

LIFE &  
TIMES

# PU SE

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2015



**LIVING PAGES 4&5**

**ART AND  
SCIENCE  
OF FOOD**

**WELL LIT. PAGE 7**

**STIRRING  
READS**

**BEATS PAGE 12**

**MIGUEL'S  
PERSONAL  
JOURNEY**

## Tree of life

BEAUTIFUL ARTWORK  
TO FOSTER A LOVE  
FOR NATURE  
→ PAGES 8&9

BROUGHT TO YOU  
BY LIFE & TIMES**PULSE** green

# SEEDS OF ENERGY AND LIFE

Magnificent works of the Pohon Budi exhibition are another way to raise awareness on the importance of protecting Mother Nature  
writes **Aneeta Sundararaj**

**I**F there's one theme that exists in all major faiths, it has to be the concept of a cosmic tree. Or so, says Edric Ong, senior vice-president of World Crafts Council, Asia Pacific. It's also the central theme for an exhibition that Ong has jointly curated, called Pohon Budi: Seeds of Energy from Tree of Life, Where Creative Imaginings Abound. In this exhibition, there are more than 100 pieces of artwork from interdisciplinary genres by established artists from 38 countries. But what stands out is that this exhibition means so much more than merely promoting "ecological values central to the global environment movement and promotion of sustainable lifestyles".

In fact, many of the artists have taken the trouble to think about things we take for granted — and create beautiful artwork from them. In so doing, they've truly fostered a love for nature and cultivated a behaviour that generates a healthy approach to sustainability. Here, Ong showcases 10 beautiful pieces from the exhibition.

❶ This is one of Ong's pieces which is a traditional piece of hand-dyed batik. The base materials are satin or silk and the dyes used are from the ketapang leaf or indigo.

❷ Using the Jamdani style of weaving, this is a sari by Gaurang Shah. Jamdani is a word of Persian origin and combines the words Jam meaning flower and Dani meaning vase. The weave is done by hand loom. Of the many motifs in this piece, Ong points to the tiger and deer, which he believes will appeal to Malaysians.

❸ This headboard is a piece from Myanmar and, in particular, Mandalay. Ong says that there are precious and semi-precious stones inlaid into the wood. What is special here is the carving of an "ever-flowering vase". In Buddhism, the vase is often a fat vessel. On top of this vessel, there will be a large jewel to indicate that it's a "treasure vase". In this case, the treasure is flowers. As such, says Ong, this is an "an ever-flowering vase".

❹ In wayang kulit, explains Ong, the show always begins with what's called a Gunungan. In Indonesia, the shows often depict stories that have a social message in them. Since there is no tradition of wayang kulit in Sarawak, Ong decided to marry the two traditions and created this Gunungan based on Sarawakian motifs.

❺ **COVER PICTURE:** This piece of songket has been woven by a group of young girls under the tutelage and guidance of Dr June Ngo in Sarawak. It depicts the tree of life. The bits of thread that hang out are meant to depict aerial roots which grow downwards.

❻ This kimono is a vintage piece. It was acquired Tokushima, Shikoku, Japan. The base cloth is silk, but Ong draws my attention to how parts of the tree have been painted in gold. When the light reflects

on this design, he says that it looks like a thousand fireflies around the tree. The crane, which symbolises fidelity, is also painted on this majestic piece.

❼ What do you do when the windscreen of your car shatters? Chances are you'll sweep all the pieces of glass and throw them away. That is not what Gabby Barredo from Philippines does. He creates artwork, like this sculpture of a tree of life, made from shattered windscreen glass and metal.

❽ This piece, says Ong, is a wall hanging that would normally be used in a tent. It's by Brigitte Singh from Jaipur, India. Her textiles are widely recognised as being amongst the finest block prints in the world.

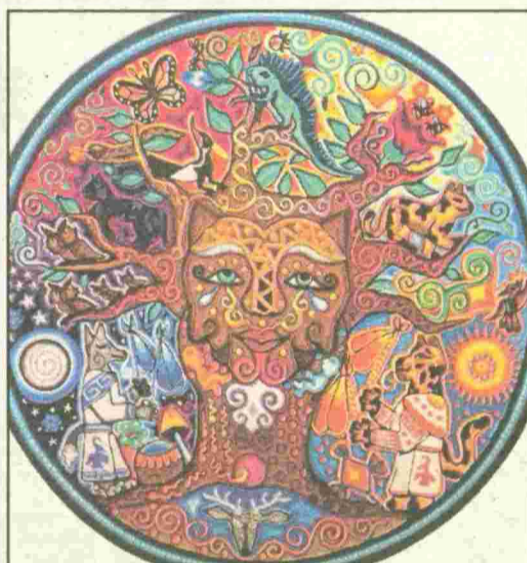
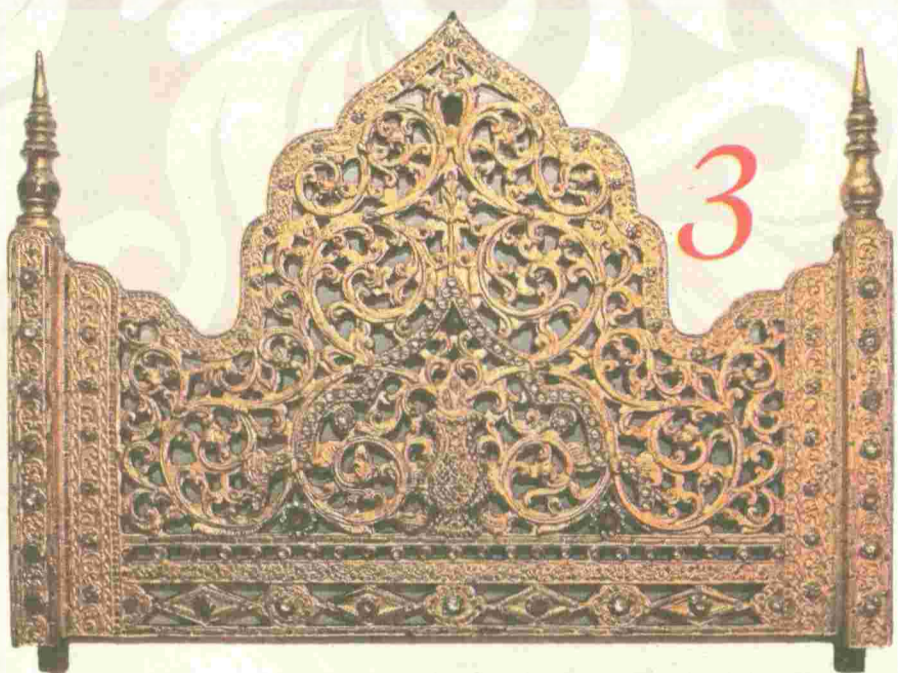
❾ Cilau Valadez is a native of Mexico and he is part of the Huichol tribe. This piece is a yarn painting and his creations are inspired by his tribe's native myths and spirituality. Ong says that he was worried about this piece because four months ago, Cilau hadn't yet completed the piece. "Cilau says that what he paints with the yarn comes from his dreams," explains Ong. He then invites us to look closer at this one-of-a-kind piece that Cilau created for the exhibition and says, "See how many animals you can find." In under a minute, we'd found a sun, moon, jaguar, owl, iguana, butterfly, serpent, birds, deer, sperm, ovary and the process of fertilisation itself.

❿ The base material of this artwork is not cotton or silk. In fact, the thread is that of peacock feathers. Then, each leaf of the tree is a beetle wing that has been shaped using lasers. Ong says that these beetle wings can only be taken from a beetle after it dies a natural death. He explains: "If you force it from the beetle, these wings will lose their shine." After that, gold-plated and silver thread was used to embroider close to 2,000 beetle wings to form this magnificent pattern.

PICTURES BY MUHD ASYRAF SAWAL

green PULSE Brought to you by LIFE & TIMES

GY  
E



**WHAT:** Pohon Budi: Seeds of Energy from Tree of Life, where Creative Imaginings Abound.  
**WHERE:** Galeri Petronas, Level 3, Suria KLCC, Petronas Twin Towers, KL ([www.galeripetronas.com.my](http://www.galeripetronas.com.my))  
Until Nov 15. Admission is free.

