

TAKING HEART

UOL champions inclusive arts, as it reaches out to children, youth and seniors with disabilities

In collaboration with Art:Dis, the property developer provides a platform for such artists to grow and showcase their work

Lindsay Wong

Published Wed, Sep 10, 2025 · 03:32 PM

[SINGAPORE] Several young artists with disabilities have been able to turn their passions into a full-fledged career. Fern Wong, Noah Tan and Abraham Koh – who have been featured at exhibitions, completed commissioned artworks and conducted workshops – are examples.

All three artists are supported by property developer UOL and non-profit organisation Art:Dis.

UOL started supporting Tan in 2014, when his artwork was featured in a 60-metre-long mural in an underpass in Novena.

In addition to doing commissioned artworks, Tan conducts workshops. In July, he led two textured-art workshops at United Square for children.

His mother, Rosyniah Wang, said: “Doing a workshop demonstration like this helps him gain confidence... He has come a long way – from an emerging artist under mentorship to now a full-time artist.”



Noah Tan completed a two-metre-long commissioned textured artwork in end-2023. PHOTO: UOL

Likewise, Koh also conducts workshops and has been undertaking commissioned artworks from companies such as Goldman Sachs.

Meanwhile, UOL and Art:Dis staged Wong's [first solo exhibition](#) last September, after she won the inaugural UOL X Art:Dis Art Prize 2023. Her art is currently showcased at the Patina Osaka hotel as well as the National Gallery Singapore's 2025 children's biennale.

Liam Wee Sin, UOL Group chief executive, noted: "People like Fern can go places because of the unique artwork that they do and the story behind it – (one) of tenacity."

Fostering inclusivity

UOL's inclusive arts journey began with its partnership with Art:Dis in 2014. They create opportunities for persons with disabilities (PWDs); for example, by providing mentorship. UOL also showcases the work of these artists at its properties, both locally and globally.

"The Singapore arts scene is growing, and it is important to keep that momentum going – to keep expanding our mind to different types of art and challenge our idea of what is considered art and who can be considered an artist," said Liam.

UOL said it hopes to broaden public perceptions of PWDs, and nurture a more empathetic and diverse society.

“By engaging with each artist’s work, the public can come to know them as individuals and be encouraged to create more opportunities for PWDs,” it added.

Liam said that UOL takes a “person-centric approach” – where it focuses on the individual journey of each artist. He noted his joy in seeing artists grow over the years with the group’s sustained support.

UOL X Art:Dis Art Prize 2025

Last Thursday (Sep 4), UOL and Art:Dis recognised Christian Tan as the overall winner of the UOL X Art:Dis Art Prize 2025. He received S\$20,000 and a chance to stage a solo exhibition. In total, 18 artists with disabilities were awarded.

This year’s edition welcomed such artists from across Singapore, instead of those only affiliated with Art:Dis. Categories for senior, child and youth artists were also introduced.

There were more than 570 submissions, compared with 300 in the previous edition. Participants included those from 18 special education schools as well as social service agencies, with ages ranging from seven to 78.

Supporting children and youth

Besides the art prize, UOL has supported inclusivity via Rainbow Centre’s Artability programme since 2024, which provides visual arts training to students aged 10 to 18. To date, Artability has benefited more than 200 students.

Tan Sze Wee, executive director of Rainbow Centre, said: “Through Artability, our students... pick up technical skills (and) develop an artistic voice and self-expression, opening more opportunities for pursuing art as a means of livelihood in the future.” She added that students from special education schools traditionally have “limited” opportunities to engage with the arts, especially after graduation.



Rainbow Centre's Artability programme provides visual arts training to students aged 10 to 18. PHOTO: RAINBOW CENTRE

Through collaborations with Art:Dis and UOL, students can create original pieces, gain industry exposure and showcase their artwork on a larger scale. Last year, eight graduates from Artability were chosen to continue training under Art:Dis.

“Beyond cultivating talent, the programme can provide platforms that link the arts to livelihoods through public engagement, paid work opportunities and art-related micro-jobs such as live art booths, customised design projects or guided art tours,” she said.

Uplifting senior artists

In late 2023, UOL and Art:Dis launched Project OpenDoor, a public initiative that upcycles doors from flats in Kampong Silat. Six senior artists worked together with Liam to create an art installation for UOL's Avenue South Residence.

UOL said: “Art plays a powerful role in uplifting their lives and well-being – it keeps them engaged, nurtures active ageing, and provides a meaningful outlet for self-expression and livelihood.”



Under Project OpenDoor, six senior artists collaborated for an art installation for UOL's Avenue South Residence. PHOTO: UOL

The group also sponsors weekly art classes for Art:Dis' senior artists. Its upcoming programmes comprise digital illustration, for seniors to keep up with technology, and printmaking, for them to experience a new medium.

For their efforts in inclusive arts, UOL and its subsidiary Pan Pacific Hotels Group were together recognised as a Distinguished Patron of the Arts at this year's Patron of the Arts Awards, organised by the National Arts Council.

UOL also hopes to involve more value-chain partners, such as architects and contractors, in its initiatives.

Taking Heart UOL Arts Seniors non-profit