

MPAS CONSUMER MAGAZINE OF THE YEAR

Time Out

Singapore

IN THIS ISSUE

Exclusive interviews with
Pet Shop Boys and The xx

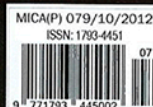
Ethan Hawke and Julie Delpy
triumph in *Before Midnight*

Shopping blowout: top bags and
furniture, plus Bangkok designers

PLUS!

Veggie burgers,
sliders and the
top ten fries
in the city

Singapore's BEST BURGERS



JULY 2013 | \$3.95

KNOW MORE. DO MORE. WWW.TIMEOUTSINGAPORE.COM

Cheatsheet SBTG



As local husband-and-wife art collective SBTG – consisting of Mark Ong and Sue-Ann Lim, both aged 34 – get ready to open a revamped exhibition based on works they previously displayed at FLABSLAB in 2012, they take a break to tell Gwen Pew about their childhood and their art.

1 SBTG is an abbreviation of 'Sabbotage': 'It's a moniker that I created when I was in design school. I've been using it to brand all my works for the past ten-plus years and we have adopted it in our names,' says Ong.

2 The show's title (*Acoustic Anarchy*) is inspired by 'what happens when opposite forces collide and produce positive results,' says Lim. 'I used that name as I felt that painting and creating

art is a very peaceful thing, which relates to the acoustic version of all that rebellious spirit,' adds Ong.

3 The works are a semi-biography of Ong's life: 'Growing up in the '80s here in Singapore, I was exposed and influenced to all things American – cartoons, basketball, fast food and, most of all, the skateboarding way of life.'

4 Ong's 'DIY spirit' first struck him in primary school: 'My dad once helped me build a rocket ship out of a toothpaste box – that opened my eyes on how I could evolve beyond my surroundings.'

5 Since then, he had always put his creativity to good use: 'When I was skating I would cut up weird patterns on my grip tape and mix colours and sh*t. In school, my bags were all decked with safety pins and my shoes had neon laces.'

6 Lim was much more of a girly-girl growing up: 'On my fifth birthday, someone bought me a Barbie doll, and from that point onwards she became the only toy I ever wanted to play with; I chucked all the rest.'

7 Ong was predominantly known for designing and painting sneakers, which Lim used to help him on: 'I started to get known for customising sneakers in the early 2000s, mostly in a tight community in the online forum called Nike Talk. There was a sneaker custom competition and I won. That did it for me – I got an order from Japanese shoe store Atmos, Chapter and local streetwear label Ambush to produce 72 pairs right after.'

8 The couple officially started working together as a collective in 2008, a year after they got married: 'It was very challenging at first, but I think any couple that decides to work together must learn to separate their personal issues from work issues and find that balance,' says Lim.

9 Despite the American rock 'n' roll symbols in their works, the couple's lives are 'pretty mundane,' Lim admits. 'We don't party or follow trends. Our idea of a great Friday night is watching movies in bed with our cats and a bag of chips!'

10 Rock 'n' roll is a state of mind, says Ong: '[It's about] doing what you do and loving what you love with no apologies.'

SBTG: Acoustic Anarchy REDUX is at Galerie Steph from 6 Jul-31 Aug.

*Explain your art Thomas Yeo



As one of Singapore's most renowned second-generation artists and recipient of the Cultural Medallion in 1984, Thomas Yeo, 77, is famed for his abstract and colourful landscape works. This month, he will be holding his second fundraiser show, *Recapturing*, at The Substation, and showcasing 30 paintings from two series, with all the proceeds going to the arts organisation. Here, he talks to Gwen Pew about his new series, the idea of change and how to approach abstract art.

'There are two new series in this show: *Ocean* and *Construction*. The *Ocean* series was inspired by National Geographic programmes, as well as from my past experience in scuba diving, so I decided to do a series on fish spawning – but not in a realistic way. The *Construction* series began after I was confronted with construction work wherever I went in Singapore. In fact, one can hardly escape it if you happen to live in town. As my surroundings were dusty and noisy, I went to my studio in Telok Kurau, hoping to have some peace. Unfortunately, the workers in Telok Kurau started to excavate the drain and the work went on for weeks!

Change can bring life into a city, but quite often, destruction and creation go hand in hand. If we have to destroy our history in order to have a new city, then we have to tread carefully. The speed at which change takes place can create confusion for the older generation. However, change is inevitable. No place can stand still.

Both series are very different from anything I have done in the past. I am hoping to create awareness through my works, but there is no short cut or quick fix to understanding abstract art. It requires plenty of time and effort. Go to the library and read up on it and, best of all, visit as many art exhibitions as you can. Nothing like confronting the art work head on! As time goes on, you will begin to enjoy the new language of art.'

Thomas Yeo: Recapturing is at The Substation from 19-27 Jul.



Beyond Canvas

Sundaram Tagore Gallery
Until 25 Aug

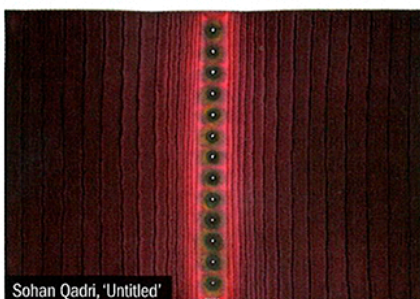
While their styles are vastly different from one another, Nathan Slate Joseph, 69, and the late Sohan Qadri are nonetheless both known for their innovative painting techniques. The former blurs the boundaries between painting and sculpture by incorporating discarded steel shards in his works, while the latter drenches paper in acid-free water, then dyes and carves the surface when it's still wet. This month, various pieces by the two artists will be displayed alongside each other at Sundaram Tagore Gallery.

'Our gallery has a focus on East-West dialogue and these two artists were friends for a very long time before Sohan Qadri passed away in 2011, so I wanted to bring them together in an exhibition,' says New York-based gallerist, Sundaram Tagore. 'This show celebrates Sohan's legacy and the deep attachment they each share toward art making and materials.'

According to Tagore, Indian-born



Nathan Slate Joseph, 'Spice Silk One'



Sohan Qadri, 'Untitled'

Qadri came up with this unique way of making his pieces through 'meditation, which he began to practice from the age of seven, the same age that he started painting.' He used to paint with oil on canvas, but the strong smell of turpentine would 'wake him up from the state

of *Dhyāna* [meditation]. He then devised a new method of painting and switched to using thick artisanal paper and dye, so he did not have to struggle with canvas, brush, paint and palette knife.'

Joseph, who was born in Israel and grew up in the Middle East, however, gets his inspirations from a much more concrete place. 'Jerusalem is sectionalised by brick walls and, as a kid, I remember walking around and seeing these walls everywhere. The bricks were cut from rocks that have been around forever and over time the colours change and somehow they speak to you,' he says.

Like Qadri, he started out painting on canvas, but wasn't entirely comfortable with the medium. Then, when he was walking around Mexico one day, he 'noticed the incredible way that pigment on metal oxidised over time in the outdoors, [and instead] began to concentrate on working with metal. My work is about my experiences in life – how I think, who I am.' **GP**