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It was Rumi who quoted: "Love is the bridge between you and everything". Metaphors like bridges have been used by poets and artists to unite two seemingly irreconcilable things. They point a way for people to make sense of an alien concept by relating it to something familiar. They illuminate by association; how the world connects directly to another apparently isolated one.

That idea of two cultures stuck at either ends of the same bridge could be applied to the art and the corporate worlds today. As we know, business is about clarity and measurability, but art loves mystery and multiple interpretations. Yet they need each other to thrive.

For the corporates, there is no better way of infusing a sense of taste and sophistication into the company culture than through investing heavily in a collection of art; and for the art world, corporate patronage provides the necessary funding to support the dynamic ecosystem of artists, exhibitions and even institutions.

The desire to collect, grow and promote arts and culture has been the mainstay of many organisations for decades.

It began in the 1950s when David Rockefeller decided that Chase Manhattan Bank should begin to acquire art.

Soon, other banks followed his lead and began purchasing artwork of their own. Rockefeller knew that organisations buying art are really investing in themselves — and in more than a monetary sense.

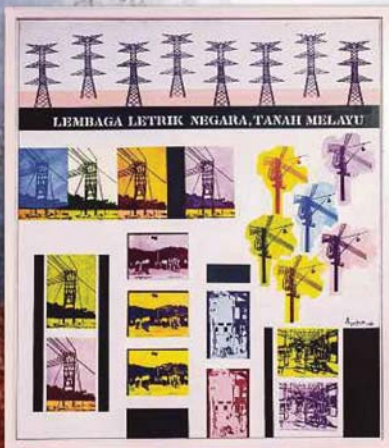
Art speaks to culture, self-expression and creativity. What's more, when organisations buy artwork, they are supporting the arts which extends beyond merely buying from local artists. They are helping to preserve and grow the cultural identity of the nation.



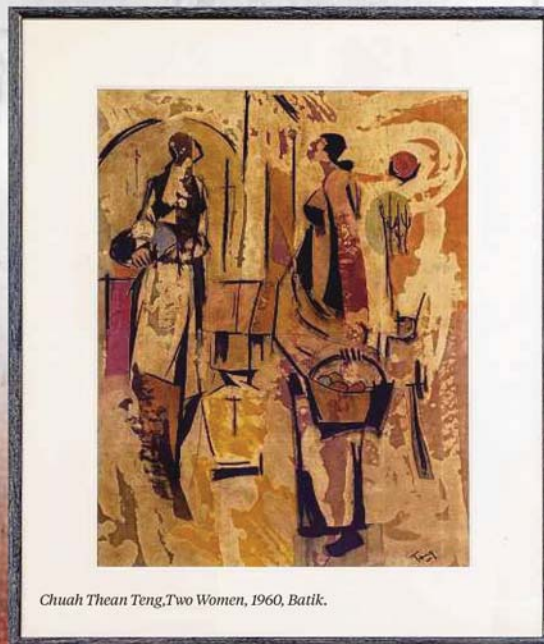
Hoessein Enas, Admonition, 1963, Oil on canvas.

# Bridging two worlds

Art and business collide in a thrilling new exhibition, discovers Elena Koshy



Redza Piyadasa, Lembaga Elektrik Negara, 1980, Acrylic on canvas.



Chuah Thean Teng, Two Women, 1960, Batik.

Bridging the gap between business and art, national utility firm Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB) is powering up the art world through its latest offering at Galeri Prima, entitled Tribute to the Nation's Pride.

The exhibition showcases Malaysia's rich and diverse cultural heritage while featuring TNB's transformation over the past seven decades.

For the first time, the utility company will be featuring 40 artworks from its impressive collection as well as photographs dating as far back as 1949 sourced from the archives of TNB as well as the *New Straits Times*.

### LOCAL FLAVOUR

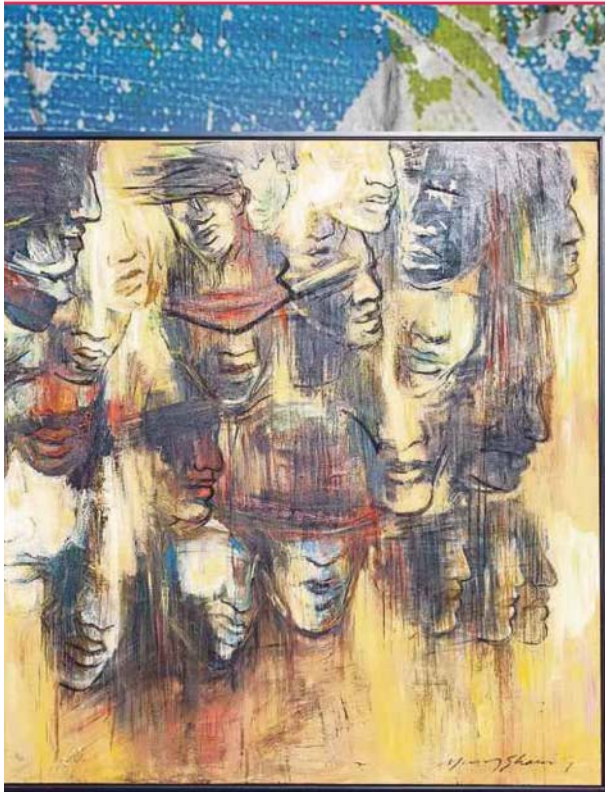
What the exhibition reveals is the remarkable scale and breadth of the art that has been collected since the 1960s.

For decades, TNB has been amassing artwork produced by local artists and have also commissioned a few established artists to explore and produce artworks in connection to the utility company's activities and role in the nation's development.

"It would take trust between a good artist and a good business, both fiercely protective and careful about their image, to allow something really impressive to come from an unlikely collaboration. And the result is fantastic," notes curator Dr. Mohd Jamil Mat Isa, of the commissioned artworks done by renowned artists including Datuk Mohamed Hoessein Enas and Redza Piyadasa.



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Yusof Ghani, Wajah Series-Perwira, 2007, Oil on canvas.

He points out that that TNB's collection of the former's body of work is the largest collection ever, surpassing even the National Art Gallery.

The exhibition features three groups of local artists hailing from the pioneer, modern and contemporary eras. Major pioneering artists include Datuk Chuah Thean Teng (1912-2008), Cheong Soo Pieng (1917-1983) and Datuk Mohamed Hoesein Enas (1924-1995).

Meanwhile, Datuk Syed Ahmad Jamal (1929-2011), Datuk Ibrahim Hussien (1936-2009), Abdul Latiff Mohidin, Chew Teng Beng, and Seah Kim Joo represent the modern-era painters, while Yusof Ghani, Amron Omar, Samjis Mat Jan and Jaafar Taib are the notable contemporary artists.

Other artists featured are Afandi Awang, Phoon Poh Wai, Phoon Poh Hong, Siaw Lan, Yusoff Abdullah, Yong Cheng Wah and Yap Sook Leong.

"For the first time ever, important collections and rare pieces will be on display outside of TNB's own private gallery," remarks Mohd Jamil, adding that the exhibition will showcase the quality of corporate art at its finest. The curator is an advocate of the benefits of corporate art.

The company wins because it promotes itself to the world and its employees; the artist wins because he or she has a new audience.

For hundreds of years, art has had a direct relationship with patrons and

individuals whose aim was, and is, to collect, grow and promote arts and culture.

However, as we welcome globalisation and the need to innovate, businesses have started to actively support the creative industry.

The gap between the arts and business corporations is getting smaller as both realise that arts and business can not only co-exist but is also able to collaborate in mutually beneficial partnerships.

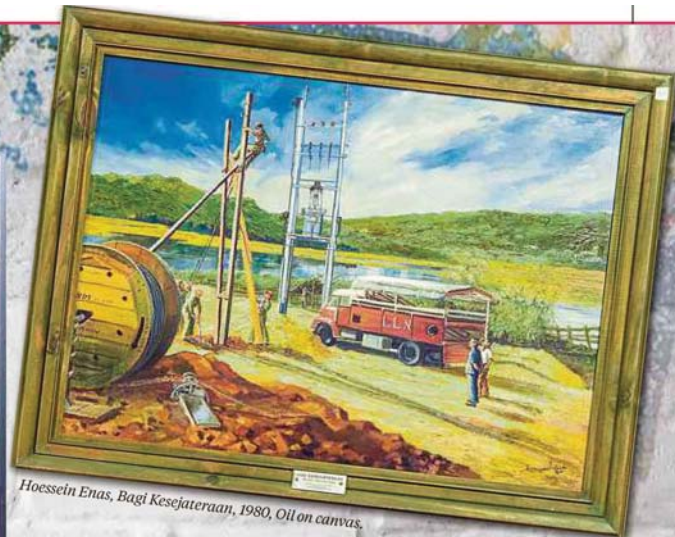
For TNB, Tribute to the Nation's Pride is a testament that art and business are simply two expressions of one shared desire: to leave the world a little different and brighter than you found it.

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**TRIBUTE TO THE NATION'S PRIDE**

**WHEN:** Until Sept 25  
**WHERE:** Galeri Prima, Balai Berita, 31 Jalan Riong, Kuala Lumpur

The exhibition is open to the public from 10am to 6pm (Monday to Friday), and from 10am to 5pm (Saturday and Sunday). Closed on public holidays.



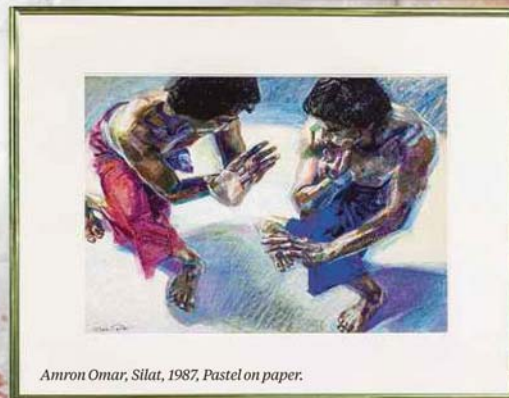
Hoesein Enas, Bagi Kesejahteraan, 1980, Oil on canvas.



Datuk Ibrahim Hussein, The Searcher, 1965, Acrylic on linen.



Cheong Soo Pieng, Malay Life, 1960, Oil on canvas.



Amron Omar, Silat, 1987, Pastel on paper.

## VALUATOR

Company(Brand)	Mention	Tone	ROI
Bestinet Sdn Bhd (Bestinet - Industry & Government News)	1	0	0
Cultural Economy Development Agency (Cendana) (Activities	17	0	0
Industry News for Nestle - Sports (Industry News for Nestle -	1	0	0
Media Prima Bhd (New Straits Times Press (M) Berhad)	4	0	0
National Art Gallery (National Art Gallery)	1	0	0
Public transport - Infrastructure (Public transport -	3	0	0
Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB) (Tenaga Nasional )	8	0	0