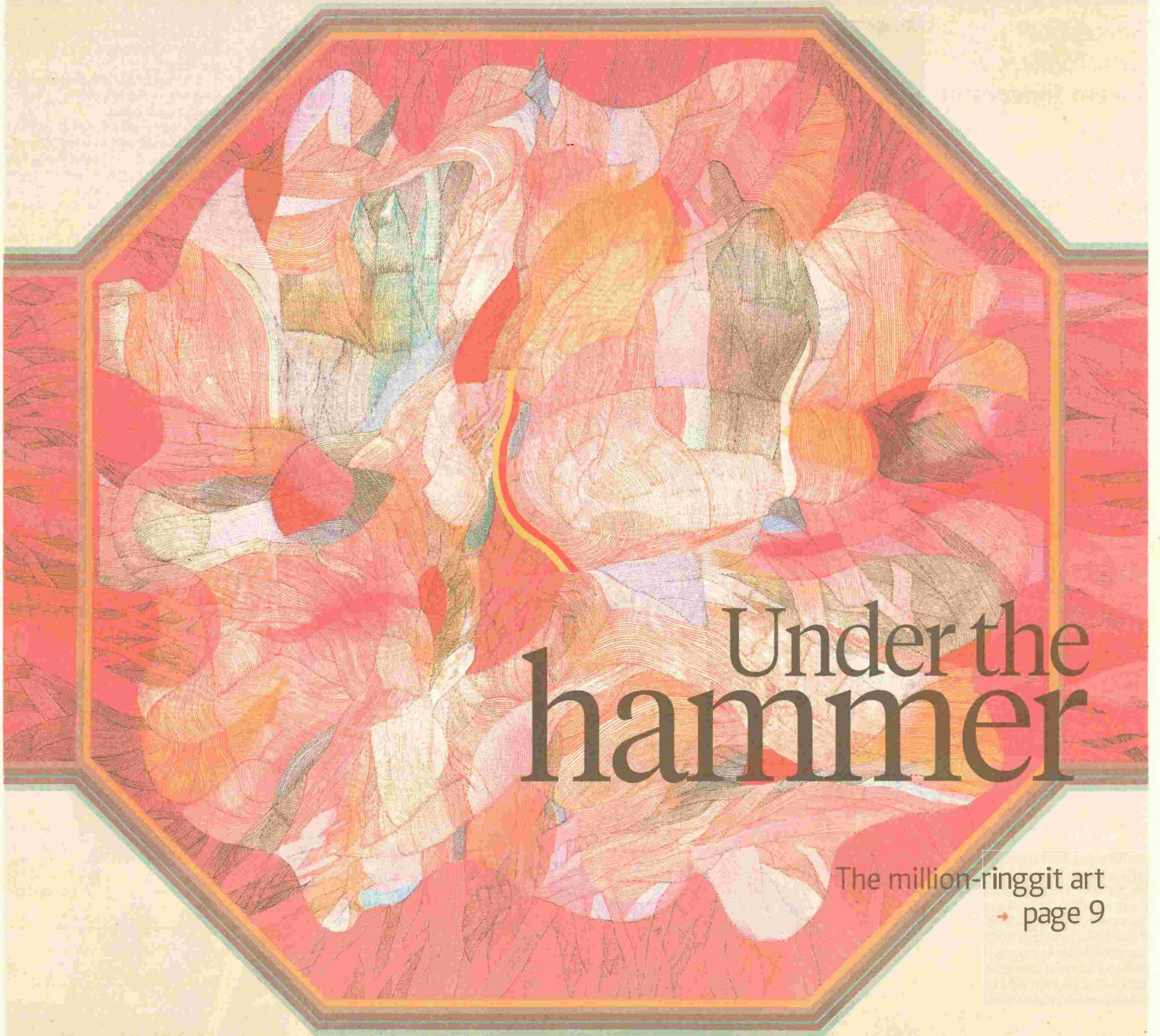


APRIL 8, 2012

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Under the hammer

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BROWSER

NOT A
STROLL IN
THE **PARK**

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THE MAN WHO COULD
HAVE BEEN **RAJAH**

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Olivia, we
honestly
love you!

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Auction of Malaysian artworks

Local art connoisseurs should head for the Henry Butcher Art Auction where 87 pieces of art will go under the hammer, writes **Aneeta Sundararaj**

WHAT happens when you've spent decades collecting art works by specific artists only to run out of space to store them?

Some people give these paintings away. Others are enormously grateful to Vincent Sim and Lim Eng Chong who are both directors of Henry Butcher Art Auctioneers. These two men are behind the upcoming Henry Butcher Art Auction Malaysia where works of art by local artists will be auctioned off.

The heart of the story of to be lies in the love that both men have for the arts. "My story begins in Muar, where I'm from," explains Sim, 67. His family has been collecting paintings by Chinese artists for a very long time and includes the work of one Professor Liu Hai Shu.

Liu was no stranger to controversy. In 1917, he founded the Shanghai Fine Art Academy and was one of the first men to use nudes as his subject

matter. In conservative Shanghai, he faced a lot of opposition to this technique, but was lucky to have the ear of the French Consul and was left in peace. Two of his students were Liu Kang and Chen Jen Hao. With the advent of the Second World War, these students returned to Liu Kang's hometown, Muar.

Sim's grandfather used to meet the two artists at the coffee shop they opened during the War. He and Sim's father remember listening to stories of the two artists accompanying their professor to Paris before the War. By 1972, young Vincent Sim was also in contact with Liu, but was terribly sad that the Cultural Revolution had reduced the professor to practically nothing. Nevertheless, he sent money regularly to the good professor. In return, Liu would send him his paintings. Sim finally met Liu in 1980 in Hong Kong, after the Cultural Revolution ended.

For Lim, 59, having attended many auctions, both in the country and internationally, he realised that while the works of many of the artists in Asia were featured, people didn't seem to know about Malaysian art. "They lack a platform to showcase their work," he says.

Lim explains that there are a lot of galleries, but each of them caters to a specific clientele and there's "no open information. By having an auction, the market becomes more transparent and open.

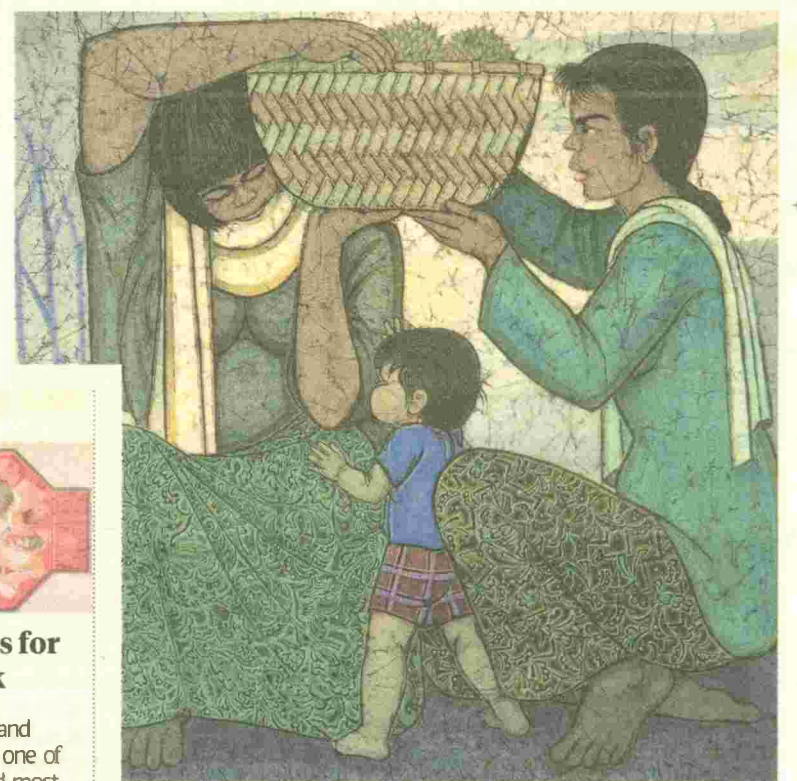
People will begin to know that what they pay for an artwork is what the market wants to pay."

So, the two men collaborated and

What: Henry Butcher Art Auction Malaysia
When: May 6
Where: White Box, MAP@Publika, Kuala Lumpur
Penang Preview April 5-8 at Galeri Seni Mutiara
Singapore Preview April 12-15 at Helutrans Artspace
Kuala Lumpur Full Viewing April 21-May 5, White Box, MAP@Publika
 For details, contact Linda Leoni at 03-26913089 / 012-227 5325 or leoni@hbart.com.my



Ismail Hashim - Kedai Gunting (1986)



Chuah Thean Teng, - Durian Sellers 1990 [87.3cm x 86.5cm] batik



Big bucks for Ib's work

Red, Orange and Core (1984), one of the finest and most significant art works by Malaysia's Datuk Ibrahim Hussein to ever appear at auction, is set to break the world auction record for the artist, as well as for any Malaysian work of art to date, at the Henry Butcher Art Auction Malaysia 2012. Standing at 1.9m tall and 2.7m wide, this piece carries an estimated price of between RM800,000 and RM1.2 million.

* Cover picture

hence, Art Auction Malaysia. This year, there are altogether 87 pieces of artwork being put up for sale.

One of them is a masterpiece by Ibrahim Hussein (more fondly known in art circles as Ib). It's called *Red, Orange and Core* and is arguably the only piece by Ib with an octagonal motif, framing the centre forms while acting as a focal device. This piece was acquired directly from the artist by the present owner shortly after its creation and has been preserved in pristine condition for almost 30 years. Standing 1.9m tall and 2.7m wide, this piece carries an estimated price of between RM800,000 and RM1.2 million.

"We are thrilled and honoured," says Lim, "to have the opportunity to offer this significant work at auction and we anticipate that it will generate strong interest among both individual and institutional collectors."

For the first time, a piece from Latiff Mohidin's *Mindscape* series will make an appearance. Estimated at between RM120,000 and RM180,000, this 1983 piece hails from Ambassador Datuk N. Parameswaran's collection. The painting was first exhib-

ited at the Maybank Art Gallery in Kuala Lumpur in 1988 and was recently featured at the National Art Gallery.

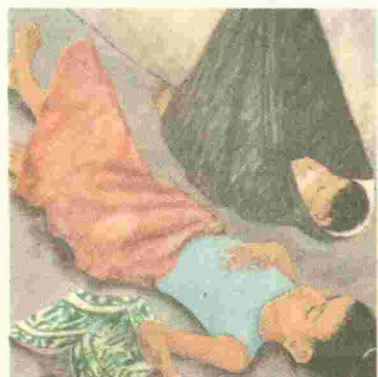
Other highlights of the auction include: *Durian Sellers* (1990) by Datuk Chuah Thean Teng (estimated between RM90,000 and RM120,000) and the work of Dzulkipli Buyong: A 1967 pastel on paper called *Tidurlah Anakku*. It perfectly exemplifies his innocent yet remarkably sensitive and true-to-life depiction of rural scenes.

For the very first time, a photography work will be featured in this auction. On offer is an extremely

rare hand-tinted gelatine silver print by veteran local photographer Ismail Hashim. *Kedai Gunting* (1986) depicts an old swivelling barber's chair in a run-down wooden hut.

Also making a debut is works using Chinese Ink. The works of artists like Chen Wen Hsi and Cheng Huang will be featured. Sim's favourite seems to be one by Huang Yao, *Reap What You Sow* (1980). Estimated at between RM3,000 and RM5,000, Sim says it shows Huang Yao's spontaneous and confident strokes with instinctive use of colours in accentuating the figures.

With something for everyone in this auction, start counting your money so that you can become a proud owner of works of art by some of the most prominent artists in Malaysia.



Dzulkipli Buyong - Tidurlah Anakku 1967 [74.5cm x 53.5cm] pastel on paper



Abdul Latiff Mohidin - Mindscape 1983 [92cm x 92cm] oil on canvas