



SKETCHING
THROUGH
SOUTHEAST ASIA
chang fee ming

AIR MAIL

SKETCHING THROUGH SOUTHEAST ASIA TELLS A DIFFERENT STORY ABOUT

SOUTHEAST ASIA THAN THE DOMINANT NARRATIVE THAT HAS LARGELY

PREOCCUPIED ITSELF WITH THE REGION'S MODERNITY, URBANISATION AND

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

AS A COLLECTION OF SKETCHES, IT DEMONSTRATES CHANG FEE MING'S

INSATIABLE DESIRE TO TRAVEL AND RECORD REALITIES THAT ARE

INCREASINGLY THREATENED BY THE HOMOGENISING FORCES OF MODERNITY

AND HIS SYMPATHY TOWARDS OUR CULTURAL INHERITANCE AND

TRADITIONAL WAYS OF LIFE.

IN THESE PAGES, WE ARE NOT OFFERED A LAMENTATION OF VANISHING
WORLDS, BUT A COMMITMENT TO THE SPIRITED YET UNASSUMING
COURAGE OF THE ORDINARY PEOPLE OF SOUTHEAST ASIA AND DRAW
FROM THEM A LESSON ABOUT OTHER MODELS OF LIVING, OTHER WAYS
OF RELATING TO ONE'S ENVIRONMENT AS WELL AS ONE ANOTHER. IN THE
ARTIST'S OWN WORDS, 'TO TRAVEL AND SEE AND PAINT IS FOR ME A WAY
OF LEARNING, PART OF MY LIFE PHILOSOPHY'.

CHANG FEE MING would like to record his sincere appreciation to the following people who have supported this project: Too Hing Yeap & Yoong Sin Min, Sio Tat Hiang & Janet Chan Kim Lian, Yeap Lam Yang, and Karim Raslan. The artist would also like to thank the wonderful people he have met on his journey - fishermen, travellers, farmers - who have shared their experiences with him and continue to inspire him to love, learn and continue to grow. Last but not least, the artist would like to convey his special thanks to all those who have shown him kindness and support throughout his journey.

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CHANG FEE MING

BORN IN KUALA TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA IN 1959, CHANG FEE MING IS

A SELF-TAUGHT ARTIST WHO BEGAN HIS CAREER IN THE EARLY 1980<sup>S</sup>.

SINCE WINNING THE MALAYSIAN WATERCOLOUR SOCIETY AWARD IN

1984, HE HAS GONE ON TO GAIN MANY ACCOLADES BOTH LOCALLY AND

INTERNATIONALLY, AND BECAME A SIGNATURE MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL

WATERCOLOUR SOCIETY (USA) IN 1994.

CHANG FEE MING IS ONE OF ASIA'S MOST ACCOMPLISHED ARTISTS

WORKING IN WATERCOLOUR. FOR OVER TWENTY YEARS HIS SUBJECT HAS

BEEN THE PEOPLE OF MALAYSIA, SOUTHEAST ASIA AND ASIA.

MEKONG SERIES, BASED ON SEVEN YEARS OF RESEARCH AND TRAVEL,
TOURED TO GALERI PETRONAS, KUALA LUMPUR, NATIONAL ART GALLERY,
JAKARTA AND CHIANG MAI UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM, CHIANG MAI IN
2004. IN 2005, HE TRAVELLED TO THE SWAHILI COAST IN AFRICA, MAKING
A SERIES OF SMALL WORKS AND STUDIES. FROM 2005 THROUGH TO
2007 HE HAS BEEN RESEARCHING AND WORKING ON THE SOURCE OF
THE MEKONG, IN YUNNAN, TIBET AND QINHAI. THIS SECOND SERIES OF
THE MEKONG WAS EXHIBITED IN KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA, SINGAPORE
AND BEIJING, CHINA. IN 2009, FEE MING PARTICIPATED IN THE ARTIST
RESIDENCY PROGRAM AT SINGAPORE TYLER PRINT INSTITUTE, SINGAPORE.

THE YEAR IN BALI, AND MUCH OF THE REST TRAVELLING THROUGH ASIA.

Photograph on opposite page by Tobias Ranzinger

## 

## THE FIRST FEW STEPS OF A THOUSAND MILE

BY KARIM RASLAN

CHANG FEE MING is an artist who has set out to chart and document those who live on the margins - fishermen, farmers, market-traders and labourers. His focus on those who have - to a large extent - been overlooked by Asia's booming economies is a reflection of the artist's very strong sense of personal rootedness, his own political and moral commitment and his desire to travel.

He injects a rare tenderness and passion into his depiction of the ordinary worker - drawing out the beauty wherever it may be. In certain cases it's the colours and the patterns of the sarong or the traditional wear, in others the gnarled and weathered hands and faces of the subjects. In doing so he is both honouring and recording their lives - the quiet, simple everyday heroism of those who live off the land and the sea.

Over the years, Fee Ming's works have attained a greater degree of pathos.

Inspired by what he's seen and recorded, his drawings and his watercolours have achieved a greater emotional impact. Colours are richer, more 'felt' and resonant.



A Boatman Carving Wooden Nails (Pulau Duyung, Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia), 2003

Imagine moreover some of Fee Ming's formative memories. Imagine

what it must have been like to be an eighteen year old looking on as

CHANG FEE MING: SKETCHING THROUGH SOUTHEAST ASIA



Yellow House I (Pulau Duyung, Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia), 1987

his brother-in-law, a sign-painter was picked up one night by the police for questioning.

It was certainly a traumatic experience for the Terengganu-born boy and even now, decades later, Fee Ming can still remember the details - his heavily pregnant sister and their fear. Luckily, after two months in detention under the controversial Internal Security Act (or ISA), the family member was released.

At the same time and a short boat-ride across the river from where he worked to Duyung Island, a French lady, who went by the name of Christine Rohani Longuet, and her husband Wan Othman were to open a guesthouse. It was called *Awi's Yellow House*.

Fee Ming was entranced. The couple and the guests they attracted to the guesthouse were unlike anything he'd ever imagined or met before. They talked about abstract things - about art and places he'd never heard of.



Yellow House II

(Pulau Duyung, Kuala Terengganu,

Malaysia), 1987

Years later he admits: "They were strange people, dreamers, wanderers who stopped by the Yellow House - visitors from Europe, Canada, Japan and elsewhere."

Nonetheless, for the young impressionable sign-painter living in the windswept east coast, the encounters were intoxicating. He listened as travellers
recounted their stories - stories of Nepal, India, Indonesia and Thailand. He
also observed as some of the visitors, despite their bravado, lived close to
destitution and others drank themselves into ignominy.

Decades later after logging up thousands of miles with his sketchbooks,

Fee Ming acknowledges that his initial wanderlust was first kindled by those

meetings at the Yellow House. The years spent listening to the stories of other

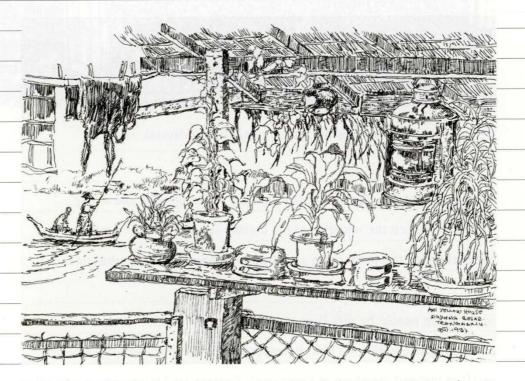
travellers came to shape his interest in what is out there. It taught him how

to travel cheaply, how to see the world beyond the sleepy town he grew up in.

He also acknowledges Rohani's encouragement and support in particular.

For him the exposure to the Yellow House - the open flow of ideas and the challenging environment was akin to an art school. Moreover, some of the old sea traders of Terengganu who have since retired reside on Duyung Island.

Fee Ming would listen with rapt attention to the stories of the Nakhodas, the boat captains and make a patient record of this local history. These stories inspired many of his early works and imbued him with an openness and a willingness to question and probe what he saw around him.



Yellow House III (Pulau Duyung, Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia), 1987 \_

Fee Ming's desire to discover the world for himself was also matched by a deeply-rooted sense of the injustice he saw around him. As I've said earlier, he was very much drawn to ordinary people.

Indeed his densely-worked watercolours seem to celebrate the simplicity of his various subjects' clothes - their sarongs, their loonghis as well as their environments. The colours he depicts are vibrant, the patterns rich and resonant.



Yellow House IV (Pulau Duyung, Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia), 1987

Moreover, Fee Ming also possessed a strong sense of right and wrong.

Having witnessed the injustice of his brother-in-law's sudden detention he comprehended the unflinching and draconian power of the authorities.

Some of the people he met from those early years were to have a deep and lasting impression on him. He especially felt a strong kinship with the socialist-inclined members of Singapore's Equator Art Society who would often come to Terengganu to paint the lives of the fishermen. Also to his early mentor Siew Hock Meng who was based in Terengganu for many years, from whom he discovered the "language of art".

Still poverty was a major shaping force. "After my father's business failed, we moved to a new village settlement in Dungun, where I was born. I started work with my brother-in-law after Form Three at his sign board shop. In the old days, this means you had to make the wood, frame it with aluminium and

then paint it." Fee Ming is matter-of-fact about his introduction to art.

Having an informal art education gave him a freedom to experiment,

which would be otherwise restricted by the conventions one is normally

made to adhere to in an art school curriculum. As such, very early in his

artistic career, Fee Ming has demonstrated an acute sensitivity towards a

local vernacular, particularly in his use of colour, which he considers quite

'tropical'. The advantage of having an informal space to experiment meant he

was also afforded room for imagination. So it is inside the signboard shop, a

setting far removed from the ideals of an artist's studio that the artist honed

his craft.

Fee Ming is very much the visual poet of the disenfranchised - those whose understanding of the elements (the land and sea) affords them nothing but hardship and toil. He empathises and through his work, we feel and share their hard lives. Nonetheless, had it not been for the strange combination of personal factors - his early hardships and the allure of *Yellow House* with its sense of adventure and the exotic, Fee Ming's art would be merely commonplace.



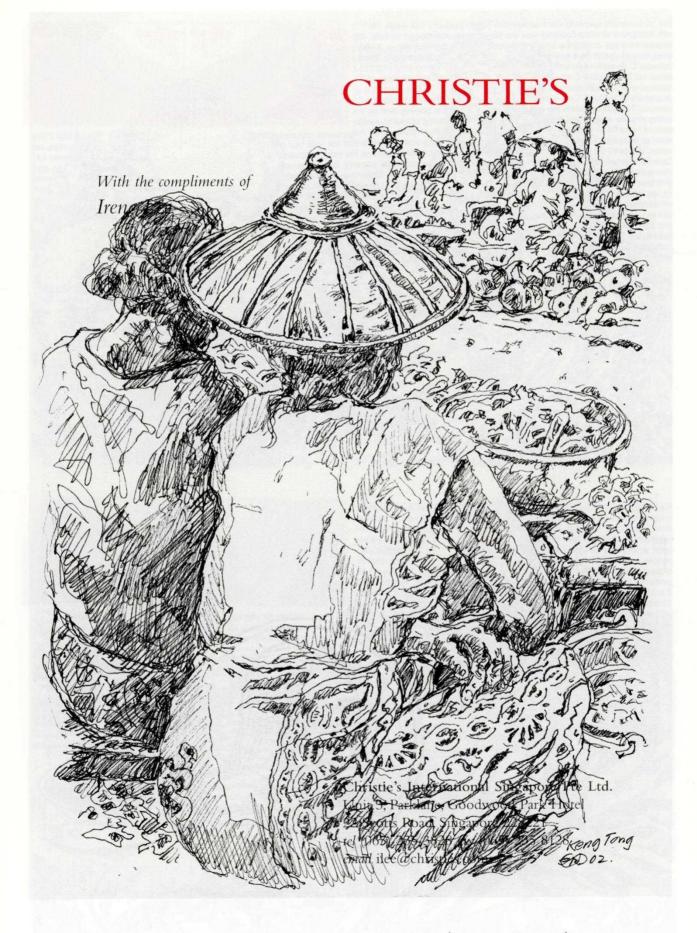
Awi's Drums (Pulau Duyung, Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia), 1992

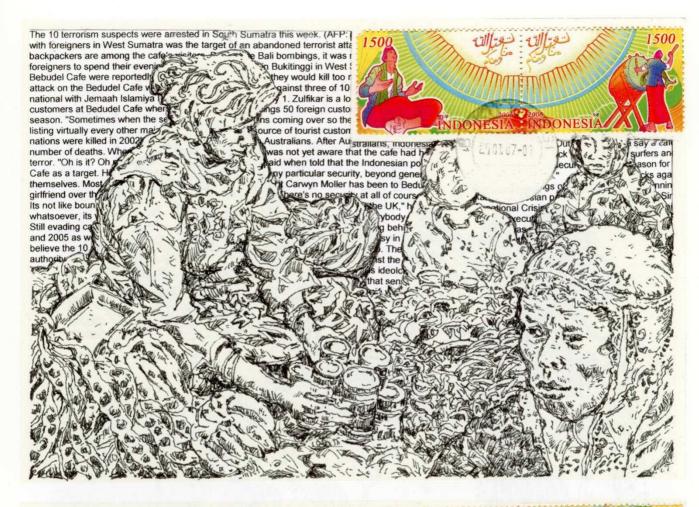


MARKET & MEETING PLACE

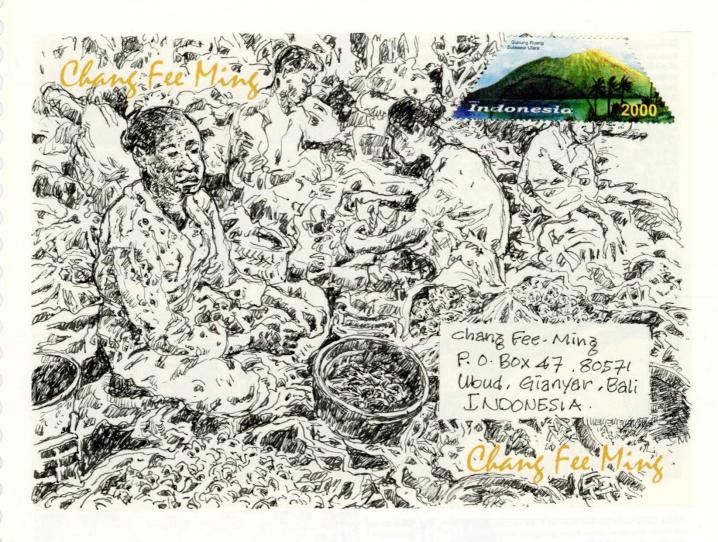
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THE MARKET IS MY FIRST PORT OF CALL AT EVERY TOWN OR VILLAGE I VISIT. WHAT ATTRACTS ME TO THE MARKET? I THINK IT IS BECAUSE IT IS THE HEART OF THE PEOPLE'S SOCIAL LIFE, A PLACE FOR EXCHANGE - PRODUCE, NEWS, GOSSIPS. IT GIVES THE TRAVELLER THE FIRST TASTE OF WHAT A PARTICULAR COMMUNITY'S PEOPLE AND CULTURE IS LIKE. HENCE IT IS ALWAYS A GREAT PLACE TO START ONE'S JOURNEY. I ALWAYS GO TO THE MARKET FIRST. FROM THERE, I WILL HEAD TO THE POST OFFICE FOR SOME STAMPS, WHICH WILL BE USED FOR MY SKETCHES ON POSTCARDS AND ENVELOPES.









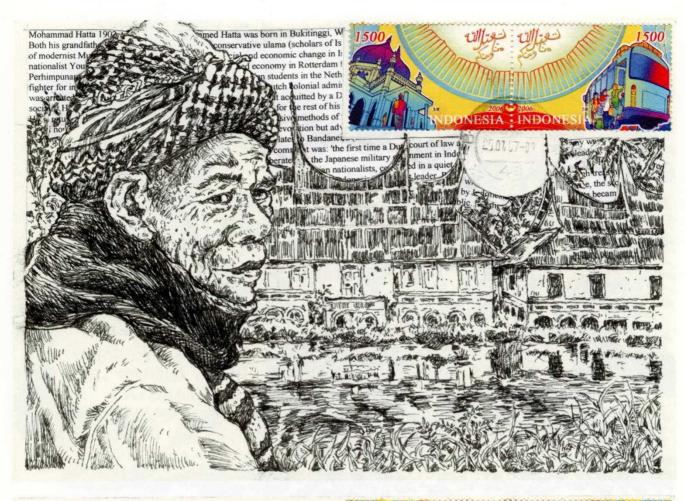
News related to the social political problems of Bukittinggi appearing as text float across the busy hum of the cacophonous marketplace as stories and gossips are traded.

above

Pasar Perinhajo (Yogyakarta, Indonesia), 2005

opposite top
Pasar Atas I
(Bukittinggi, Indonesia), 2008

opposite bottom Pasar Atas II (Bukittinggi, Indonesia), 2008







For me, the market is the place where a community comes alive. There is something authentic about the market that you don't find in modern day grocery store in the city. In a market, often what is sold comes from the land, from its vicinity. It is proudly local.

opposite top
A Pious Man

(Bukittinggi, Indonesia), 2008

opposite bottom

Pasar Atas III

(Bukittinggi, Indonesia), 2008

above

Basket of Tobacco (Salavan, Laos), 2000 True Break
(Soc Trang, Vietnam), 2010

opposite top

Another Busy Day (Kampong Chnang, Cambodia), 1999

opposite bottom

A Beautiful Display
(Chiang Khong, Thailand), 2004

A fisher monger breaks for a simple meal perhaps during the quieter part of the day, all the while ready to serve any prospective customer who might stop by her stall.











above Chicken Sellers (Salavan, Laos), 2000 opposite top

Ywana Market Day (Inle Lake, Myanmar), 1994

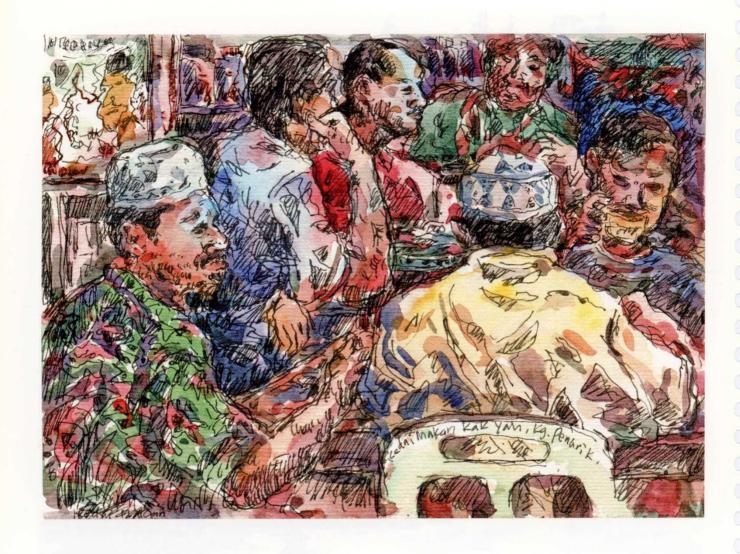
opposite bottom

Cai Be Floating Market (Vinh Long, Vietnam), 2002

At floating markets in Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam, farmers row along the river or lake and hawk their produce in wooden dinghy. In Southeast Asia, the river helps transport produce from the hinterland to various towns and villages along its course. The floating market serves a local populace. Today, it has become more of a tourist attraction as proper roads connect rural villages to urban centres. What they sell at the floating markets have changed too. These days you can buy a lot of handicraft and souvenirs.







above

Kedai Makan Kak Yan (Penarik, Terengganu, Malaysia), 2006

opposite

At the Warung

(Marang, Terengganu, Malaysia), 2007





Restaurant and foodstalls within the marketplace are where people congregate to eat, but also more importantly to socialise. The market's lively atmosphere is overwhelming and delightfully accessible. The noise, the smell, the sight, the crowdedness, all mixed together in a heady blend that reflect the distinctive texture and colour of a particular community.





above

Jering Seeds (Kuala Berang, Terengganu, Malaysia), 2004

left

A Chinese Woman at the Pasar Payang (Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia), 1998

opposite

A Pick-up to Pyin U Lwin (Mandalay, Myanmar), 1994



Whether in Myanmar, the Philippines, Cambodia, Laos, or Thailand, the pick-ups or auto-rickshaws are a common mode of public transportation. Passengers huddle together in these vehicles that conveniently navigate their way through the complex sprawl that make up many of Southeast Asia's towns and cities. Being squeezed within close proximity amongst other passenger, one can study the texture of another person's face or clothing in detail.



CULTURE & TRADITION

ALTHOUGH I AM ATTRACTED TO DIFFERENT CULTURES

AND DIFFERENT LIVES, I NEVER SEE MYSELF AS

AN ACADEMIC RESEARCHER WHOSE TASK IS TO

PAINSTAKINGLY RECORD IN MINUTE DETAIL THE

CULTURAL SYSTEM OF A PARTICULAR COMMUNITY. BEING

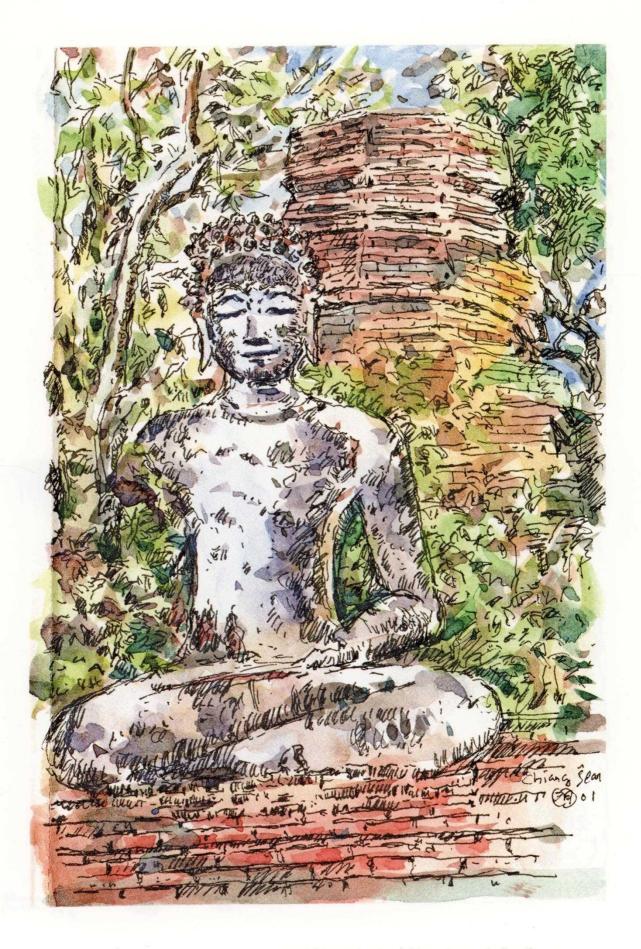
A VISUALLY ORIENTED PERSON, I JUST LIKE TO OBSERVE

THE WAY LIFE IS LIVED. HOW PEOPLE SIT, STAND,

MOVE AROUND, BEHAVE THEMSELVES, ARE THE LITTLE

FEATURES THAT MAKE UP ONE'S IDENTITY AND CULTURE.





Along the Mekong river is a monastery in Champasak. Here is a tragic document of modernity's encroachment into traditional life. An outer shell of a bomb is used as a temple bell. The northern and eastern part of Laos suffered severe bombing during the Indochina war. Many of these unexploded bombs still continue to injure unexpecting farmers and children who stepped on them. I once did a major painting for my Mekong Series called *Gift from the Sky*. Today, many of the shells have since been used to built houses, plant flowers and in this instance, summon the faithful to prayers.



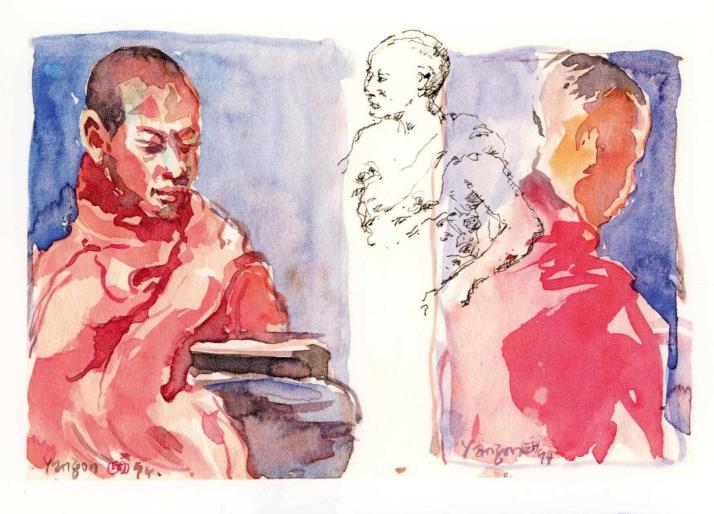
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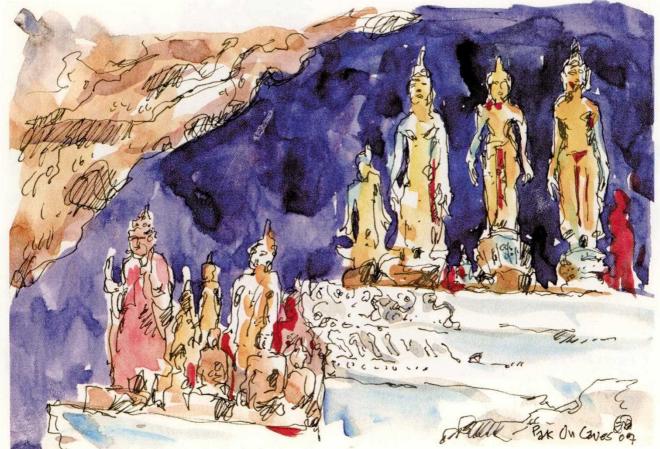
A Bell out of the Remains of War (Campasak, Laos), 1999

below

Memory of the Cham I (My Son, Vietnam), 2002









above

Memory of the Cham II

(My Son, Vietnam), 2002

opposite top Study for Twilight at the River of Lost Footsteps (Yangon, Myanmar), 1994

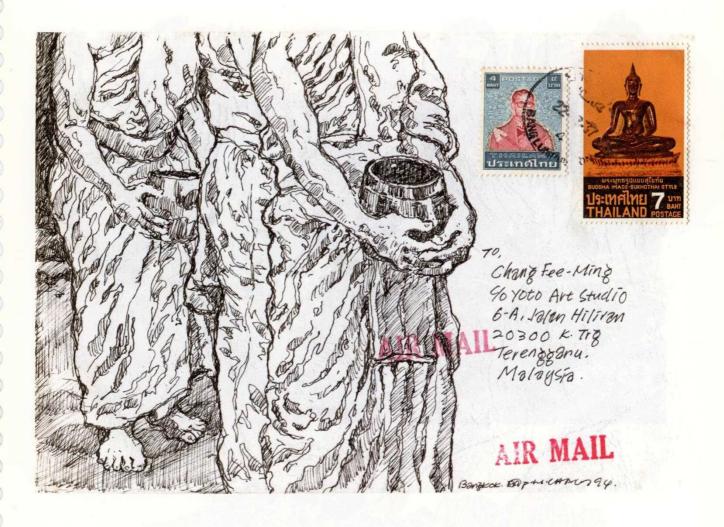
opposite bottom

Pak Ou Caves

(Luang Prabang, Laos), 2007



The mornings of Luang Prabang are a sight to behold. At this hour, the monks will form a procession, walking in a single file as they receive alms from the town-folks and bless them in return. The crimson light of dawn, casting its ambient glow across the waking land, transforms this everyday event into a theatrical spectacle.



above
Alms
(Bangkok, Thailand), 1994

opposite

Morning Alms
(Luang Prabang, Laos), 1999







Ta Prohm

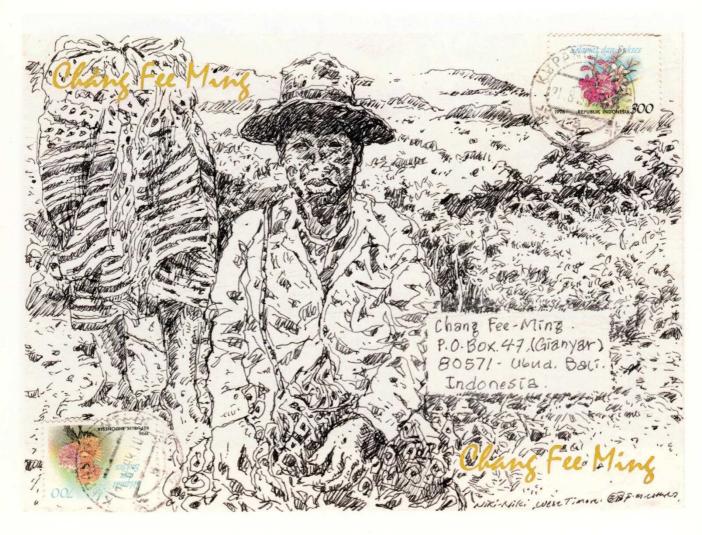
(Siem Reap, Cambodia), 2007

opposite top

Ceremony Before Going to Catch Giant Cat Fish I (Chiang Khong, Thailand), 2001

opposite bottom

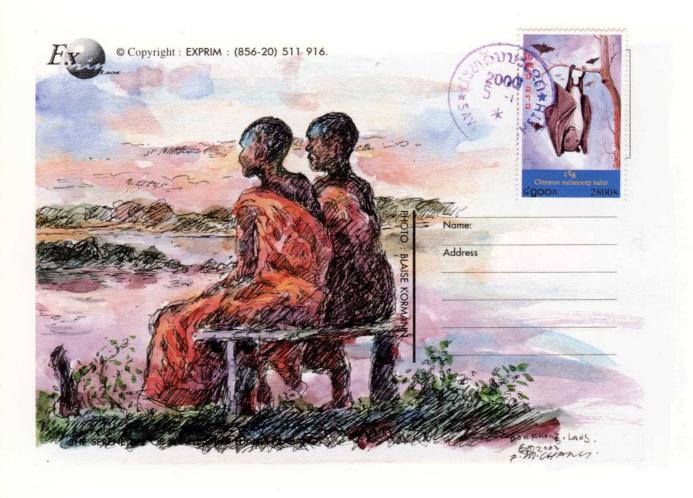
Ceremony Before Going to Catch Giant Cat Fish II (Chiang Khong, Thailand), 2001



Attending the Wedding at Niki Niki (West Timore, Indonesia), 1998

opposite top
Sunset at Don Khong
(Si Phan Don, Laos), 2000

opposite bottom Novice Monks (Mandalay, Myanmar), 1994







Gamelan in Play I (Tejekula, Bali, Indonesia), 1993

opposite

Gamelan in Play II (Tejekula, Bali, Indonesia), 1993





I like to draw or sketch what happens before, perhaps during the hour of preparation, rather than the event proper. Such as a cremation ceremony or a performance rehearsal. This is a time leading up to an event, a time filled with hope, excitement, anticipation.

In Balinese sacred dance performance, even when they are entertaining a big audience, they are really dancing for the Gods. Wayang Wong is my favourite performance. The word 'wong' literally means people, so it is a performance that employs stage actors and dancers. Invariably, the wayang tells the timeless Indian classic, The Ramayana. However, when these are performed in temples, they have to live up to a standard of religiosity. For them, when you put on the mask, you're more than human, you transform into a Ramayana character.

opposite top left

Behind the Scene I (Tejakula, Bali, Indonesia), 1993

opposite top right

Behind the Scene II (Tejakula, Bali, Indonesia), 1993

opposite bottom left

Behind the Scene III (Tejakula, Bali, Indonesia), 1993

opposite bottom right

Behind the Scene IV (Tejakula, Bali, Indonesia), 1993

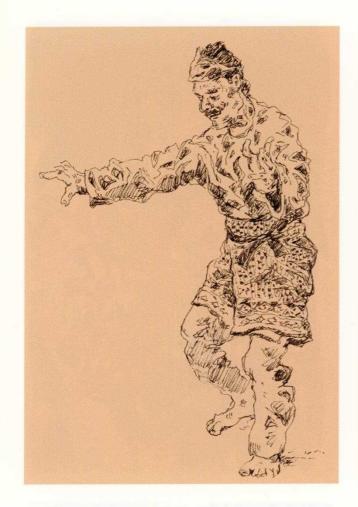


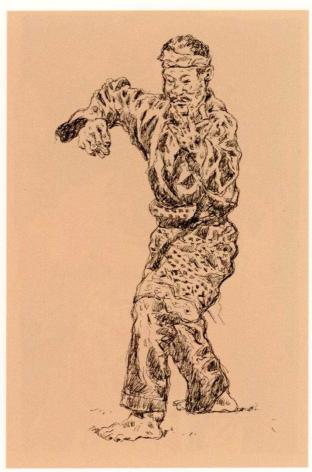












above left

Silat Performance at Circumcision Ceremony I (Jambu Bongkok, Terengganu, Malaysia), 2008

above right

Silat Performance at Circumcision Ceremony II (Jambu Bongkok, Terengganu, Malaysia), 2008 opposite top left

Praying Study I (Bali, Indonesia), 2003

opposite top right

Praying Study II (Bali, Indonesia), 2003

opposite bottom left

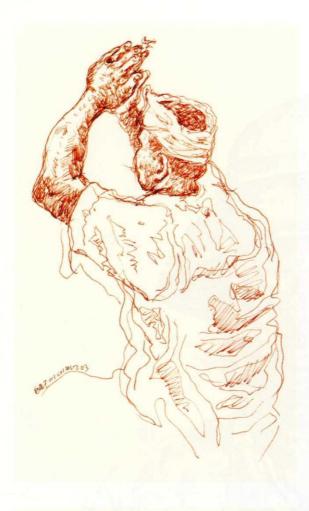
Dressing up the Guardian

(Ubud, Bali, Indonesia), 2003

opposite bottom right

Ceremony Day

(Ubud, Bali, Indonesia), 1999







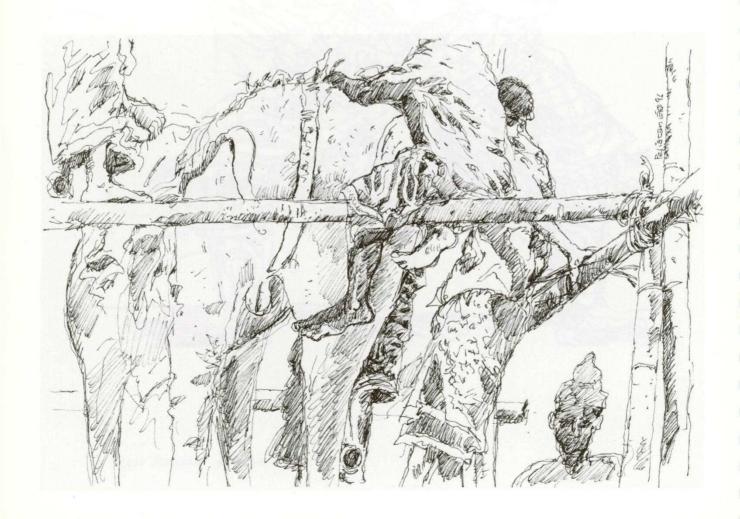




Medals from the War (Vinh Long, Vietnam), 2010



Balinese cremation ceremony is a lavish and long drawn out affair for the entire community. As one of the most important events in Balinese rites of passage, locals are sometimes obliged to sell off their land in order to finance the expensive cremation ceremony. Here are sketches of how a scaffold was built around the corpse. They placed the corpse within a decorated animal-shaped casket, depending on the person's caste. All of these are done in a very detailed and intricate manner.







opposite

Preparing for Cremation I (Peliatan, Bali, Indonesia), 1996

above left

Preparing for Cremation II (Ubud, Bali, Indonesia), 2002

above right

Preparing for Cremation III (Ubud, Bali, Indonesia), 2002

right

Preparing for Cremation IV (Ubud, Bali, Indonesia), 2002





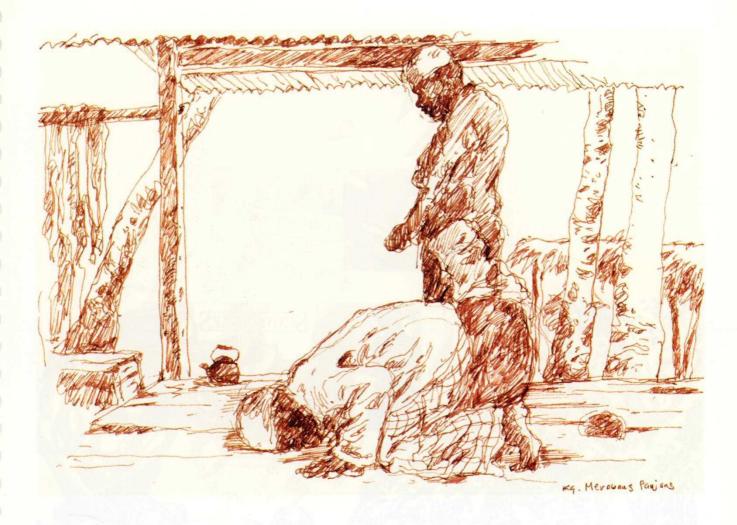


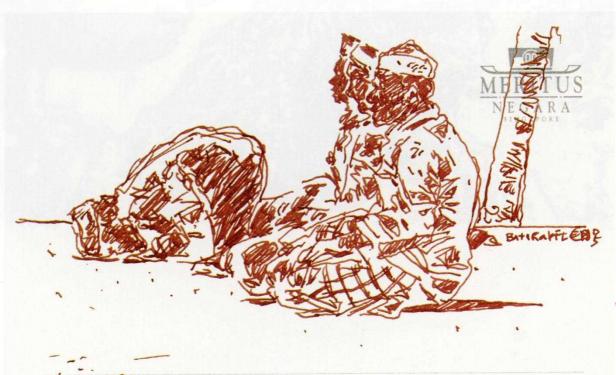
left Haji Wan Su (Jambu Bongkok, Terengganu, Malaysia), 2003

opposite top Asar (Kg. Merawang Panjang, Terengganu, Malaysia), 1998

opposite bottom Zuhor (Batu Rakit, Terengganu, Malaysia), 2005

You will find the most beautiful way of praying in Terengganu. Here, the fishermen pray on the wakaf beside the sea and their boats. A wakaf in a fishing village is a simple wooden structure, built by cobbling planks together to form a raised platform, that is a bit like a pavilion serving multiple needs - rest, leisure, prayer. An old fisherman once told me, "Allah never said you need a splendorous place to pray in and here the fishermen pray in a natural mosque, as long as the place is clean, it is good enough, whether it is by the sea, on their boats and by spreading a few sheaves coconut leaves on the beach."



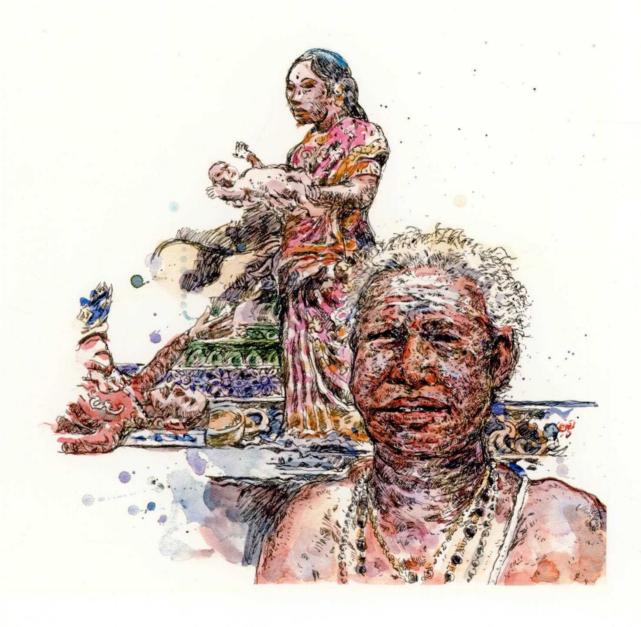


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CONTRARY TO POPULAR STEREOTYPES OF THE LAZY
TROPICS, PEOPLE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA WORK HARD.
TRADITIONALLY THEY CULTIVATE THE LAND OR FISH
IN THE SEA AND RIVER, AND THEIR LIVELIHOOD IS
INTIMATELY CONNECTED TO NATURE'S CYCLE OF THE
RAINY (MONSOON) AND DRY SEASON. CALL ME A
SOCIALIST IF YOU WANT, BUT I IDENTIFY WELL WITH THE
WORKING PEOPLE. THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THEIR
LIFE THAT FASCINATES ME, SOMETHING HONEST AND
TRANSPARENT ABOUT IT. MAYBE IT IS THE SIMPLICITY OF
IT. SADLY BUT SURELY, THIS IS CHANGING.



Waiting for Sale (Si Phan Don, Laos), 1999

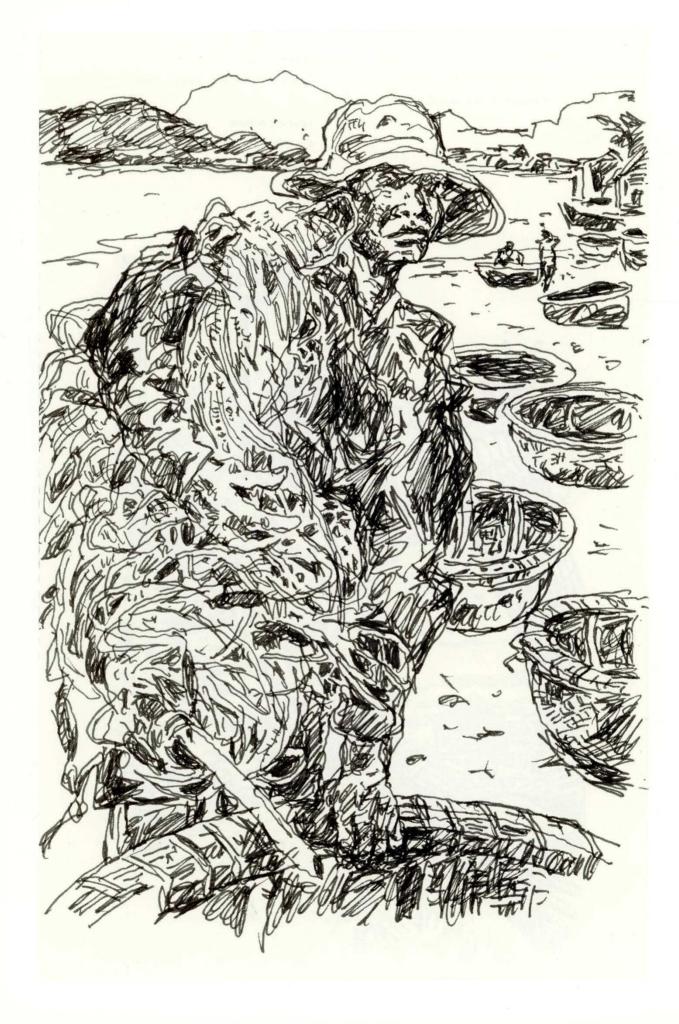


Returning from the Sea I (Vung Tau, Vietnam), 2002

opposite

Returning from the Sea II (Vung Tau, Vietnam), 2002

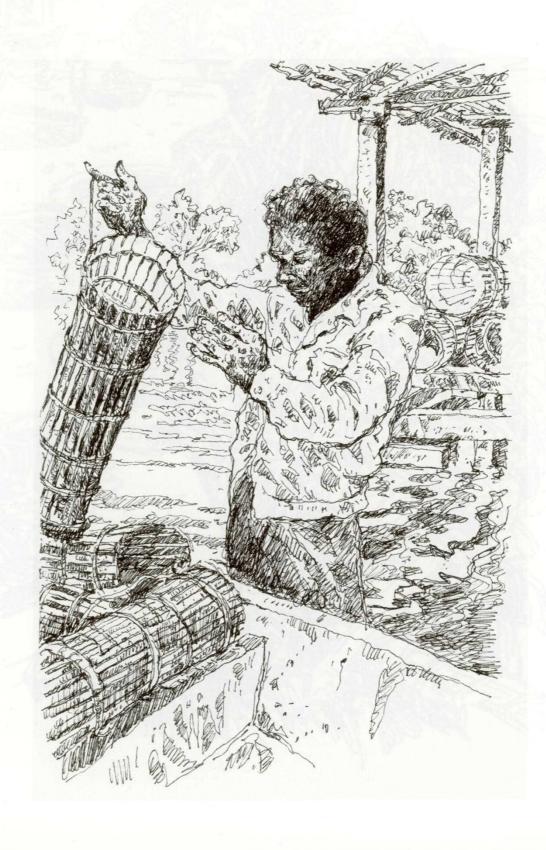
Fishermen return from sea in a giant basket. The rower would sit on the edge to steer the boat. The gigantic basket is used as a mode of transportation from the fishing boat to the shore. With so many of them lined along the shore, they looked like an art installation to me. Later, I found out that a well-known Malaysian landscape architect used these baskets in one of his design for a hotel in Hanoi.



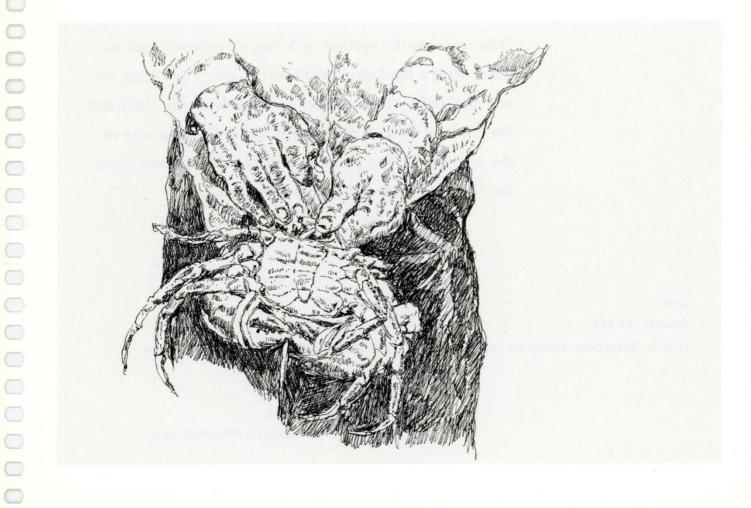
below

Crab Trappers I (Kg. Fikri, Terengganu, Malaysia), 2003 opposite top
Catch I (Vientiane, Laos), 1992

opposite bottom Crab Trappers II (Kg. Fikri, Terengganu, Malaysia), 2003









Fishermen work together to bring their boats back on shore after a hard day's work out at sea. Their lives are not dictated by the minutes or seconds of the clock but the ebb and flow of the tide. When do they go out to the sea? Not at any particular hour. They go out when the tide comes in and carries them out.

above

Mooring the Boat
(Rusila, Terengganu, Malaysia), 1993

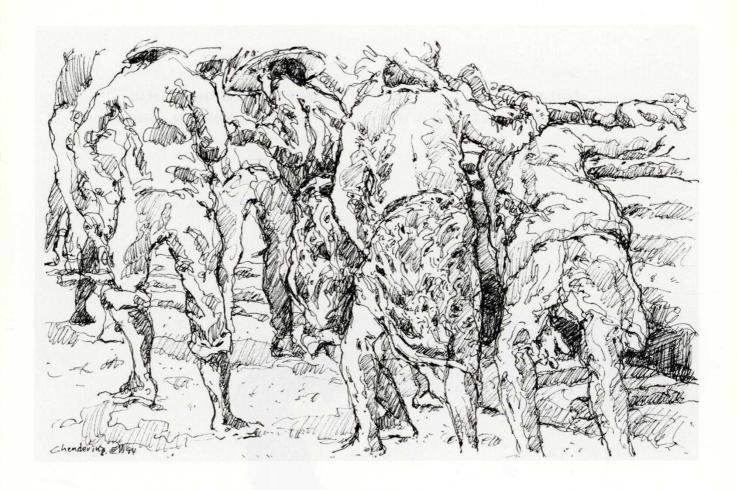
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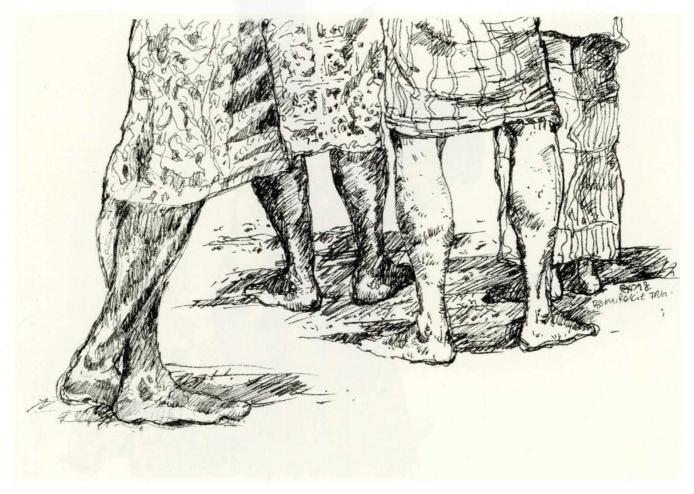
Towards the Shore

(Chendering, Terengganu, Malaysia), 1994

opposite bottom

Men Wearing Sarong,
(Batu Rakit, Terrenganu, Malaysia), 1998





below

Catch II

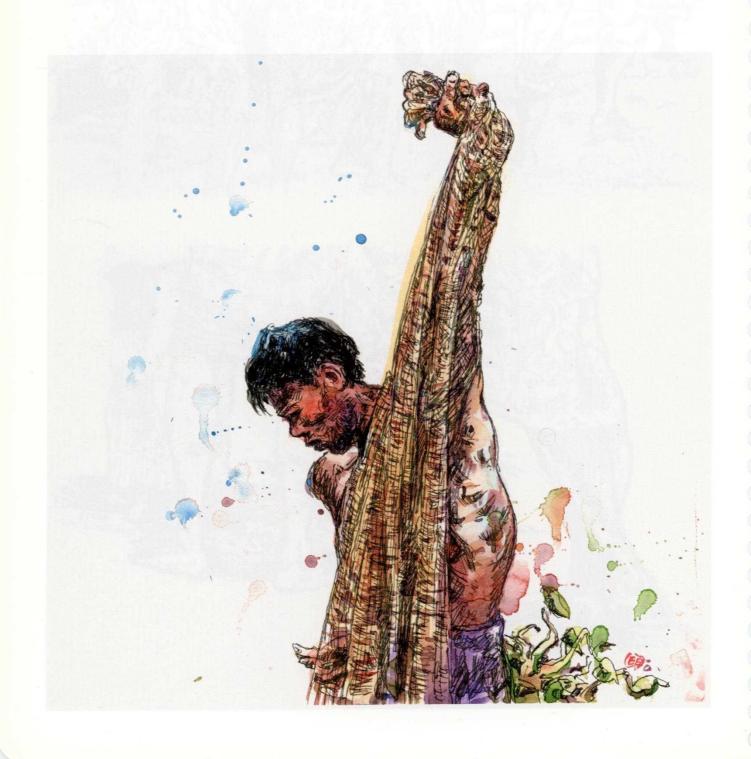
(Kampong Cham, Cambodia), 2010

opposite left

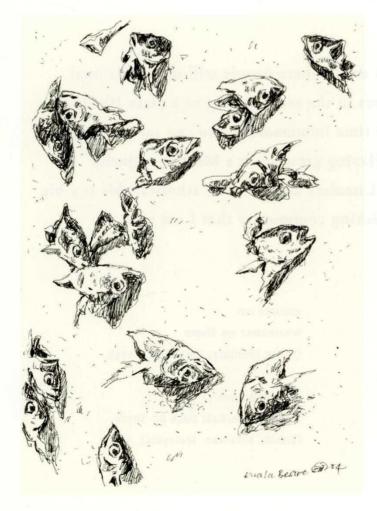
The Other Half of Keropok Lekor (Kuala Besut, Terengganu, Malaysia), 2004

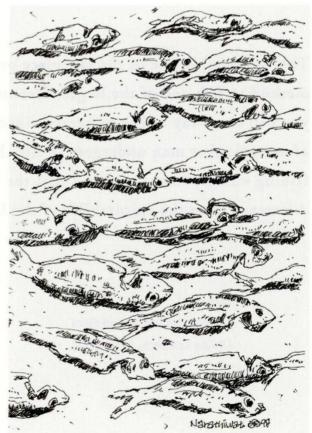
opposite right

Dry Fish Under the Sun (Narathiwat, Thailand), 1998



Rows and rows of fishes let out to dry in the baking afternoon sun. Dried fish, which is a cheap and effective method for preserving food, can be stored for a long time which is especially useful during the monsoon season when the fishermen couldn't go out to sea.







This is probably one of the last place on earth where people still use traditional method to fish one of the largest creatures in the sea. Coming to a place like this, you can see a way of life preserved since time immemorial. You can see the kind of struggle that man undergoes in life. Having grew up in a Muslim majority fishing village, I am fascinated that the Lamalera are Roman Catholics, this is a big difference from the cultural life of the fishing community that I am used to.

above

A Whale Hunter in Lamalera (Pulau Lembata, Indonesia), 1998 opposite top
Whalebone on Shore

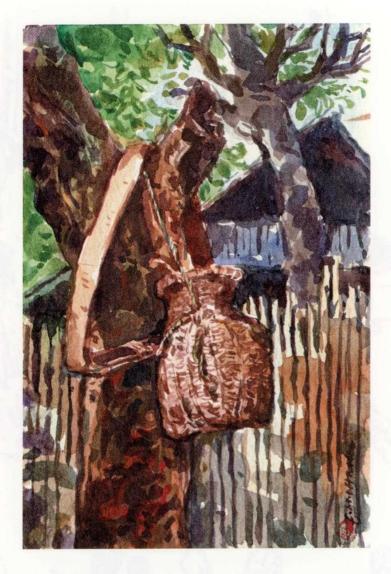
(Pulau Lembata, Indonesia), 1998

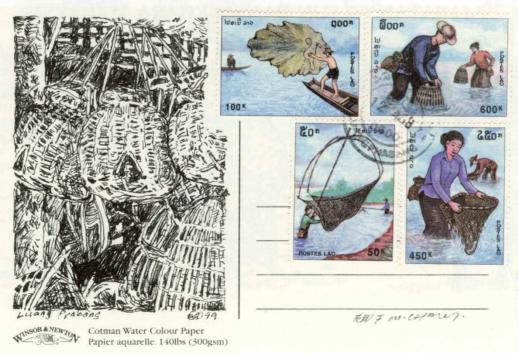
opposite bottom

Bringing the Boat Back on Shore
(Sabak, Kelantan, Malaysia), 1992









opposite [postcard front & back] Fishing Gear (Luang Prabang, Laos), 1999

below Ant Nest Hunter (Phibun Mangasahan, Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand), 2000









Est Methods 2000 Ban Pa-Ac-Udon Ratcharthani



Although I have visited the Philippines a couple of times, I never really ventured out of Manila. However, I have once been to Pagsanjan to see the waterfall. But it wasn't the waterfall that captivated me. I started noticing the boatmen who were very skillful at manouvering the boat upriver. At times when the boat couldn't be paddled up the rapids, they would come down and push us along.

opposite top

Menjala

(Kuantan, Malaysia), 2007

above

Up the Rapids

(Pagsanjan, Philippines), 1996

opposite bottom

Pestle at Ban Pa Ao

(Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand), 2000



A farmer trashes the rice stalks to separate out the grain during harvest season. Their graceful movements appear seemingly like a dance as rice grains fly around them.

## above

Harvest Day (Kengtung, Myanmar), 2002

## opposite top

Under the Farmer's House at Ban Tha Baen (Luang Prabang, Laos), 2004

## opposite bottom

Grinding Rice (Nan, Thailand), 1999

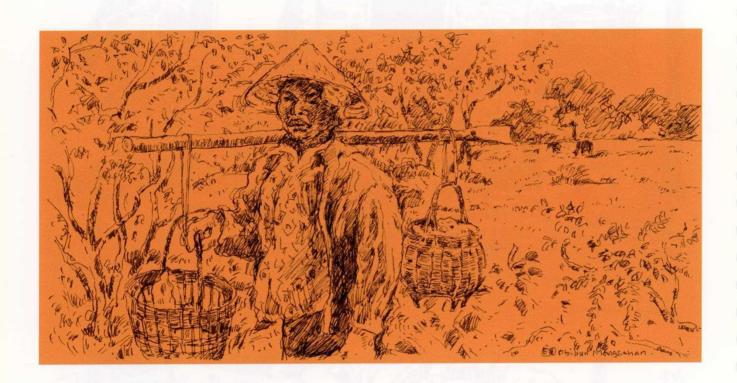




below

Returning from the Farm (Phibun Mangasahan, Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand), 2000 bottom

Cow with the Wooden Bell (Tabana, Bali, Indonesia), 2002





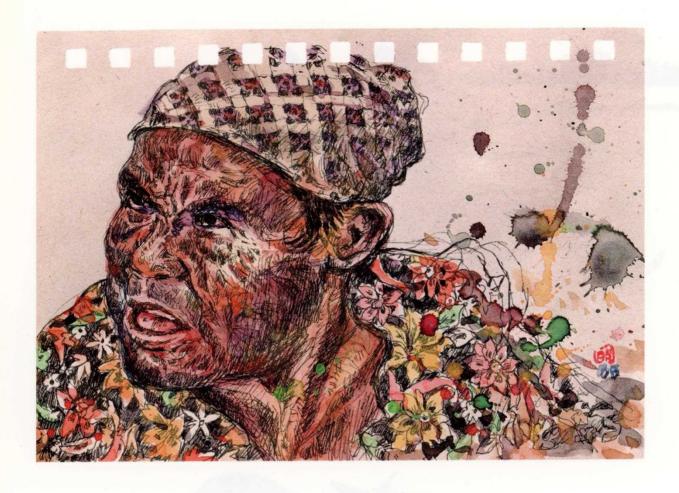




top Waterlily Picker (Siem Reap, Cambodia), 2001 bottom

Porter at Harbour

(Kampong Cham, Cambodia), 2004





opposite top Tiger Prawn Season (Mangkok, Terengganu, Malaysia), 2008

opposite bottom Hard Working Youths (Chiang Khong, Thailand), 2003 below Logging Trail (Chong Mek, Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand), 1999

Once, on my way from Thailand to Laos borders, I saw some loading truck passing through. I wonder aloud if these are illegal logging exports from Cambodia that are destined for Thailand via Laos, which reminded me of an NGO report that I have read about.



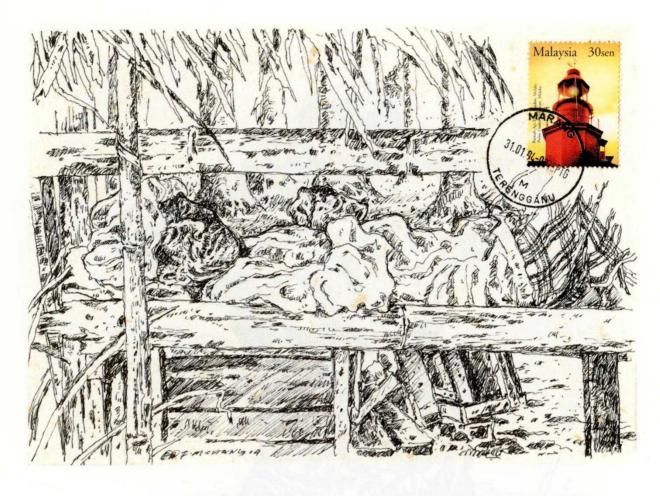


REST & LEISURE

REST AND SLEEP DURING THE DAY IS AN ESSENTIAL RESPITE AGAINST THE TORRID HEAT OF THE TROPICAL SUN ACROSS SOUTHEAST ASIA. FOR MOST OF US WHO LIVE IN MODERN CITIES, WE WORK THROUGH THE AFTERNOON INSIDE AIR-CONDITIONED ROOMS, UNAFFECTED BY THE FEROCITY OF THE SCORCHING SUN. IT IS DIFFERENT FOR PEASANTS WORKING OUT IN THE FIELD OR AT SEA. AFTERNOON NAPS ARE NOT INSTITUTIONALISED LIKE IN SPAIN. HERE, REST FOLLOW THE RHYTHM OF THEIR WORK. A RURAL LIFE'S SENSE OF TIME IS NOT DICTATED BY THE PRECISE HANDS OF A CLOCK, HERE PEOPLE LOOK AT THE TIDE AS WELL AS RECOGNISE THE SEASON. DEPENDING ON THE SEASON, YOU MIGHT LOOK FORWARD TO A BOUNTY OF SQUID, PRAWN OR CRAB. SEASON ALSO DICTATES WHAT TIME OF THE DAY YOU LEAVE FOR YOUR CATCH. IT IS FUTILE TO SAY, 'WE WILL DO THIS AT SO AND SO HOUR OR MINUTE'. IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE WHEN LIVELIHOOD IS CONNECTED TO A MUCH MORE ARBITRARY RHYME AND REASON.



Bathing in the River (Sekayu, Terengganu, Malaysia), 1996



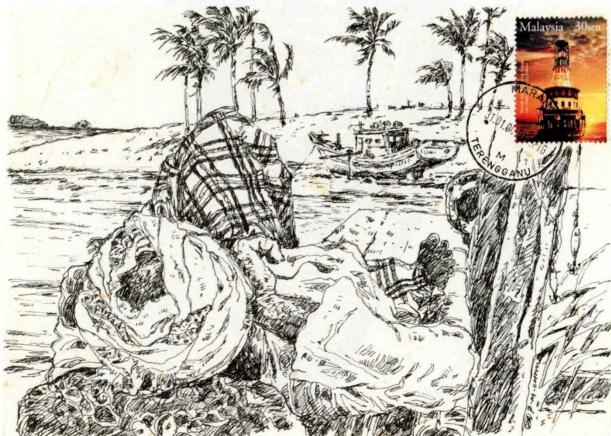
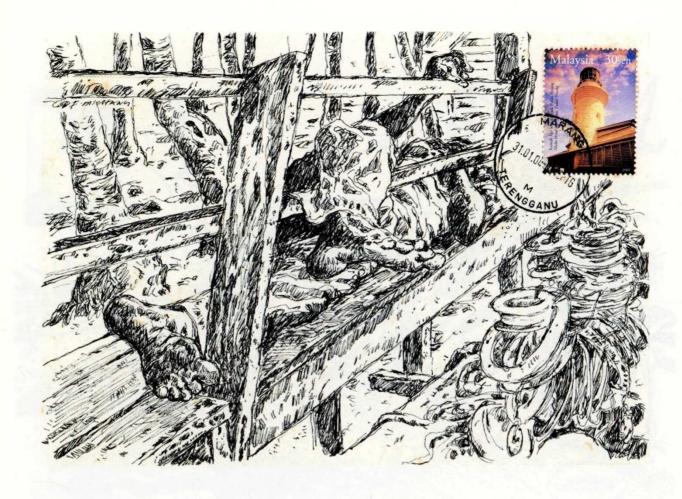


Table Called the United Velocity product and the distability



opposite top

Candat Season I

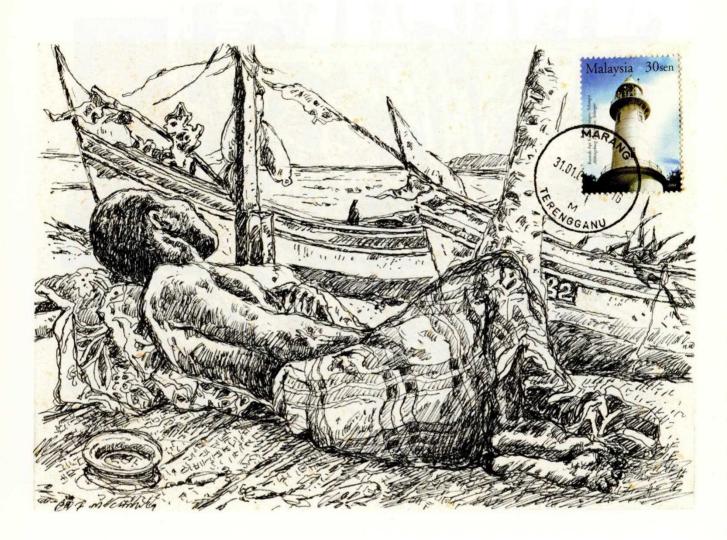
(Terengganu, Malaysia), 2004

opposite bottom

Candat Season II

(Terengganu, Malaysia), 2004

above
Candat Season III
(Terengganu, Malaysia), 2004



Look at the simplicity of how this person is napping casually by the sea. I like the sculptural quality of a sleeping person, the repose body stretching out, limbs locked in various arrangements. Of course, when a person sleep he is also static, this gives me more time to work on a sketch.



above

At the River Border (Kandal, Cambodia), 2002

opposite

Candat Season IV (Terengganu, Malaysia), 2004





opposite top Afternoon Nap on a Wakaf (Tok Jembal, Terengganu, Malaysia), 2007 below Prayer Line (Cirebon, West Java, Indonesia), 2009

opposite below A Farmer Resting in Ban Pa Ao (Bangkok, Thailand), 2000

> In one of the oldest mosque in Cirebon, Java, a man found a quiet corner to drift off into sleep. Previously I thought the sign says 'sleep here'. Later I found out that it means, 'prayer line'. It is in fact quite common that a mosque also functions as a place for rest.





Cruising along the river that wends through Laos from Pakse to Champaksa, local travellers can be seen gambling to while away the slow and trudging hours. They spread out a piece of paper with a drawn table where people can place their bets on it. The excitement at each roll of the dice helps them pass time.

above

Gambling on the Deck, Passing Time (Boat From Pakse to Champasak, Laos), 1999

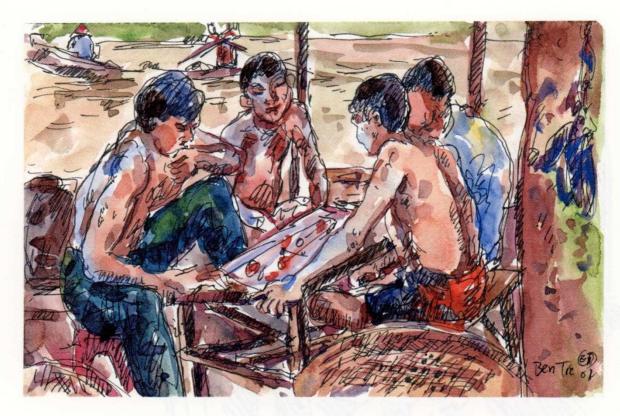
opposite top

Not a Fishing Day (Ben Tre, Vietnam), 2001

opposite bottom

Main Dam Haji

(Marang, Terengganu, Malaysia), 2006











Performing late into the nights for their Gods, Balinese temple dancers often nap during the hottest hours of the day when it is impossible to focus or exert too much energy.

opposite top
A Family in Lao Huy Village
(Huay Xai, Laos), 2001

opposite bottom

Elephant Ear Fish

(Vinh Long, Vietnam), 2010

above

Resting for Tonight (Ubud, Bali, Indonesia), 1995 right Midday (Ubud, Bali, Indonesia), 2000

below
Resting Army
(Champasak, Laos), 2000





At one of the forested border territories, even the border army take shelter under the thick green foliages of the trees from the blazing daylight. The languid atmosphere of rural life can also be seen in animals, like this dog, who restful watch allowed him to drift off into slumber.



Study of One Lazy Afternoon (Kampong Cham, Cambodia), 2010



GARDEN & LANDSCAPE

LIFE COMPETES AGAINST OTHER LIFE IN THE TROPICS.

A TROPICAL GARDEN CAN HARDLY BE TAMED. PLANTS

HAVE A MIND OF THEIR OWN. EVERYTHING SEEMS TO

SUGGEST FERTILITY, FECUNDITY, EXCESS. EVERYTHING

GROWS AT EVERY CORNER. SIMILARLY ITS LANDSCAPE IS

JUST AS VARIEGATED, MESSY, CHAOTIC YET PREGNANT

WITH SO MUCH BEAUTY. THE NATURAL WORLD AFFORDS

THE ARTIST WITH SO MUCH POETRY, SO MUCH DIVERSITY.

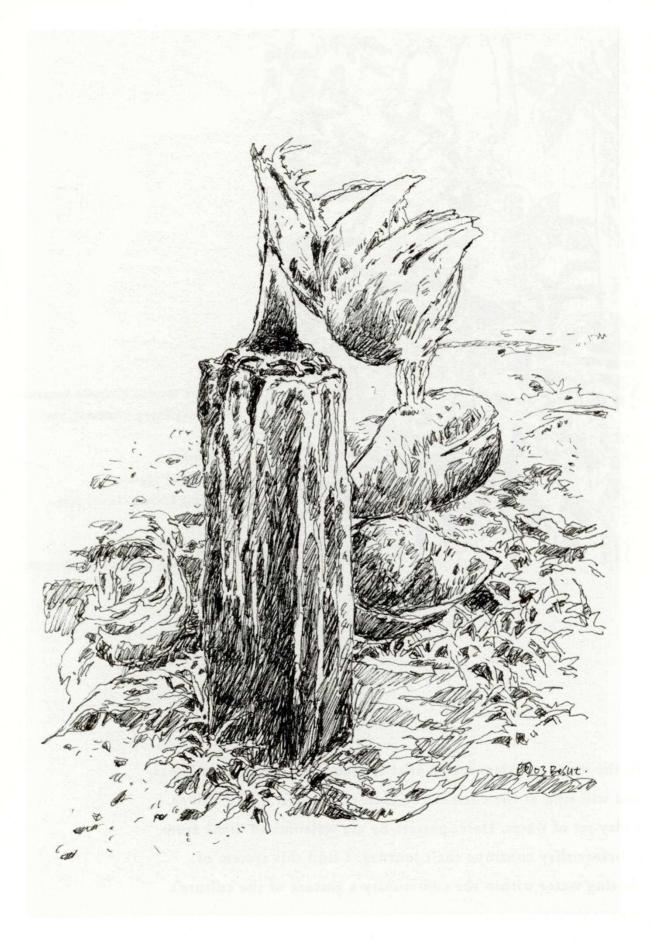
NOTHING EVER REPEATS ITSELF. I CAN SPEND HOURS

AND HOURS SKETCHING THE PLANTS, FLOWERS, SEEDS,

LEAVES, BRANCHES, TREES. THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING

NEW OUT THERE.

0





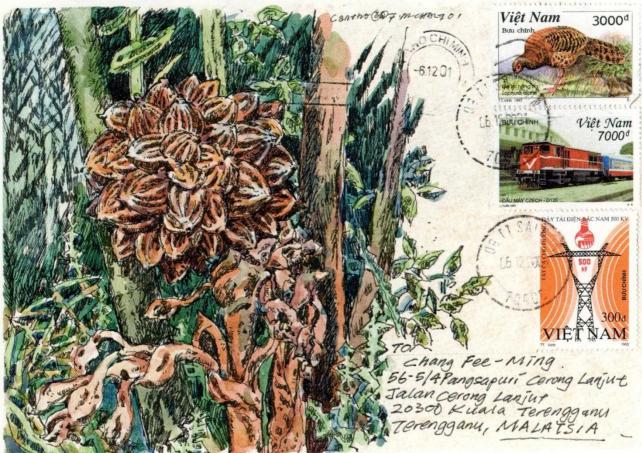
left

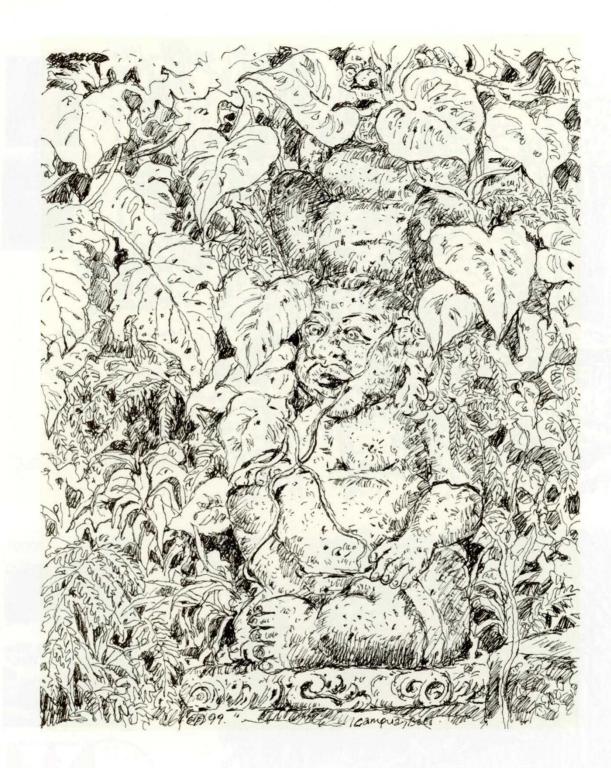
At the Tammila Riverside Bungalows (Chiang Khong, Thailand), 2005

opposite top
Beauty of Sharing
(Luang Prabang, Laos), 2003

opposite bottom
Nypa Palm (Cantho, Vietnam), 2001

In the farming communities that stretch from Laos to Myanmar, you will find at the entrance to each compound in the village, a clay jar of water. Here, passers-by are welcome to drink from it before they continue their journey. I find this system of sharing water within the community a gesture of the culture's magnanimity.





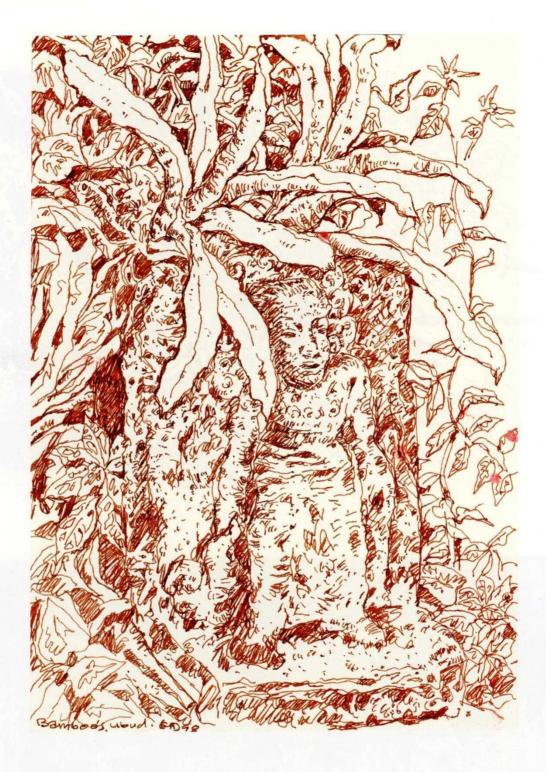
above

Hidden Statue at Campuan (Ubud, Bali, Indonesia), 1999

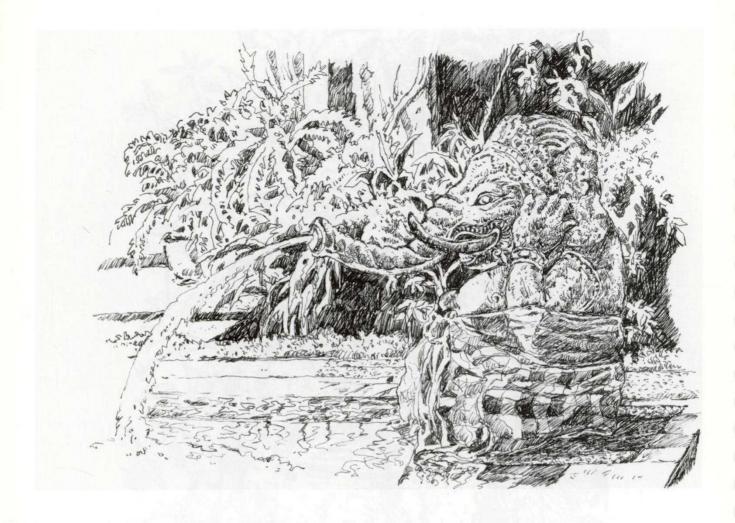
opposite

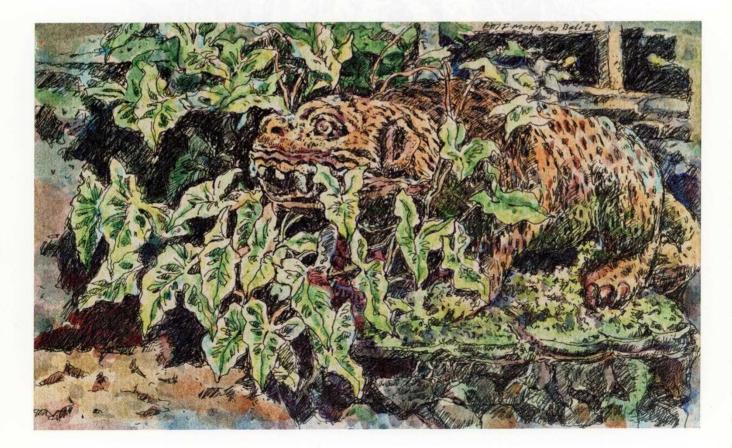
Garden at Bamboo Villa I (Ubud, Bali, Indonesia), 1998

0



It is in the attention to details, the quiet small things that people do in Bali that appeal to me most about this island, such as placing an offering at the holy corners of one's house. To me these things are very significant. Every morning, every corner. I think it is a very lyrical form of expression, a very poetic language. And at dawn or dusk, the smoke from the incense and the sunlight come together to cast a reverential glow on the land, this is beauty beyond words.



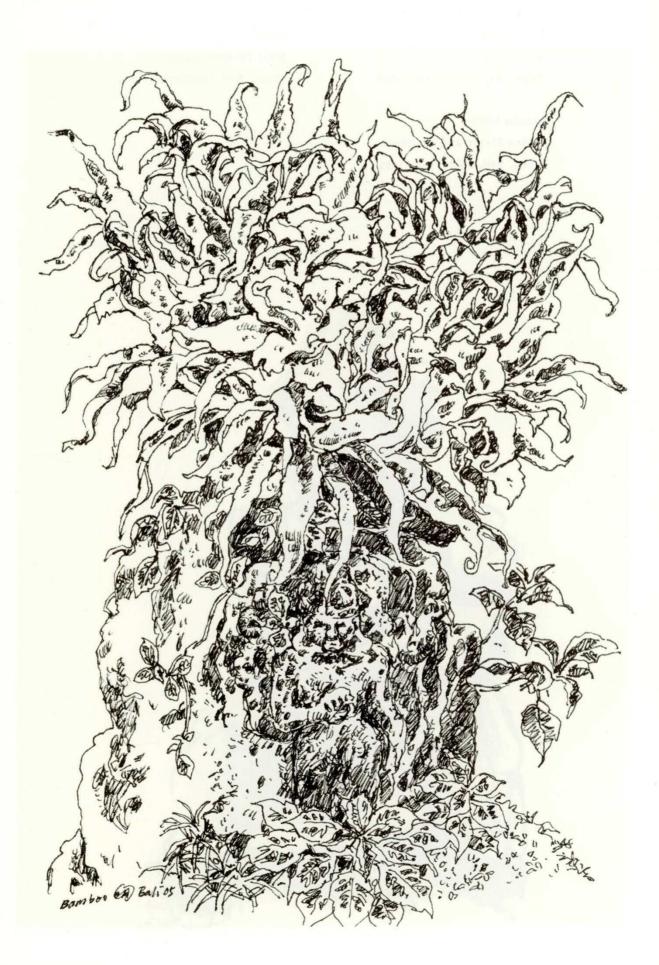


opposite top Tanah Gajar (Teges, Bali, Indonesia), 2000

opposite bottom Hidden Statue at Ulun Ubnal (Ubud, Bali, Indonesia), 1999 below

Moss Covered Statue (Ubud, Bali, Indonesia), 1994





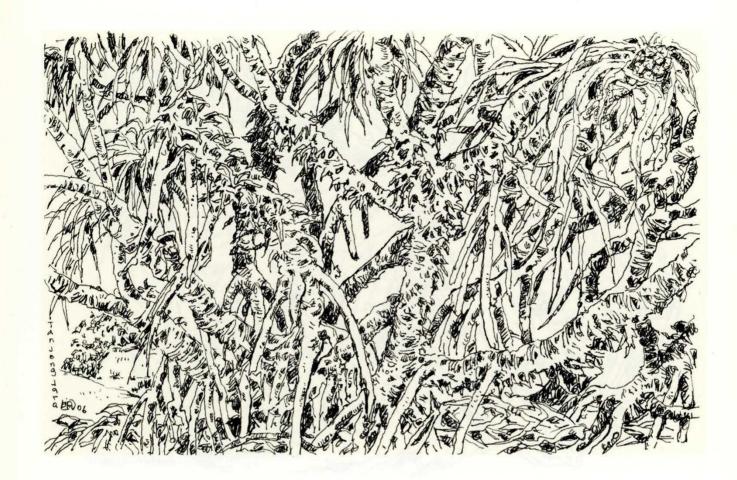


above

Nepenthes in my Studio (Chendering, Terengganu, Malaysia), 2005

opposite

Garden at Bamboo Villa II (Ubud, Bali, Indonesia), 2005



above

Mengkuang

(Tanjong Jara, Terengganu, Malaysia), 2006

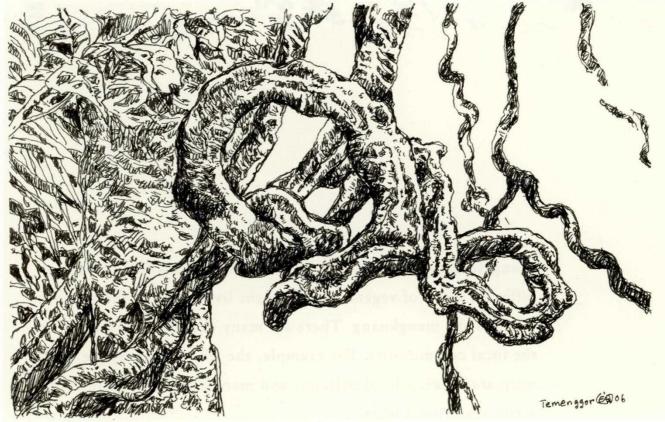
opposite

On the Way to Mek Wo's House
(Jambu Bongkok, Terengganu, Malaysia), 2004



Along Terengganu's picturesque shorelines, you will find a lot of different kinds of vegetation and plant lives, such as the coconut tree and the mengkuang. There are many uses of these plants for the local communities. For example, the coconut leaves are used to wrap otak-otak, a local delicacy, and mengkuang leaves are used to weave traditional mats.





Where She Used to Live (Tok Jembal, Terengganu, Malaysia), 2006

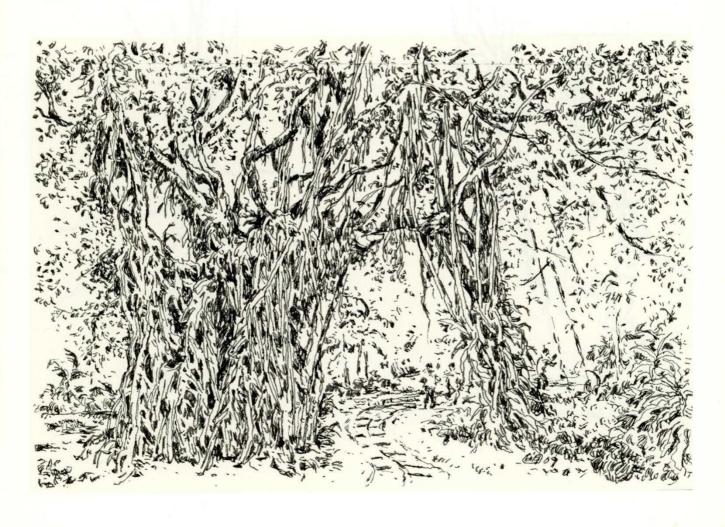
opposite bottom

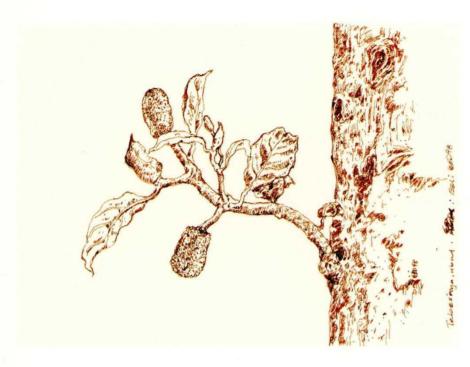
Forest Scene

(Temenggor, Perak, Malaysia), 2006

below

A Huge Banyan Tree (Botanic Gardens, Singapore), 2009



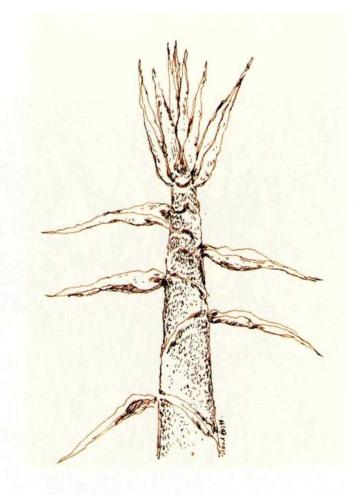


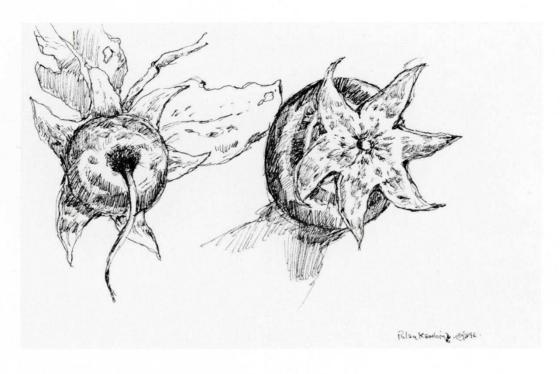
left Jack Fruit (Ubud, Bali, Indonesia), 1998

bottom left Young Bamboo Shoots I (Ubud, Bali, Indonesia), 1995

bottom right Young Bamboo Shoots II (Ubud, Bali, Indonesia), 1998









## above

Mangrove Apple at Yellow House I (Pulau Buyung, Terengganu, Malaysia), 1996

## below

Mangrove Apple at Yellow House II (Pulau Buyung, Terengganu, Malaysia), 1996



ARTWORK DETAIL



A BOATMAN CARVING WOODEN NAILS (PULAU DUYUNG. TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA), ink on paper, 14 x 21.5 cm

PG 020

PASAR ATAS III (BUKITTINGGI, INDONESIA). paper collage and ink on stamped envelope, 14 x 20 cm





YELLOW HOUSE I (PULAU DUYUNG, KUALA TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA), ink on paper, 13.5 x 18.5 cm

BASKET OF TOBACCO (SALAVAN, LAOS), ink on paper, 15 X 21 CM

PG 010



YELLOW HOUSE II (PULAU DUYUNG, KUALA TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA), ink on paper, 13.5 x 18.5 cm PG 022

TRUE BREAK (SOC TRANG, VIETNAM), ink on paper, 14 X 21 CM

PG 011



YELLOW HOUSE III (PULAU DUYUNG, KUALA TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA), ink on paper, 13.5 x 18.5 cm PG 023

ANOTHER BUSY DAY (KAMPONG CHNANG, CAMBODIA), ink on paper, 14 x 21 cm

PG 012



YELLOW HOUSE IV (PULAU DUYUNG, KUALA TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA), ink on paper, 13.5 x 18.5 cm PG 023

PG 021



A BEAUTIFUL DISPLAY (CHIANG KHONG, THAILAND), ink on paper, 10.5 X 15 CM

PG 013



AWI'S DRUMS (PULAU DUYUNG, KUALA TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA), ink on paper, 14 x 21.5 cm PG 024



CHICKEN SELLERS (SALAVAN, LAOS), ink on paper, 9.5 X 15 CM

PG 017



MORNING MARKET (KENGTUNG, MYANMAR), ink on paper, 21 X 15 CM

PG 025



YWANA MARKET DAY (INLE LAKE, MYANMAR), ink on paper, 10.5 X 15 CM

PG 018



PASAR ATAS I (BUKITTINGGI, INDONESIA), paper collage and ink on stamped envelope, 14 x 20 cm

PG 025



CAI BE FLOATING MARKET (VINH LONG, VIETNAM), watercolour & ink on paper, 10 X 15 CM

PG 018



PASAR ATAS II (BUKITTINGGI, INDONESIA), paper collage and ink on stamped envelope, 14 x 20 cm PG 026



KEDAI MAKAN KAK YAN (PENARIK, TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA), Watercolour & ink on paper, 12 x 16 cm

PG 019



ASAR PERINHAJO (YOGYAKARTA, INDONESIA), ink on stamped envelope, 13.5 x 18.5 cm

PG 027



AT THE WARUNG (MARANG, TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA), ink on paper, 10 x 15 cm

PG 020



A PIOUS MAN (BUKITTINGGI, INDONESIA), paper collage and ink on stamped envelope, 14 x 20 cm PG 028



JERING SEEDS (KUALA BERANG, TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA), watercolour & ink on paper, 12.5 X 18 cm

watercolour on paper,

15 X 10 CM

PG 028		A CHINESE WOMAN AT THE PASAR PAYANG (KUALA TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA), ink on paper, 21 x 14.5 cm	PG 040	ANCE	CEREMONY BEFORE GOING TO CATCH GIANT CAT FISH II (CHIANG KHONG, THAILAND), watercolour & ink on paper, 10 x 15 cm
PG 029		A PICK-UP TO PYIN U LWIN (MANDALAY, MYANMAR), ink on paper, 10.5 x 15 cm	PG 041		TA PROHM (SIEM REAP, CAMBODIA), ink on cardboard, 13 x 20 cm
PG 033		A BUDDHIST HOLY SITE (CHIANG SEAN, THAILAND), watercolour & ink on paper, 15 x 10 cm	PG 042		ATTENDING THE WEDDING AT NIKI NIKI (WEST TIMORE, INDONESIA), Ink on stamped envelope, 13.5 x 18.5 cm
PG 034		A BELL OUT OF THE REMAINS OF WAR (CAMPASAK, LAOS), watercolour & ink on paper, 13 x 18.5 cm	PG 043		SUNSET AT DON KHONG (SI PHAN DON, LAOS), watercolour & ink on stamped envelope, 12 x 17 cm
PG 035	Sauji .	MEMORY OF THE CHAM I (MY SON, VIETNAM), watercolour & ink on paper, 10 x 15 cm	PG 043	10/964	NOVICE MONKS (MANDALAY, MYANMAR), ink on stamped envelope, 11 x 23.5 cm
PG 036		STUDY FOR TWILIGHT AT THE RIVER OF LOST FOOTSTEPS (YANGON, MYANMAR), watercolour & ink on paper, 14.3 x 21 cm	PG 044		GAMELAN IN PLAY I (TEJAKULA, BALI, INDONESIA), watercolour on paper, 10 x 15 cm
PG 036	20 1	PAK OU CAVES (LUANG PRABANG, LAOS), watercolour & ink on paper, 10 x 15 cm	PG 045		(TEJAKULA, BALI, INDONESIA), watercolour on paper, 10 x 15 CM
PG 037		MEMORY OF THE CHAM II (MY SON, VIETNAM), ink on paper, 10 x 15 cm	PG 047		BEHIND THE SCENE I (TEJAKULA, BALI, INDONESIA), watercolour on paper, 15 X 10 CM
PG 038		MORNING ALMS (LUANG PRABANG, LAOS), ink on paper, 15 x 20.4 cm	PG 047	館	BEHIND THE SCENE II (TEJAKULA, BALI, INDONESIA), watercolour on paper, 15 x 10 cm
PG 039	mile en	ALMS (BANGKOK, THAILAND), ink on paper, 12.5 x 18 cm	PG 047		BEHIND THE SCENE III (TEJAKULA, BALI, INDONESIA), watercolour on paper, 15 x 10 cm
PG 040		CEREMONY BEFORE GOING TO CATCH GIANT CAT FISH	PG 047		BEHIND THE SCENE IV  (TEJAKULA, BALI, INDONESIA),

(CHIANG KHONG, THAILAND),

watercolour & ink on paper,

10 X 15 CM

11 X 15 CM

ink on paper,

21 X 13 CM

watercolour & ink on paper,

14.5 X 21 CM



watercolour on postcard,

10 X 15 CM



TIGER PRAWN SEASON
(MANGKOK,
TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA),
watercolour & ink on paper,
12.5 x 17.5 cm



PRAYER LINE (CIREBON, WEST JAVA, INDONESIA), watercolour & ink on paper, 7.5 x 11 cm

PG 080



HARD WORKING YOUTHS (CHIANG KHONG, THAILAND), ink on paper, 15.5 x 22.5 cm PG 092

GAMBLING ON THE DECK,
PASSING TIME (BOAT FROM
PAKSE TO CHAMPASAK, LAOS),
ink on paper, 10 x 15 cm

PG 081



CHONG MEK, UBON
RATCHATHANI, THAILAND),
ink on paper, 10.5 x 15 cm

PG 093



NOT A FISHING DAY
(BEN TRE, VIETNAM),
watercolour & ink on paper,
10 x 15 cm

PG 085



BATHING IN THE RIVER (SEKAYU, TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA), ink on paper, 21 x 13 cm PG 093



MAIN DAM HAJI (MARANG, TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA), ink on paper, 15 X 10.5 cm

PG 086



CANDAT SEASON I (TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA), ink on stamped envelope, 14 x 20 cm PG 094



A FAMILY IN LAO HUY VILLAGE (HUAY XAI, LAOS), ink on paper, 10 X 15 CM

PG 086



CANDAT SEASON II (TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA), ink on stamped envelope, 14 x 20 cm PG 094



ELEPHANT EAR FISH (VINH LONG, VIETNAM), watercolour & ink on paper, 13.5 X 21 CM

PG 087



CANDAT SEASON III (TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA), ink on stamped envelope, 14 x 20 cm PG 095



RESTING FOR TONIGHT (UBUD, BALI, INDONESIA), ink on paper, 14 x 21.5 cm

PG 088



CANDAT SEASON IV (TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA), ink on stamped envelope, 14 x 20 cm PG 096



MIDDAY (UBUD, BALI, INDONESIA), ink on paper, 13 x 14.5 cm

PG 089



AT THE RIVER BORDER (KANDAL, CAMBODIA), ink on paper, 10 x 15 cm PG 096



RESTING ARMY (CHAMPASAK, LAOS), watercolour on paper, 13 x 21 cm

PG 090



AFTERNOON NAP ON A WAKAF (TOK JEMBAL, TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA), watercolour & ink on paper, 10 x 15 cm PG 097



STUDY OF ONE LAZY AFTERNOON (KAMPONG CHAM, CAMBODIA), watercolour & ink on paper, 19 x 19 cm

PG 090



A FARMER RESTING IN BAN PA AO PG 101 (BANGKOK, THAILAND), watercolour & ink on paper, 15 X 21 CM



KUPAS KELAPA (BESUT, TERENGGANU, MALAYSIA), ink on paper, 21.5 x 13.5 cm



ink on paper, 10 x 15 cm



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