

One Cool Guy

Wang Zineng has chosen a route less followed by his peers in opting for a life dedicated to the arts.

While others are busy climbing their way up the career ladder in the private or public sector, Zineng chose a subtler route.

What differentiates him from the rest of the recent crop of graduates is his eye for detail and an infinite appreciation of the arts, especially visual arts.

For Zineng, the arts scene is not about the glitz and the glam. The passion for art in him overpowers the conventional path material success.

Zineng has recently completed his honours thesis on Malayan batik painting in the Southeast Asian Studies Programme, NUS. Presently an adjunct assistant curator at NUS Museum, he is in charge of four projects: one involves setting up the second installation of NUS Museum's exhibition on their permanent collection known as *Highlights: Modern Southeast Asian Art Collection*, which will run until 2008. In this project, Zineng helped to finalise the selection of artworks, identify the overarching themes of these works, and decide where within the NUS Museum to place these artworks. He also contributed to the exhibition brochure.

Unlike the movie *Night at the Museum* where dinosaurs were seen chasing humans and working at the museum seems like an exciting adventure, Zineng's job requires more than just surface action. Besides having to do thorough research in preparation for exhibitions, he constantly needs to preserve a healthy rapport with the

staff, artists and other professionals.

When asked about his future plans, he spoke of studying textilemaking in Indonesia in August and will continue to develop theoretical and context-based bodies of knowledge in Southeast Asian art and culture

His interests are not confined to modern art. Instead he gets pleasure from firsthand research and keeping abreast with developments in the study of the ethnographic arts.

"My plans are simple; they revolve around only one requisite – that I believe what I do bears relevance and interest to people around me. If I ever stop believing, that is the day I discontinue making plans."

Zineng shared his heartwarming memories of an encounter which took place at the end of an afternoon touring *Bodies and Relationships: Selected Works of Lee Sik Khoon* before it opened.

"Lee Sik Khoon's wife came up to me and thanked me for putting into words what she has always felt about her husband's art but could never express. Quite naturally, I felt a great sense of pride at that point."

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