OPENING JAN 26TH AT 4.30PM
AT CENTRE D’ART - CITADINES

Exhibition from 26 Jan to 10 Feb 2024
10–12pm and 2–4.30pm – Mon to Sat
Please park at Town Hall
Inky Onky is an exhibition by Ongkie Tan, showcasing a series of drawings that one can see as a time travel over different facets and stages of his life. His ink drawings reflect his wild imagination around the themes of his muses and passions: family, nature, animals, spirituality and hair cuts... Ongkie likes to travel light: a paper and a pen are enough to embody his creativity.

ONGKIE TAN

Ongkie Tan is a self-taught artist hailing from Borneo where he grew up alongside nine siblings. He dropped out of college and moved to the U.S. to focus on street art in Los Angeles during the 80’s and became also passionate about hair styling. Having found his place in the art scene of the time he painted for the art department of the film industry and was later represented by numerous galleries including Beverly Hills Gallery and the Museum of LA County. During this period, he also worked as a hair dresser in a famous celebrity salon, in Beverly Hills.

He has traveled the world for a decade, carrying his canvas tubes in his backpack. When his trip landed him in Auroville in 2010, he continued to combine both his passions not to make a living but to follow his innate curiosity. He found that in Auroville he could be himself, and he fills his days with a calm sense of belonging. When he paints, surrounded by wildlife, light, trees, and like-minded people, he draws his inspiration from animals, birds, and nature. More recently, Ongkie’s paintings are portraying family.

In Auroville, the last destination of his ten-year travel, he found himself equipped with only a torch light during a tropical cyclone that resulted in extended power outages. He found solace once again in his drawings and discovered his love for black and white. His simple house surrounded by nature, birds, and light, is his refuge and muse. While hair styling is now on pause, his art is his channel to “let go of expectations and be in the moment”. Recently, his paintings jumped from animals and psychedelics to family, a theme that he is beginning to explore more.

In his own words he describes himself as “meticulous to the point of obsession over details that others don’t see”; certainly a trait that has contributed to his art, as his fine drawings embody the detailed strokes of nature. Inspired by his early days in Indonesia, where tattoo art and life in the forest were his first source of inspiration, Ongkie’s art represents the presence of light and shadow, good and bad, in each of us and in the world at large.

By Inge, for It Matters