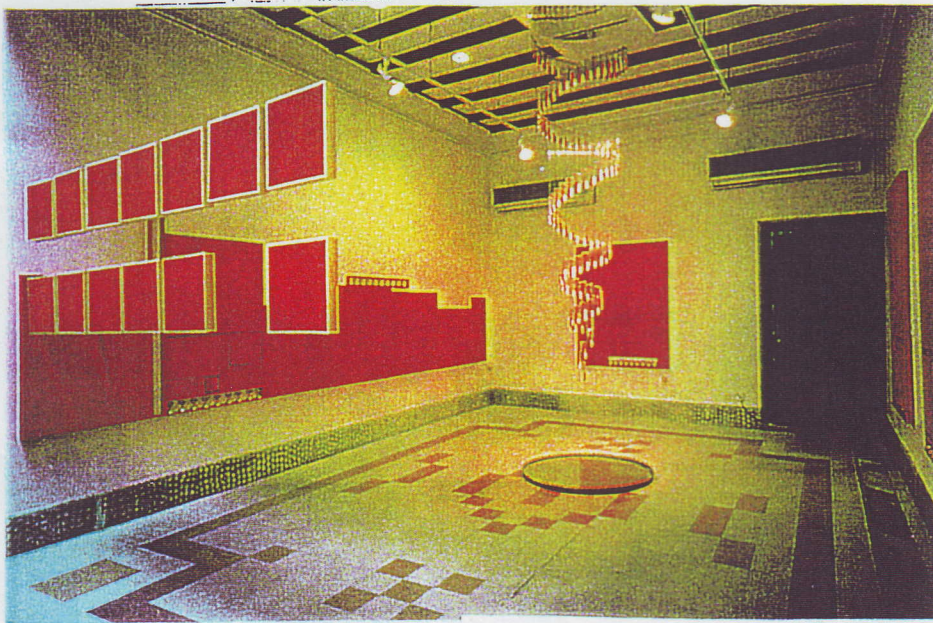


LIVE LIFESTYLE

An exploration of inspirations

BEN MUNROE looks at the works of Chinese brush painter Wucius Wong and one of S'pore's most exciting artists, Kumari Nahappan



A totally different world of art is on show at The Wetterling Teo Gallery. Kumari Nahappan was the first Masters of Fine Art graduate from LaSalle college, and her work was last seen here in November 1996, when she presented her Icon series, alongside the Chinese brushwork of Cai Heng. Now she has the gallery to herself and has literally filled it with her art.

"Almanac, entry . . . 3 November 1997, three hundred and sixty test tubes from Ubi Road 2", which marks the start of a three-month closure of the gallery for renovation, sees paintings and mixed media collages presented as an installation work. Candles glow around the paintings, which are arranged to provide a spiritual journey through the space, and the test tube installation of the title acts as a centrepiece.

Filled with varying amounts of black, red and white pigment, the test tubes hang suspended in a spiral, reflected in a shallow pool of water below and a mirror above.

"The Almanac is dealing with time

and space and so installation is very important, that's why I used 360 test tubes — a full circle," said the artist. "It all depends how much you want to read into it — I like to leave it open."

On the lower level, visitors walk from black paintings through the serene "white" canvasses and end up in an area dominated by red works. This Almanac series continues Kumari's exploration of time and ritual, with specific reference to Hinduism, whereas the Windows series in the upper gallery deals with the frailty of the individual.

"The Almanac itself deals with overall structures but the Windows are like individual spaces, like a diary within the Almanac," she said. "I wanted the Windows to deal more with life and the fragility of existence, that's why I used paper."

Almanac provides another opportunity to view the work of one of Singapore's most exciting contemporary artists.

Visions of a Wanderer at Plum Blossoms until Nov 16. Tel: 334-1198.

Almanac at Wetterling Teo until Nov 23. Tel: 738-2872