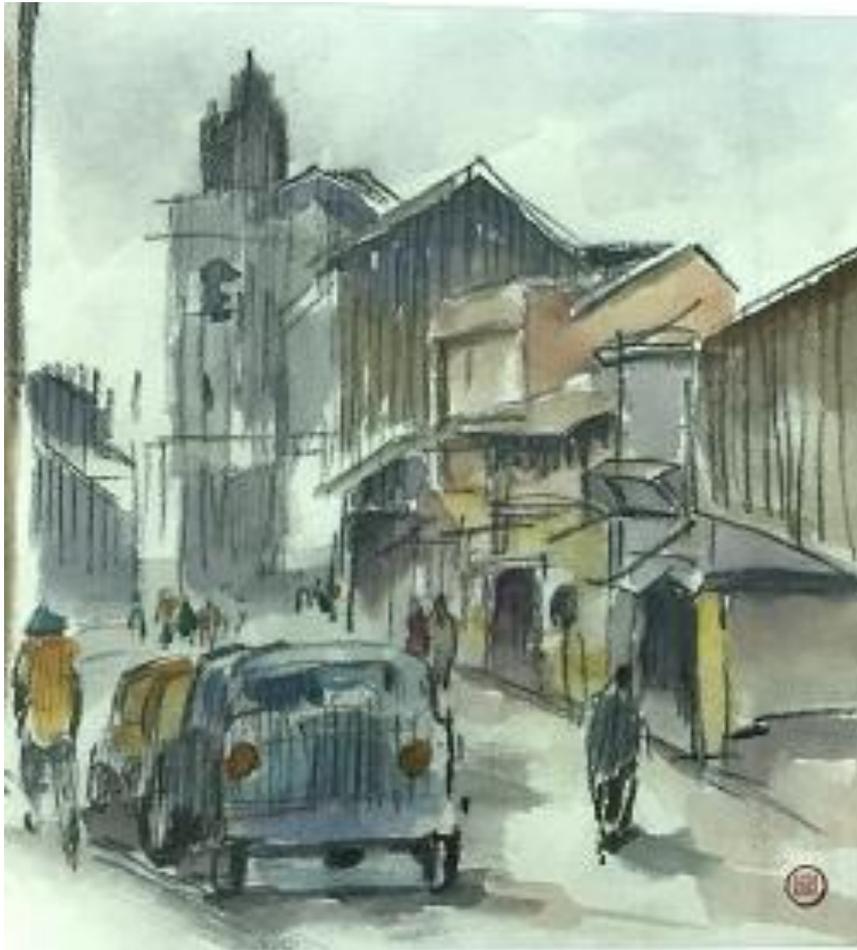


artcommune gallery, in conjunction with The Art Gallery, Penang, proudly presents

Paintings by Kuo Ju Ping

Malaysian Pioneer Artist Series



City Life, undated, watercolour on paper, 28 x 26.5 cm

Exhibition Reading Material
Text written by: Ma Peiyi

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In collaboration with The Art Gallery, Penang, Artcommune Gallery presents 33 works by the late Mr. Kuo Ju Ping. This exhibition is the second installment of the Malaysian Pioneers Artist series, held in order to expose these Malaysian pioneers to the Singaporean art scene.

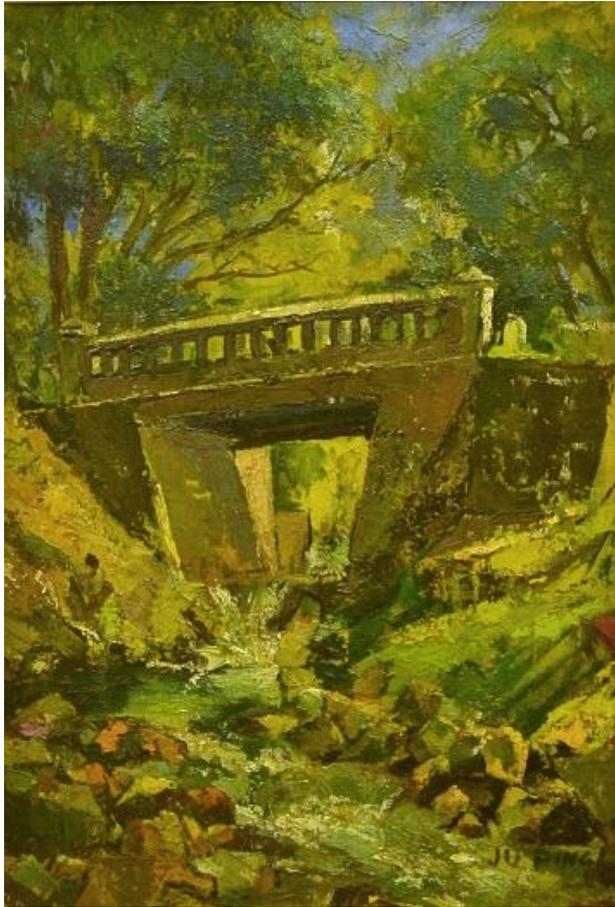


A Building Behind Trees, undated, watercolour on paper, 30 x 40 cm

Born in China in 1908, Kuo Ju Ping moved to Malaya as a teenager and was among the first graduating batch of art students at Singapore's Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts in 1940. He was also a founder member of the Penang Chinese Art Club in 1936. During his lifetime, he was praised for his versatility and technical competency. He remains well known today for his realist-impressionistic oil and watercolour paintings of Malayan scenes.

Those familiar with regional history and the development of Malayan art during the early 20th century would no doubt be aware of the cultural impact upon colonial Malaya (which included Penang and Singapore under the British empire) that occurred as a result of the political turmoil and cultural movement in China. This period saw an exodus of Chinese immigrants (including intellectuals, artists and businessmen) to the Peninsula. After the 1950s, post-independent Malaysia and Singapore would continue to share an inefaceable kinship in the development of an overarching artistic lineage established by sizeable groups of artists who were born and

academically-trained in China, but subsequently relocated to different parts of Malaya and undertook significant roles in shaping the respective art scene and education.



Bridge, undated, oil on canvas, 49 x 34 cm

In the book *The Art of Khaw Sia and Kuo Ju Ping*, Dato' Dr. Tan Chee Khuan describes the use of medium by Kuo Ju Ping:

"He majored in oil and watercolour paintings with realistic and Impressionistic influences. He also used pastels and on rare occasions, Chinese ink. He painted a mountain tiger in Chinese ink which is still extant - the only known example of his Chinese brush technique. He was especially fond of sketching, using charcoal, pencil or marker pen."

Much of the paintings on display reveal his fondness for sketching, with the pencil or marker markings being especially clear. These characteristic outlines forms a contrast against the soft watercolours or pastels he uses to create colour. Kuo Ju Ping shows a talent for capturing images through his sketching lines, as well as a sensitivity to colour. The bright shades he used reveals the influence of the Nanyang style, which can be attributed to his time at NAFA.

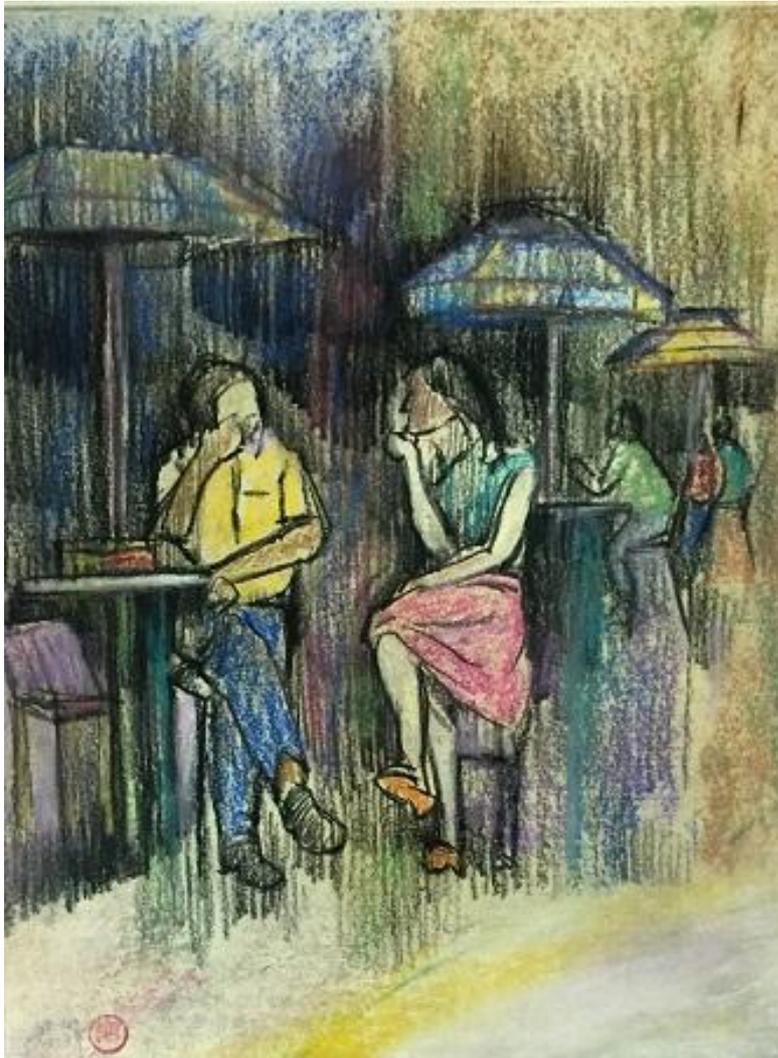
Dr. Tan also writes:

"Most of his leisure hours were spent on painting. He went on outdoor sketching trips with fellow artists and students. Whenever he was free, he would observe nature and people and depict them painstakingly in sketches. He was known to climb up other people's rooftops to get a good view to paint sceneries. In the evenings, he would walk along the beach for inspiration. His devotion to art, his wide choice of subject matters, sophisticated compositions and techniques gains him a reputation among fellow artists for successfully displaying versatility, style and technical competence."



Bridge Across River, undated, pastel on paper, 30 x 44 cm

Despite his senior position in the Nanyang art canon, Kuo Ju Ping's paintings, at present, is severely undervalued. Although he is a peer of the likes of Cheong Soo Pieng, Chen Wen Hsi and Liu Kang, his paintings are only being sold for a fraction of the price. However, interest in the Malaysian pioneers (including Khaw Sia, Lee Cheng Yong and Yong Mun Sen) have been growing steadily, with a sharp price increase in recent years.



Having A Chat, undated, pastel on paper, 34 x 25c m