



More photos: Ted pointing out some of his photo submissions which did not make the final cut, but were assembled into a collage and displayed at one corner of the gallery.

Appreciating the works of others: Noordin and his wife Noni Abdullah admiring some of the other PhotoMalaysia members' prints.



Malaysia seen through the eyes of shutterbugs

Country's largest online photography community organises maiden exhibition

By JADE CHAN
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IT WAS quite a sight to behold the many photography enthusiasts snapping away, from a rafter overlooking the gallery as well as inconspicuous spaces in between, at the launch of PhotoMalaysia's *What Now? Malaysia After 50* photo exhibition.

The exhibition was the first to be organised by PhotoMalaysia, Malaysia's largest online photography community comprising 15,000 individuals from various backgrounds and professions.

"The theme reflects an attempt to see what a typical person on the street would see of Malaysia after her 50th birthday," said exhibition curator and organising committee member Azrul K. Abdullah.

"Most people who post their photos in online forums never see them exhibited at a proper venue; this is an experimentation of sorts to see if something virtual can be turned into something tangible.

"It's also an attempt to get members to understand what the exhibition process is about, from submission to

selection process to background work and finally the exhibition.

"Ultimately, their reward is to see their work displayed on the wall," said Azrul.

"We received nearly 500 entries during a call for a competition last year. The photos went through a three-stage filtering process: relevance to theme, adherence of subject to theme, and technical skill. Content was the key.

"While the exhibition's main focus is the 37 works which the judges feel most worthy of being shown, about 80 images that made it to the final selection were assembled into a collage and displayed as well."

"All the exhibited prints are available for sale and priced at RM300 each. Those who are interested in buying the prints can approach any of our members at the gallery for more details," said PhotoMalaysia moderator and exhibition chairman P.H. Chan, who had several of his black-and-white prints on display.

Noordin Sulaiman and Ted Anan shot their photos during a Crossing Bridges photo outing with several photography forum members from



Portrait photography: Dr Teh standing next to 'Sadness', which had already been snapped up by a buyer at the launch of the exhibition.



Picture of innocence: 'Education' by June Yap.

Singapore and Indonesia in Semporna, Sabah.

Noordin's two prints - *Teamwork* and *Stilts* - represent his favourite photography styles - street photography and landscapes.

"*Teamwork* was taken in Maiga, an island off Semporna. Street photography captures life as it is; in this case, I wanted to capture the energy and excitement as the children played an impromptu game of tug-of-war on the beach.

"*Stilts* depicts my best memory of Maiga. What's unique about this scene is that it's the only place where the houses are on stilts in the sea.

"These houses aren't connected by any walkways, so the only way to access them is to take a boat and climb up a ladder to enter a house," said the 64-year-old company director.

One of Ted's *Untitled* prints depicts two girls standing in front of a house in Kunang, a fishing village between Tawau and Semporna.



Shutterbug's interpretation: 'Surreal @ 50' by Megat Arizal.

"I became the centre of attention of a group of children as I was wandering around. I started making small talk with them and they brought me around the village. As they followed me, I managed to capture two of the girls dressed in bluish T-shirts standing in front of a blue house," said Ted, a professional photographer.

"These are Malaysians who grow up in an environment with limited resources, yet if given the chance, can really shine.



Rustic: 'Accommodation' by June Yap.



Unique scene: 'Stilts' depicts Noordin's best memory of Maiga.

"Most of my submissions were about non-Malaysians on Malaysian soil, foreigners who come to Malaysia to earn a better life. These are people among us whom society chooses to ignore or not see," said the 38-year-old, who specialises in people photography.

Paediatrician Dr Teh Ban Hup, 49, began dabbling in photography two years ago, when his daughter "hijacked" his point-and-shoot camera that led to him getting a Nikon D200. "Sadness was taken during a charity outing with my family at a home for handicapped children in Taman Megah.

The exhibition will run until Jan 27 at The Annexe Gallery, Central Market, KL.

It is open to the public from 11am to 7pm daily except for Mondays. For details, call 03-2070 1137/03-2274 6542.

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