizontally, across the sketch paper in different perspectives. The sketches are a generation and experimentation of ideas. In keen observation, the lines become more refined and the cubes takes on a more distinctive and definitive structure. Through continuous sketching and incessant drawing, it allows for a further experimentation of the various forms and ideologies that an artist may explore in the path leading to his final work of art.

Notably too, one cannot miss the many writings within these sketches. Drawing is a form, a means of communication... it is the primary visual language of communication which predates the written word. While the many writings within the sketches may work as notes of reference for the artist, Husin too partakes it as a form of visual art and masterfully produces the preferred writings within the appropriate perspectives to accompany, or even to further reinforce his artist's statement. Such writings for Husin is essentially a written visual, where words are viewed as images on its own. These word images are repeatedly present through the many sketches, duly attesting to the undeniable fact that art is in fact a powerful means of communication.

Interestingly too what comes to mind...while these may be sketches and somewhat perhaps the unrefined works of art by the artist, the final work of art may very well be largely distinct from its corresponding sketches. Nevertheless it must be noteworthy that the sketches remain as the production works of the artist and in itself are the artist's creative ideas,

thereby irrefutably a work of art on its own.

Employing mixed media in his works, we see a further development in Husin Hourmain as his works carry various mediums and even collages, an item that is not common within his portfolio. Following from his successful *Awal Hurouf Asal Hurouf* 2013 solo show that carried vibrant colours and creative juxtaposition of various central key characters, *Aku...Dalam Mencari Rukun* belies more sombre and earthy tones within the upcoming solo works. In keen scrutiny, the sketches are clearly detailed and tantamount to the depth of research that the artist underwent for this portfolio of works. It would truly be interesting to see the intricacies of such research and personal expressions translated effectively into the powerful visual aesthetics that Husin Hourmain is so well-known for, within the upcoming solo *Aku...Dalam Mencari Rukun*.

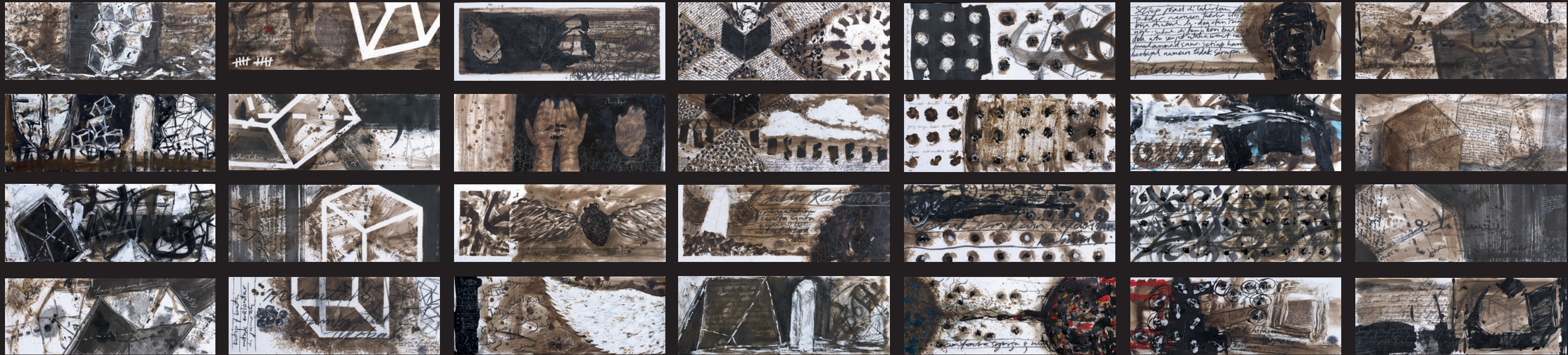
...drawing an indexes of thoughts

Drawing is inherent in everyone. As an artist, I draw and sketch vigorously in the developmental course leading up to my final work of art. My sketches and drawings represent my base thoughts and trial before the execution of the final visual.

To produce an effective visual...to compose an appealing visual, I pen down my creative thoughts into sketches be it on scrap paper or sketchbook. Through these incessant pieces of paper, it allows me to visualise and compose my ideas in an effective manner. It lies as a similar principle even for writers or strategists or even an automotive engineer. For writers, they will perhaps note down a basic structure for their writing and subsequently followed by various sub headers or pointers. Through these notes, writers would further re-arrange and enhance their content further prior to the final composition. For car designers or automotive engineers, the development of their prototype model would form as their initial sketch...their blueprint before their actual production of the car. Such notes or blueprint are a form of drawing too. In conclusion, drawing is undeniably an essential element for every individual regardless of their stature or occupation.

In essence, art is everywhere. We are living in art...the bedroom that we live in are filled with works of art, a bed designed to your comfort, the curtain shades that dresses the intricately designed windows. In summation, art and design narrates and documents how the society lives.

For me, the importance of drawing is irrefutable. It lies as an irreplaceable process within my line of work. It is akin to our journey in life where we go through ups and downs in life and continue to work through our failures in our effort to succeed. Drawing works on the same ideology as we draw and sketch vigorously in our attempt to generate and produce an effective visual that speaks to everyone across all levels of society.



Husin Hourmain

*Aku... Dalam Mencari Rukun - Working Drawings
on Paper*

Mixed Media on Acid Free Paper

28cm x 76cm each (Set of 28 pcs)

2016

MOHD BAKIR B BAHAROM

The Melting Landscape

Mohd Bakir b Baharom is no stranger to the local arts scene and proves to be a rare artist within the local Malaysian arts scene that primarily works with soot for his works of art.

The Melting Landscape is a work of pure abstraction by the artist. He works off an unprimed canvas and controls the burning of candles at 60 degrees to generate this work. To mark the imprints that he wishes for his work, he manipulates the candles burning while contemplating his surroundings; of the wind and air disturbances that may come up during the production of this artwork. Within a single canvas, landscape images emerge as the candles begin to burn. Consequently Bakir washes off the soot and reworks this cycle in overlapping layers to create the abstract forest that gradually merges to form growing townscapes.

The Melting Landscape represents a call by the artist of the impending growing development around us today. In his constant travels from Kuala Lumpur to Kajang, he witnesses the continual land clearing around Kajang highway that

makes way for new urban development. As he gazes into the burning candles, the soot and smoke generated were a keen reminder of the destruction of the green landscape surrounding Kajang. Thus birthed the inspiration behind this work.

For Bakir, he draws his art with soot, a tricky medium that replaces the common paint brush or charcoal. It is truly commendable that to master the technique of employing soot requires years of experimentation and perseverance. Bakir has worked with a variety of items such as the lighter, fire torches, candles, cigarettes and even oil lamps.

The Melting Landscape was produced purely with the burning of candles.

...drawing with soot

Drawing represents the first visual impression and perception by the artist. It is a record of one's creative ideas and grants us the ability to comprehend further. Drawing is a vital process for me as it helps me to visualise my next work of art.

Mohd Bakir b Baharom

The Melting Landscape

Soot on Canvas

122cm x 122cm

2017

