

VDMFK-INFORMATION

ASSOCIATION OF MOUTH AND FOOT PAINTING ARTISTS
ACROSS THE WORLD

July 2024/208



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Im Rietle 25, FL-9494 Schaan, Principality of Liechtenstein, Phone +423 232 11 76, Fax +423 232 75 41
e-mail: vdmfk@vdmfk.li, Internet: www.vdmfk.com

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Dear artists, dear readers,

Today I am writing the foreword to the current Information Brochure on behalf of our President. That's an enjoyable task, I thought. But what should I write in a time in which there only seems to be bad news? The world is full of crises: wars, climate catastrophes, inflation, famine and so forth.

And then there are also the personal worries of many people. For people with disabilities, everyday life additionally holds very particular challenges. At present, the lack of suitable and affordable carers is especially acute. My head is full of these negative thoughts. I am tired of the bad news. This is currently called 'news fatigue' in research. It is, however, spring at the moment. Nature has awoken in my garden. The first flowers and sun rays are warming my soul. I want to write something positive, optimistic. Right here and now, I do not wish to think about these things that pull me down again and again.

And so I am reflecting on what inspires me and puts me in a positive mood: my garden, as mentioned, and contact with people who do me good and who mean something to me. I look at my palette in my studio. I have to grin at the chaos that is the residues from tubes of squeezed acrylics. Perhaps I should offer my palette for sale as an abstract work of art? I think about our pleasant task of creating works in a form that is artistically sophisticated, but which also enjoys the widest possible audience, on the other hand. This is not easy, and it is a challenge we set ourselves time and again. How do we reconcile artistic demands – particularly on ourselves – with the intention of pleasing our customers with our subjects? After all, we wish to earn money through our own work, to make our living – like every other working person VDMFK Vice President Thomas Kahlau, mouth painter from Germany.

I always call these paintings my 'compromise paintings'. When I am working at the easel, the question at the back of



VDMFK Vice President Thomas Kahlau, Mouthpainter from Germany.

my mind is: Could this be enjoyed by a wide audience?

Sometimes it works out and one of these pictures can be found sometime on a card or in one of our calendars. This pleases and encourages me. Then, however, I paint again, without this question at the back of my mind, and enjoy the freedom of art to the full. Sometimes there is that wonderful moment when something special emerges from this work – it is somehow indescribable. If this is something that pleases me as an artist and also touches many people, then that is one of the precious moments for me. Therein lies my motivation to stand at my easel again and again and to feel free and full of life while painting. You probably feel the same way – my mouth and foot painting colleagues. From our work, we draw strength to cope with our everyday life. Perhaps that is one of the reasons that we manage better than some people with disabilities in a comparable situation. In this way, we repeatedly create unique works of a quality with high artistic demands,

using our mouth or foot. It is what we are able to do. Even a painting with Christmas, Easter or other festivities as its subject can and should have this standard of quality. Those of us on the VDMFK Board, the employees at the office and the publishing houses that work for us ensure the necessary framework conditions on behalf of our members. In the summer, the Board of Directors came together with the Executive Board for their regular meeting. Here, and at a subsequent workshop with the publishers, we considered and discussed what we can do even better. It was primarily about how, in these difficult times, we can continue to ensure that the members of our self-help organisation can live from their art, free of financial hardship. For this purpose, a solid and resilient foundation for our organisation is required. We are working on this constantly, in accordance with our assignment, with the greatest motivation.

And we mouth and foot painting artists continue to paint pictures that we hope will bring joy to you – our loyal fans and supporters.

Now I will take a break: read a good book or listen to inspiring music while looking at my garden. I will then devote myself again to the painting I have begun on my easel. All this is the best form of rest I can take from this flood of news.

Let us stay creative and confident.

Thomas Kahlau
Vice President of the VDMFK

Miscellaneous

Mouth painter Carl Ernst Fischer (Cefischer) from Germany made a name for himself with his caricatures and the picture stories of the cat "Oskar". These were also published in book form. On this page we show three of these caricatures.



'Oskar saws wood' is the title of this caricature.



Mouth painter Cefischer gave this caricature the name 'Mother wants to shoot too'.



'Preventive detention' is the name of this caricature.



Lenaïc Leger (Associate Member/France), 'Blooming anemones', watercolours, 34x24 cm.

Artists' activities

ARGENTINA

Moya, Maria Celeste (Scholarship Holder)

- On 12 March 2024, an exhibition by Maria Celeste Moya was unveiled at the Congress of Honour of the Argentine Nation, to which she received an invitation. This exhibition was on display until 22 March 2024. Members of the Ar-



gentinian congress were among the visitors. There were various media reports about this exhibition.

Barcia, Cesar Andres (Scholarship Holder)

- Cesar Andres Barcia took part in a number of activities. One of these was an invitation to paint live with children and teachers in a kindergarten on 6 November 2023. He painted with three to five-year-old children. In addition, he was invited to exhibit his works at the Andrés Salgado sports complex, where he put on a painting demonstration together with children of all ages. On 7 March 2024, he was invited to take part in a campaign to mark 'Women's Month'. Together with 52 female artists, he exhibited two works and was the only male artist invited to paint live. In addition, the cultural directorate of Exaltación de la Cruz, Buenos Aires, offered him the opportunity to organise a personal art exhibition in the cultural centre. 10 of his works were exhibited in the exhibition hall of the cultural centre from 12 April to 12 May 2024.

BRAZIL

- The three **Brazilian Associate Members Gonçalo Borges, Maria Goret Chagas and Marcelo da Cunha** held a joint exhibition from 16 November



2023 to 4 January 2024, which was a great success. It took place in the restaurant of the Hotel Hilton Morumbi in São Paulo. The three artists exhibited a total of 45 works.

Borges, Gonçalo (Associate Member)

- Gonçalo Borges won first prize in the 'Universo Cerâmico 2024' exhibition, which took place in the Legislative Assembly of the State of São Paulo.

Chagas, Maria Goret (Associate Member)

- Maria Goret Chagas was honoured that one of her works was selected to be exhibited at the Biennale in Yog-

yakarta/Indonesia. This exhibition took place from 13 to 21 October 2023. The same opportunity was offered to Scholarship Holder Cupertino da Silva.

- In addition, Maria Goret Chagas and Scholarship Holder Diogo Alexandre de Sousa Silva organised an exhibition at a cultural centre, which ran from 12 December 2023 to 5 January 2024. The title was 'Images of Christmas - Art Beyond Hands'. They showed 17 paintings depicting everything from St Nicholas to Father Christmas, a Christmas tree, candles, the Holy Family and various Christmas themes.

Jefferson, Maia Figueira (Scholarship Holder)

- Maia Figueira Jefferson had a very active year 2023. During the year, he held numerous solo exhibitions or took part in group exhibitions. He has also been the subject of many reports in the media.



Maria Goret Chagas (Associate Member, left) together with Scholarship Holder Diogo Alexandre de Sousa Silva at the painting demonstration during the Christmas exhibition.

Artists' activities

CANADA

Matthias, Theresa Helen (Full Member)

- Theresa Helen Matthias took part in an exhibition in London, Ontario, to which over 70 artists were invited. It was cal-



led 'Resilient London, Meet Your Neighbours' and ran from 5 October 2023 to 12 May 2024.

CHINA

Huang, Guofu (Associate Member)

- During the Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival, which took place from 17 to 28 September 2023, Guofu Huang held a personal art exhibition at the Chongqing Nanan Expo. He had the privilege of exhibiting 12 works of art. In addition, the artist presented his works at the Shizishan Park Art Gallery in Chongqing from 25 October to 20 November 2023. At this exhibition, he exhibited more than 60 of his small-format works of art. He also presented his work at an art exhibition he organised at the Nanping Exhibition Center in Chongqing from 26 January 2023 to 6 February 2024 to mark the Chinese New Year.

CROATIA

Perkovic, Stjepan (Scholarship Holder)

- Stjepan Perkovic took part in the Festival of Equal Opportunities, which took place in Zagreb's main square from 21 to 23 May. There were over 900 participants, and almost 600 of them were people with disabilities. The primary aim of this unique event in Europe is to showcase the creativity of people with disabilities and to demonstrate that they are equal members of society. The festival consists of three areas - art, music and sport. Stjepan Perkovic exhibited his work, which attracted many visitors.

ESTONIA

Järvpõld, Tiia (Scholarship Holder)

- At the beginning of December 2023, Tiia Järvpõld opened her 85th exhibition at the Järvakandi Culture Hall. There was even a television report about this event. At the opening, there was a concert featuring the Spanish tenor Germán Gholami Torres-Pardo and well-known Estonian singers Elisa Kolk and Maarja Kaplinski. The artist put on a painting demonstration of her foot painting on stage. This exhibition was on display until 29 February 2024.

GERMANY

Höllerer, Lars (Full Member)

- Lars Höllerer, a German artist, received a major award. In April 2024, he was honoured with the Order of Merit of



the Federal Republic of Germany. This honour was bestowed on him by the Federal President at the suggestion of

the Prime Minister of Baden-Württemberg, Winfried Kretschmann. The mayor of Überlingen, Jan Zeitler (right), handed over the medal of honour to



him, which was accepted by his father Rudolf Höllerer on his behalf. Lars Höllerer was honoured for his vast artistic work, which he has brought to the canvas with his mouth and brush, as well as for his tireless commitment to inclusion. 'I never expected to win this award,' said Lars Höllerer, visibly moved.

Continued on page 8

Artists' activities

GREAT BRITAIN

- In November 2023, an exhibition of 45 framed prints was held in the upper waiting room of the British Parliament for a week. The exhibition was organised by **Tom Yendell, Board Member** of the VDMFK. Other British artists who took part in the exhibition included **Keith Jansz (Full Member), Robert Trent (Full Member) and Andrew Bernard Baker (Scholarship Holder)**. The result was an international exhibition of mouth and foot painters, with works by artists from all five continents on display.

Moriarty-Simmonds, Rosaleen (Scholarship Holder)

- Rosaleen Moriarty-Simmonds was given a great honour. A portrait of her in her former High Sheriff uniform, as well as a work painted by her, were selected to be exhibited in the Welsh Parliament.

HUNGARY

- The two Hungarian **Scholarship Holders Ferenc Deák and Nagypál Istvánné** took part in exhibitions. The first one took place in the theatre of



Veszprém and the second one in the corridors of the Catholic University in Jászberény.

INDONESIA

- The two Indonesian artists **Sabar Subadri (Associate Member) and**

Muhammad Asroel (Associate Member) organised an art exhibition entitled 'Foot Art Duet' at the 'Warung Teduh' restaurant in Salatiga City from 23 to 27 December 2023, where they both exhibited a total of 18 of their works. The event was opened by Mr Yayat Nurhayat, head of the city of Salatiga's culture



and tourism office, Ms Nunuk Dartini, head of the city's education office, and Inspector Nurwakhidin, head of the police office of the Argomulyo sector of the city of Salatiga.

- The Indonesian Mouth and Moot Painters **Yusuf Agus (Associate Member), Mumammad Amanatullah (Scholarship Holder), Muhammad Asroel (Associate Member), Salim Harama (Scholarship Holder), Sodikin Pard (Associate Member), Faisal Rusdi (Scholarship Holder) and Sabar Subadri (Associate Member)** held a joint exhibition in the city of Madiun, East Java Province. The theme of the exhibition was 'A Change of Perspective in an Art Exhibition'. The works were exhibited at 'Kapitan Cina House & Brother's Coffee' in Madiun City from 20 to 27 February 2024. Ms Inda Raya, Deputy Mayor of Madiun, was also present.

JAPAN

Morita, Machiko (Full Member)

- Due to the pandemic, no exhibition has been held in the building of 'Mitsubishi Building Solutions' for four years. The decision has now been made to hold exhibitions again. Full Member Machiko Morita was invited to present

her work at the reopening.



MEXICO

Escalante, Rosa Maria de Guadalupe (Scholarship Holder)

- Rosa Maria de Guadalupe Escalante held a solo exhibition at her home on 18/19 May 2024, which was called 'Kronos' and comprised 38 works.

POLAND

Kmiecik, Stanislaw (Full Member)

- Stanislaw Kmiecik had a very active year in 2023. On 21 June 2023, an exhibition of his works opened in the town of Biecz. On 26 June 2023, an exhibition entitled 'Under the Sky of Krakow' took place at the Tadeusz Kosciuszko University of Technology in Krakow, where he also met with students and other guests and put on a painting demonstration as usual. On 25 August 2023, he took part in a group exhibition at the medieval castle of Kwidzyn. On 5 September 2023, an exhibition was held in a club café in the Śródmieście Cultural Centre in Warsaw. On 28 August 2023, there was an exhibition and a foot painting show at the palace in Bochnia. On 10 October 2023, the closing event of his exhibition took place at the town hall in Władysławowo, with a painting demonstration for officials and invited guests. On 4 December 2023, he held a vernissage at the headquarters of the European Court of Auditors, a meeting with officials and invited guests, for whom he gave a painting demonstration.



Leanne Beetham (Associate Member/Great Britain), 'Kingfisher on stone on the river bank', watercolours, 36x25 cm.

We mourn for

JAPAN

Minami, Eiichi

Date of birth: 28 August 1955
Passed away on: 16 November 2023
Painting technique: Mouth Painter

Eiichi Minami was 17 years old and a pupil in the third year of high school when he had an accident in a judo fight on the judo day in Nagano Prefecture in 1972. He sustained a spinal injury and his limbs remained completely paralysed. He subsequently spent three years in the hospital. Thanks to his rehabilitation therapy, he managed to move his arms again slightly. He required help, however, for all the tasks of everyday life. Eiichi Minami already enjoyed painting before his accident. Soon after he was discharged from the hospital, he therefore took a brush in his mouth and began to paint in this way. He made the first attempts with watercolours. He later moved to oil painting.

Eiichi Minami primarily painted still lifes. At the same time, he wanted to bring the happy and hopeful scenes of young people and animals from all over the world to the canvas with his artwork. In 1982, he received a scholarship from the Association. Ten years later, in 1992,

he became part of the VDMFK family, as a Full Member. Over time, he was able to achieve various successes with his artwork. These included his painting 'Rainbow over a hill' being selected by the Principality of Liechtenstein as the

image for the 'Peace 2000' stamp issue. Eiichi Minami died on 16 November 2023.



Eiichi Minami had been a Full Member of the Association since 1992. He died on 16 November 2023.

Deceased Scholarship Holders

AUSTRIA

Sedighi, Rouhollah

Date of birth: 1 October 1988
Passed away on: 24 March 2024
Painting technique: Mouthpainter

Rouhollah Sedighi was born on 1 October 1988 in Afghanistan. At the age of 15, he came to Austria. He lived there in a young people's home and graduated from secondary school. Rouhollah Sedighi subsequently trained as a chef. One year after he had completed the training, he became self-

employed and opened a shisha lounge with a restaurant. In summer 2015, Rouhollah Sedighi fell from a window. From then on, he lived in Altenhof a. H. in an institution for people with physical disabilities. During a rehabilitation stay in Bad Häring, he had the opportunity to take part in artistic activities. Rouhollah Sedighi established that he very much enjoyed painting. The Association granted him a scholarship from 2019. Rouhollah Sedighi died on 24 March 2024.

BELARUS

Goluschko, Anatolij

Date of birth: 20 February 1963
Passed away on: 12 December 2023
Painting technique: Mouthpainter

Anatolij Goluschko was born on 20 February 1963 in the village of Mogilizia. On 4 August 1980, he sustained a compression fracture of the 5th cervical vertebra with an injury to the spinal cord, as a result of which he was paralysed. He completed secondary school. Through self-study, he began to paint with his mouth in 1998. From 2001 to 2007, he participated in various

exhibitions. In his leisure time, he wrote poems and stories. From 2009, he was a Scholarship Holder of the VDMFK. Anatolij Goluschko died on 12 December 2023.

BRAZIL

Alesse, Maria de Lourdes

Date of birth: 10 November 1950
Passed away on: 29 November 2023
Painting technique: Footpainter

Maria de Lourdes Alesse was born on 10 November 1950 in Olímpia, Brazil without arms. She already began performing activities with her right foot as a child. In 1969, Maria de Lourdes Alesse began to draw and paint with her foot. The artist perfected this by attending special courses. She enjoyed painting landscapes. From 1976, she was supported by the VDMFK as a Scholarship Holder. She participated in exhibitions in Olímpia and other South American towns. Maria de Lourdes Alesse died on 29 November 2023.

Correia da Silva, Carlos Matheus

Date of birth: 26 November 1995
Passed away on: 4 January 2024
Painting technique: Mouthpainter

Carlos Matheus Correia da Silva was born in Magé on 26 November 1995. On a working day in 2014, he and a friend decided to cool off in the sea after a day's work of construction. They jumped off a pier into the water. His friend reappeared unharmed. Carlos Matheus Correia da Silva, however, hit his head on a sandbank and did not resurface. After his rescue, he spent 92 days in the intensive care unit of a hospital. During rehabilitation treatments, he met Scholarship Holders Thiago Ribeiro Santons and Luciano Alves dos Nascimento. His friends encouraged him to learn to paint with his mouth. Carlos Matheus Correia da Silva attended painting lessons by an art teacher known to the local publishing

house. Carlos Matheus Correia da Silva became a Scholarship Holder of the VDMFK in 2023. He died on 4 January 2024.

COLOMBIA

Berri'o Betancur, Carlos Augusto

Date of birth: 9 November 1952
Passed away on: 29 December 2023
Painting technique: Mouthpainter

Carlos Augusto Berno Betancur was born on 9 November 1952 in Medellín. He was the second son of a family of eight and therefore had to assume responsibility for the upbringing and maintenance of his siblings from an early age. For this purpose, he worked in various professions. At the age of 23, he began to work at the Medel-Kn municipal utilities as an energy assistant. Aged 46, he fell at work, which resulted in complete dislocation of vertebrae C5, C6, C7 and the spinal cord (tetraplegia). At his wife's encouragement, he pursued the path to art, particularly to painting. Later on, at a meeting of people with disabilities, he met the artist Hector Jairo Tamayo, Scholarship Holder of the VDMFK, and was noticeably able to make considerable artistic progress. Oil painting became one of the most satisfying activities in his life. He was able to show his artwork to a broad public at exhibitions. From 2011, he received a scholarship from the Association. Carlos Augusto Berno Betancur died on 29 December 2023.

GERMANY

Wenig, Petra

Date of birth: 31 March 1960
Passed away on: 9 May 2024
Painting technique: Mouthpainter

The mouth painter Petra Wenig was born on 31 March 1960 in Landstuhl near Kaiserslautern. Since birth, she had

curvature of the joints in all her joints and on her hands and was therefore confined to a wheelchair. The mouth painter graduated from the special vocational school in Usberg and worked at the 'Pfennigparade' foundation in the art department. In 1974, Petra Wenig began to paint with her mouth in a self-taught manner. She attended several art courses. The mouth painter participated in an exhibition at the Gasteig in Munich and took part in the 'Pfennigparade' Christmas bazaar. Her hobbies were painting, reading, television and travelling. Petra Wenig was supported by the VDMFK as a Scholarship Holder from 1991. She died on 9 May 2024.

ISRAEL

Ganon, Arie

Date of birth: 3 April 1963
Passed away on: 31 December 2023
Painting technique: Foot painter

Arie Ganon was born on 3 April 1963 in Tel Aviv. From birth, he suffered from cerebral palsy or rather muscular atrophy with uncontrolled movements of the individual body parts. It was only his right foot that he was able to move in a controlled way, which was why he used it to paint. Arie Ganon lived in a home, where he also received private art lessons. Nature was the foot painter's inspiration. He loved strong colours and enjoyed painting living things that are at home in nature. He was supported by the Association as a Scholarship Holder from 1992. Arie Ganon died on 31 December 2023.

We mourn for

JAPAN

Himeno, Tokiko

Date of birth: 24 April 1954
Passed away on: 23 November 2023
Painting technique: Mouthpainter

Tokiko Himeno was born on 24 April 1954. As a result of an injury to the cervical vertebrae, all four of her limbs were paralysed and she also had a functional disorder of the body. In 2003, Tokiko Himeno became aware of mouth painting and educated herself further about art in a self-taught manner. The artist presented her work at a variety of exhibitions, at the art museum in Kitakyushu and on the premises of the 'Izutsuya' centre, among others. She was presented with various awards for her artistic skills. From 2013, she was supported by the VDMFK as a Scholarship Holder. Tokiko Himeno died on 23 November 2023.

MALTA

Vassallo, Michael

Date of birth: 6 February 1968
Passed away on: 5 January 2024
Painting technique: Mouthpainter

Michael Vassallo was born on 6 February 1968 in Siggiewi. In June 1987, he sustained a spinal fracture, which resulted in quadriplegia. In 1999, he attempted to paint with his mouth for the first time. In no time, the artist developed a great enthusiasm for painting, and within a few months, he painted approx. 50 originals. He was an autodidact. The VDMFK supported him with a scholarship from 2001. Michael Vassallo died on 5 January 2024.

POLAND

Warachim, Katarzyna

Date of birth: 17 August 1970
Passed away on: 13 April 2024
Painting technique: Mouthpainter

Katarzyna Warachim was born on 17 August 1970 in Gliwice. She attended primary school. From 1980, Katarzyna Warachim suffered from tetraplegia, as a result of which her arms and legs were paralysed. In 1986, she began to paint with her mouth. The mouth painter participated in exhibitions and the media reported on the activities of the talented artist. From 1995, she was a Scholarship Holder of the VDMFK. Katarzyna Warachim died on 14 April 2024.

TAIWAN

Lin, Ting-Ting

Date of birth: 15 October 1975
Passed away on: 24 April 2024
Painting technique: Mouthpainter

Ting-Ting Lin was born on 15 October 1975 in Jilong. From an early age, Ting-Ting Lin developed a particular inclination for art. She graduated from the technical institute with the specialisation of decoration as well as visual communication and construction. Professionally, she was responsible for designing wedding dresses and illustrating children's books. In addition, she worked in commercial design, as a painting teacher in a studio and as a deputy managing director in a company. In 2002, she sustained a comminuted fracture of the cervical vertebra with a joint shift in a traffic accident. From then on, her entire body was paralysed. On the encouragement and instruction of her teacher Xie Kunshan and his wife, Ting-Ting Lin picked up a paintbrush again, only this time, she used her mouth. From 2007, she was supported by the VDMFK as a Scholarship Holder. Ting-Ting Lin died on 24 April 2024.

USA

Bell, Donna

Date of birth: 17 March 1964
Passed away on: 28 January 2024
Painting technique: Mouthpainter

Donna Bell was born on 17 March 1964 in Port Sulphur. She grew up in Vidalia and also went to school there. In summer 1979, she was out with her sister and a friend in the car when she had an accident. She was the only one to be injured and from that day, she was paralysed from the shoulders down (C3 - C4). She spent some time at the Methodist Rehabilitation Center in Jackson. After a period of time at home, she tried to write her name with her mouth; she was pleasantly surprised by the result and then began to write letters to her friends, which led to drawing and then to painting. From 2018, she was supported by the VDMFK as a Scholarship Holder. Donna Bell died on 28 January 2024.

Tynan, Chris

Date of birth: 22 March 1982
Passed away on: 1 January 2024
Painting technique: Mouthpainter

Chris Tynan was born in 1982 in San Diego. When he jumped from the roof of a one-storey house into a swimming pool, the then 16-year-old sustained a neck injury, which resulted in paralysis. The artist very soon began to paint and draw with his mouth, by preference with charcoal. Chris Tynan quickly gained recognition for his work, as his painting of a tractor was presented in the John Deere magazine. He used a variety of media, including pencil, oils, acrylics, watercolours and oil pastels. Chris Tynan liked paintings that depicted wildlife and landscapes, but he was also interested in creating fantasy and the surreal. When he was not painting, he enjoyed doing crosswords, he played chess, went online and liked to meet up with friends. From 2003, he was supported by the VDMFK as a Scholarship Holder. Chris Tynan died on 1 January 2024.

VDMFK personalities

In the section 'VDMFK personalities', we present mouth and foot painters who have made outstanding contributions to the VDMFK in the past. This time, we are presenting VDMFK founding member Madeleine Jars, Mouthpainter from France.

Madeleine Jars was unable to use her arms or legs from birth. She was confined to a wheelchair and also suffered from the consequences of a speech disorder. She began mouth painting early on. Her preferred subjects were flower still lifes and landscapes. She also very much enjoyed depicting subjects from the Rhône Valley. The pictures by Madeleine Jars are impressive as a result of their certainty, the shape-creating power of the stylisation and simplifications, and the rich colour surfaces.

Madeleine Jars enjoyed great success with her artwork and also received numerous awards. For example, she was awarded the 'Le Merit' honour cross, among others. Additionally, she showed her artwork at exhibitions to the wider public from 1952. She exhibited regularly in Bourgoin and in Vieuve/Isere. She participated in exhibitions in Paris, Lyon, Strasbourg, Toulon and in many cities of the world.

After she had driven all over her region, where her talent as a colourist and her ability to conjure the landscapes onto

the canvas had been recognised, she spent a happy retirement. Madeleine Jars had to give up painting as a result of problems with her teeth. Despite her

health concerns, she spent her time with draughts, music and travelling. She found comfort in the Association's support and the meetings with her artist friends.

Madeleine Jars participated in the meeting in Liechtenstein at which the VDMFK was founded. She was a committed founding member and an active member of the VDMFK family until she passed away, on 9 March 2004.



Madeleine Jars from France was a founding Member of the VDMFK.



Madeleine Jars (Mouthpainter / France), 'Bord de Mer en Bretagne', oils, 24x35 cm.

The significance of painting

Below is the significance of painting for mouth painter Rudolf Lombard, Associate Member from South Africa.

The significance of painting

When you belong to a worldwide association with so many artists with disabilities, you tend to understand what it means to be an artist.

We deal with so many matters on an everyday basis and therefore express our feelings and thoughts through art. As a mouth painting artist of 21 years now, I have had the opportunity in life to find 'the significance of painting' within my daily life. Anyone can create a picture, but to give a picture life, understanding and a meaning itself requires dedication to and love of art.

There is a saying, 'practice makes perfect'. That is what painting is about. To be the best in what you wish to achieve requires time and effort. Painting is important because it demonstrates your ability to be creative



The Mouthpainter Rudolf Lombard from South Africa has been an Associate Member of the Association since 2009.

and gives expression to your inner life. Most of our artists are autodidacts, born with a talent that many admire.

It is important to discover your own painting style. From abstracts to still life – it depends on what you are best at and what matters to you as an independent artist. How good do you feel when you sell your first picture or you see that it is reproduced by the VDMFK? I have to say, you feel ecstatic! You can then only think about making more pictures and when you look back at your previous pictures, you are amazed at how your pictures have improved.



Rudolf Lombard (Associate Member/South Africa), 'Zebra at night', oils, 31x41 cm.

Be open to criticism! Do NOT feel bad or dismayed if you ask the public, your art teacher, friends or family for their input and criticism. It makes you an artist and gives you perspective on where you are and what you should change.

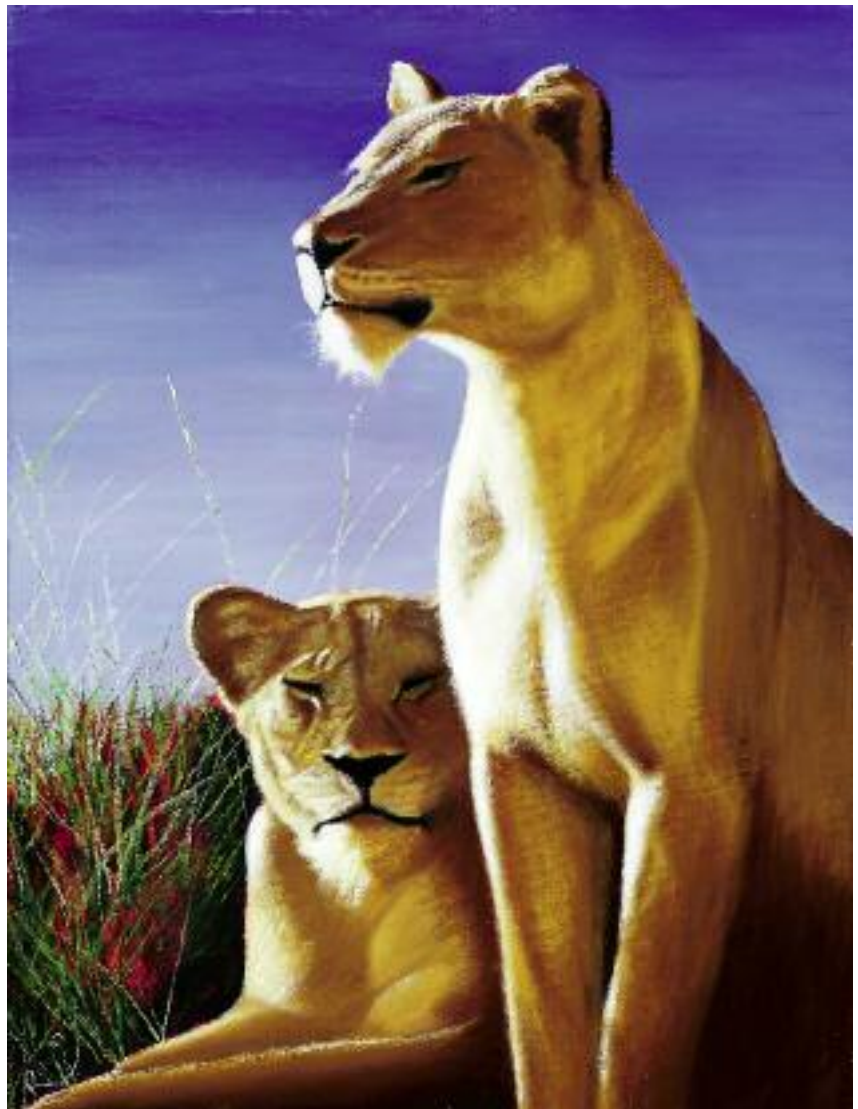
The significance of painting

In the past, I was sometimes furious with my teacher and hated criticism, but it brings me great joy when I participate in an exhibition or when friends and family love my artwork. The significance of painting is not only about being creative, it is also about supporting our Association and being an artist who delivers highly desirable works of art.

*Rudolf Lombard
Associate Member / South Africa*



Rudolf Lombard (Associate Member/South Africa), 'Country girl', oils, 41x31 cm.



Rudolf Lombard (Associate Member/South Africa), 'African Pride', oils, 45x35 cm.

Lombard, Rudolf (South Africa)

Date of birth: 15 August 1967

Place of birth: Pretoria

Associate Member since: 2009

Painting technique: Mouthpainter

In 1983, Rudolf Lombard was involved in a car accident, as a result of which he became a C4-C5 quadriplegic and therefore remained paralysed in all four limbs. After a middle school education,

the artist enrolled at a school for people with disabilities in 1986. His interest in art was already awakened in this school, where he created the first pencil drawings with his mouth in 1986. He subsequently concentrated, however, on his university education in the field of computer science and his professional career. It was not until 2002 that he began mouth painting again. From 2003, he was supported by the Association as a Scholarship Holder. He

was admitted to the Association as an Associate Member in 2009.

His preferred techniques are oils and acrylics. He often combines these two techniques, which for him is 'a mystical experience and provides the opportunity to apply colour effectively', as he says himself. His main subjects are portraits, landscapes, animals and flowers.

Letters to the editor

Below is a letter from Scholarship Holder Jefferson Maia Figueira, mouth painter from Brazil.

Drawing as a didactic basis in painting



When we speak of artistic further development, we must first be aware that, generally, not all painters can consider themselves by nature to be artists. There are, fundamentally, two possibilities regarding the question of how one can improve one's artistic skills: firstly, through innate talent, also generally described as a gift, or secondly, and I personally regard myself as part of this group, through perseverance, practical learning and further studies as a growth factor.

Humans are evolving beings and that applies not only to people working in the art sector. This development can proceed in both the abovementioned ways. Most of us already encountered painting for the first time in our childhood. The enthusiasm we felt for it has not disappeared with age. The pleasant feeling that painting is an innate quality that brings us great playful enjoyment has remained in our memories, and some people discover painting in a self-taught manner during their life, whereas others acquire skills through studies. Whichever group we regard ourselves as part of, it is important to recognise that a continuous learning process is required in teaching to achieve better perception, determination and a clearer focus, all of which are aimed at original results.

So when we think of painting, we should not disregard the fact that this form of artistic expression is based on drawing as an aid, which found its expression as the human spirit since so-called cave art (drawings in caves), at the beginning of humankind. Even when we, as artists, have the possibility of painting directly on any

medium (usually canvas), it is therefore certainly interesting to exhaust the possibilities of drawing in the form of sketches, with a sketch as the basis for a print, a picture, or in the sense of a 'finished own drawing', whether for studies or for work. As the artist Paul Cézanne said, "three work steps are recommended in the creation of visual art: first, drawing, second, drawing and third, drawing".

Regardless of the form of painting – in our case, with the foot or the mouth – we would do well to remember this saying and to turn to drawing as an interesting way of improving our skills, without worrying about the direct result. On the contrary, we should simply try to perceive and study personal features, as demonstrated to us by the famous artists Matisse, Delacroix and Portinari, among others. The actual goal for every one of us, regardless of the subject to which we devote ourselves, or the style we use, is undoubtedly the creation of an oeuvre using various materials, techniques and colour sets. In this regard, we rely on pencils (black or coloured) or charcoal and use the materials available on the market in a method adapted to the objective. For this purpose, we employ our mouth or foot or the paintbrush directly, with which we work on the canvas. I myself was lucky enough to study technical drawing in my youth, and today I usually project the geometric perspectives I learnt in these studies onto my artwork – into the sketch of a scene or even a landscape, which facilitates the framing on the canvas, whereby I now usually draw with my mouth with a light brushstroke and neutral colour before I perform and complete the colour mixing in my pictures.

With these explanations, I now wish to end my text, in all modesty, as a pedagogical recommendation to turn to drawing as a means of studying and of artistic growth for artist colleagues, in the hope that I have made a positive contribution to a further stage of development.

We were sent the following letter by Paulus Ploier (Full Member, Austria).

Obituary for deceased Scholarship Holder Rouhollah Sedighi

As a Full Member of the Association of Mouth and Foot Painting Artists of the World, it is particularly important to me to report on the great person Rouhollah Sedighi, who left us on 24 March 2024. Rolli, as he liked to call himself, was a great source of motivation for me as an artist and also for life itself. I am deeply saddened and share this pain with his relatives and everyone who knew Rolli. In my view, he was a highflier as a mouth painter. I am even more sorry that I will particularly miss him as an Austrian artist. In this way, I would like to wish his family and relatives great strength. Warmest regards, also on behalf of our Association. We have the fondest memories of you.



John Louw (Associate Member/South Africa), 'Spring flowers', watercolours, 29x21 cm.

Information from the office

Submission of originals

The office of the Association kindly asks all artists to read and take note of the following information.

All consignments of originals sent in to the VDMFK are subject to inspection by the Swiss Customs Administration (Liechtenstein is Swiss Customs Territory and part of the Swiss Currency and Economic Area). Import levy is imposed on all originals, which will be paid by the VDMFK.

As artists constantly send their originals to the VDMFK we have commissioned the forwarding agency DHL Logistics AG, Switzerland, to handle this difficult matter.

We therefore request you to send all your parcels containing originals to the following address:

**DHL Logistics (Schweiz) AG
Für VDMFK
Heldastrasse 66
CH-9471 Buchs
Schweiz**

Please keep in mind the following points when you send in your paintings:

- no framed paintings
- no passe-partouts
- no eye bolts or other hanging devices
- no oil paintings that are not dry

Please write the following information on the reverse of your original:

- name
- country
- original title
- technique
- on sale or not on sale

With your cooperation you save us additional correspondence and considerably facilitate the work of the VDMFK.

Please send only originals to DHL but no correspondence, reports, photographs, catalogues, biographies, etc.

All your correspondence etc. should be addressed solely to the:

**VDMFK
Im Rietle 25
P.O. Box 818
FL-9494 Schaan
Principality of Liechtenstein
Email: vdmfk@vdmfk.li**

Return of originals

Due to lack of storage we have to return the originals to our artists from time to time. We send back those originals that have already been reproduced or motifs that are not needed for other purposes any more. The VDMFK does not need these paintings any more, so please do not submit the returned originals again. You can use your works for your exhibitions or sell them. However, please take into account that the purchaser does not acquire the right to reproduce the original.

For private sales please use the form of the VDMFK, which has to be signed by the respective purchaser.

Corrigendum

In the previous edition of VDMFK Information in December 2023, there was an error in the reporting on the activities of artists under the country Argentina. It was not Maria Celeste Moya, but rather Agostina Antonella Semaan who participated in the Long Night of the Museums. Ms Semaan was therefore in the published photo. We apologise for this mistake.

*The editors of
VDMFK Information*

Presentation of painting techniques

Soonyi Oh, Board Member of the VDMFK and foot painter from South Korea, presents tips and tricks on the topic of 'Mouth and Foot painting'. This time, the theme is cherry blossom in full bloom.



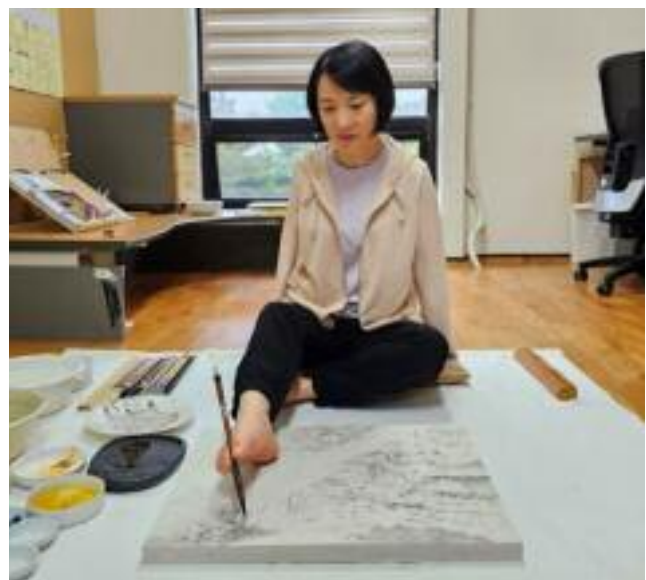
Establish the structure, the theme and the main area to be described.



In Indian ink, draw the Cornelian cherry blossom tree to be depicted in detail.



Draw the trees around the tree in the centre densely in some places and sparsely (or indistinctly) in others.



Draw in the road in the centre and the trees at the lower edge of the picture in Indian ink.

Presentation of painting techniques



Depict the petals in ink, varying the darkness of the ink.



Colour the petals in light to strong yellow to depict the various layers of the blossom.



Accentuate the strong yellow in some parts and depict the entire yellow blossom.

Presentation of painting techniques



Paint the road in the centre, place the three people in their own positions and depict their gestures differently.

Colour their clothing to give the picture a lively and dynamic touch.



Check whether the themes are well depicted to represent the topic and whether there is anything that could be depicted even better. If so, continue with your painting, to improve.

When you are finished, sign the painting and enjoy your new artwork.

Interview

On the occasion of the VDMFK general meeting in Barcelona in April 2017, Grant William Sharman, mouth painter from New Zealand, was elected to the Board of the Association. We spoke with him about this experience and the VDMFK in these uncertain times.

Mr Sharman, you were re-elected to the Board of the VDFMK at the Delegates' Convention in Copenhagen. What makes this office so special that you ran for a further term?

Grant William Sharman: It was a great honour and a privilege when I was elected to the Board for the first time, and my re-election at the convention in Copenhagen felt just the same. I have been part of the VDMFK since 1981, when I received my first scholarship, and as for so many of our artists, our organisation has enabled my family and me to have a wonderful life. Together with a handful of important people, Mr Stegmann founded the VDMFK with a vision that it should enable artists who are not able to paint with their hands, but are able to paint with their mouth or foot, to earn a good living. For many of us, this also means that we preserve our dignity and can pursue a career as an artist. As a Member of the Board, I have the opportunity to ensure that the legacy of Mr Stegmann also lives on in the future, so that our young artists and those who will join us have the same opportunities as us. I had the feeling that I learnt in the first three years how the Board works, I have experienced how our organisation functions, and I have gained a better insight into the challenges we have to face. After I have completed my training, I look forward to creating added value for the Board.

When you look back at the past years as a Member of the Board, what do you particularly remember?

Grant William Sharman: I have the



Mouth painter Grant William Sharman from New Zealand was re-elected to the Board of the VDMFK at the Delegates' Convention in July 2023 in Copenhagen.

feeling that the Board that I joined in 2017 is very different from that of 2024. When I entered the Board for the first time, I felt that we were going through a significant change in the way that we work as a Board and that we were confronted with a very challenging business environment. For 60 years, things had been done in a certain way, but just as the commercial and social conditions have changed, we also have to change as a Board and an organisation. I particularly remember my first Board meeting, when I sat down at the board table and was so excited and nervous about what I hoped to achieve. It was also the first time that I had used an interpreter for a personal discussion. It took me a while to get used to speaking through 'someone else'. Fortunately, my interpreter Anita, who had worked together with my close friend Trevor Wells when he was still on the Board, did an outstanding job and demonstra-

ted remarkable patience in showing me the way. It is crucial that our Members recognise the importance of clear communication, which in our case is all the more difficult when five languages are involved. As a Board, we are lucky to have a world-class team of interpreters. I feel very much at home in a team, and I find it incredibly exciting to take this journey of change with a group of very passionate people, a strong leadership and the shared vision of preparing the VDMFK for the next 60 years.

You have travelled the world and are familiar with many different countries. What is different for mouth and foot painters in New Zealand or Australia than in other regions of the world?

Grant William Sharman: That's a very interesting question; my answer is

nothing and everything. Let me explain that. I believe that art is a universal language and that creating art is very similar all over the world. I believe that our art and our artists are equal, but I think that the differences arise from our unique environment and the way that one country can differ from another, as one culture differs from another. It is often said that New Zealanders and Australians are cousins, and I think that is reflected in our attitude towards life and in the way we approach things. I had the privilege of meeting many of our artists in different countries, and at these wonderful meetings where our artists come together, there is also always a common ground as regards our feelings for art and the way we approach our craft. When we bring together a number of artists from all over the world, I am fascinated time and again by the diversity of people, it is like our own artists' United Nations.

How advanced is social acceptance for people with physical disabilities in your home country? Are there still obstacles that need to be overcome?

Grant William Sharman: I have had a disability since 1977, this year I will have used a wheelchair for 47 years. The way that disabilities and people with disabilities are treated today is so different from when I had my injury. In some ways, I believe that this is the reason why we now have difficulties recruiting Scholarship Holders in many countries. In New Zealand, there is a strong awareness for disabilities, as in many other parts of the world. It is expected that good access opportunities are created, that people with disabilities are offered a variety of career paths and employment opportunities and that society in general accepts that a disability is a difference and no reason to feel ashamed. Nevertheless, there are always things that could be done better, and there are

still people who have entrenched beliefs and attitudes. I must say, however, that New Zealand is a very disability-friendly country.

Viewed from outside, it seems as though the mouth and foot painters of New Zealand and Australia maintain a close friendship with each other. Is that really so? What is the relationship of the artists from "down under" with one another and how are the friendships cultivated? After all, the distances are greater than in Europe, for example.

Grant William Sharman: Although we often think that New Zealand and Australia are culturally very similar, we could not be more different geographically. New Zealand is a relatively small country that exists of two main islands, and the majority of our artists live within two to three hours' drive from each other. Australia, on the other hand, is a huge island continent, and it takes longer to fly from Sydney to Perth than from Sydney to Auckland. In New Zealand, Bruce Hopkins was our first Full Member, and he set the example of bringing artists together. Great Britain has a very similar approach to bringing its artists together, and when I became a Full Member, they were a great example of how that can be achieved. I hope to continue the legacy of Bruce, and when I met up with other Full Members, we tried to establish an artist family. Every year, we met up for a Christmas party, to which our office workers and publishers were also invited, and that was a wonderful opportunity for us to stay in contact. Additionally, we regularly organised exhibitions, at which our artists came together, and we even had our own category at the renowned Royal Auckland Easter Show. In Australia, Bruce Peardon, a former Board Member, set a good example, and he was a great mentor for me. Unfortunately, our number has dropped in the last five years, we are no longer recruiting so many new artists, and the



VDMFK Director Mario Famlonga congratulates Grant William Sharman on his re-election to the Board of the Association.

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Interview



Grant William Sharman (Full Member / New Zealand), 'Tony's 56 Chevvie', acrylics, 30x41 cm.

effects of the COVID pandemic strongly restricted our artists' meetings. In recent years, New Zealand artists have participated in a large Australian festival called the Ekka, which offers a great art exhibition; it did not take place during COVID, but we are hoping that it will restart in August this year. Incidentally, the rivalry between our New Zealand and Australian artists in matters of sport has never been as strong as now!

Which priorities have you set yourself that you wish to address during your coming term on the VDMFK Board? Are there topics that lie particularly close to your heart and that you wish to advance?

Grant William Sharman: I believe that the Board implemented several very important initiatives during my first term, and in my second term I want us

to work on strengthening the structures of our organisation, particularly with regard to the strategic orientation we are taking, so that our organisation is strong enough to withstand any headwind to which our business could be exposed. I would also like to build closer relationships with our publishers, who do good work despite some very difficult and challenging circumstances. In my opinion, technology will play as large a role in the future as it already does, and I believe that our organisation has to be positioned in such a way that it can take full advantage of this opportunity. Another area that we need to work on more intensively, in my view, is the way in which we support our student artists beyond the payments they receive. Considering the wide geographical distribution of our students, it will be very difficult to achieve this goal, but I believe that we can make a positive difference. Despite the changes that

we have to make, some things will never change, for example that our artists show commitment to their profession and produce artwork with which our publishers can earn income, which is ultimately the reason why Mr Stegmann founded this Association.



Jun Wei Lee (Full Member/Taiwan), 'New Year in Taiwan', watercolours, 45x35 cm.

Publishers' activities

BRAZIL

- The publishing house in Brazil organised a joint exhibition at the Naval Club in Rio de Janeiro, which took place from 19 April to 22 May 2024. The special exhibition was part of the 30th Lake Salon of the Naval Club and was created by our artist Marcelo da Cunha (Associate Member). The theme was 'The Wonders of Brazil'. 36 Brazilian mouth and foot painters created a total of 56 paintings for this exhibition. During the opening, the Association was recognised and presented with a certificate by the President of the Club. The Naval Club, which is very well known in Rio de Janeiro, is a listed building and was built in 1910. This made it the perfect location for such an event. The following artists exhibited paintings:

Associate Members: Gonçalo Borges, Maria Goret Chagas and Marcelo da Cunha

Scholarship Holders: Adolfo Simões de Oliveira Neto, Aline Korb Mendes, Bárbara Corrêa da Silva, Rick Matheus Matias de Sousa, Daniel Rodrigo Ferreira da Silva, Daniela Cristina Caburro, Danielle Dias de Souza, Débora Ferreira dos Santos, Domingos Dupé Ferreira Silva, Eduardo Moreira de Melo, Eliana Zagui, Evanilda Leite Ferreira, Ivanildo Gomes, Ivana Soares Bandeira, Jefferson Maia Figueira, João Paulo da Silva Fontenele, Carlos Eduardo Rosa Fraga, Leandro Augusto Portella Santos, Lucas Figueiredo de Abreu, Lucas Luciano Silva, Luciano Alves dos Nascimento, Luísa Pohl de Almeida, Márcio Alcântara da Silva, Marcos Paulo Silva Machado, Severino Monteiro de Freitas, Ricardo Gonzales Rocha Souza, Rita Boz, Ronaldo Cupertino da Silva, Rose Mary Orth, Thiago Ribeiro Santos, Antonio Luiz Martins, Victor Pereira Santos and Wender Ferreira dos Santos.



The mouth and foot painters of Brazil at the group exhibition.



The spirit among the artists present was excellent, especially given the great success of the exhibition.



The attending artists also gave painting demonstrations, which were met with great interest.

Publishers' activities

SINGAPORE

- From 11 to 26 November 2023, the 'Shaping Hearts 2023 Art Exhibition' took place in Singapore. Shaping Hearts 2023 was not only an art exhibition, but also a celebration of the spirit and talents of the 'Heartists' - artists with disabilities who have overcome challenges and created masterpieces that testi-

fy to their strength and resilience. Over 150 artists exhibited their works, told their stories and inspired all in attendance. The Singapore publisher participated with the following seven mouth painters. **Full Member Tan Kok Leong** and the **Scholarship Holders Aaron Yeo Kwok Chian, Christina Lau Lay Lian, Daniel Beng Leong Tan, Kaini Zhang, Raymond Khee Huat Tan and William Ngo**. The artists not only pres-

ented their works, but also gave painting demonstrations. The festival offered fascinating art exhibitions, exciting live performances, art sales and a heart-warming art auction for charity.



Raymond Khee Huat Tan attracted the interest of the audience with his painting.



Scholarship Holder Kaini Zhang during her painting demonstration.



The mouth painting by Scholarship Holder Christina Lau Lay Lian drew a lot of attention.



Scholarship Holder Daniel Beng Leong Tang during his painting demonstration.



Scholarship Holder Aaron Yeo Kwok Chian also presented his painting skills.

