

synthesis

love dreams hope

AN EXHIBITION ON BATIK AND BATIK INSPIRED WORKS OF ART





detail Tunku Hajah Azizah Aminah Maimunah Iskandariah Batik

synthesis

love dreams hope

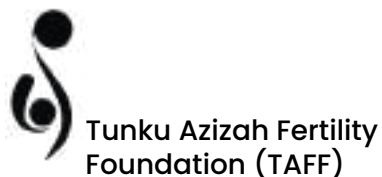
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*Merafak Sembah
Menjunjung Kasih*



**HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN OF MALAYSIA
TUNKU HAJAH AZIZAH AMINAH MAIMUNAH ISKANDARIAH
BINTI AL-MARHUM AL-MUTAWAKKIL ALALLAH SULTAN ISKANDAR AL-HAJ**

For gracing Synthesis on August 8, 2022 at

galeri
PRIMA



detail of Chuah Seow Keng Joyful Moment

S. KENG 20

Foreword

We were looking for an arts project for the Merdeka month celebrations, themed along the lines of culture and heritage, when we were granted an audience by Tunku Azizah Aminah Maimunah Iskandariah binti Al-Marhum Al-Mutawakkil Alallah Sultan Iskandar Al-Haj at the Institut Kraf Negara (IKN) in Rawang to see first-hand Her Majesty's batik works.

IKN had been the Raja Permaisuri Agong's playground before the COVID-19 lockdown where she had single-handedly painted some 30 pieces of batik fabric.

While Tunku Azizah was finishing the exclusive collection for the National Kraf Week, we broached the idea of displaying the batik pieces alongside batik themed paintings by established and emerging artists. Her Majesty later consented to another meeting at Istana Negara where the plan for the exhibition was further expanded and discussed.

And as such, SYNTHESIS is born out of our LOVE, our DREAM and our HOPE that the country's time-honoured arts, culture and heritage are kept alive.

Galeri Prima is proud that it is the first private gallery that the Raja Permaisuri Agong has granted permission to showcase her works. Her Majesty's works are block-printed batik, which is one of the oldest traditional batik-making techniques in Malaysia. Wooden blocks are carved with patterns to become moulds.

Batik, which is deeply embedded in Malaysia's rich heritage, is not only a piece of art on fabric but it can also be reproduced on canvas.

And as batik has become a very central means of artistic expression for many, we decided to pair Tuanku Raja Permaisuri's beautiful pieces, with brighter hues and more versatile patterns, with the art pieces by our established and emerging artists.

Batik is an innovation as reflected in the batik pieces by Tuanku Raja Permaisuri's and the artworks by these artists. It allows individual freedom and creativity.

Through Synthesis, Galeri Prima is supporting the government's initiative to promote Malaysian batik and the local art scene.

We hope that these works by the Raja Permaisuri Agong and the artists will inspire the other batik artisans and craftsmen to keep the country's age old arts, culture and tradition alive. These fine works can also motivate our local artists to produce more artistic pieces, which are not only fresh, but also of high quality and value.

God willing, Malaysian batik and arts would one day hand in hand make it to the world stage.

GALERI PRIMA



detail of Tony Ng Life Is Wonderful #11



The Royal Touch of Batik Inderapura

Batik Inderapura is a collection of batik pieces which are exclusively hand-painted by KDYMM Tunku Azizah Aminah Maimunah Iskandariah binti Almarhum Al-Mutawakkil Alallah Sultan Iskandar. The collection is aptly named after the capital city of the medieval kingdom of Pahang.

The batik collection is as the Raja Permaisuri Agong described “an exploration and experimentation” where Her Majesty is noted for her passion in finding ways to keep the age-old tradition of batik-making alive.

In Tuanku Raja Permaisuri’s batik pieces, we see a juxtaposition of ancient batik techniques, colours and new designs.

Using a combination of batik-making methods such as batik terap or batik cop, brushing and colouring techniques, Tuanku Raja Permaisuri had infused contemporary and refreshing designs to her batik.

This ensures that batik can weather the test of time as fashion continues to evolve with new designs and patterns.

Not limiting to working with cotton and silk, Tunku Azizah experimented successful on different fabrics such as satin, linen and crepe de chine. Her Majesty applied various techniques which resulted in unique colouring effects on the fabric.

The brush strokes and colour tones are characteristically that of Tuanku Raja Permaisuri’s.

Her Majesty has her own way of colouring batik to get the different tonal effects. This is done through repeated brush strokes. The technique is most time-consuming and requires patience to get the desired effect. Her Majesty will let each layer dry before applying the next coat of colour.

It takes between three and four days to prepare one piece of cloth. Tunku Azizah is very meticulous in every colour mix used for that desired interesting effect. The colours are layered one after another until Her Majesty is satisfied with the particular piece. Not a drop of colour is wasted for each batik produced.

Besides the Batik Inderapura collection, some of Tuanku Raja Permaisuri's earlier batik works including scarves are also on display.

While Tuanku Raja Permaisuri learned the various techniques to batik painting including attending a batik drawing masterclass in London, Her Majesty is certainly not the "by the book" batik designer.

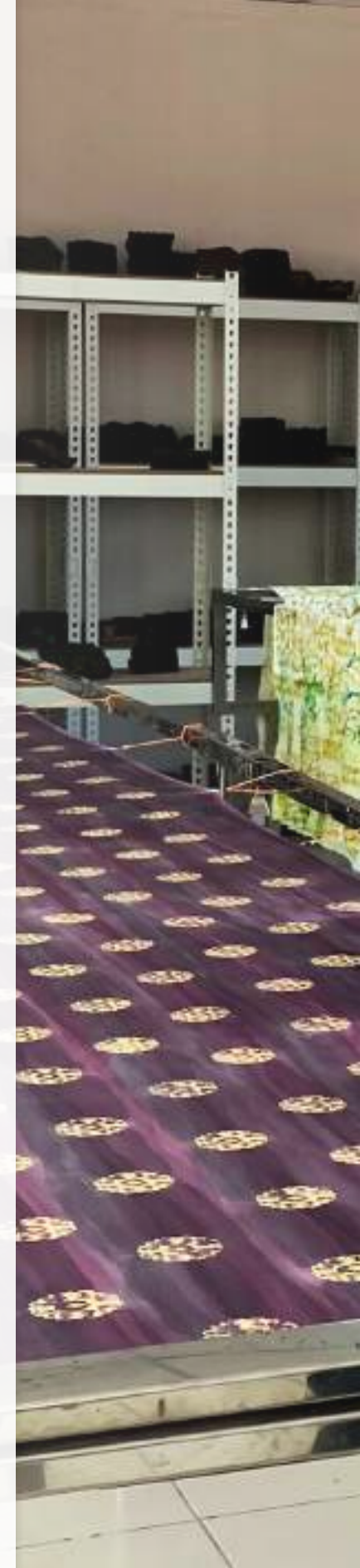
Her Majesty had imbued some elements of design from the Tenun Di Raja Pahang in her Batik Inderapura collection. The tenun weaving pattern design are translated through vertical and horizontal and crossing brushstroke techniques and block pattern layouts.

Tuanku Raja Permaisuri also adapted the "Beragi" and striped patterns, commonly seen on the woven fabric, for her batik works.

Each piece measures 4.5m and is done in a pair, one which can be turned into menswear while the other can be turned into a female attire.

Her Majesty's batik work shows that there is no boundaries to creativity. With a little bit of imagination, the possibilities are endless.

Fauziah Ismail





Batik Tunku Hajah Azizah Aminah Maimunah Iskandariah



Men's Shirt - 2 meter, Silk satin, Remazol



Men's Shirt - 2 meter, Silk satin, Remazol



Shawl, 1 Meter



Shawl, 1 Meter



Men's Shirt - 2 meter, Silk crepe de chine,
Remazol



Men's Shirt - 4 meter, Silk crepe de chine,
Remazol



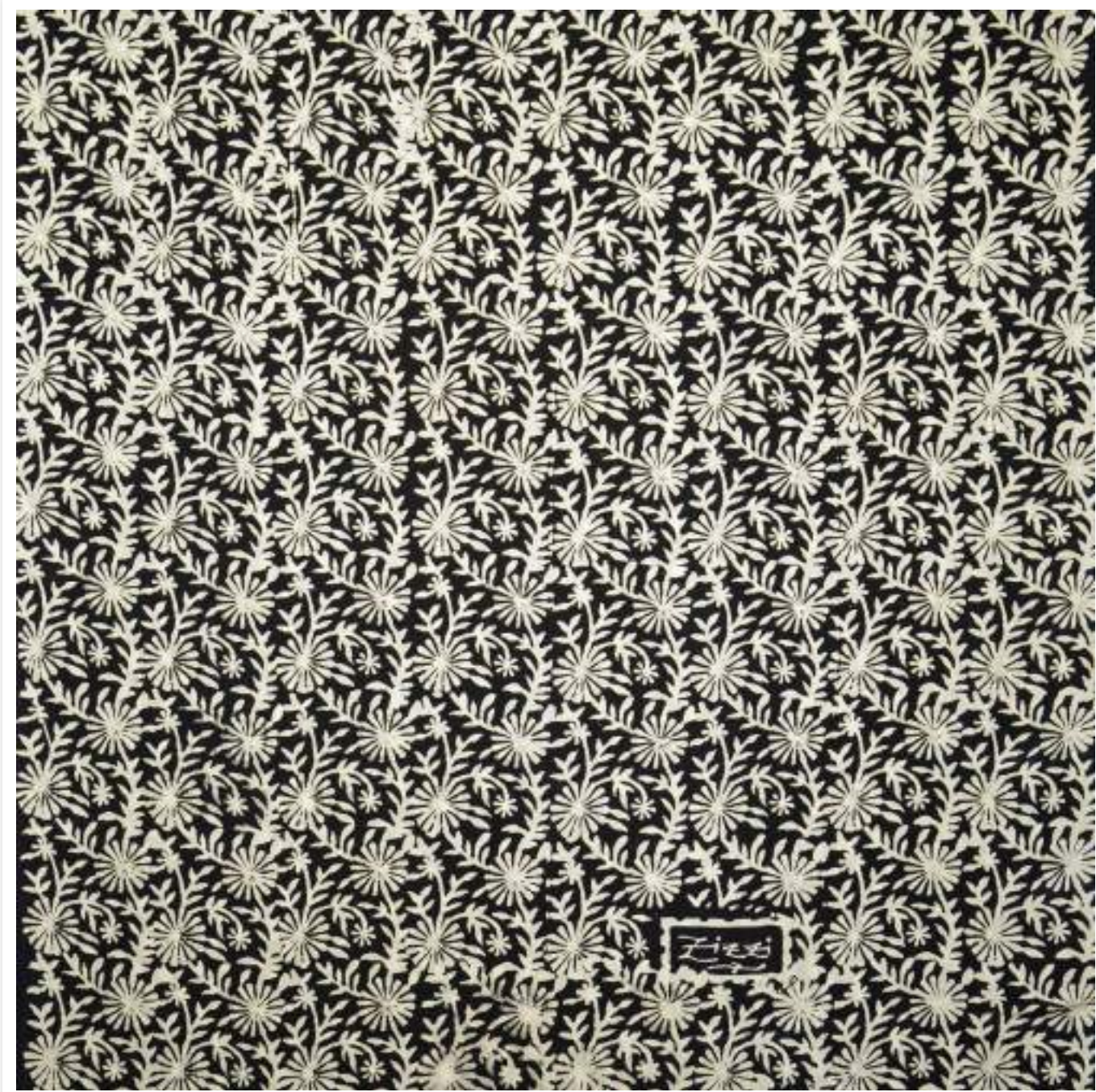
Shawl, 1 Meter



Men's Shirt - 2 meter, Silk satin, Remazol



Men's Shirt - 4 meter, Silk crepe de chine,
Remazol



Men's Shirt - 2 meter, Silk crepe de chine, Remazol



Men's Shirt - 2 meter, Silk Crepe de chine,
Remazol



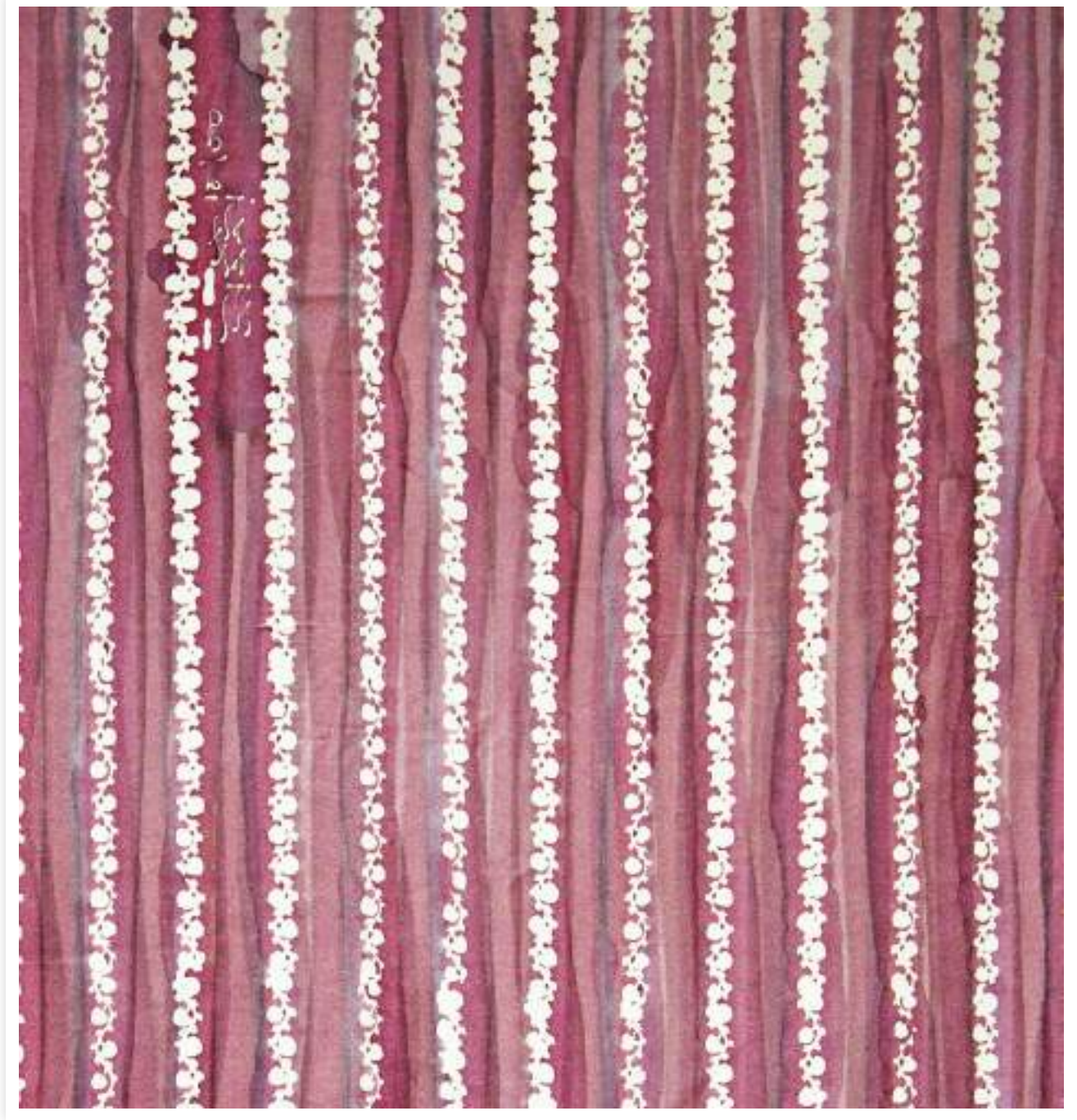
Men's Shirt - 2 meter, Silk satin, Remazol



Men's Shirt - 2 meter, Silk satin, Remazol



Full Suit Female Attire - 4 meter, Silk satin, Remazol



Men's Shirt - 2 meter, Silk satin, Remazol



Full Suit Female Attire - 4 meter, Silk crepe de chine, Remazol



Full Suit Female Attire - 4 meter, Silk satin, Remazol



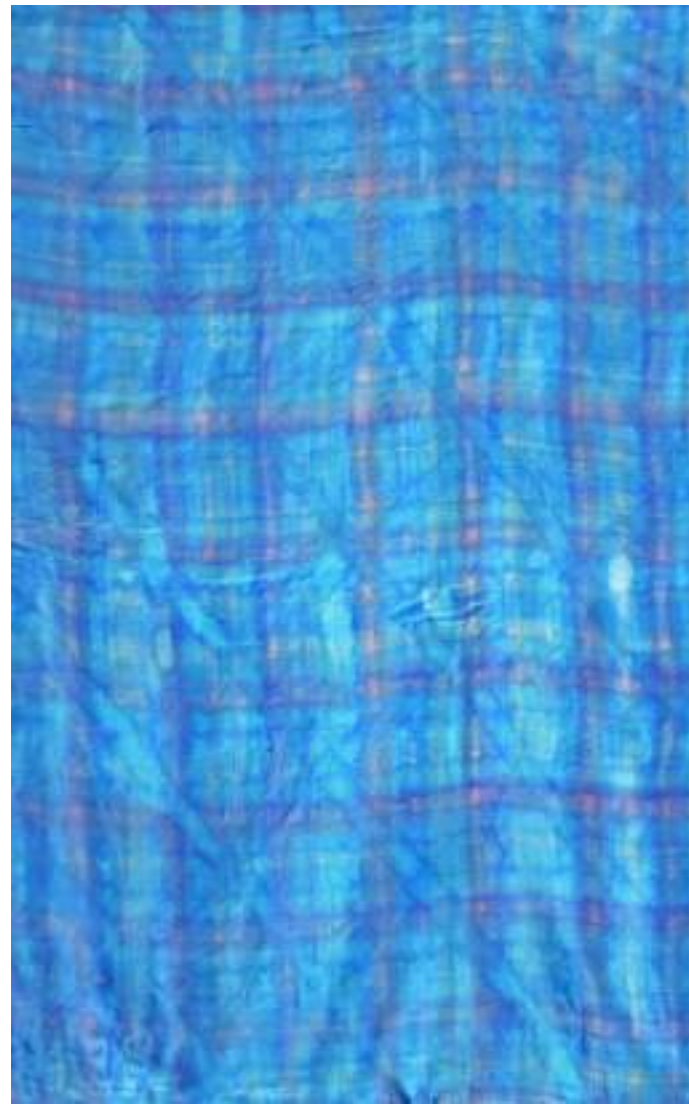
Men's Shirt - 2 meter, Silk crepe de chine,
Remazol



Men's Shirt - 2 meter, Silk crepe de chine,
Remazol



Full Suit Female Attire - 4 meter, Silk crepe de chine, Remazol



Full Suit Female Attire - 2 meter, Silk crepe de chine, Remazol



Shawl, 1 Meter



Men's Shirt - 2 meter, Silk crepe de chine,
Remazol



Full Suit Female Attire - 4 meter, Linen,
Remazol



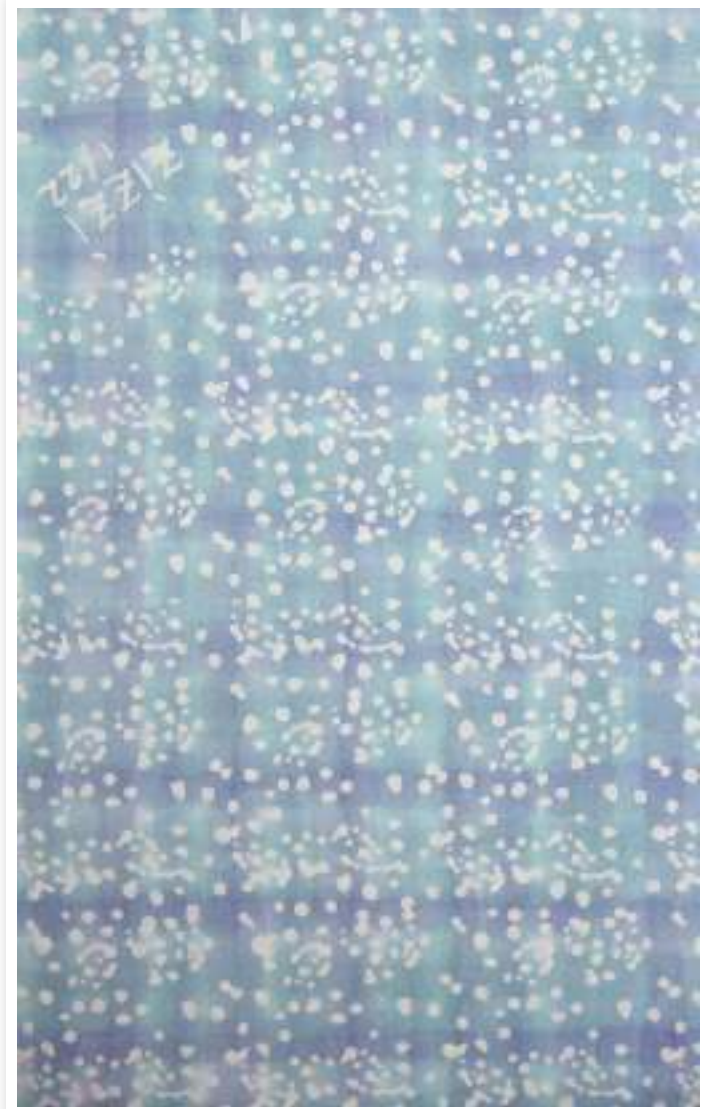
Shawl, 1 Meter



Shawl, 1 Meter



Full Suit Female Attire - 4 meter, Silk satin, Remazol



Men's Shirt - 2 meter, Silk satin, Remazol



Full Suit Female Attire - 4 meter, Silk crepe de chine, Remazol



Full Suit Female Attire - 4 meter, Silk satin, Remazol



Full Suit Female Attire - 4 meter, Silk satin, Remazol



Shawl, 1 Meter



Men's Shirt - 2 meter, Berlin linen, Remazol



Men's Shirt - 3 meter, Berlin linen, Remazol



Men's Shirt - 4 meter, Berlin linen, Remazol



Men's Shirt - 2 meter, Silk crepe de chine,
Remazol



Men's Shirt - 4 meter, Silk satin, Remazol



detail Datuk Chuan Thean Teng Feeding

Synthesis: Batik Painting and Painting Batik

Batik in the local community

The textile industry is not obscure to the local community especially in the east coast of Malaysia. It was practiced long before the arrival of foreigners to Malaya. Sources from local plants became the basis for fibre manufacturing before cotton was widely used, which was introduced by traders from India.

Batik is one of the most famous textile products and one of the superior Malay heritages.

“Batik” refers to making or decorating cloth using a stamp or *canting* or using both techniques. It is one of the resist techniques where wax is used as a blocking material from the inclusion of dyes on the surface of the fabric.

The local Batik industry was detected as early as the 1920s when two important figures, Haji Che Su bin Haji Ishak (Kelantan) and Haji Ali bin Ismail (Terengganu), worked on this craft.

Block Batik began in Terengganu in the 15th century using carvings on potatoes and wooden blocks. It continued to develop with time and technology and there are now “digital printed batik” in the market.

Lee Chor Lin (2007) stated that the British encouraged batik entrepreneurs to produce batik stamps by carving patterns on wooden blocks to make cheaper clothing materials in Kelantan and Terengganu.

Abdullah Mohamed (Nakula) said:

“The word “Batik” appears to be of Indonesian origin from the Malay word for “point” and the Javanese word “Mba” meaning “to write.” Therefore “batik” means “writing dots,” which is meant here either in the form of dots in the true sense or the form of flowers and other small motifs on the surface of white cloth. Then, the technique to create those motifs depends on time and space.”

And there is a philosophy about batik especially the sarung. The position of the kepala kain symbolises the marital status of the wearer. If the kepala of the cloth is positioned in the front, it means the wearer is unmarried. If the kepala of the cloth is at the back, the wearer is married. If the wearer wears the kepala of the cloth on the left side, then she is a widow while positioning the kepala on the right, she is a divorcee.

Batik Painting

It is generally known that “batik painting” existed in Malaysian modern art in the 1950s. The works used batik media and went through traditional batik production. “Painting Batik” refers to works related to specific themes but focuses on batik motifs. Media use is not tied to batik-making media and it is free according to the artist’s convenience (Harozila Ramli, 2007).

The first art exhibition that featured batik works was held in September 1955 at the Penang Library. Half a year later, an exhibition on the concept of Batik was held in Singapore by a joint venture between Wilfred J. Plumbe and Frank Sullivan (Wang Zineng, 2016).

Batik techniques and processes have also attracted the attention of some individuals to be applied in their paint production process. Pioneering painters such as Datuk Chuah Thien Teng (1912–2008) applied the batik technique in their painting process as early as 1953. It was the result of experimentation by the painter in the 1940s. His early work was exhibited at the Penang Painting Association Exhibition (1953).

As Cheong Soo Pieng (1917–1983) was very interested in the process, Chuah Thean Teng taught him to produce Batik.

The next generation of artists continues the batik technique and processes in the production of their paintings. Patrick Ng Kah Onn (1932-1989), Khalil Ibrahim (1934-2018), Tan Rahim Zahici, Grace Selvanayagam, Ismail Mat Hussin, Tay Mo Leong , Seah Kim Joo, Tan Thean Song and Fatimah Chik are among those who use Batik as a technique in their creative process. However, their works differ in appearance when closely examined and studied, each having their own style and identity, due to the diversity in the batik process they apply.

Chuah Thean Teng, Patrick Ng Kah Onn, Khalil Ibrahim, Grace Selvanayagam, Ismail Mat Hussin, Tay Mo-Leong, Seah Kim Joo, and Tan Thean Song, for example, are fond of using *canting* and cracking in their works while Fatimah Chik is comfortable with the Shibori technique or “tie dye” in producing her batik paintings.

Batik is no longer seen as a surface decoration or practical item but has transformed as an easel painting surface presented in a framed or scrolled form and displayed in the context of an art gallery. Art historians describe the use of batik techniques in modern Malaysian painting as initially seen as enriching the technical and formal principles of a painting. It does not produce any historical change; artists are still tied to creating decorative and scenic paintings and tourists will receive them (Mulyadi Mahamood, 1995).

Batik Painting and Painting Batik

Synthesis brings together several painters who use Batik as a theme in their work. It comprises various generations of painters, pioneers, prominent, contemporary, and young and upcoming painters. Various techniques, styles and issues are presented as a visual treat.

Synthesis displays works that elevate nature as a subject. Nature is a reference for painters because it holds various meanings to be explored and translated into visual form.

Feeding (1987) by Chuah Thean Teng shows a figure as its main subject as he likes to create figurative works.



detail Yusof Ghani Ibu Pertiwi 1

Joyful Moment (2020) by Chuah Seow Keng also shows a stylised figure as subject against the backdrop of a natural environment. The background is obscured to show space to emphasise the main subject. Daily activities are recorded as current visual documentation.

Fisherman's Village (2021) is a visual recording by Mohamed Abdullah. The atmosphere of the fishing village showing their socioeconomic status attracted his attention to be discussed with the connoisseurs.

Flora (2022) by Nadzrin Haziq and Kasihnya Ibu (2022) by Sukri Derahman are also among the Batik paintings on display.

Raja Azhar Idris shares his Selendang Batik (2006), a work made of fused slumped glass, which is indeed the identity of this versatile painter. The work that shows a piece of batik shawl fabric decorated with floral bouquet motifs is a documentation of the shape of classic sarung batik fabric that is often worn by women, especially in the East Coast. A scarf is a women's accessory that is often styled casually or at formal events and complements Malay woman's clothes.

Ibu Pertiwi I & II (2022) is an abstract painting by Yusof Ghani, which displays images of regional floral motives and figure that are stylised. Indeed, Yusof Ghani is known as a prolific abstract expressionist painter.

Abdullah Jones shows a simplified floral motif to dominate the surface space of an acrylic painting titled Soraya dan Orked Berkelah di Pantai Sepat (2022). There are several small-sized human figures in the space above the surface.

Tumbuh #12 (2021) by Fauzin Mustafa also chooses a natural image like flora filling the surface space. Fauzin Mustafa is always comfortable with the construction process of his work surface layer by layer. This technique is indeed the identity of the artist.

Mekar Cempaka (2022) by young painter Badrulzzaman Abu has always appreciated flora and fauna in his paintings. The image of various flora that is harmed looks fresh and vibrant.

Mastura Abdul Rahman, one of the female artists who always works and is loyal to local motifs, shares *Pesan Ibu* (2016). It combines Middle Eastern style arabesque patterns and traditional Malay textile patterns and flora that has been visibly styled.

Baja dan Racun (2022), a work by Mohd Noor Mahmud, offers images of flora resulting from the application of batik blocks in his collection. The image of flora is always a choice in producing batik fabric. The artist greatly appreciate the creation of the Almighty; flowers store various secrets and functions for us to find and benefit from.

The Four Seasons #1 (2022) by Zaharin Mohammad also shows flora motifs styled using applied or stamp techniques such as batik block making techniques. The batik maker transfers the motif produced on the block onto the surface of the fabric; the painter transfers the motif onto the surface built with a specific medium to create an invented texture effect.

The block batik technique is further celebrated in the work titled *Teruntum* (2022) by Syed Zamzur Akasah, inspired by the *Bunga Teruntum* pattern that is often found on batik fabric especially on batik block.

Night Working (2022) by Faiz Mahdon records the natural drying process of batik fabrics. The process of drying batik cloth naturally is a traditional method before the introduction of modern dryers. This natural drying process also affects the quality of the batik fabric produced. It is usually done before the scorching sun so as not to be exposed to direct sunlight. Air circulation also needs to be considered.

An artist who often portrays fishing boats in his works, Zaim Durulaman uses a collage of batik fabric as his *Pisang Emas Dibawa Belayar Revisited #II* (2002) surface. Images of fishing boats are symmetrical and objects like pisang emas adorn the foreground of the painting. The fishing boat is used as a metaphor for the daily life of fishermen who face various challenges for the survival of themselves and their families.

Stamps are the identity of young painter Hirzaq Harris. *Batik Canting 2017* (2022) shows one of the techniques in the batik-making process. This young artist celebrates local craft products through the “stamps” produced. The batik *canting* technique is in the second edition Batik Stamp Series, together with the Batik Block technique (60 cents)

detail Hirzaq Harris Batik Canting 2017



Batik Canting
Canting Batik

Malaysia **مليسيا** 80sen
2017

and Tie and Dye (90 cents), was launched by Pos Malaysia on 20 June 2017. The first edition of Batik Malaysia was launched in 2005. Batik Chanting 2017 (2022) is also a visual recording of Malaysian Batik history that connoisseurs should celebrate.

Other artists participating in the Synthesis exhibition are Abdullah Jones (Soraya & Orked berkelah di tepi pantai Sepat, 2022), Aimman Hafizal (Rhythm is life, life is rhythm, 2022), Akif Azmi (14 Kuntum dalam Rumah, 2022), Alisya Fahmi (Ibu, 2022), Amsyar Ramly (Terang Malam, 2022), D Khairul Anwar Salleh (Titik, 2022), Elly Nor Suria (Isen-Isen Bunga Series I, 2022), Fadzil Fakaruddin (But'tick (Flower), 2022), Fujianggara (Figura Serumpun, 2022), Hidayat Arshad (Grid (Rssence of Colour), 2022), Isa Ishak (Pelepah, 2022), Jamil Mat Isa (Floating Melur, 2022), Mandy Maung (The Knight with Midnight Jewels, 2020), Najib Bamadhaj (Wind of Change, 2022), Ng Foo Cheong (Blue Indigo...My Lotus Pond, 2016), Raden Hisbullah (Debur Gelombang Rahsia Samudera, 2022), Rosli Zakaria (Sculpdraw #Motif Saraf Jantung, 2022), Rahman Jabbar (Heart of Red, 2022), Shaliza Juanna Alfred (Sang Anggun, 2022), Sharlene Lopang (Madame, 2022), and Tony Ng (Life is wonderful #11, 2022).

Conclusion

It is hoped that Batik will continue to be part of the process of life of the local community. Hopefully, Batik will always be a reference in the work process of local artists. Hopefully, local Batik will continue to find a place in the study of researchers and may Batik continue to be explored by academics.

Mohd Jamil Mat Isa, PhD
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College of Creative Arts
Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Shah Alam

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ABDULLAH JONES
Soraya dan Orked
Berkelah di Pantai Sepat
Acrylic on canvas
153 cm x 153 cm
2022

RM 11,500





AIMMAN HAFIZAL
Rhythm is Life, Life is Rhythm
Acrylic on canvas
91 cm x 121 cm
2022

RM 3,800

AKIF AZMI
14 Kuntum Dalam Rumah
Mixed media on canvas
122 cm x 91 cm
2022

RM 2,400



ALISYA FAHMI
Ibu
Oil on canvas
91 cm x 91 cm
2022

RM 2,700



AMSYAR RAMLY
Terang Malam
Oil on Canvas
92 cm x 92 cm
2022

RM 2,600





BADRULZAMAN ABU
Mekar Cempaka
Oil and bitumen on canvas
122 cm x 153 cm
2022

RM 4,350



CHUAH SEOW KENG

Joyful Moment

Batik painting

116 cm x 121.5 cm

2020

RM 65,000

CHUAH THEAN TENG, DATUK

Feeding

Batik painting

100.5 cm x 67.5 cm

1987

RM 80,000





ELLY NOR SURIA
Isen-isen Bunga series 1 & 2
Watercolour and batik dye
84 cm x 59 cm (each)
2022

RM 3,600



FADZRIL FAKARUDDIN

But'tick (Flower)

Oil on canvas

91.5 cm x 152.5 cm

2022

RM 4,500



FAIZ MAHDON
Night Working
Oil on canvas
38 cm x 76.5 cm
2022

RM 4,000



FAUZIN MUSTAFA
Tumbuh #12
Mixed media on canvas
122 cm X 122 cm
2021

RM 24,000

FUJIANGGARA
Figura Serumpun
Acrylic on canvas
152 cm x 152 cm
2022

RM 5,000





HIDAYAT ARSHAD
Grid (Essence of Colour)
Acrylic on canvas
91.5 cm x 122 cm
2022

RM 3,500



HIRZAQ HARRIS
Batik Canting 2017
Mixed media on canvas
105 cm x 180 cm
2022

RM 5,800

ISA ISHAK
Pelapah
Oil on canvas
152 cm x 152 cm
2022

RM 6,300





JAMIL MAT ISA
Floating Melur
Waterbased paint on canvas
120 cm x 120 cm
2022

RM 24,000



D KHAIRUL ANWAR SALLEH

Titik

Acrylic on canvas

122 cm x 183.5 cm

2022

RM 16,800

MANDY MAUNG
The Knight with Midnight Jewels
Oil on canvas
182.8 cm x 122 cm
2020

RM 20,000





MASTURA ABDUL RAHMAN
Pesan Ibu
Mixed media on canvas & wood
152.4 cm x 204.47 cm
2016

RM 75,000



MAT DOLLAH (MOHAMED ABDULLAH)

Fisherman's Village
Batik on cotton calico
80 cm x 120 cm
2021

RM 3,000

MOHD NOOR MAHMUD
Baja dan Racun
Mixed media on canvas
105 cm x 115 cm
2022

RM 22,000



NADZRIN HAZIQ
Flora
Oil on canvas
91 cm x 91 cm
2022

RM 2,250





NAJIB BAMADHAJ

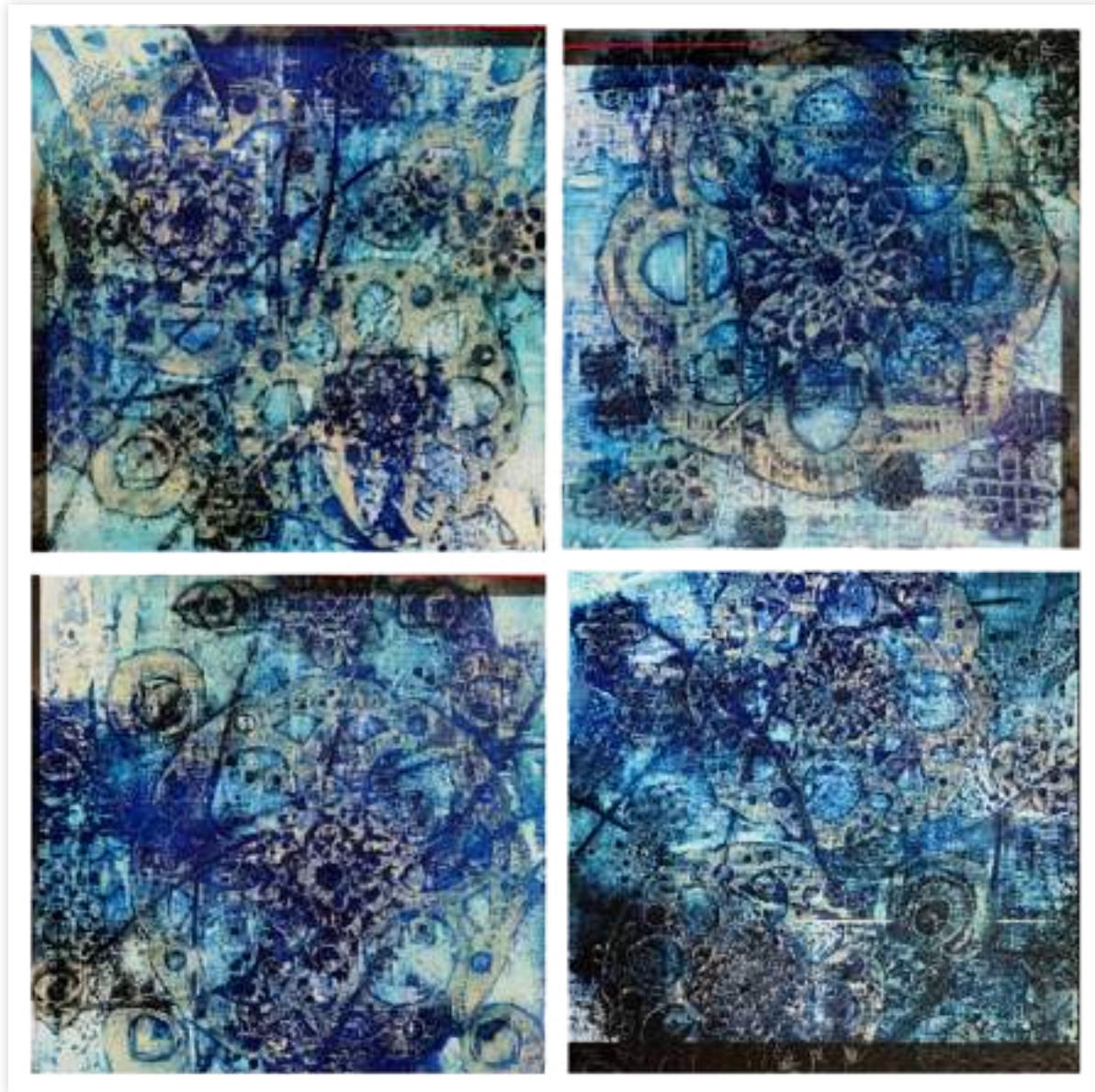
Wind of Change

Acrylic, charcoal and fabric collage on wood panels

124 cm x 153 cm

2022

RM 20,000



NG FOO CHEONG
Blue Indigo... My Lotus Pond
Mixed media on canvas
180 cm x 180 cm
2016

RM 39,000

RADEN HISBULLAH
Debur Gelombang Rahsia
Samudera
Oil, acrylic and chinese ink
on canvas
122 cm x 153 cm
2022



RAHMAN JABAR
Heart of Red
Acrylic and collage on canvas
122 cm x 91 cm
2022

RM 2,000





RAJA AZHAR IDRIS

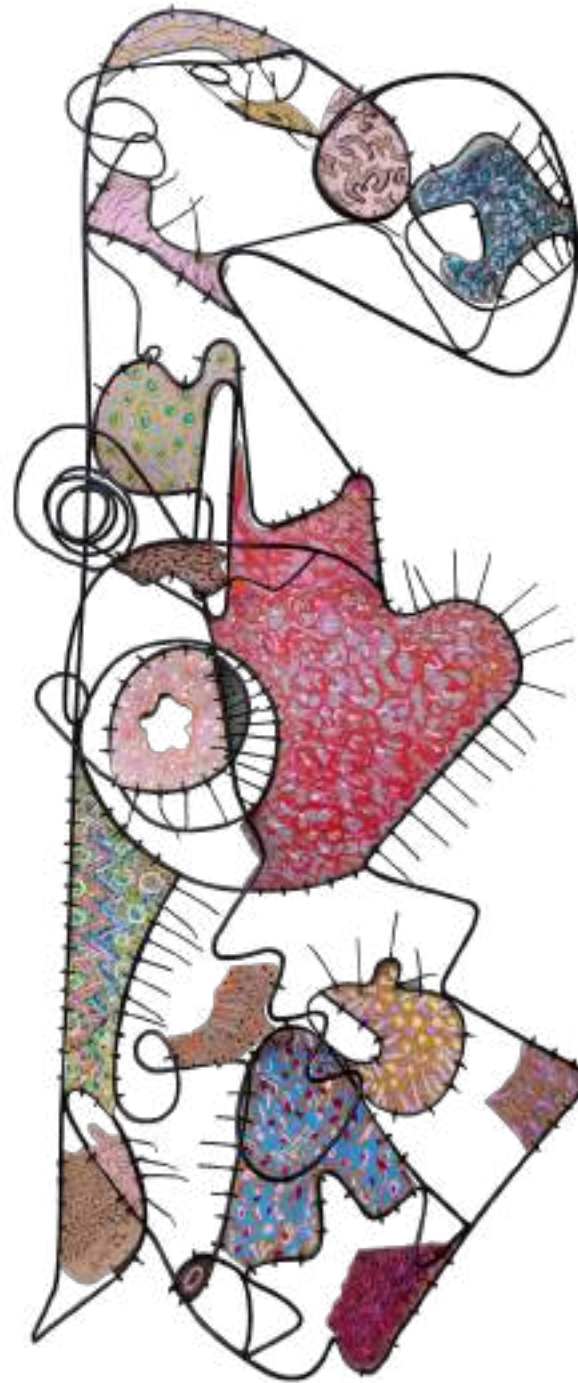
Selendang Batik

Fused, textural and slumped hot coloured glass with 18 carat gold

61 cm x 110 cm

2006

RM 25,000



ROSLI ZAKARIA

Sculpdraw

#Motif Saraf Jantung

Metal, MDF board with crayon

colour, cable tight

180 cm x 65 cm

2022

RM 8,800



SHALIZA JUANNA ALFRED
Sang Anggun
Fabric collage on canvas
130 cm x 150 cm
2022

RM 8,000



SHARLENE LOPANG

Madame

Fabric on canvas

61 cm x 61 cm

2022

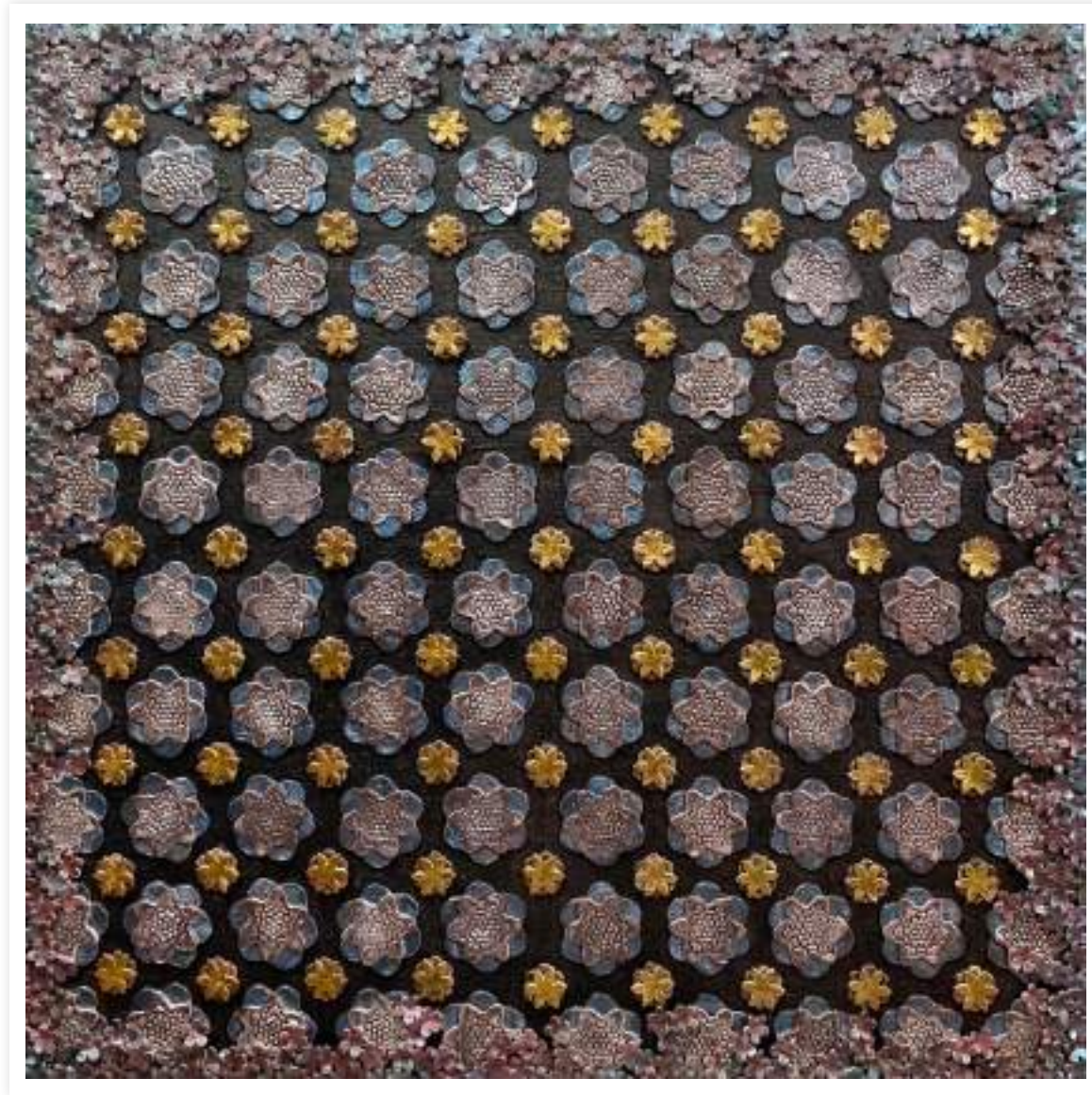
RM 3,500



SUKRI DERAHMAN

Kasihnya Ibu
Batik painting
125 cm x 145 cm
2022

RM 15,000



SYED ZAMZUR AKASAH
Teruntum
Paper clay & acrylic on canvas
91 cm x 91 cm
2022

RM 2,600

TONY NG
Life Is Wonderful #11
Acrylic on canvas
91 cm x 91 cm
2022

RM9,900





YUSOF GHANI
Ibu Pertiwi I & II (diptych)
Mixed media on batik
65 cm X 54 cm
2022

RM 38,000 (each)

ZAHARIN MOHAMMAD
The Four Seasons #1
Mixed media on canvas
81 cm x 81 cm
2022



RM 4,800



ZAIM DURULAMAN

Pisang Emas Dibawa Belayar
Acrylic & batik fabric on canvas
91 cm x 182 cm
2022

RM 18,000

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Chuah Thean Teng, Datuk
Elly Nor Suria
Fadzril Fakaruddin
Faiz Mahdon
Fauzin Mustafa
Fujianggara
Hidayat Arshad
Hirzaq Harris
Isa Ishak
Jamil Mat Isa
D Khairul Anwar Salleh
Mandy Maung
Mastura Abdul Rahman
Mohamed Abdullah
Mohd Noor Mahmud
Nadzrin Haziq
Najib Bamadhaj
Ng Foo Cheong
Raden Hisbullah
Rahman Jabar
Raja Azhar Idris

Rosli Zakaria
Shaliza Juanna Alfred
Sharlene Lopang
Sukri Derahman
Syed Zamzur Akasah
Tony Ng
Yusof Ghani
Zaharin Mohammad
Zaim Durulaman

Datuk Michael Chan
Jeannie Leong
Azlynn Aziz
Fauziah Ismail
Burhanuddin Bakri
Syukri Idris
Shahrul Md Desa
Azreen Aziz
Siti Hajar
Harun Najmi
Isam Rasip
Azrie Zainuddin
Ainur Fathiah

Dr. Jamil Mat Isa
Salikin Sidek

Institut Kraf Negara
Kakee Batik



detail Alisya Fahmi Ibu

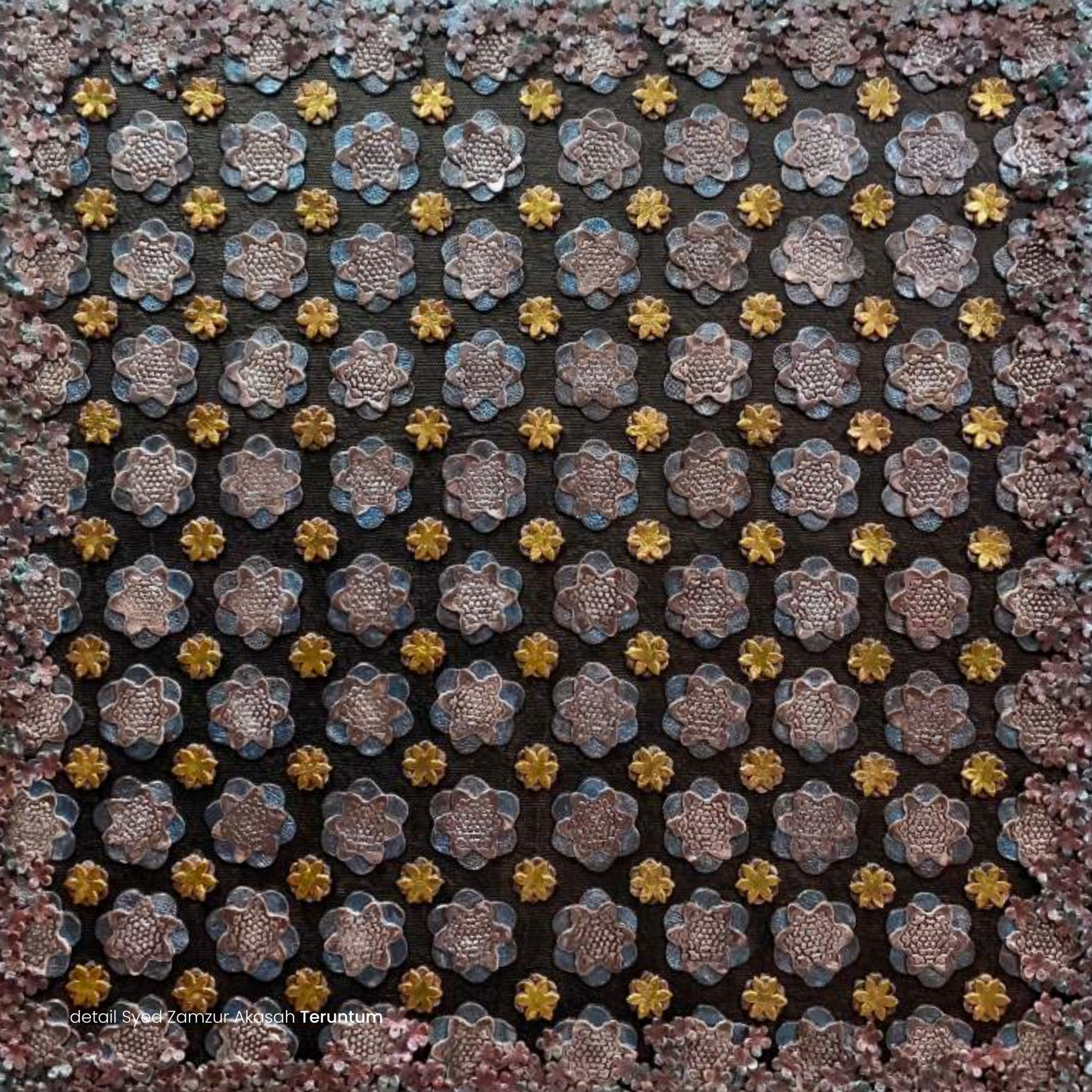
Alisya Fahmi Ibu 2010



detail Aimman Hafizal Rhythm is Life, Life is Rhythm



detail Faiz Mahdon **Night working**



detail Syed Zamzur Akasah Teruntum

galeri
PRIMA