



CHANG FEE MING

VALENTINE
WILLIE
FINE ART

KUALA LUMPUR • BALI

Journal

Small Works & sketches

CHANG FEE MING

*I first met Fee Ming in 1987 and in 1988 bought his watercolour painting **Trio (Gajus)** (1988). Fee Ming was then only 29 years old, and I thought: Here is an artist with boldness and daring in colour and in composition. Today, fifteen years and several watercolour additions later, Fee Ming has succeeded well beyond those impressions. He is now a leading Asian watercolour artist.*

*Fee Ming travels in search of inspiration. **Journal**, as this exhibition is aptly titled, records the many journeys he has taken. The sights captured are of common village folks, their customs and surroundings, all quickly sketched with his usual detail. The exhibited works follow Fee Ming's trail from the mountains of Bhutan to the temples of Myanmar, to the streets and stalls of the many villages he has visited, and then to Bali, the land that has so inspired him, and then back home.*

Home is Terengganu, to which Fee Ming returns, his mind "exploding with images and ideas" (his own description). His sketchbooks and postcards help him settle down because what he has recorded in his travels can remain as visions in storage. Some of the sketches and drawings remain as such: spontaneous works to be enjoyed in their own right. Yet others will provide references for or get translated into large water-colour works.

What exactly Fee Ming seeks for his paintings, the camera cannot capture. Faithful followers of his work always marvel at the diverse range of colours at his command. Mundane village scenes and their peoples, the texture of their fabrics and forms,



come alive, as if intoxicated by his watercolours. Even in the smaller watercolour works of this exhibition, we see evidence of this mastery.

Today, Fee Ming has many patrons and supporters. Whilst patronage is always to be encouraged, excessive patronage can lull an artist into complacency and numb his artistic senses. Fee Ming faces many such temptations, but does not yield to them. He could easily have continued with the Terengganu "window" series or his "half-figures", but that is not Fee Ming. He is always searching for new and unfamiliar subjects, exploring new colours. Now, he is working on a new **Mekong** series, but we have still to wait for a year or two before they are on exhibit. To his collectors, that is a long wait, but Fee Ming is not an artist to be hurried.

Fee Ming succeeds because he never seeks the comfortable and easy path. Even with success, he remains fully committed to his artistic pursuit. He continues with a simple life and is still ever humble. Indeed, a true and rare artist!

Three Boys (Terengganu)

1995

inkpen on paper

13 x 20.5 cm

About the artist

Born in Kuala Terengganu in 1959, Chang Fee Ming is a self-taught artist who began his career in the early 1980s. 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. He has exhibited widely in the Southeast Asian region, with solo shows in Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta and Bali, and participating in numerous major exhibitions in Malaysia, Australia, Taiwan, South Korea, Thailand, China (Tianjin and Shanghai), Indonesia, USA, Canada, Hong Kong, UK, Sweden and Brazil. His works have also appeared at auction at Christie's and Sotheby's over the past seven years. In 1995, he published **The World of Chang Fee Ming** (Ooi Kok Chuen & Garrett Kam) and in 2000 published **The Visible Trail of Chang Fee Ming** (Christine Rohani Longuet). His work has been featured in **Puspaseni** (Bank Negara, Kuala Lumpur 1989), **A Collector's Journey - Modern Painting in Indonesia** (AT Dermawan, Centre for Strategic & International Studies and Museum Neka, Jakarta, 1996), **Best of Watercolour: Painting Texture** (BL Schlemm & SM Doherty, 1997), **Best of Watercolour 2** (BL Schlemm & L Webster, 1997), and **Collected Best of Watercolour** (BL Schlemm & SM Doherty, 2002) (all Quarry Books, Rockport Publishers, Massachusetts), **The Development of Painting in Bali** (S Neka & G Kam, Yayasan Dharma Seni Museum Neka, Bali 1998), **Treasury of Malaysian and International Art** (CK Tan, The Art Gallery, Penang, 1999) and in the catalogue of the Neka Museum Collection in Bali. In 1999, he illustrated the poems of Marzuka Ali, translated by Christine Longuet and published by Dewan Bahasa. He is currently based in Kuala Terengganu, spending three months of the year in Bali and much of the rest travelling through Asia.

Exhibition dates: 10th September to 28th September 2002, Valentine Willie Fine Art, Kuala Lumpur.
tel: +60 3 22842348 fax: +60 3 22825190 www.artsasia.com.my





page far left above:
Kota, Bali
 1995
 watercolour on paper
 13.5 x 9 cm

page left above:
Pura Sumuan Tiga I
 1995
 watercolour on paper
 13.5 x 9 cm

page left below:
**Turning the Oft-Spun
 Prayer Wheel**
 1999
 watercolour on paper
 14 x 19 cm

this page above:
Pura Sumuan Tiga II
 1995
 watercolour on paper
 13.5 x 9 cm

this page below:
**Boat Construction,
 Kuala Terengganu**
 1998
 inkpen on envelope with
 postage stamps
 13.5 x 19 cm

cover:
Back Stage III
 1999
 watercolour on paper
 20 x 12.5 cm

