

06/08/2003

Artistic images of Merdeka

V. Josephine

FOR the first time, 107 Malaysian artists who have "visualised" the meaning of "Merdeka" in their paintings are exhibiting these works at Balai Seni Maybank, Menara Maybank, Kuala Lumpur starting today.

Jointly organised by the Maybank Group and Anugerah Gallery Sdn Bhd in line with the coming 46th Merdeka celebration on Aug 31, the exhibition themed "Imajan & Suara Kemerdekaan" will be officiated by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight.

The artists have not only contributed their works but have also come up with a poem in Bahasa Malaysia to convey the meaning of, and to reinforce, the visual depiction of the Merdeka paintings.

The works are creations of both established as well as up-and-coming artists, making the exhibition an apt reflection of the "images and voices" of the people in celebrating Merdeka.

Maybank vice-chairman Datuk Richard Ho said the exhibition was unique in terms of works that also involved individual artists as well as participation by family members, among them husband-and-wife teams, parents and children, and also siblings.

"The exhibition will enable the public to view the exhibits and better understand the impressions of Merdeka, seen through the visual and poetic descriptions of Malaysian artists.

"About 40 per cent of the proceeds from the sale of the 107 paintings will be forwarded to the Warriors Fund, in recognition of the armed forces' role in helping Malaysia achieve independence as well as in maintaining peace and harmony in the country," he said in a Press statement on Monday.

The minimum price of an artwork is RM900 and the maximum, RM38,000. The paintings have been produced since three months ago specifically for the exhibition.

Tonight, Maybank will also make a separate contribution of RM2,000 to the Warriors Fund as part of its corporate responsibility in recognising the services of the national warriors.

Balai Seni Maybank is open to the public from 9.30am to 5.30pm Mondays to Fridays, and from 9.30am to 1pm on Saturdays until Sept 5. It is closed on Sundays and public holidays.

To preserve the exhibits for posterity, Maybank will compile the artworks and poem into a hardcover anthology which will be made available to the Government, including embassies abroad, for distribution to foreign officials and visitors.