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Hadi's paintings to be auctioned for AIM

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TWENTY-THREE oil paintings by Abdul Hadi Ahmad will be auctioned in an exhibition entitled "Syurga Di Tapak Kaki Ibu" ("Heaven Is to be Found At Mother's Feet") in aid of the Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia.

The auction, to be officiated by Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, wife of Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, will be held at the Balai Seni Menara Maybank in Kuala Lumpur tomorrow at 10am.

The auction is organised by Ferry Anugerah Makmur - of Anugerah Gallery - who said he hoped to raise RM1 million from the sale of the paintings.

Each painting of standard 92x122cm format will start with a reserved price of RM10,000 and the auction will be conducted by Kassim Ali.

Hadi, 28, a self-taught artist who honed his skills in figuratives with the Angkatan Pelukis SeMalaysia, was born in southern Thailand but has Kelantan blood.

Though he has been taking part in group exhibitions since 1985, he first made his mark in the "Anugerah Dunia Untuk Mahathir" exhibition at the Putra World Trade Centre in November 1995. His portrait of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was among 32 others of other artists from Malaysia and abroad which went on show during the Umno General Assembly.

Hadi's series of works in this "solo exhibition" - which is his first - is dedicated to mothers. Incidentally, the theme also fitted in nicely with Mother's Day which fell on Sunday.

The backdrop is mostly of the east coast which Hadi is most familiar with.

A relative newcomer in the art scene, Hadi has already made his mark with his clinical and clear renditions of ordinary life, particularly the kampung folk.

His Photo-Realist works are noted for the strong contrast and polished finish with an unusual sheen and spotlessly clean clothes.

In this Mother's series, he profiles the business-minded Kelantan makcik in commerce as well as a thriftiness in managing the family expenses like in one work entitled Ke Arah Inflasi Sifar I. The woman with a headdress is depicted engrossed in counting the loose change.

In order to make ends meet and to live more comfortably, the mother also takes the initiative to work like selling kuih or fruits to supplement the family income (Menambah Productivi Keluarga I).

The mother is also shown as a bedrock of succour - she would beg, borrow and probably even steal to bring up her child (Daif). Succour is also in the form of milk, though in bottled form because of changing lifestyles (Zuriat - Secebis Kain Putih Yang Suci).

The bond among womenfolk at leisure or at work is also an integral element in fostering harmony and creating a lasting friendship and trust (Ibu - Sekiakawan I and II, and Yang Besar Sama Dilapah, Yang Kecil Sama Dicicah).

A mother is only human, and there are times when the tough can get going as is shown in one outstanding work, Renunganku Tuhan, showing a pensive squatting woman with a faraway look.

In these works, Hadi presents time-honoured themes of honesty, thrift, hardwork and even shrewdness (as in business acumen), caring, and a willingness to share and help others.

Hadi's works are in the individual collections of the Sultan of Brunei, Sultan of Selangor, Sultan of Perak, Sultan of Johor, Dr Mahathir and the

late Tan Sri Yahaya Ahmad.

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