

By Ooi Kok Chuen

TRUST N. Parameswaran to come up with a saucy title like *Men On Women* for the exhibition on figurative art he organised.

At first, somehow, many thought that this art-loving ambassador (Under-Secretary in the Foreign Ministry) was mounting a show of erotic art (read: nude) by Malaysian artists.

A subject certainly not something terribly endearing to religious sentiments and prudish/traditional principles, nor to feminists. But of course, Parameswaran, fresh from the successful curatorship of the Singapore Malays exhibition last year, knows better.

No, this exhibition is not about women as a sex object or about the beauty of lines, forms, contours and textures of the female anatomy. It is about women working shoulder-to-shoulder with their menfolk, about women at home and in nature, about women alone by themselves. It is about making a statement about figurative art, with the religious bugbears and sacred cows that go with it.

The exhibition is being held at the Malaysian Institute of Management (MIM) at 227 Jalan Ampang (next to the China Embassy), Kuala Lumpur, from March 28-April 5.

It brings together a "proper mix" of 11 artists of different artistic backgrounds, races, geographical areas

# An ordinary look at women

and ages — from the 30-year-old art critic Anurendra Jegadeva (better known as J. Anu) to 75-year-old sculptor-painter T. Selvaratnam.

The others are Ahmad Zakii Anwar, Ajis Mohamad (Zainurin Mohamad), Haron Mokhtar, Khalil Ibrahim, Loh Ek Sem, Maamor Jantan, Mohammad Mohammad, Syed Thajudeen and Tan Choon Ghee.

The exhibition, held at the MIM for the first time, is to mark its 30th anniversary. It was opened by Yayasan Seni Berdaftar's Toh Puan Mahani Idris Daim.

Ajis's superb Realist works prove once again the rich store of talents at Central Market who have become a force by themselves since the wet market became a cultural hub in Kuala Lumpur 10 years ago this month.

While doing portraits to hone their skills and pay the bills, self-taught artists like Ajis also get to paint what they like without having to worry about the commercial aspects.

His insights into domestic

kampung life are matched by a maturity of composition and skilled figurations. A woman in her nightdress cutting her toenails signifies a break with the past and a new day and you can actually breathe the fresh morning air from the soft light from the door opening. A side portion of another stilt house abuts the right corner to add interest to the "open" space.

There is the superbly rendered charcoal on paper of the *nenek* with one arm cradled on an upraised bended knee in *Nenek Renungan* or the dotting grandmother trying to pacify the little child hurt while playing with matches.

Yes, there are many more Ajises at the Central Market who can capture such moments on canvas if only we are not too enamoured of foreign sounding names.

J. Anu invests his paintings in oil with the same discipline and sobriety as he does his art reviews. His works on Indian subjects, probably of middle-class stature, are not without the tensions or predicament. There's one on a matriarch standing resplendent in her sari against a yellow wall but with her half-body area cast against the dark rectangle shadow.

While the raiments can be a cultural appendage and sign of status, the faces of his characters reveal a stoic stance, and by extension, probably the lot of the people.

In another, a woman is shown bending over doing some kind of grinding.

The emergence of artists of Indian origins like J. Anu is interesting. While J. Anu reflects on the Indian condition in real-life situations, Chantherun shows Indian beauties with gleaming jewellery and in mock-fantasy backdrops of vibrant colours.

Khalil and Maamor both show, in their watercolours, the industrious kampung women whose responsibilities go beyond the household chores, helping on the beach or in the padi-fields.

Selvaratnam's oil on canvas, *The Cycling Damsel*, "tilts" his picture to suggest the jerky movement of the trundling bicycle as the girl balances herself with only

one hand on the handlebar, the other holding a flask. People like Selvaratnam are moels with their devotion to art despite their age.

Iaron, a one-time Major Award winner of the Young Contemporary Artists (YCA) exhibition, continues with his Melayu-Pop archaisms, this time delving into stages of women's life.

Syed Thajudeen and Loh bo use stylisations to create the mood and ambience, La's more down-to-earth while Syed Thajudeen's steps in heathen wistfulness, mythology and even a sense of history.

Syed Thajudeen's parable of love, while being copared with Mogul miniatures, are interesting vignettes of D.H. Lawrence's sexual fecundity.

ahmad Zakii, who packs a man brush with his figura-

tives, chooses this time to "hide" behind the *wayang kulit kelir* in his re-enactments of episodes of the Ramayana through the *Wayang Beber*.

Mohammad Mohamad's work, strangely, is the only "abstract", though conceding in a semi-abstract form, in the whole collection with thick pigments and configurative strokes.

Choon Ghee, a legend for his pearly washes of street scenes and one who "destresses" on the figures with homogenous ordinary "faces", also has a few works on figures including a 1965 ink-and-wash on rice paper of French nuns on the ship's deck.

Five per cent from the proceeds from the sale of art works from this exhibition will be donated to the Women's Aid Organisation.



PARABLE OF LOVE ... Syed Thajudeen's *Waiting For The Lover II*

## RADIO

### RADIO 1

6.00 AM: Berita Ringkas; 6.05 Maju Malaysia (K-Bahan Sn); 7.00 Berita Utama; 7.10 N Malaysia (K-Bahan Agama); 8.00 Berita Ringkas; 8.05 Hari Ini Cn Sejarah; 8.10 Maju Malaysia; 9.00 Berita Utama; 9.10 Setitik R Segunung Intan; 9.15 Pilihan Hni (Kapsul Agama); 10.00 Hari; 11.00 Berita Utama; 11.10 Dalam Sejarah; 11.15 Hari ini

1.00 PM: Hari Ini 11.1; 1.00 Muzika; 1.30 Berita; 1.40 Dari Lidah Pengarang-an Saham; 1.50 Muzika; 2.30 Ipaian Satria; 3.00 Berita; 3.10 Muzika; 4.00 W:E (4:5); 5.00 Berita Utama; 5.10 Vista; 6.00; 6.45 Hikmah (AG).

8.00 PM: Berita Utama; 7.10 Mustika (K-Bahan Agama); 8.00 Ulasan Berita; 8.05 Pa-n Saham; 8.10 Mustika; 9.00 ia Utama; 9.10 Pop Sepanjang an; 10.00 Arena Sukan; 10.15 algia; 11.00 Berita Utama; 11.00 Hiburan Malam; 11.30 Ke- Kesejahteraan (Bacaan Al-in/Doa (Agama)).

1.00 MN: Teman Setia; 1.00 And; 1.00 Berita; 1.05 Hari Ini Dalam Se-; 1.10 Teman Setia Anda; 2.00 ia Ringkas; 2.05 Teman Setia; 3.00 Berita Ringkas; 3.05 r Harapan; 5.00 Tanda Wak-egaraku/Hebahan Pembu-; 5.05 Nida-UI-Islam; 5.10 Pagi idu.

### RADIO MUZIK

6.00 AM News Buletin; 6.03 Rising Beat; 7.00 The Morning Man; 9.00 Happenings; 10.00 Line OK (bilingual)

12.00 PM Buletin RM; 12.03PM Ada Ada AJE; 2.00 Hit 2-4; 4.00 Jammin' With...; 6.00 Spinning Free;

8.00 PM Mega Muzik; 9.00 Pi-lihan Bersama; 12.00AM Ekspres 180; 3.00-6.00 Beat The Rhythm

### RADIO 3

6.00 AM: Selamat Pagi Kuala Lumpur; 7.00 Berita Nasional; 7.10 Selamat Pagi Kuala Lumpur; 7.15 Berita Ibukota; 7.20 Selamat Pagi Kuala Lumpur; 9.00 Berita Nasional Dari R1; 9.10 Warna-warna Kota Raya; 11.00 Berita Nasional Dari R1; 11.10 Metro-rama.

1.00 PM: Warga Kota; 1.30 Be-rita Nasional; 1.40 Warga Kota; 2.00 Bandaraya Dan Anda; 3.00 Berita Nasional Dari R1; 3.10 Kuala Lumpur Hits; 4.00 Metropolitan K.L.; 5.00 Berita Nasional Dari R1; 5.10 Berita Ibukota; 5.15 Metropolitan K.L.; 6.00 Mega Hiburan (6.7(MAS)).

7.00 PM: Berita Nasional Dari R1; 7.10 K.L. 7.9; 9.00 Be-rita Nasional Dari R1; 9.10 Terima Kasih Kuala Lumpur; 11.00 Berita Nasional Dari R1; 11.10 Terima Kasih Kuala Lumpur; 11.59 Heba-han Penutup & Tamat Siaran.

### RADIO 4

6.00 AM: Top News Of The Hour; 6.05 Inspiration;

6.058 Good Morning Malaysia; 7.00 News On 4; 7.10 Good Morning Malaysia; 7.30 Weather Forecast; 7.32 Good Morning Malaysia; 8.00 News On 4; 8.10 Understand The National Language; 8.15 Good Morning Malaysia; 8.30 Market Trends; 8.35 Good Morning Malaysia; 9.00 Top News Of The Hour; 9.03 Rhythm Of The Nation; 10.00 Top News Of The Hour; 10.03 Rhythm Of The Nation; 11.00 Top News Of The Hour; 11.03 Rhythm Of The Nation; 11.15 Share Market Update; 11.20 Rhythm Of The Nation;

12.00 PM: Top News Of The Hour; 12.03 From The Editorials; 12.05 Lunch Break; 12.45 At The Bourses; 12.50 Lunch Break; 1.00 News at 4; 1.10 Lunch Break; 2.00 Top News Of The Hour; 2.02 Lunch Break — The Law And Us; 3.00 Top News Of The Hour; 3.03 Drive Time On 4; 3.20 Market Updates; 3.35 Drive Time On 4; 5.00 Top News Of The Hour; 5.03 Drive Time On 4; 5.25 At The Bourses; 5.30 Drive Time On 4; 6.00 Top News Of The Hour; 6.06 Drive Time On 4;

7.00 PM: News on 4; 7.10 Juke Box; 8.00 Top News Of The Hour; 8.03 News Commentary; 8.05 Juke Box; 8.30 Parliament Report/Music; 9.00 News On 4; 9.10 Hot Tracks; 10.00 Top News Of The Hour; 10.03 Hot Tracks;

12.00 MN: Top News Of The Hour; 12.03 Midnight Magic; 1.00 Top News Of The Hour; 1.03 Midnight Magic; 2.00 Top News Of The Hour; 2.03 Midnight Magic; 3.00 Top News Of The Hour;

3.03 Yours For The Asking; 4.00 Top News Of The Hour; 4.03 Yours For The Asking; 5.00 Top News Of The Hour; 5.03 Yours For The Asking

### RADIO (JB)

6.00 AM: Negaraku/Sound of Johor/Pegenalan Stesen/Doa/Susunan Rancangan; 6.05 Fajar Hikmah; 6.30 Selamat Pagi Johor; 7.00 Berita Utama (Radio 1); 7.10 Selamat Pagi Johor; 8.00 Radio 3 Bersama Anda (Gayung Bersambut); 9.00 Berita Utama (Radio 1); 9.10 Rencah-Rencah Pagi (Bimbingan Usahawan); 10.00 Harmoni (Radio 1); 11.00 Berita Utama (Radio 1); 11.10 Hari In Dalam Sejarah (Radio 1); 11.15 Sudut Petua.

12.00 PM: Salam PKENJ; 1.00 Selera Ria; 1.30 Berita Utama; 1.40 Dari Lidah Pengarang/Pasaran Saham; 2.00 Kemasyarakatan Pertanian; 3.00 Berita Utama (Radio 1); 3.10 Permintaan Petang Rabu; 4.00 Johor Sana Sini (Desa Ke Desa); 5.00 Berita Utama (Radio 1); 5.10 Hiburan Petang (Bakat Baru/Kombo RTM/Ghazal/Asli); 6.00 Senandung; 6.15 Senandung Petang; 6.45 Hikmah (Radio 1).

7.00 PM: Berita Utama (Radio 1); 7.10 Al Quran Dan Tafsiran/Azan Maghrib; 7.30 Lembayung Senja; 7.45 Dunia Saham Hari Ini; 8.00 Ulasan Berita (R1); 8.10 (Pilihan Ku); 9.00 Berita Utama (Radio 1) 9.10 Hello Johor (Memo-ri); 10.00 Senandung Malam; 10.15 Senandung Malam (Ghazal); 11.00 Berita Utama (Radio 1); 11.10 Hiburan Malam; 11.55 Doa Penutup/Negara Ku.

## TIME HIGHWAY

6.00 AM The Morning Run; 10.00 Crossroads Route 1; 12.00 Crossroads Route 2; 2.00 Ronda Ronda; 5.00 Bumper To Bumper; 8.00 Gold Disc; 12.05 Midnite Express; 3.00 Pukul 3 Pagi

## REDIFFUSION COMMERCIAL II

6.00 AM Top Of The Morning; 6.30 Warta Berita; 6.35 Top Of The Morning; 8.30 News In English; 8.40 Top Of The Morning; 10.00 Dramatised Story; 10.30 Opera; 11.30 Society Story.

12.00 PM: Song Request; 12.30 Chinese Fable; 1.00 Opera; 2.00 Modern Songs; 2.30 Broadcasting Play; 3.00 Opera; 4.00 Dunia Remaja; 5.00 Berita Jam 5; 5.40 Pilihan Sentimental; 8.00 News In English; 8.10 Share Market Report; 8.30 Mega RC 2; 9.00 Easy Classic 240; 10.00 Night Shift; 11.00 News In English; 11.10 Night Shift; 12.00 National Anthem/Close.

## SUARA JOHOR BEST 104

2.00 AM: Getaran Jiwa; 4.00 Santapan Rohani; 6.00 Best Morning Show; 7.30 Good Morning Dedication; 8.30 Best Morning Show (cont'd); 9.00 Sensasi 104;

1.00 PM Afternoon Delight; 5.00 Variasi; 7.00 Melodi Senja; 8.00 Muzik Serumpun; 9.30 Keroncong Emas; 11.00 Easy Listening



Ajis' insight into domestic kampung life