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News Release

Artwork that depicts Hanoi Cathedral on car bonnet wins inaugural UOB Painting of the Year Award in Vietnam

Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, 27 October 2023 – UOB Vietnam presented its first UOB Painting of the Year (POY) award to artist Trinh Minh Tien for his artwork titled “*Thủy Phủ- Water Palace*”. The inaugural UOB POY Awards Ceremony in Vietnam was held today at The Factory Contemporary Art Centre and livestreamed on UOB Vietnam’s Facebook page. The event was graced by Mr Ma The Anh, Head of Fine Arts, Photography and Exhibition Department from the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism in Vietnam.

As the Top Winner in the Established Artist Category, Minh Tien will receive a cash reward of VND 500 million and compete with the winning artists from Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand for the prestigious 2023 UOB Southeast Asian Painting of the Year award. Minh Tien also stands a chance to be selected for a one-month residency programme at the renowned Fukuoka Asian Art Museum in Japan. The UOB Southeast Asian Painting of the Year will be announced on 8 November 2023 at an awards ceremony in Singapore.

Established in 1982, UOB POY is the longest-running annual art competition in Singapore and one of the most recognised in Southeast Asia. The competition aims to promote visual art in the region and showcase the talents of established and emerging artists, having uncovered over 1,000 artistic talents across the region since its inception. Expanding to Vietnam this year, this flagship art competition reinforces the Bank’s long-term commitment to supporting art and artists in Southeast Asia.

Mr Victor Ngo, CEO of UOB Vietnam, shared, “We are very delighted that the first UOB Painting of the Year competition in Vietnam was a resounding success, drawing enthusiastic participation from artists and art enthusiasts across the nation. This competition provides a platform for artists to showcase their boundless passion and artistic ingenuity. The submitted entries delivered vivid, inspirational and profound narratives on various aspects of life and societal concerns. In line with the Bank’s Purpose of building the future of ASEAN, we will



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continue to uncover and nurture artistic talents, helping them develop their careers and shine on regional and international platforms."

Artist Trinh Minh Tien clinches 2023 UOB POY (Vietnam), Established Artist Category



"*Thủy Phủ-Water Palace*" by artist Trinh Minh Tien awarded Top Winner of the 2023 UOB POY (Vietnam), Established Artist Category

Through "*Thủy Phủ- Water Palace*", artist Minh Tien conveys the concept of impermanence, illustrating the continual transformation of history and religion through the imprints of architecture. Using airbrush painting techniques, the artist skilfully creates the reflection of Hanoi (St. Joseph) Cathedral on a car's bonnet, as the Cathedral casts its silhouette upon the rain-slicked car windows. Hanoi Cathedral stands as an exemplar of French architectural influence in Hanoi, seamlessly blending Gothic design with indigenous elements. The Cathedral was built on the foundation of the destroyed Bao Thien tower of Bao Thien Pagoda, The artist deftly highlights the contrast between constructed heritage and the transience of time and memory. The image of the Cathedral serves as a poignant representation of the dichotomy between material and spiritual values in contemporary society, where materialism often overshadows the spiritual connections that bind people to one another and the world around them.

Describing his artwork, artist Minh Tien shared, "In Vietnamese, 'Thủy' symbolises water, denoting flexibility, continuous change and impermanence. Water conveys the concepts of



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cleansing, soothing, and healing, washing away impurities and fostering creativity. 'Phủ' signifies a dwelling place, symbolising a geographical element. I hope my artwork can mend the traces of forgotten glory and present existence through the transformative power of water. As the pace of life accelerates, our vulnerability and fragility grow; thus, we must cherish the present. I am honoured to win the 2023 UOB Painting of the Year Vietnam award and delighted that my artwork will represent Vietnam in competing for the prestigious 2023 UOB Southeast Asian POY award.”

Artist Luong Xuan Doan, Chief Judge for the UOB POY in Vietnam, shared, “This year's winning artwork is praised for its innovative expression technique, transcending the confines of conventional art by experimenting with new materials to convey a profound message. The artwork's content carries a societal theme, offering a close view of the shifts in Vietnamese history and culture. Moreover, it conveys multi-layered messages about impermanence, as expressed through the element of 'Thuy', raising concerns about the current trend of social development. This urges a deeper introspection to foster lasting connections between individuals, humanity and the universe.”

Mr Ta Duy Tung wins the 2023 UOB Most Promising Artist of the Year (Vietnam), Emerging Artist Category



'Trên con đường - Fly on my way' by artist Ta Duy Tung, 2023 Most Promising Artist of the Year (Vietnam), Emerging Artist Category



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In the Emerging Artist Category, artist Ta Duy Tung took home the 2023 Most Promising Artist of the Year (Vietnam) award with oil painting "Fly on my way". His artwork depicts a flying shoe with a loosely tied thick string, symbolising the challenges, uncertainties and obstacles the artist faced during his youth as a student studying and working, marked by a bold and resilient spirit.

"In the realm of art, my personal inclination is to depict subjects that are close to reality, combining them with hidden meanings from my subconscious. My aspiration is to inspire young people to confront adversity and challenges with unwavering determination. I draw from the invaluable experiences and lessons in my own journey, which I believe will prove beneficial for future generations. I was surprised and proud to win the Most Promising Artist of the Year in Vietnam. This far exceeds my expectations and motivates me to continue pursuing my artistic path. I am very excited to attend the regional awards ceremony in Singapore this November and to interact with other talented artists in the region. Thank you UOB, for giving me a wonderful experience and opportunity," artist Ta Duy Tung shared.

The winning artworks from the Established and Emerging Artist Categories of the 2023 UOB POY (Vietnam) competition are on display at the Factory Contemporary Art Centre, Ho Chi Minh City. The exhibition is open to the public with free admission from 28 October until 13 November 2023, from 12.00pm to 7.00pm (28 October 2023) and from 10.00am to 7.00pm (29 October to 13 November 2023).

- Ends -

About UOB and Art

UOB's involvement in art started in the 1970s with its collection of paintings by Singapore artists. Today, the UOB Art Collection has more than 2,600 artworks, made up primarily of paintings from established and emerging Southeast Asian artists.

UOB plays an active role in communities across the region, most notably through its long-term commitment to art. As the leading patron of the arts in Asia, the Bank continues to make art accessible to a wider audience through a diverse range of visual art programmes, partnerships and community outreach across the region.



Singapore Australia Brunei Canada China France Hong Kong India Indonesia Japan
Malaysia Myanmar Philippines South Korea Taiwan Thailand United Kingdom USA Vietnam

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The Bank's flagship art programme is the UOB Painting of the Year competition, which was started in 1982 to recognise Southeast Asian artists and to offer them the opportunity to showcase their works to the wider community. The competition was extended to Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and in 2023, to Vietnam. It is now the longest running art competition in Singapore and one of the most prestigious in Southeast Asia.

Over the past 41 years, the competition has cultivated and advanced the careers of many artists in Singapore. Notable among them are Mr Goh Beng Kwan (1982 winner), and the late Mr Anthony Poon (1983 winner) and Mr Chua Ek Kay (1991 winner), who received the Singapore Cultural Medallion, Singapore's most distinguished art award.

The competition has also recognised talents from across the region through the UOB Southeast Asian POY award. Previous winners include Chomrawi Suksom from Thailand in 2022, Mr Saiful Razman from Malaysia in 2021, Mr Prabu Perdana from Indonesia in 2020, Mr Anagard from Indonesia in 2019, Mr Suvi Wahyudianto from Indonesia in 2018.

Together with the UOB POY winning artists, UOB also runs art workshops for underprivileged and special needs children regularly. At these workshops, the young learn art techniques from art professionals and award-winning artists.

In recognition of the Bank's long-term commitment to art, UOB was presented with the Singapore National Arts Council's Distinguished Patron of the Arts Award for the 20th consecutive year in 2023.

About UOB Vietnam

UOB Vietnam commenced operations officially on 2 July 2018. It is a wholly-owned subsidiary of UOB, a leading bank in Asia with a global network of around 500 offices in 19 countries and territories in Asia Pacific, Europe and North America.

UOB has been in Vietnam for 30 years, started from a representative office in 1993 and became the first Singapore bank to launch a branch in the country in 1995. Today, UOB Vietnam offers a range of personal and institutional financial services to both Vietnamese and overseas customers across the country backed by the seamless connectivity offered through UOB's regional network. In 2019, UOB Vietnam expanded into northern Vietnam with a branch in Hanoi. With the completion of the acquisition of Citibank Vietnam's consumer banking business early 2023, UOB now has a total five branches in Ho Chi Minh city and Hanoi.





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For nearly nine decades, UOB has adopted a customer-centric approach to create long-term value by staying relevant through its enterprising spirit and doing right by its customers. UOB is focused on building the future of ASEAN – for the people and businesses within, and connecting with, ASEAN.

The Bank connects businesses to opportunities in the region with its unparalleled regional footprint and leverages data and insights to innovate and create personalised banking experiences and solutions catering to each customer's unique needs and evolving preferences. UOB is also committed to help businesses forge a sustainable future, by fostering social inclusiveness, creating positive environmental impact and pursuing economic progress. UOB believes in being a responsible financial services provider and is steadfast in its support of art, social development of children and education, doing right by its communities and stakeholders.

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Appendix: Winning Artworks of 1st UOB POY in Vietnam

Established Artist Category

1. UOB POY Award



**“Thủy Phủ – Water Palace”
 Author: Artist Trinh Minh Tien**

Thủy phủ (Water Palace) represents an ethereal vision of St. Joseph’s Cathedral in Hanoi, with rain on the car windshield recreated by the artist on a car bonnet. The Cathedral was built on the foundation of the destroyed Bao Thien tower of Bao Thien Pagoda. Two layers of covering, space within space, time within time – creating surrealism within realism.

This artwork contemplates and questions the clash of values in the course of history and society with a historical manmade structure in contrast to the impermanence of time and memory.

About the artist

Trinh Minh Tien has persistently pursued hyperrealism for many years. For him, painting is a natural and continuous act, much like the way he paints with an airbrush starting from a single point and gradually spreading until he finishes. The use of airbrush on automobile shells as canvas affirms Trinh Minh Tien’s unconventional art practice.

2. Gold Award



**“Họa Chúng Sinh #1- Beings Painting #1”
 Author: Artist Pham Tran Viet Nam**

Họa chúng sinh #1 (Beings Painting #1) depicts the trilogy of works and densely crowded webs of human faces, encroaching and suffocating under the pressure of urban developments. The artwork includes bruised faces in combats, children at wars, medieval beggars, coal miners and the innocents struggling to survive in a world filled with complexities.

About the artist

Pham Tran Viet Nam’s compositions convey humanitarian messages from the depths of his compassion, the emotional resonance he feels toward societal situations and sufferings in the immediate world. He is drawn into contemplative thoughts about his time and his paintings are sculptural – he sews, embroiders, patches pieces of canvas together, and punches holes into his canvas before painting them.



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3. Silver Award



“Hiện thực chậm lại - Decelerated Reality” **Author: Artist Lai Dieu Ha**

Hiện thực chậm lại (Decelerated Reality) is an expression of the artist’s personal history, approach and creative process. This artwork recurred her own performance *Extended North-Needle* (2019) and created a new identity.

The painting is the result of three levels of creation: using the artist’s body as the subject, delving into the subconscious through psychological research, and finally translating it into a painting. The enduring anguish of loss due to conflicts and chaos and taking risks to go beyond the safe boundary.

About the artist

For over a decade, the public has identified Lai Dieu Ha as an “extreme performance artist.” After four years in retreat to burrow into the method of psycho-dramatic therapy, she came back with painting as the next stage in examining what the boundaries of performing art truly entails while exploring society and humanity from the lens of performance references.

4. Bronze Award



“Thế giới - World” **Author: Artist Duong Ngoc Tuan**

Thế giới (World) employs an expressive and surreal visual language within an abstract and ambiguous space, with rich monochromatic brushstrokes. This artwork represents a significant departure in terms of the theme from the peaceful and realistic paintings that have long been associated with the artist’s practice.

About the artist

Duong Ngoc Tuan has been practicing art for over 20 years with an ardent passion in painting. Throughout his journey, he has experimented with various materials, including oil, lacquer, acrylic, silk, and more.



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Emerging Artist Category

1. Most Promising Artist of the Year Award



“Trên con đường - Fly on my way” Author: Ta Duy Tung

Trên con đường (Fly on my way) draws inspiration from the pair of shoes the artist used to wear during his school days and holiday job. Only one shoe is seen to illustrate how he has been overcoming odds and emerging stronger.

The untied lace signifies uncertain steps, yet the shoe taking flight and portraying how scattered elements could be extraordinary. Its background is reduced to a flat, dark space for the subject to take focus and accentuate its surrealism.

About the artist

Ta Duy Tung's artistic inclination revolves around depicting the familiar in a realistic manner, serving as symbols for meaning within his conscious, subconscious, and unconscious minds. In addition to painting, he is also passionate about martial arts and Eastern philosophy. Before starting to paint, he often meditates, much like preparing for a match. While painting, he always strives to achieve the best possible state of each brushstroke and shade – when he fails to reach this level of perfection, he is willing to fully scrap his work in progress.

2. Gold Award



“Qua tĩnh lặng - Through tranquility” Author: Lâm Phối Dung

Qua tĩnh lặng (Through tranquility) is a continuation of the artist exploring different forms of alternative spaces. It serves as a form of escapade, welcoming viewers into familiar spaces that evoke a peaceful time one has had. The painting is a piece of memoir and memories of a person racing against time yet striving to slow oneself.

About the artist

Lam Phoi Dung is a print designer and visual art practitioner. She is in love with exploring and creating alternate narratives of life within nature, matter, and colour that corresponds to her journey of self-exploration. She often uses storytelling and nature as an endless inspiration at the core of her practice – creating alternative spaces to escape for herself and viewers.



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3. Silver Award



“Tĩnh Không - Emptiness” Author: Nguyen Anh Vu

Tĩnh Không / Śūnyatā (Emptiness) depicts a young man with red hair, carrying a hint of melancholy, gently glancing at the viewer, or, from the viewer, looking away in another direction. With this gaze, the viewer is no longer a viewer but can start a conversation with the character. The young man's form is distilled into lines and colours, drawing the viewer's attention towards the motion and the gaze of the character, forging a lasting connection. The artist sees himself in this character – initially portrays someone other than himself. “I am composed of what is not me”, and this work is a zen koan.

About the artist

Nguyen Anh Vu is a young graphic designer who specialises in simplicity and functionality. Besides design, he is also passionate about languages and the history of Fine Arts, which led him to artmaking. His artworks marry graphic design, oil pastels and paper-cutting.

4. Bronze Award



“Lạc Lối - Lost” Author: Nguyen Huu Tang

Lạc lối (Lost) is a call for the end of animal cruelty practices in luxury fashion. Luxury fashion has thrived and gained importance to many. Despite growing awareness and collective call for ethical practices, luxury brands still persist in ruthless pursuit of profit at the expense of innocent animals.

In this painting, we see images of hunted species, their fur cruelly stripped from their bodies, enduring emotional stress and deprivation, and disruptions to biodiversity – our planet's natural balance can only be restored or preserved when all forms of life are valued and cherished.

About the artist

Nguyen Huu Tang is an independent artist who graduated from University of Fine Arts Ho Chi Minh City specialising in lacquer painting, commerce and media works for many years. His style evoke influences from comics and cartoons from his childhood. The themes of his creations aim to provoke a certain disquietude in the (young) audience regarding contemporary societal issues.

