

CHEN FAMILY SUPPORTS ART AT YALE-NUS

“One cannot find a better place than Singapore and Yale-NUS College to study Asian art. Yale-NUS, with its excellent resources and ideal location in a region with a burgeoning arts scene, is a solid platform for students who wish to pursue their passion, and potentially a career in art,” says Mr Tan Wee Lee, the eldest son of late Singaporean artist Mr Chen Chong Swee. And that was what prompted the Chen family to set up the Chen Chong Swee Asian Art Programme at Yale-NUS.

The Programme was set up in honour of their late father, Mr Chen Chong Swee, who was a pioneer of the Nanyang painting style that is unique to Singapore. He also co-founded the Singapore Water Colour Society as well as the Salon Art Society, now known as the Singapore Society of Chinese Artists.

The Chen Chong Swee Asian Art Programme will support various academic programmes at Yale-NUS that promote the appreciation of local and regional art among students. The Chen Chong Swee Art Scholarship has also been set up and will go towards helping a Yale-NUS graduate pursue postgraduate studies in fine arts.

And already, the Programme has benefited students through *Week 7: Learning across boundaries*, a Yale-NUS initiative that brings learning out of the classroom. From studying butterfly diversity to analysing global fashion, students chose from a wide



The Chen family: Mr Tan Wee Lee (far right), and his spouse Madam Rosalind Wee Joo Wah (not pictured), with his siblings, Mr Chen Chi Sing and his spouse Madam Ooi Kim (second and third from right), and Madam Chen Chi Wah and her spouse, Mr Chan Yen Teng (fourth and fifth from right).

range of subjects and interests both locally and abroad. At the end of Week 7, students and faculty came together to share the insights and knowledge they had gained.

Two of the projects, *Placemaking at RC4** and *Art, Identity & the Meaning of Things*, were funded by the Chen Chong Swee Asian Art Programme.

Placemaking at RC4 aimed to familiarise students with concepts such as the philosophy of place and neighbourliness, the social science of the neighbourhood, and urban design and community development principles of placemaking. Tiffany Sin, one of the participants, says, “One thing I learnt from

this module is that no matter how much a designer or architect plans a space, it’s all about the interactions that happen when users come in and shape its ‘desire lines.’”

Daniel Soo, who took part in *Art, Identity & the Meaning of Things*, says, “The module opened my mind to a whole bunch of questions that I did not even previously consider. These questions are difficult to answer and are sometimes very personal, and I am appreciative that these questions stay with me even after the course. It was a great learning experience!” ■

*RC4 refers to Residential College 4, the temporary home of Yale-NUS College. The College’s new campus will open in 2015.



Yale-NUS students taking part in a variety of different learning opportunities outside the classroom during Week 7. Photo Credit: Yale-NUS College

