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## Profile: Ruben Pang

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**Ruben Pang's rise in the visual arts scene has been nothing short of meteoric.**

BY Daphne Ong

He may be just 24 years old, but Ruben Pang already has a following of art collectors so hungry for his contemporary statement pieces, his paintings sell out in a blink. His latest local exhibition this January saw all 12 of his

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paintings snapped up on opening night. This was his fifth straight sell-out solo exhibition in Singapore.

Pang graduated with a Diploma in Fine Art from LASALLE College of the Arts in 2010, the same year he exhibited in five different shows. Since then, his works have featured in 14 exhibitions in Singapore, Turkey, Italy and Switzerland, five of which were solo shows. The artist is currently completing a residency in Israel and has a new body of work in the pipeline headed for Jakarta this August.

Interestingly, it was a tattoo artist from China who inspired Pang to journey the artistic path. "I met him seven years ago," recalls Pang. "He told me he used to be a mechanic and advised me, 'The moment you even think about your art, drop everything and run to your work.' I could see the fire and conviction in his eyes even after all those years. I quit my job the next day."

Pang is represented by two galleries, Chan Hampe Galleries in the Asia Pacific and Primo Marella Gallery in Europe. Says Benjamin Hampe, owner of Chan Hampe Galleries, "All it took was a few key collectors to be exposed to his work and his career really took off from there. It is Ruben's technical brilliance and truly unique perspective that makes him one of the most exciting contemporary painters working in Singapore."

Indeed, Pang's approach to his paintings is unusual: he builds layers of colour, removing parts of the layers with brush strokes, hands, palette knives and sandpaper. The final result? Bursts of visual energy, that are intense, abstract, atmospheric and even otherworldly. Pang describes it as "visual syncopation, like searching for a melody in white noise".

In spite of his breakout success, Pang maintains his humility and is more than willing to help other artists. After all, his main wish for the scene is for artists to "cultivate kindness and encourage each other."

To find out more about Pang's work, visit Chan Hampe Galleries at Raffles Hotel Arcade or check out [www.chanhampegalleries.com](http://www.chanhampegalleries.com).

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