

Art & the City: Liu Kang, A Centennial Celebration

An exhibition to commemorate Liu Kang's 100th year of birth



"Life by the River", one of Liu Kang's most celebrated paintings will be on display at the exhibition.

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There's no denying the thriving local art scene in recent years -- Asia's first [Affordable Art Fair in Singapore](#) last year (look out for the next one coming up this November) was a testimonial of that. Art connoisseurs now have something new to look forward to: from 29 July to 16 October 2011, National Art Gallery presents the works of one of the forefathers of art in local history, Liu Kang in "Liu Kang: A Centennial Celebration" to commemorate the 100th year of the birth of the prolific artist. To be held at the Singapore Art Museum, the exhibition will showcase 100 artworks, sketches, writings and artefacts, where visitors can journey into the life and mind of Liu Kang. Serving as the President of the Society of Chinese Artists for more than a decade as well as one of the founding members of the Singapore Art Society, he helped develop Singapore's art scene and united artists from Southeast Asia. "Believing that art is 'the spirit and soul of a people', Liu Kang emphasised the importance of raising artistic standards and art appreciation within the community," said Mr Kwok Kian Chow, "Director of the National Art Gallery, Singapore. "We are happy to put together this exhibition to

showcase his distinctive painting style and legacy." Curator, Ong Zhen Min, explains some of the pieces to look out for at "Liu Kang: A Centennial Celebration":



Life by the River, 1975

"The artwork *Life by the River* is one of Liu Kang's most celebrated paintings, and a well documented work in terms of related supporting drawings by the artist. The work is also one of the artist's most sophisticated attempts in terms of composition, through the adaptation of the Chinese landscape tradition to Western oil painting. *Life by the River* represents the artist's philosophy of fusing Eastern and Western artistic concepts in his works."

A Girl sitting on Verandah/My Young Wife, 1944 "In 1937, Liu Kang married Chen Jen Ping, sister of fellow artist Chen Jen Hao. Chen Jen Ping subsequently became Liu Kang's muse and model for many of his portrait works. Painted during World War II, this work depicts a young Chen Jen Ping. The painting's romantic quality can be attributed to the soft focus and warm tone provided by chalk pastel. The movement of light in the painting also displays influences from French Impressionism."

Souri, 1953 "In 1952, Liu Kang, together with fellow artists Chen Wen His, Chen Chong Swee and Cheong Soo Pieng, made the historic trip to Bali. The exotic life, culture and scenic landscape of the island provided the artists with rich visual imageries and inspiration which set the tone for the Nanyang style. This painting depicts the view of a Balinese dancer in the midst of practicing her art. The fabric on the dancer has been reduced to largely flat areas of colours and designs, similar to the reduction of forms into flat and decorative design patterns in Fauvist painting."

Details:

Exhibition: Liu Kang: A Centennial Celebration

Venue: Singapore Art Museum, 71 Bras Basah Road, Singapore 189555

Dates: 29 July to 16 October 2011

Curator Tours: Tour in English - 16 September 2011, Friday, 7:30pm to 8:30pm / Tour in Mandarin - 23 September 2011, Friday, 7:30pm to 8:30pm Meeting point: Singapore Art Museum Lobby Tours are free and limited to 30 registered participants. For registration, please email masitah_ismail@nhb.gov.sg.

Website: www.nationalartgallery.sg/liukangexhibition

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