

Invitational Exhibition opens today at School of Arts Gallery, UMS

NST 10/02/2011/9

KOTA KINABALU: Since its introduction 23 years ago, the Invitational Exhibition has been an important event for artists in Sabah, providing them with a showcase for their distinctive talents and latest preoccupations in terms of subjects, techniques and artistic media.

At one venue and in a single viewing, art enthusiasts and the general public alike are treated to an exhibition which is panoramic in scope and truly representative of the current art scene in Sabah – with the work of new artists being displayed alongside the output of their more experienced counterparts.

Originally conceived as a way of identifying artists practicing at the time, the Invitational Exhibition has grown in stature over the years and now considers its primary roles to be those of honouring the efforts of the active artists as well as showing appreciation for their contributions to the development of the visual arts in Sabah.

This year, the number of artists participating has risen to 40, with 12 female and 28 male artists being represented.

Among the 90 artworks on display are a number of realistic, naive and still-life paintings as well as an array of 3D pieces, including metal and wooden sculptures, and fabric crafts.

Many of the works are based on traditional themes and portray local scenes and subjects such as Tina Rimmer's "Watermelons for Sale", Christianne Goonting's "Tribute to Tambalang" (race course), Sarah Lim's vibrant depiction of "Gaya at Sunset" and Maduni Majidin's "Atkinson Tower in Kota Kinabalu".

Flowers and animals continue to inspire our artists. Richard Lim's Chinese ink on canvas "Flower series", Hikari Fujita's "Sakura series", Carol Lim's "Nepenthes" and "Butterflies", Zulwawi Hashim's "Orchid Series", David Liew's "Orang Utan" and "Crab" are typical of displayed works on these themes.

Noteworthy textile craftworks on the same theme include Suzani Suhaimi's "Bajau Horse" bags and Naomi Kato's exploration of flowers and the distinctive scales of the pangolin.

The combination of works by experienced artists, such as Tina Rimmer, Richard Lim, Dzulkipli Abdul Rahman, Christianne Goonting, Maduni Majidin and Zaimie Sahibil with those of new emerging artists such as Azlan Dulikab, Arthur Siowou, Rosmaini Sunarjo and Chua Yuen Chang, is what makes this exhibition special.

Hopefully, this 'coming together' of artists from different generations and different cultures with widely contrasting approaches to their subjects will continue to promote creativity and innovation, and ultimately enhance the status of art in the State.

The exhibition will be officially opened by Nilakrisna James (Chairman of the Committee of Development of Visual Arts & Sabah Art Gallery, and member of the Board of Directors for Sabah Cultural Board) today (Thursday) at 9am.

It will be open to the public from February 10-28, 2011 at the School of Arts Gallery, University Malaysia Sabah here from 9am-4pm. For further information, contact (088) 268 806, 268 535 or 268 748.