

# Reinterpreting the Malaysian landscape

BY SARAH ABU BAKAR

“It is as though every work contains an ‘exclamation mark’, so to speak,” says Mark Neo, Deputy High Commissioner of Singapore, at the recent preview of Jalaini Abu Hassan’s solo exhibition in Kuala Lumpur.

“There are the beautiful exotic landscapes, which I really appreciate. Overall, it is an excellent collection,” says Neo, an avid art collector.

The diplomat was among 200 guests who attended the exhibition, *Siang & Malam: The Landscape in Mind*, which is being held at The Edge Galerie in Mont’Kiara.

One of Malaysia’s leading contemporary artists, Jalaini, popularly known as Jai, is known for his sharp social commentator on national and international issues. He is showing a dozen new works that reflect his current thoughts.

Among the other prominent art lovers who attended the event were legal adviser Naimah Abdul Khalid, distinguished photographer Tara Sosrowardoyo, art consultant Valentine Willie, film director Saw Teong Hin, architect Dr Tan Loke Mun, lawyer Yoong Sin Min, company director Billy Too Hing Yeap, Minconsult executive director Datuk Rosaline Ganendra, engineer and Crescent Capital chairman and CEO Mirzan Mahathir and Crimson Petroleum CEO Datuk Meor Azman Mohamed and his actress wife Datin Sofia Jane Hisham.

“Jai’s *Siang* section of lush greenery reminds me of home as I live abroad now. I have always admired Jai’s creative oeuvre. Every work in this show is a personal favourite,” says Sofia Jane.

Arranged within the gallery in two sections — *Siang* is characterised by bright, vibrant hues and *Malam* with dark, monochromatic compositions — Jai’s works are said to relate to “fragmented narratives” derived from travel notes, postcards and snapshots.

“The ‘day and night’ theme is carried out very well because of the gallery layout,” says Asian Banking School Sdn Bhd corporate communications senior manager Rafizah Abdul Rahman, who is a former art consultant. “The artworks are also thoughtfully hung. This is a good progression from Jai’s past works.”

MyCreative Ventures CEO Johan Ishak says, “I admire Jai’s version of the dark genre. The night section is minimalist in approach. Jai’s technical ability with his use of colours and rendering, like the drip effect are impeccable. The narrative in works like *Diego Garcia* is also powerful.”

IJM Land managing director Edward Chong comments: “Jai has done a fantastic job in creating attractive works that are very contemporary. Based on my observations tonight, the show is a great success.”

“It is remarkable to see the response by art lovers tonight,” says Au Foong Yee, managing director and editor-in-chief of TheEdgeProperty.com and managing director of The Edge Galerie.

Jai concludes: “Tonight is not merely a preview but a social gathering. It’s great to see art lovers as well as new collectors come together to show support.”

Supported by IJM Land, the show is open to the public from Sept 22 to Oct 7. Opening hours are 11am to 7pm, Tuesday to Sunday. Closed on Monday and public holidays. For details, please contact The Edge Galerie at [info@theedgegalerie.com](mailto:info@theedgegalerie.com) or call (03) 7721 8188. Visit the website at [www.theedgegalerie.com](http://www.theedgegalerie.com).



From left: Mark Neo, Mirzan Mahathir, Jai, Tara Sosrowardoyo, Prof Emeritus Doctor Mazlan Othman of The Academy of Sciences Malaysia



From left: Meor Azman, Sofia Jane, Saw Teong Hin



From left: Au Foong Yee, Jai, Edward Chong, Mark Neo



From left: Billy Too, Yoong Sin Min, Au Foong Yee, Edward Chong



From left: Au Foong Yee, Edward Chong, Dr Tan Loke Mun