

Headline	Beauty of nature on canvas		
MediaTitle	The Star		
Date	22 May 2015	Color	Full Color
Section	Metro	Circulation	288,916
Page No	28,29	Readership	866,748
Language	English	ArticleSize	1786 cm²
Journalist	Story and photos by GRACE CHEN	AdValue	RM 89,883
Frequency	Daily	PR Value	RM 269,649



# Beauty of nature on canvas

Art exhibition in KL portrays importance of environmental conservation

Story and photos  
by GRACE CHEN

gracechen@thestar.com.my



**F**EATURING a myriad of landscapes from sea to sky, the From Sea To Summit exhibition which features artists Yeong Seak Ling, Ajis Mohamad, Raphael Scott Ahbeng and the late Joseph Tan opened on an engaging note at the Bank Negara Malaysia Museum and Art Gallery.

In the presence of fans such as Mimi Chung, who was so moved by the more than 50 pieces exhibited she shed tears, the joint exhibition also evoked a discourse on environmental conservation.

First to voice his thoughts was Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) director-general Datuk Dr Abd Latif Mohmod, who was there to officiate at the launch with Bank Negara Malaysia deputy governor Datuk Nor Shamsiah Mohd Yunus.

"When we ask young people where water comes from, they point to the tap," he said.

Abd Latif, whose department will be responsible for greening the grounds of the museum, said more awareness should be given to conservation considering many of the country's states and towns are named after plants including Petaling, Kulim,

Ipoh, Bruas and Malacca.

"The forest is our life. Our very survival depends on it but we seem to care more about finance, economics and cash crops instead," he said.

In the pursuit of development, scant attention is being paid on environmental impact.

"Do you know we have 15,000 plant varieties in Malaysia and that a study done between 2005 and 2013 revealed 1,132 have been obliterated. One of them is the Shorea kuantanensis reported to have become extinct in 1960," he said.

Abd Latif, whose department made headlines last year when a proposed highway threatened to split the man-made tropical forest in half, implored artists in future to not only record the beauty of nature but to go further by stating the species, how many are left in the country and their living patterns to heighten awareness.

"Mankind can undo in days what nature has worked on for eons."

said Nor Shamsiah in her opening address.

Fragility, she said, is what nature's wonders have in common, whether it is the underwater world of the turtle or the misty mountains, their futures exist in a fine balance.

From the artistic camp, Ahbeng, who is known for his paintings of Sarawakian jungles, agreed that the pursuit of profit had resulted in over-development but argued it was

not altogether bad.

"Sometimes development adds to the glamour of a place. We must also not forget the job opportunities. For example, when you build a condominium it involves thousands of people," said Ahbeng.

Yeong, who wowed audiences with vivid details of sarongs and

sleeping babies in his Kampung Life series, said a country without development would go into regression.

"No country can exist without development, but it must be properly planned. At the same time, it must go hand in hand with education. If not, you will have first-class facilities but third-world mentality," said the colon cancer survivor.

Ajis, the artist who had moved Chung to tears with his aquatic compositions, put it simply. "For every bright, beautiful and tranquil side,

there exists a dark and busy side," he said.

"As you know, I am already 77 years old, so career-wise, having my work shown by Bank Negara means a lot more people like my work and that makes me happy," Ahbeng said.

As Yeong explained, for an artist to have his work collected by Bank Negara meant national recognition.

"In the Malaysian art world, there are two important collectors. One is the National Art Gallery. The other is Bank Negara," he said.



Statement piece: Vivid colours of 'Red Hill of Semasai' by Ahbeng.



Green art: Abd Latif showing off the preserved leaves and shoots of a damar hitam (shorea kuantanensis). Development has rendered the plant extinct.



Headline	Beauty of nature on canvas		
MediaTitle	The Star		
Date	22 May 2015	Color	Full Color
Section	Metro	Circulation	288,916
Page No	28,29	Readership	866,748
Language	English	ArticleSize	1786 cm²
Journalist	Story and photos by GRACE CHEN	AdValue	RM 89,883
Frequency	Daily	PR Value	RM 269,649



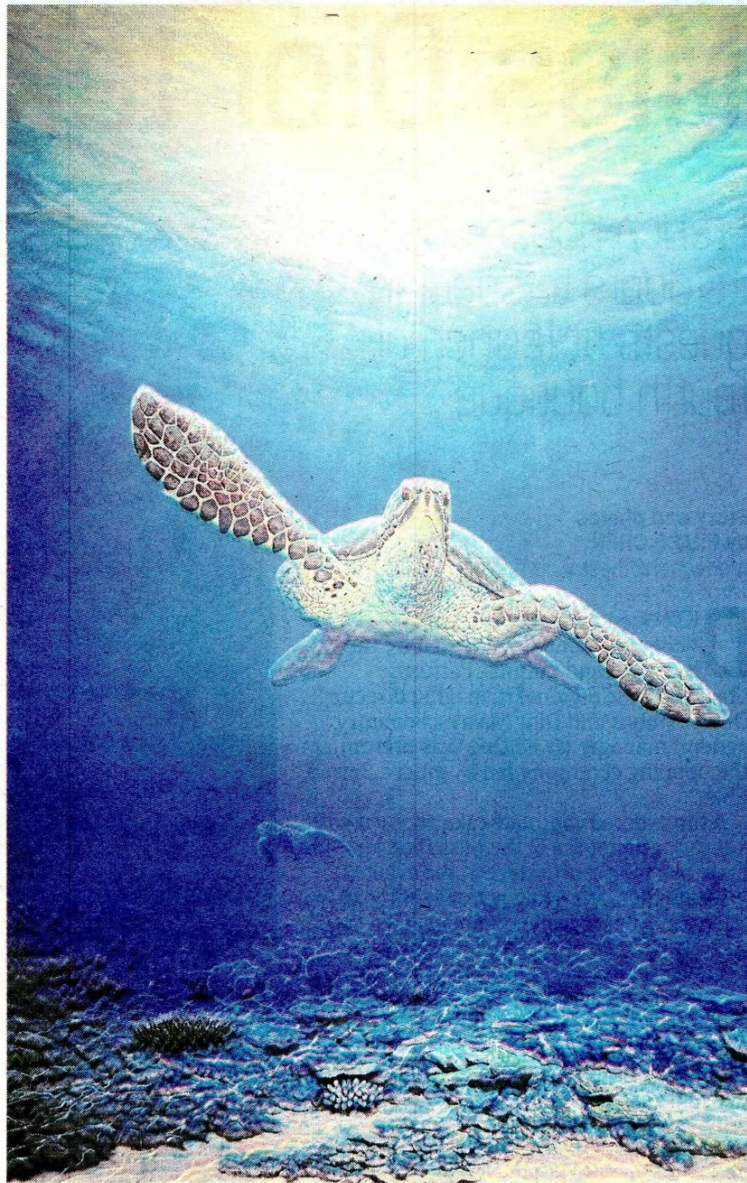
**Just like old times:** The three important elements in this piece by Yeong are babies, birds and nature, which create harmony.



**Moved to tears:** Ajis (left) signing a catalogue for Chung.



Headline	Beauty of nature on canvas		
MediaTitle	The Star		
Date	22 May 2015	Color	Full Color
Section	Metro	Circulation	288,916
Page No	28,29	Readership	866,748
Language	English	ArticleSize	1786 cm²
Journalist	Story and photos by GRACE CHEN	AdValue	RM 89,883
Frequency	Daily	PR Value	RM 269,649



**Ray of hope:** 'Lightness Series' by Ajis. The appearance of turtles speaks about marine preservation.



**Art in stone:** In Tan's 'Memories of Dungun', the rock formations here took millions of years but in the blink of an eye, all this can be wiped away.



Headline	Beauty of nature on canvas		
MediaTitle	The Star		
Date	22 May 2015	Color	Full Color
Section	Metro	Circulation	288,916
Page No	28,29	Readership	866,748
Language	English	ArticleSize	1786 cm²
Journalist	Story and photos by GRACE CHEN	AdValue	RM 89,883
Frequency	Daily	PR Value	RM 269,649



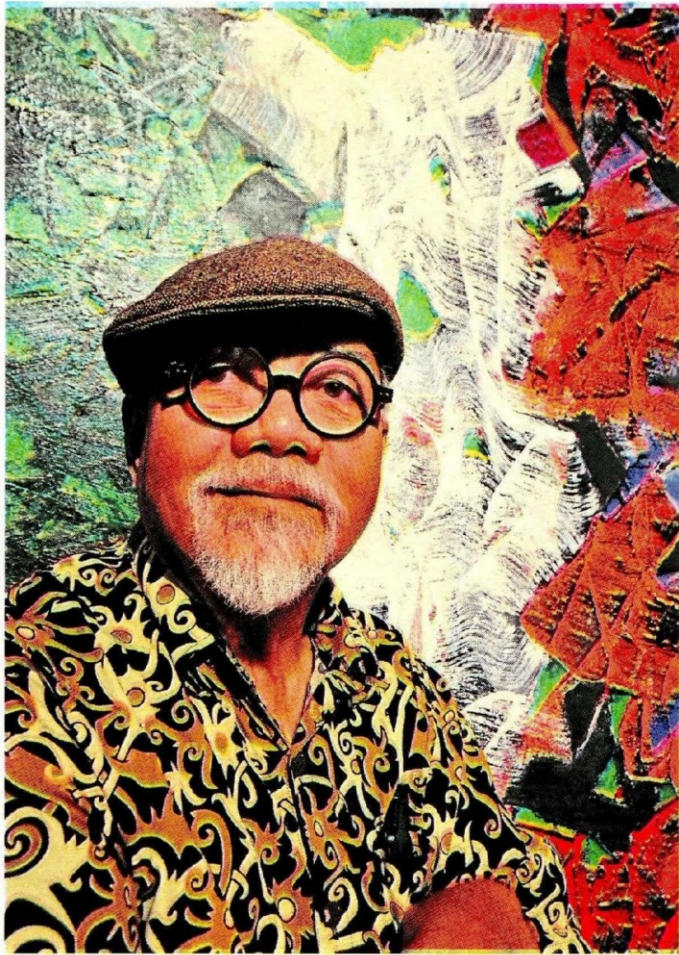
**Colours of the trees:** Ah Beng's 'Borneo Magic' depicts the beauty of the jungle.



**Beauty beneath:** 'Ocean Mystery' by Ajis shows the beauty of underwater life.



Headline	Beauty of nature on canvas		
MediaTitle	The Star		
Date	22 May 2015	Color	Full Color
Section	Metro	Circulation	288,916
Page No	28,29	Readership	866,748
Language	English	ArticleSize	1786 cm²
Journalist	Story and photos by GRACE CHEN	AdValue	RM 89,883
Frequency	Daily	PR Value	RM 269,649



**Honoured:** Ahbeng in front of his work 'Rompin Adventure'.



**Pretty petals:** 'Exquisite Garden' by Ahbeng expresses the artist's quest to not abandon or treat lightly, God's greatest gift – our environment.



Headline	Beauty of nature on canvas		
MediaTitle	The Star		
Date	22 May 2015	Color	Full Color
Section	Metro	Circulation	288,916
Page No	28,29	Readership	866,748
Language	English	ArticleSize	1786 cm²
Journalist	Story and photos by GRACE CHEN	AdValue	RM 89,883
Frequency	Daily	PR Value	RM 269,649



**Peaceful:** Tranquility, but for how long? – Yeong’s ‘Malaysian Sky Series’.