

...fifth of local art collective ZERO – of which SKLO, aka ‘The Her Lady’ is also a member – will be going solo this month, displaying a series of his most street-style paintings on white walls of Hampe Galleries. **Gwen Pew** asks the master of spray cans about ten things about him.

...hamed Zulkarnaen Othman’s pseudonym was inspired by the brand his favourite skateboarder started, as well as the song ‘When Pumpkins’ song. ‘When I decided to adopt it as my artist name, ZERO meant emptiness – a surface that needs to be filled with additional value.’ When he isn’t busy painting, he lectures part-time at Lasalle.

3 He graduated from NAFA with a diploma in Visual Communications in 2000, and subsequently earned a BA for painting in 2008 from Lasalle.

4 ZERO is the only urban artist to have been part of The Substation’s Associate Artists programme, and he was also a nominee for the President’s Young Talent in 2005.

5 He first got into street art in 2003, when he and his friends from art school founded his first collective, ARTVSTS – one of the pioneering street art groups in Singapore. ‘We chose the streets as our gallery as we felt that it was the best space to show our art.’

6 He is, however, still happy that he will be displaying his works in a proper gallery: ‘I am, first and

foremost, an artist. The only thing urban about my works is the fact I am using aerosol paints and stencils as a predominant medium.’

7 He decided to name his upcoming show ‘Anthology of the Abyssma’ because it is a collection of his emotions and being at the particular period of time: ‘It’s a body of work borne out of the severity of my emotional and mental state.’

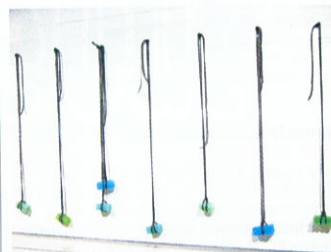
8 Despite having had a few solo shows in the past, this is the first one centred on paintings: ‘My first solo show was at The Substation in 2010, and even that was a whole exhibition that was supposed to be seen as an installation.’

9 It’s also a deeply personal show for him: ‘My subject matters have always been current affairs and social issues; I hardly paint that which is akin to my being as a person, both emotionally and mentally. This will be the first time people will get to see my inner self, a conflict between my two selves – ZERO and Zul Othman.’

10 He doesn’t mind painting over works that he no longer feels a connection with, time and time again: ‘I have no qualms about repainting over a completed artwork of mine until I get to say what I need to say. I stop when I have already said enough.’

ZERO: Anthology of the Abyssmal is at Chan Hampe Galleries from **10-26 May**.

*Spotlight Ye Shufang



Best known for her food art installations involving colourful agar-agar – a vegetarian substitute for gelatine – local artist Ye Shufang’s latest show features both agar-agar pieces and watercolours. **Gwen Pew** asks about her internationally renowned works.

Why did you first start using agar-agar as an artistic medium?

It started as part of a series of experiments that I had conducted (or played with) for my Masters research in 1997 and 1998. I was looking at relational aesthetics and experiential values in art back then, and agar-agar, with its ease of preparation, half turgid and half wobbly translucent form, had the qualities that appealed to me.

How did you create ‘Experiments for a very perishable short installation’ (pictured), the piece with agar-agar and the rubber strip?

I prepare and cook the agar-agar as per usual preparations, without adding anything to increase their lifespan. However, I had to experiment with different proportions of water to agar-agar for this work, in order to test a range of consistencies to create the density that I needed for the agar-agar to stay tied to the rubber strips without falling to pieces. The agar-agar installations will decompose over the period of the exhibition – this is part of the visible process of trying to track or record the passing of time.

Are the watercolour drawings meant to complement the piece?

Generally, my research and practice, whether in my installations or drawings, have been consistently focused on ideas of the ephemeral and the ready-made. I referenced images from circus posters and children’s books and used items such as cookie-cutters and drawing templates. I wanted to explore how we use invented devices and templates to organise and quantify vast items, events, or even emotions and memories. I use the templates, cookie-cutters and book illustrations as a form of ready-made items, and try to tease out the aspects of the immeasurable and miscellaneous within these areas.

Tell us a secret.

I can’t cook!

Ye Shufang: The Loss Index is at The Private Museum until **2 Jun**.

Explain your art Wyn-Lyn Tan

...11, local artist Wyn-Lyn Tan became one of the first two Singaporeans to take part in the Arctic Circle Residency, an annual expeditionary residency programme that brings a group of artists, scientists, architects and explorers to the wilderness of the Arctic. A collection of acrylic and video works created by Tan during her trip is now on display at FOST Gallery. She tells **Gwen Pew** about the experience.



...been on a few other artist residencies before, but while many of them followed a similar thread of pursuit of vast, open spaces and the luminosity of light, this was my first trip to the Arctic. It was an expeditionary residency – which meant we (24 other international artists and I) were on a voyage to remote far-off destinations aboard a specially out-fitted sailing vessel. Sailed from the Norwegian port of Svalbard, voyaging along the North-Western coast of the island of Spitsbergen for over two weeks, making various shore stops along the way. The Arctic moved me because the sense is vast, unknown and elemental. There is stillness, yet

never dead silence. It is a place of unparalleled beauty, yet it remains a harsh, unpredictable environment. It is frozen, yet fluid. I see a similarity in all these paradoxes to my paintings.

“Fading Shadows” (pictured) is not meant to be a literal representation of any particular landscape, but rather to convey the emotive experience of the place. The emphasis is on atmosphere and this piece aims to convey an ethereal sense of barrenness and solitude. Yet, as one draws closer, one starts to unravel the underlying panoramas beneath the layers of coloured wash. There is a deliberate building of coloured washes and layers, akin to the passing of time. My work

process for this new series is also a lot more contemplative, similarly, inviting the viewer to spend a longer time looking at the work, unearthing the hints of brush strokes and shadows beneath the layers.

As with my painting technique, I start with mark-making, and the entire process includes a fair amount of contemplation to allow the painting to organically take shape. I spoke of paradoxes in my paintings earlier: there is a sense of masculinity in the way the strokes are executed here, yet the layers within also have a soft fluidity to it.’

Silence on a Milk Mountain is at FOST Gallery until **2 Jun**.