



CHEW



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CHEW Fang Chin, who has dabbled in arts for four decades, has dedicated his life to painting the culture of Sarawak.

Now in his 70s, he reflects on his achievements in promoting the state in many countries throughout his active years.

His art, which he described as "ethnic impressionist", depicted the various walks of life of Sarawak's indigenous people. He attributed this to his days spent visiting several longhouses and villages in order to get to know the Dayaks better.

As a Chinese, he has always been intrigued by the fact that Sarawak is a multicultural state abounding with beautiful heritage and significant traditions.

Chew, despite being a law graduate, had always wanted to do art since he was young. His father was a collector of art, specifically Chinese porcelain.

With creativity running through his veins, he established a reputation in his early days, showcasing his artwork at the Sarawak Museum in 1986 — his first solo exhibition.

In conjunction with the state's Cultural Heritage Year in 1988, Chew exhibited his artwork in Kuching, Sibul, Sanyek, Miri, and Bintulu.

His paintings can now be found in the National Art Gallery, the Sarawak Museum, and the Sarawak State Library.

His art journey

Chew shared that he had spent a decade immersing himself in art in various places throughout Europe and America when he was younger.

Through his journey of experimenting with different art

Four decades of culture on canvas

methods and exposing himself to various artists, he learnt techniques that he eventually incorporated into his artwork.

"In the mid-2000s, I travelled throughout America and Europe to attend various artist camps in order to learn different techniques, improve myself, and draw inspiration from them. I observed my trips through the eyes of an artist and was inspired to create a painting that incorporated two very different elements: modernity and traditions."

Having participated in over 30 solo exhibitions worldwide, Chew said that creating art takes time.

"When I get inspired, I would sketch it out. I would then spend my time painting them on canvas. Doing art is not easy. It depends on an individual's background and ability. Regardless, one must work hard. If I stop painting for months or years, I believe my techniques and skills will become rusty."

Chew also believes that a good artist must be disciplined in order to be successful.

"The journey of art may be a long and difficult one, but an artist should always strive for the best. A lot of artists love what they do, and that is enough. Painting makes me happy because I get to do what I love," said the 77-year-old.

Even after years in the art scene, Chew said he would rather not sell his artwork, believing that doing so would create insincerity in his passion.

"Many people have wondered why I am doing this, but I believe that I would be a lot happier if I could continue to showcase them while keeping every piece of my artwork as they are precious."



Chew never regretted his decision to forgo his law degree in order to focus on art.

"Back then, all I knew was that I wanted to concentrate and focus on doing art. I know that investing my time in doing what I love will bear fruit in the long run."

As he speaks about his art with New Sarawak Tribune, Chew proudly shows his work through newspaper clippings and photos he kept throughout the years.

In his retirement age, he can look back with pride and happiness on the years he spent chasing his dreams.

"I believe that more people should know that when you pursue what you love, you can achieve your goals."

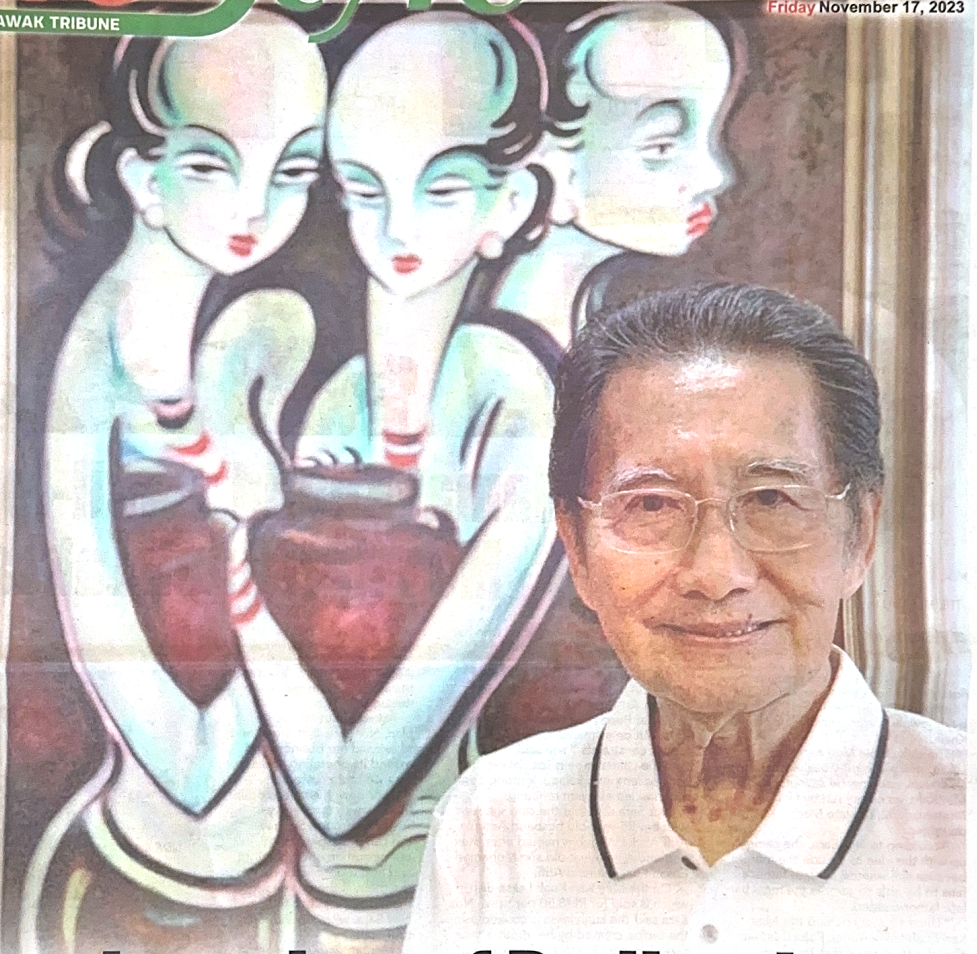
Despite his age, Chew hopes that one day he will be able to have more solo exhibitions in Sarawak as well as abroad, showcasing his four decades' worth of work.

Lifestyle

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Brushstrokes of Dedication

Sitting in a cafe with New Sarawak Tribune, Chew Fang Chin talks about the 40 years he spent immersing himself in arts and the lessons he learnt from them.

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