

Artworks that you can 'hear'



Sound artist Zul Mahmod with his work, *Resonance In Frames*, a three-part installation where solenoids hammer away at copper pipes, starting out with a series of sharp, rhythmic clanks. ST PHOTO: GAVIN FOO

VIEW IT / SOUND & VISION

WHERE: Fost Gallery, 01-02 Gillman Barracks, 1 Lock Road
WHEN: Till Dec 30, from 11am to 7pm (Tuesdays to Saturdays), and 11am to 6pm (Sundays). Open by appointment on Mondays and public holidays
ADMISSION: Free
INFO: Go to www.fostgallery.com/sound-vision/

A group exhibition features artworks that examine the relationship between sound and visual art

Toh Wen Li

Step into Fost Gallery at Gillman Barracks and you will hear Zul Mahmod's artwork before you see it.

Resonance In Frames, a three-part installation where solenoids hammer away at copper pipes, starts out with a series of sharp, rhythmic clanks.

Then the notes grow increasingly insistent, at times syncopated as they trip over one another.

Zul, who has explored this concept in larger installations in places such as the Esplanade underpass, was inspired by the rhythm of the city.

"Most of us try to block out those noises. Most of us just hear, but we don't exactly listen," says the 43-year-old sound artist, who is also an adjunct lecturer at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts.

His work is part of a group exhibition called *Sound & Vision*, which also features more than 30 abstract works by artists Ng Joon Kiat, Wyn-Lyn Tan and Ian Woo.

The show runs till Dec 30 at the arts enclave off Alexandra Road. It is curated by Michelle Ho, gallery director of ADM Gallery at Nanyang Technological University's school of Art, Design and Media.

The works examine the relationship between sound and visual art, and nearly all of them are being exhibited for the first time.

On the wall opposite Zul's installation are several graphite-speckled acrylic paintings by Ng, 42. These seemingly quiet "landscapes" explore the ideas of white noise and cosmic microwave background, a kind of "relic radiation" left over from the Big Bang.

Also on display are artist and musician Woo's paintings, where geometric and organic shapes are held in a state of tension.

The acrylic on linen paintings in his *Streaming The Mental* series are slightly larger than the size of vinyl record covers, he says, adding that the colours – a mix of green, orange and purplish hues – were inspired by the covers of psychedelic records.

"I try to be as playful as I can," says the Lasalle College of the Arts programme leader for MA Fine Arts.

Abstract painter Tan, 44, says movement and rhythm are key to her artistic process, adding that she pays attention to the duration between brush strokes.

"It's almost like a dance – this sense of movement and rhythm is what goes into the work."

Tan, who enjoys electronic music, adds: "I feel my abstract painting is a physical manifestation of the music I'm listening to."

The brushwork and effaced markings in her acrylic on canvas piece *Etched In Chartreuse*, for example, suggest the pulsations of energy in a musical number. In a dramatic flourish, the last vertical stroke she added to the canvas represents a kind of climax.

She has created sculptures made from resin and the paper which she used to blot out acrylic paint from the canvases. These sculptures, also on display, are visual "echoes" of her paintings, she says.

Ho, who is also curator for the Singapore Pavilion at next year's Venice Biennale, says: "The metaphor of sound might open up new ways of trying to see the language of paintings. What intrigues me is that sound is invisible. We cannot see sound, but we know without a doubt that it exists."

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