

news

These young artists are the best of the best

35 works by Nafa graduates on display at Ngee Ann Kongsi Galleries

LYDIAGAN

Miss Zhuang Xuehong understands what suffering for your art means.

The 23-year-old had blisters on her lips and inside her mouth after kissing 121 concrete steps for her documentary called Untitled.

The four-minute video shows Miss Zhuang kissing the steps of the Bukit Batok World War II Memorial.

The place used to be a base for the Japanese during the Japanese Occupation.

Said Miss Zhuang, a Nanyang Academy of Fine Art (Nafa) fine art graduate: "I was looking for a space that was mostly forgot-

ten, and bring a show of love back to it."

Her documentary is one of the 35 works inspired by the spaces and themes found in Singapore that are on display at Nafa's Best of the Best exhibition.

The exhibition showcases ideas and works by the graduating diploma and degree cohorts from the School of Art & Design at Nafa.

The exhibition, held at the Ngee Ann Kongsi Galleries, ends on Sunday.

Mr Ryan Lim Jun Jie, 24, focused on MRT signage for his Lost & Found (In Transit) project. He redesigned the typography, layouts, visibility, message hierarchy and colour

usage of MRT signs in order to better direct commuters.

Said Mr Lim, a design and media graduate: "We often take the public transport system for granted without realising the impact it has on us. I want to convey my sense of pride and appreciation through this project while improving on what we already have."

The Best of the Best exhibition also challenged people to look past seemingly mundane and normal everyday objects.

20.8 Ways to Pepper, a mixed media collection, was painstakingly handcrafted by Miss Wong Gin Min to show viewers how a simple and ubiquitous McDonald's pepper packet could be re-



Miss Zhuang Xuehong and her documentary piece, Untitled. TNP PHOTO: KHALID BABA

imagined in multiple ways, such as incorporating it into lip balms, or simply laying out its 2,884 individual grains.

Said Miss Wong, 25, who is graduating with a fine art diploma: "McDonald's has a place of relevance and comfort in our hearts. I hoped that my work would be relevant and easily understood by most, thus effectively challenging the audience to see the mundane in a different light."

All three graduates desire to continue impacting the local art scene after finishing their for-

mal education.

Miss Zhuang has an upcoming exhibition in the Annual Young Artist Group Show with Gajah Gallery, while Mr Lim is in talks to produce temporary directional signs for Chinatown MRT station.

Said Miss Wong, who will be pursuing a post-graduate degree: "We may find art difficult to understand because it can be abstract. I want to bring people closer to art, make it palatable to the public."

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