

MAY 13 - 31 / LA PROMENADE MALL

# DIALOGUE WITH OUR NATURE

BONG CHOO CHEW 黄楚洲

 HOAN  
GALLERY



# Contents

|                                 |    |
|---------------------------------|----|
| FOREWORD                        | 3  |
| ARTWORK SERIES                  |    |
| <i>Harmony</i>                  | 5  |
| <i>Dialogue With Our Nature</i> | 10 |
| <i>Taiji &amp; Yin Yang</i>     | 13 |
| <i>Buntau Fishing Village</i>   | 15 |
| <i>Love Our Rivers</i>          | 18 |
| <i>Zen</i>                      | 21 |
| <i>Loneliness</i>               | 22 |
| <i>Others</i>                   | 23 |
| PAST SOLO SHOW - ALENA MURANG   | 28 |
| HOAN GALLERY                    | 29 |





## FOREWORD

**DATUK SEBASTIAN TING'S SPEECH AT THE SHOW OPENING ON MAY 13**

*Deputy Minister of Tourism, Creative Industry and Performing Arts*

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Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests, and most importantly, artist Bong Choo Chew.

I would like to begin by congratulating Bong on your show. I know how significant a solo art show is to any artists, and I am so happy for you, even more so that you will be celebrating your 70th birthday soon.

Thank you for inviting me to open your show, Dialogue With Our Nature.

It is a beautiful show. I've only seen a few pieces out of the over 50 artworks in this show, and I am, honestly, more than impressed.

There is so much beauty that you have captured in your paintings of rivers, lotus flowers, Koi fishes and village scenes.

Surrounded by all these great artworks, I feel calm and at one with nature.

Bong is an old friend of mine. I've always known him to be a loyal friend, a talented individual and a nature lover.

For the benefit of the audience, let me enlighten you all about Bong.

Born in Kuching in 1953, Bong graduated from the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts in Singapore in 1975. This was during a time when not many young men would venture into the studying of art. In 1984, he became one of the founding members of the Sarawak Artists Society, and as the honorary secretary then, he organised the society's first art show at Sarawak Museum in 1985.

Bong is a wonderful artist of Chinese brushes, watercolour and Batik. In the 1990s, he ventured into the realm of oil paintings.

For everybody's info, almost all artworks in this show are oil paintings. This is a genre of art that is exceedingly rare in Sarawak. Oil painting is among the hardest techniques to master — and to do it well, one must become a master.

The 50 odd pieces that we see in this show today is a representation of Bong's artistic works over a span of 30 years.

A round of applause for the artist.



Ladies and gentlemen, when Bong first told me about Dialogue With Our Nature, he described to me in amazing details of beautiful Japanese Koi fishes he had seen and admired over the years, lotus flowers, crystal clear rivers and tranquil villages.

I see all of those in the art pieces around us today.

His deep appreciation of nature really comes through.

His pieces are in the styles of impressionism and abstracts but imbued with his understanding of universal values found in Zen, Taiji & Yin Yang,

Buddhism and Taoism.

My friend Bong's artworks remind us that we have only one Earth to live upon and that every one of us must perform our duties to take care of the environment.

We must love our rivers, protect our greens. Another round of applause for Bong — a true Sarawakian artist. This is a great message that he is sending through his paintbrush.

I hope Bong serves as an inspiration to artists and the wider society — to youths especially. Here is a master artist, showing us the true beauty that surrounds us all.

We must not neglect nature, that is Bong's wisdom.

I must also praise Bong for his generosity. Seventy per cent of the proceeds of artworks sold will go to charities of Bong's choosing. This show will run for three weeks at Hoan Gallery. Entry is free.

I urge many to visit Hoan Gallery and purchase the art.

So without further ado, let us enjoy Dialogue With Our Nature.

Thank you Bong, thank you all guests gathered here today. Let the show begin.



Harmony Series



▲  
**Harmony 1, 1997**

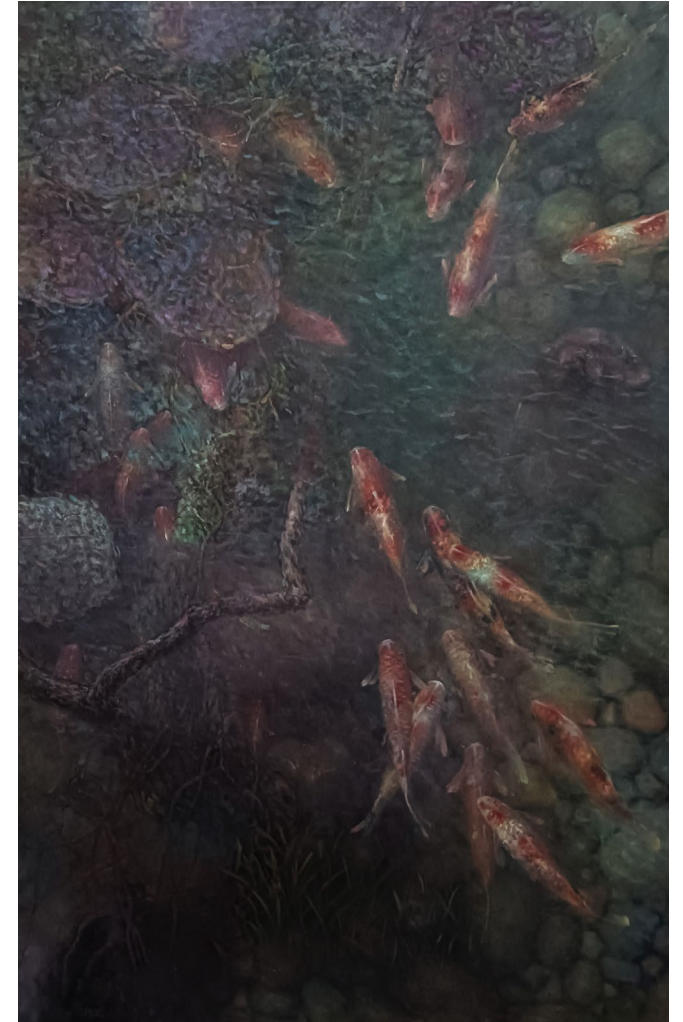
—  
Oil on canvas  
51cm x 101.5cm  
RM9,800

**Harmony 2, 1999**

—  
Oil on canvas  
76cm x 76cm  
RM7,680



For Bong, his paintings featuring a school of fishes are called “*Harmony*”.



▲  
**Harmony 3, 2000**

—  
Oil on canvas  
91.5cm x 137cm  
RM17,680

▶ **Harmony 6, 2004**

—  
Oil on canvas  
30.5cm x 30.5cm  
RM3,980



▲ **Harmony 7, 2004**

—  
Oil on canvas  
30.5cm x 30.5cm  
RM4,000

◀ **Harmony 8, 2021**

—  
Oil on canvas  
76cm x 91.5cm  
RM9,880



▲ **Harmony 5, 2001**

—  
Oil on canvas  
53.5cm x 63.5cm  
RM8,800



◀ **Harmony 17,  
2023**

—  
Oil on canvas  
35.5cm x 46cm  
RM5,500

**Harmony 9, ▶  
2021**

—  
Oil on canvas  
91.5cm x 137cm  
RM18,800



◀ **Harmony 14,  
2022**

—  
Oil on canvas  
91.5cm x 137cm  
RM15,880





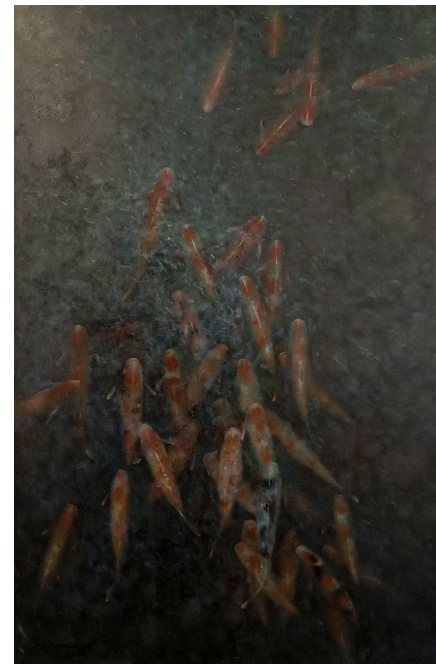
▲  
**Harmony 15, 2022**

—  
Oil on canvas  
91.5cm x 137cm  
RM17,680



▲  
**Harmony 10, 2021**

—  
Oil on canvas  
122cm x 190.5cm  
RM27,680



◀ **Harmony 4, 2000**

—  
Oil on canvas  
91.5cm x 137cm  
RM17,680



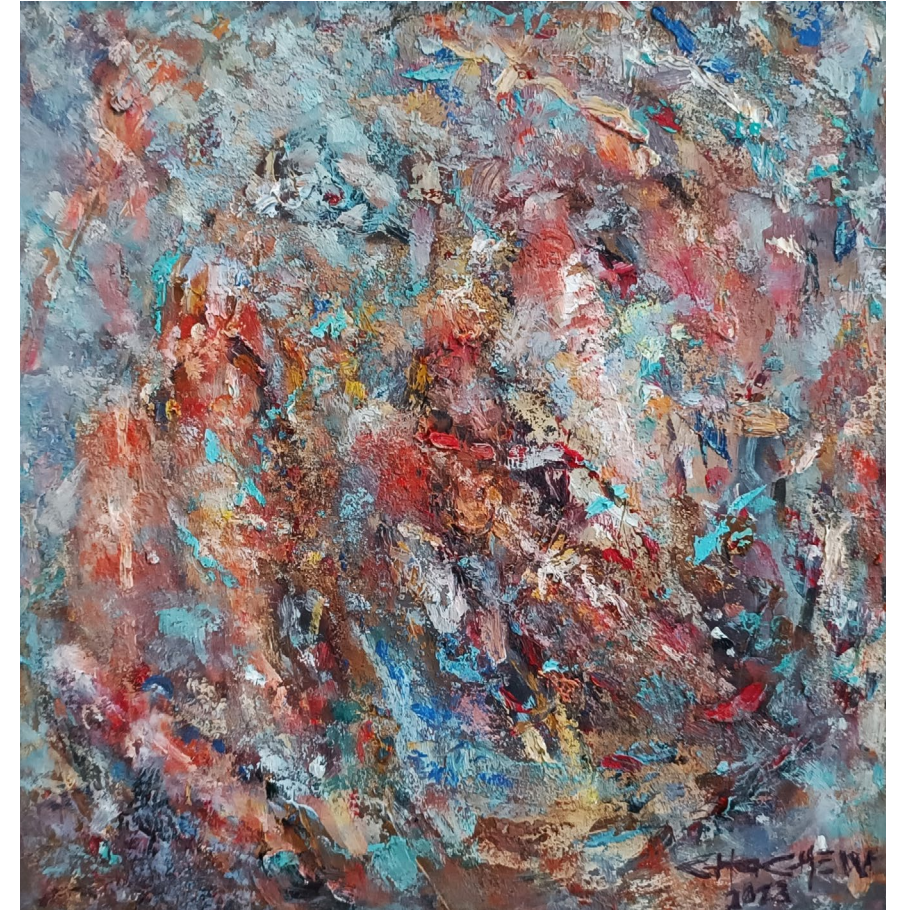
**Harmony 11, 2022** ▶

—  
Oil on canvas  
28cm x 30.5cm  
RM3,000



**Harmony 12, 2022**

—  
Oil on canvas  
23cm x 28cm  
RM3,000



▲  
**Harmony 16, 2023**

—  
Oil on canvas  
30.5cm x 30.5cm  
RM3,000

◀ **Harmony 13, 2022**

—  
Oil on canvas  
38cm x 38cm  
RM5,300



Dialogue With Our Nature Series



A conservationist, “*Dialogue With Our Nature*” is the name of Bong’s abstracts. These paintings feature strong textural elements.

◀ **Dialogue With Our Nature 4, 2023**

—  
Oil on canvas  
91.5cm x 137cm  
RM12,780



◀ **Dialogue With Our Nature 1, 2022**

—  
Oil on canvas  
91.5cm x 137cm  
RM15,880

**Dialogue With Our Nature 6, 2023** ▶

—  
Oil on canvas  
91.5cm x 137cm  
RM12,780



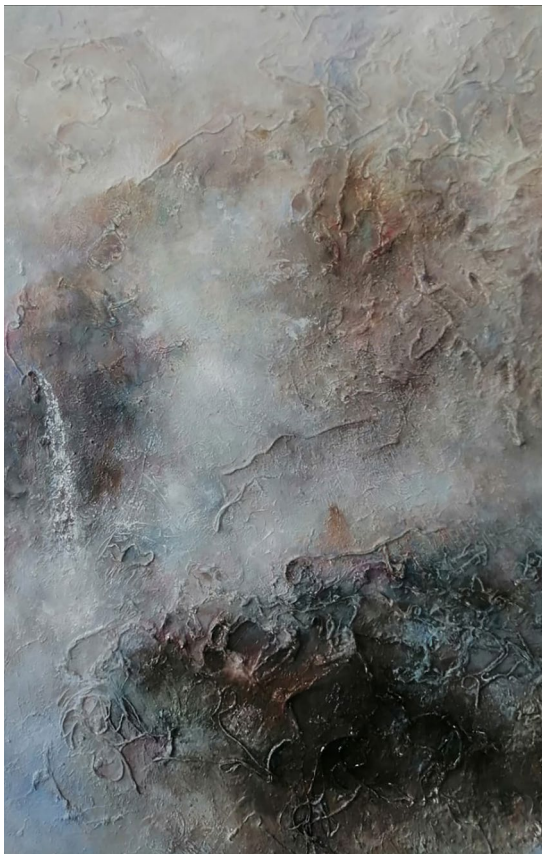
**Dialogue With Our Nature 3, 2022** ▶

—  
Oil on canvas  
91.5cm x 137cm  
RM12,780



**Dialogue With Our Nature 7, 2023**

—  
Oil on canvas  
122cm x 122cm  
RM17,680



▲  
**Dialogue With Our Nature 2, 2022**

—  
Oil on canvas  
91.5cm x 137cm  
RM12,780



▲  
**Dialogue With Our Nature 5, 2023**

—  
Oil on canvas  
122cm x 122cm  
RM17,680

Taiji & Yin Yang Series



Bong started abstracts only after 2020. "Taiji & Yin Yang" are some of his latest.

◀ **Taiji and Yin Yang 1,  
2021**

—  
Oil on canvas  
122cm x 140cm  
RM25,880

**Taiji and Yin Yang  
7, 2023** ▶

—  
Oil on canvas  
91.5cm x 91.5cm  
RM9,800



**Taiji and Yin Yang  
5, 2023** ▶

—  
Oil on canvas  
122cm x 140cm  
RM25,880



**Taiji & Yin Yang 2, ▶  
2022**

—  
Oil on canvas  
38cm x 38cm  
RM5,300



**◀ Taiji and Yin Yang 3,  
2022**

—  
Oil on canvas  
30cm x 30cm  
RM5,680

**Taiji & Yin Yang 4, ▶  
2022**

—  
Oil on canvas  
43cm x 45.7cm  
RM5,300



**◀ Taiji and Yin Yang 6, 2023**

—  
Oil on canvas  
38cm x 38cm  
RM5,300

Buntal Fishing Village Series



“Before I retired, my job took me to a lot of places. These *'Buntal Fishing Village'* paintings were scenes I captured after official duties,” Bong said.

◀ **Buntal Fishing Village 6, 1998**

—  
Oil on canvas  
38cm x 46cm  
RM5,800



▲  
**Buntal Fishing Village 7,  
1998**

—  
Oil on canvas  
35.5cm x 46cm  
RM6,500

**Buntal Fishing Village 2, 1996** ▶

—  
Oil on canvas  
28cm x 30.5cm  
RM4,000

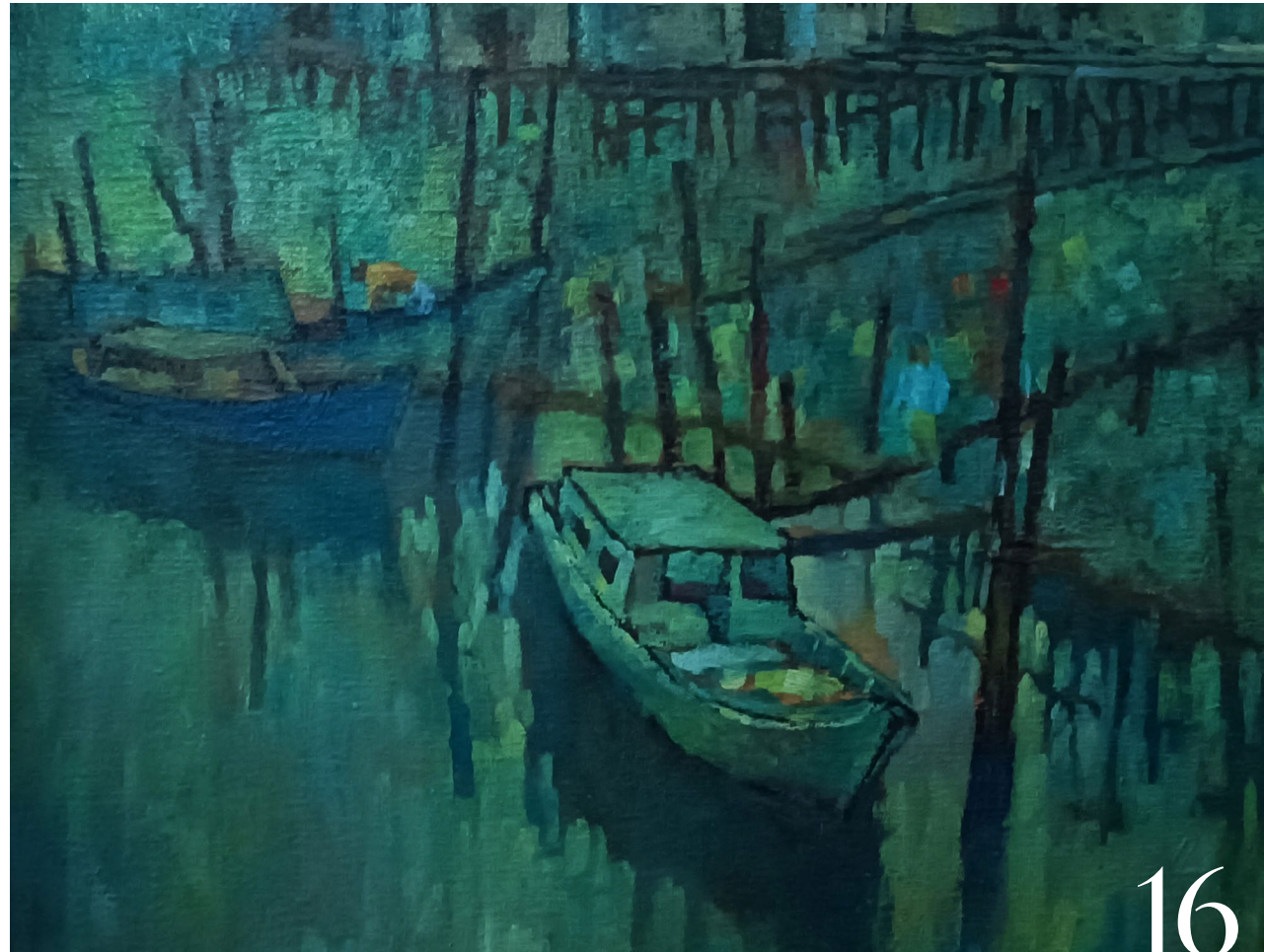


◀ **Buntal Fishing Village 5, 1997**

—  
Oil on canvas  
28cm x 30.5cm  
RM3,000

**Buntal Fishing Village 3, 1996**

—  
Oil on canvas  
28cm x 33cm  
RM5,300







▲  
**Buntal Fishing Village 4,  
1997**

—  
Oil on canvas  
28cm x 30.5cm  
RM4,500



▲  
**Buntal Fishing Village 8,  
1999**

—  
Oil on canvas  
38cm x 46cm  
RM5,800



▲  
**Buntal Fishing Village 1,  
1995**

—  
Oil on canvas  
26.5cm x 30.5cm  
RM5,000



*“Love Our Rivers”* are some of Bong’s earliest oil paintings. Each took six months to paint, “requiring a lot of patience on my part,” Bong said. The artist divides his work into three phases: Realism, Semi-Abstract and Abstract.

◀ **Love Our Rivers 1, 1993**

—  
Oil on canvas  
71cm x 104cm  
RM20,530



◀ **Love Our Rivers 3,  
1995**

—  
Oil on canvas  
76cm x 76cm  
RM15,300

▲ **Love Our Rivers 2,  
1995**

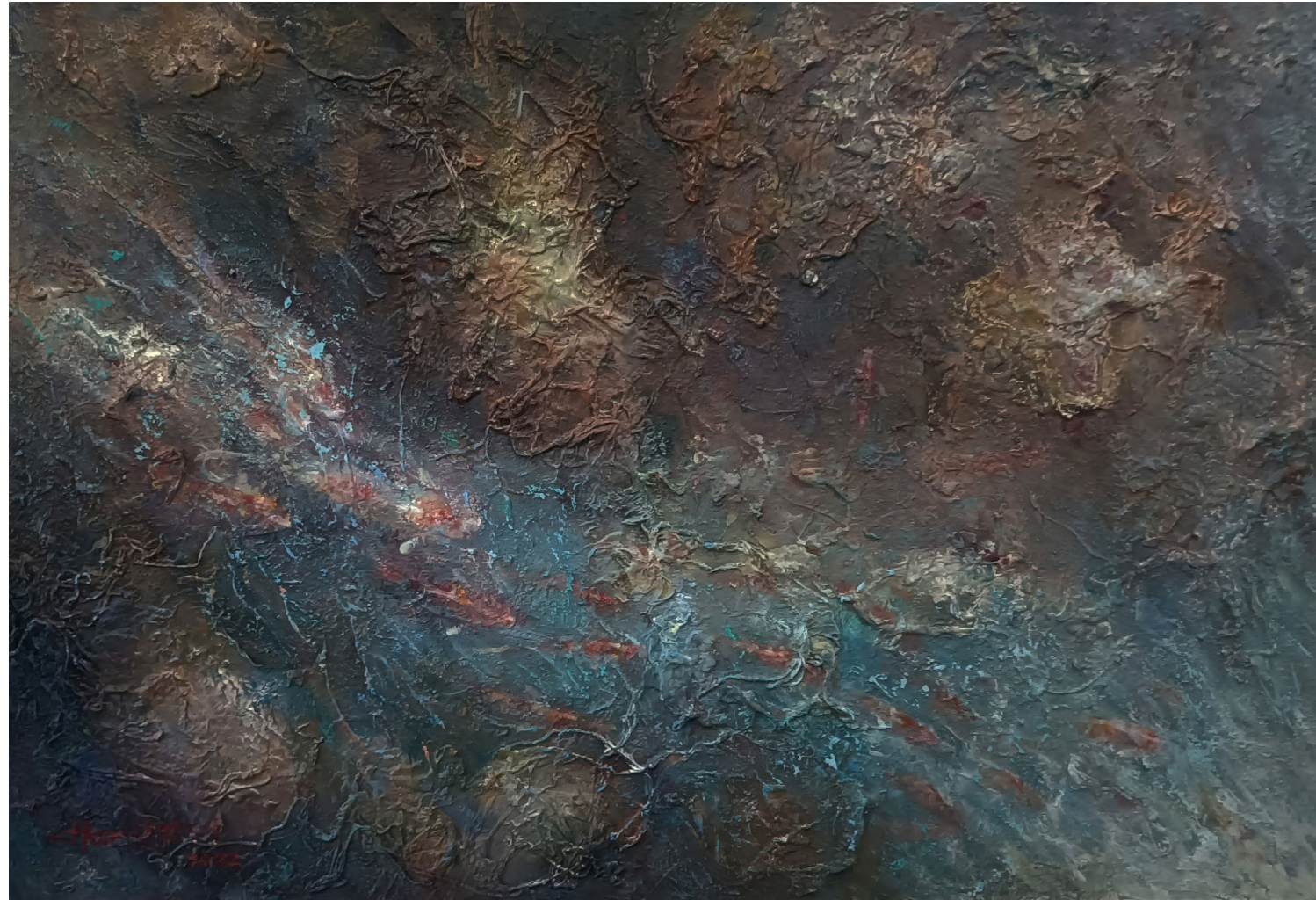
—  
Oil on canvas  
76cm x 76cm  
RM15,300



◀ **Love Our Rivers  
4, 2022**  
—  
Oil on canvas  
91.5cm x 91.5cm  
RM9,800



◀ **Love Our Rivers  
5, 2022**  
—  
Oil on canvas  
91.5cm x 91.5cm  
RM9,800



▲  
**Love Our Rivers 6, 2023**  
—  
Oil on canvas  
91.5cm x 137cm  
RM12,780

Zen Series

**Zen 2, 2021**

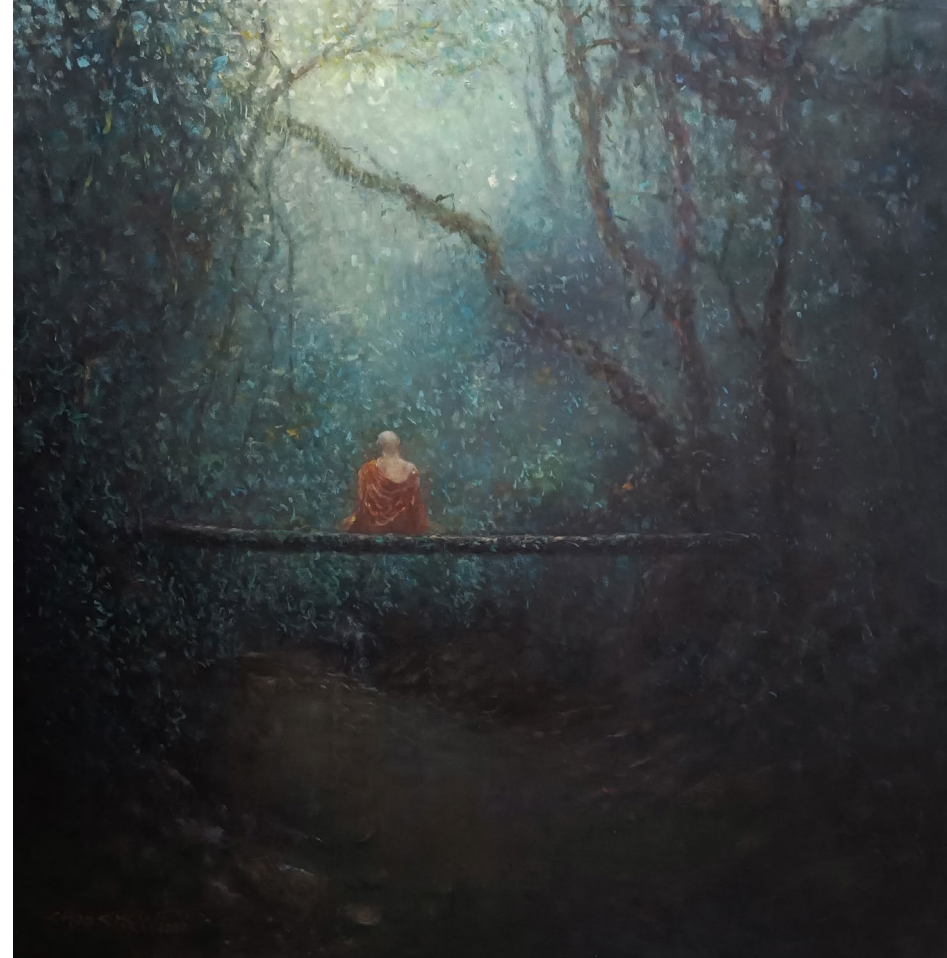
Oil on canvas  
122cm x 122cm  
RM30,000



The "Zen" series are large works. Highly contemplative, evocative, and beautiful.

**Zen 3, 2022**

Oil on canvas  
122cm x 122cm  
RM30,000



**Zen 1, 2020**

Oil on canvas  
53.5cm x 61cm  
RM7,680



Loneliness Series



◀ **Loneliness 1, 2004**

—  
Oil on canvas  
30cm x 30cm  
RM3,900



◀ **Loneliness 2, 2004**

—  
Oil on canvas  
30.5cm x 30.5cm  
RM5,700



◀ **Loneliness 3, 2004**

—  
Oil on canvas  
30.5cm x 30.5cm  
RM4,500

Bong's highly detailed paintings depicting a single fish are called "Loneliness".



▲ **Loneliness 4, 2005**

—  
Oil on canvas  
30.5cm x 30.5cm  
RM4,000



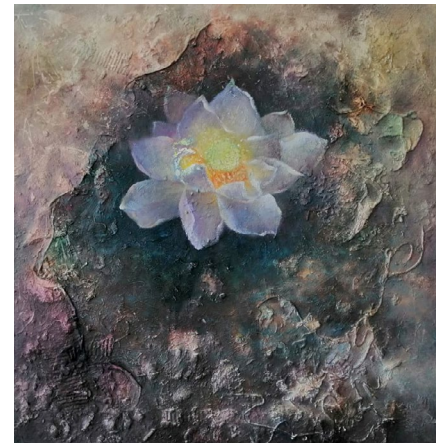
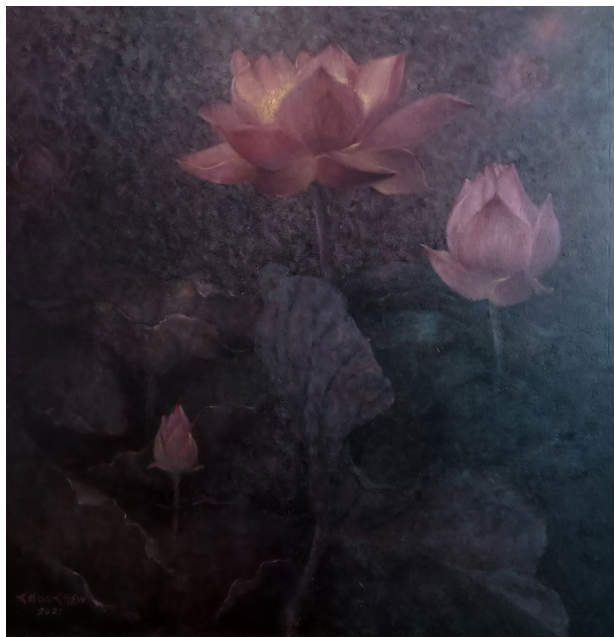
▲ **Misty Morning, 2021**

—  
Oil on canvas  
123cm x 190.5cm  
RM27,680

In “*Others*”, Bong’s eclectic mix of skills and personality comes through: Streetscapes, lotuses, abstract light, waterfall and Mother Earth.

▶ **Lotus, 2021**

—  
Oil on canvas  
76.3cm x 76.3cm  
RM7,680



◀ **Life, 2023**

—  
Oil on canvas  
91.5cm x 91.5cm  
RM10,880



▲ **Serenity, 2021**

—  
Oil on canvas  
61cm x 102.5cm  
RM12,780



▲  
**Market Street, 1994**

—  
Oil on canvas  
75cm x 65cm  
RM15,300

**Kuching Street Scene, 2000** ▶

—  
Oil on canvas  
38cm x 38cm  
RM3,780





**Mother Earth, 2023 ▶**

Oil on canvas  
91.5cm x 91.5cm  
RM9,800



**Light, 2002**

Oil on canvas  
81.3cm x 92.7cm  
RM9,800



**▲ Rhythm Of The Breeze, 2023**

Oil on canvas  
122cm x 140cm  
RM18,880



**◀ Waterfall, 2023**

Oil on canvas  
30.5cm x 30.5cm  
RM3,800

**Morning Glory, 1998**

Oil on canvas  
23cm x 25.5cm  
RM3,000



▲ **Sungai Apong, 1995**

Oil on canvas  
28cm x 30.5cm  
RM4,300



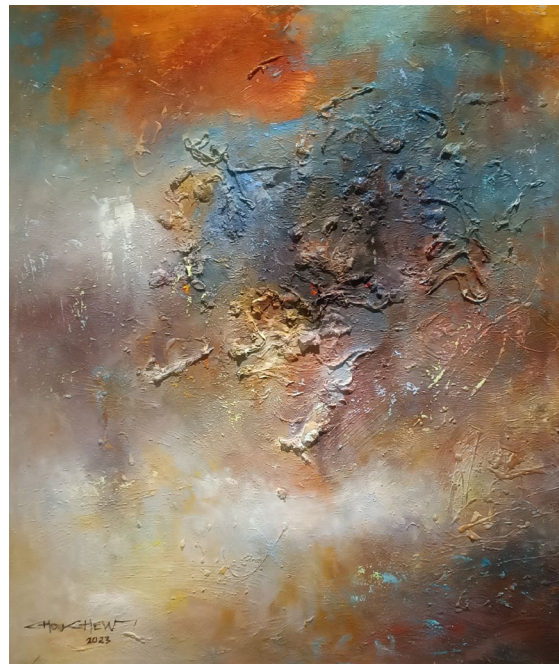
**Guardians of the Land, 2023**

Oil on canvas  
91.5cm x 137cm  
RM12,780



**Purity, 2021**

Oil on canvas  
76cm x 91.5cm  
RM8,880



**Colours of Life, 2023**

Oil on canvas  
91.5cm x 91.5cm  
RM9,800

**Tranquility, 2022**

Oil on canvas  
122cm x 137cm  
RM18,880

## Past Solo Show - Alena Murang

Hoan Gallery's 2023 season began with sape songstress Alena Murang's first-ever solo art show – Colours of the Highlands.

The show is about the Kelabit people's past and present. Alena's paintings depicted Kelabit elders, abstracts of the highlands, and her interpretation of ancient swirls (or 'arit' in the Kelabit language) based on photographs from longhouses.

The showpiece, *The Storyteller*, is a portrait of Tepu' Sina' Balan facing the artist. Completed in 2017, the artwork is accompanied by an audio recording of Alena's conversations with village elders including songs.

*Colours of the Highlands* was an enriching journey into Kelabit culture from the perspective of a young multi-talented artist.

Over 70% of the show sold within three weeks and the show was widely reported in the media.





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Hoan Gallery, by Kee Huang, is a passion project of patience and paint.

Discover the works of Sarawakian artists, past and present, in our gallery. Visitors will see people and places, from unique perspectives, depicted in oil, acrylic paint, watercolour, Chinese ink and nearly lost traditional Batik techniques.

This gallery aspires to promote past masters and reveal future potential.

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