

View artist's works on love

Subtle works by Syed Thajudeen on display until end of this month

SYED Thajudeen Shaik Abu Talib, one of the brightest and best figurative and lyrical painters in the country, is currently holding a solo exhibition at the KL Lifestyle Art Space (KLAS) in Bangsar until Sept 30.

On display are his oil on-canvas and ink-on-paper drawings.

Back in 2006, dancer Ramli Ibrahim, then guest curator at the National Art Gallery, said of the artist: "Syed Thajudeen's works not only contribute towards the diversity of points of embarkation in catalysing and achieving the coming of age of Malaysian modern art but also define contemporary modernism."

The *Paintings on Love* collection at KLAS, includes several oil-on-canvas works painted this year, including the pieces entitled *Ka'bah*, *Ibu*, *Holy Book*, *Meeting of the Eyes II* and six works in the *Waiting for the Lover in Kebaya Labuh Songket* series.

The paintings in the collection nearly all bear that distinctive look that immediately marks them as his work with elongated figures and stylised lips, eyes and motifs, the latter surprisingly small in number but oft repeated.

We see the same tree, the same woman, the same lover, the same fish, the same cloud, the same bird (or geese) in the same painting and in different paintings, yet each one is subtly different.

What is also immediately apparent when you view his artworks is their unmistakable Indian influence.

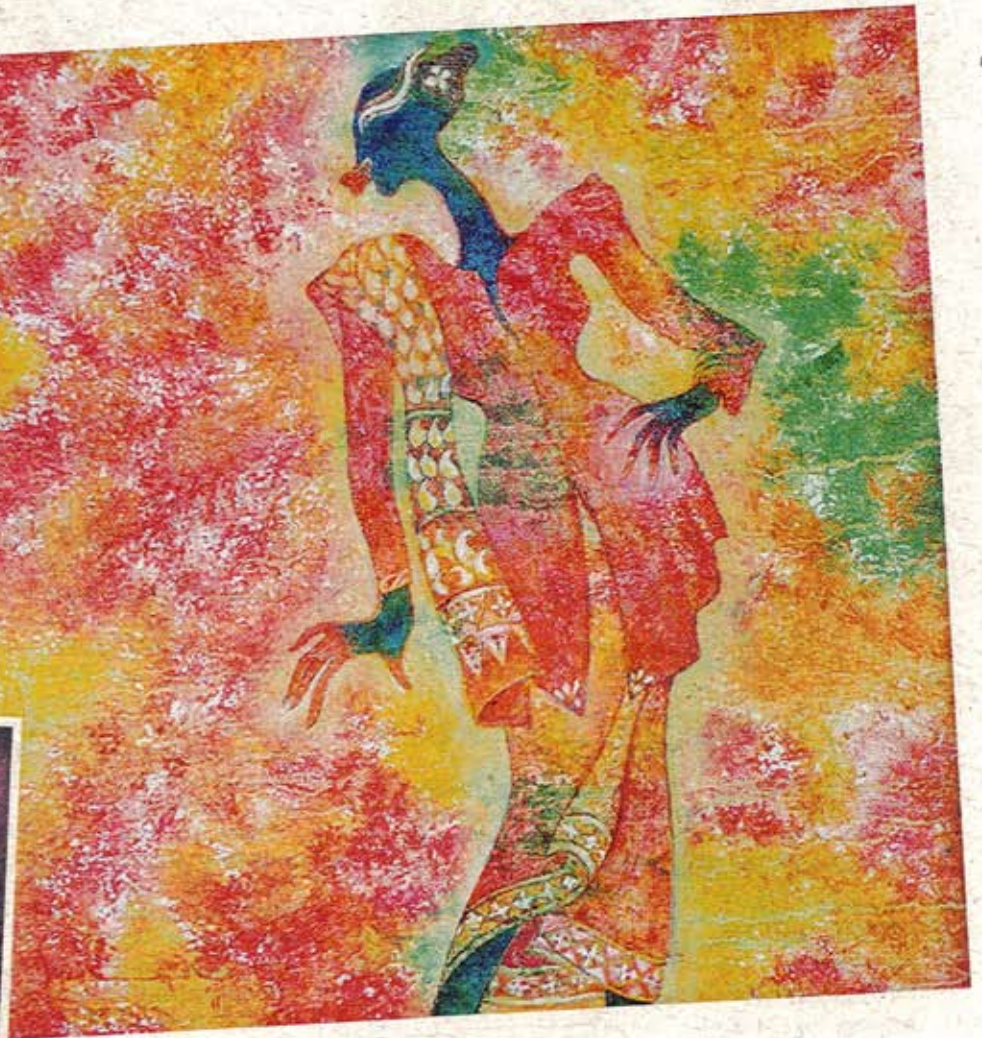
Syed Thajudeen trained from 1968 to 1974 as an artist at the Madras College of Arts, a fact unpalatable to many local artistes and collectors who prize an European art education above all else.

"This entrenched perception in the minds of Asian artists is changing for a better awareness of the stable and fine aesthetics emanating

from the visual and plastic arts that are Asian in dimension," said Ramli when he was guest curator at the National Art Gallery.

He added, "Malaysia does not possess an indigenous painting tradition, though there exist neolithic cave drawings (in Sarawak and Perak). Prints and paintings documented indigenous flora and fauna in the days before photography. The fact is that Syed Thajudeen is a Malaysian artist (whose) artistic product is remarkable testimony to indigenous ideas, symbols and motifs couched in the refined aesthetic and metaphysical sensibilities of Mother India, universal and at the same time Malaysian."

For details, call 019-333 7668 or visit KLAS at 150, Jalan Maarof, Bukit Bandaraya, Kuala Lumpur. Website: www.kl-lifestyle.com/artspace



Vibrant colours: A 2011 piece from Syed Thajudeen's latest collection 'Waiting for the Lover in Kebaya Labuh Songket' series.

Starry night: Syed Thajudeen's 'Moon of Ramadan' — a 1997 oil on canvas piece.