

# Galeri Sasha

**Hana Tan, Arash Jabbar, Loqman Zainal, and Hafizuddin Azman**

*Occupied Spaces*

16 August – 7 September 2025

**Opening reception:** 16 August, 2pm – 7pm

**Gallery Hours:** Friday to Sunday, 12pm – 7pm



*Occupied Spaces* (2025), Galeri Sasha

**Galeri Sasha** is pleased to present *Occupied Spaces*, a new body of work by Hana Tan (b. 1995, Sabah), Arash Jabbar (b. 2001, Johor Bahru), Loqman Zainal (b. 1995, Melaka), and Hafizuddin Azman (b. 1994, Kuala Terengganu) — four Malaysian artists whose practices examine the relationship between bodies and the spaces they move through, remember, or quietly inhabit. The exhibition centers on the idea that space is never neutral. It stores memory, absorbs identity, and quietly reflects the figures that pass through it—whether through presence or absence.

The works on view exist between observation and imagination. There are interiors drawn from memory, rendered in soft pencil or charged brushstroke; rooms that feel lived-in but emptied out; bodies flattened into stillness or warped by psychological strain. These artists respond to the domestic, the suburban, and the emotional architecture of everyday life in Malaysia—not in pursuit of document or nostalgia, but as a way of locating the self within a shifting terrain.

Each artist approaches this condition differently, yet with a shared sensibility: attuned to interior states, to residual memory, and to the quiet drama of space.

### **About Hana Tan**

**Hana Tan** (b. 1995, Sabah) explores the performance of identity through theatrical, domestic spaces. Drawing from her childhood in Sabah and her early experiences on stage, her paintings incorporate traditional Sabahan ornamentation, thrifted décor, and fictionalized memory. Figures are often poised within lush, enclosed interiors—dressed, adorned, or mid-thought—offering a reflection on cultural duality, feminine ritual, and inherited gesture. She lives and works in Klang.



### **Artist Statement**

My work explores the in-between spaces shaped by personal history, cultural displacement, and performance. As an indigenous artist from Sabah, Malaysia, and a former stage performer, I use painting to navigate memory, identity, and cultural imagination, often framed through theatrical settings.

As a child, I was frequently prepared by my mother for competitions and performances, and she would dress me in dresses with lantern sleeves and layered tutu skirts with crimson red lipstick to pair with the dresses. These vivid moments

were echoed in the way our home was decorated and filled with thrifted Western items like tea sets, lace curtains, silky sleepwear, and patterned carpets. This fusion of cultures within a domestic space has become a central theme in my art.

My paintings focus on female domestic scenes, where everyday activities are layered with cultural references. I incorporate traditional jewellery and accessories from my indigenous roots, allowing daily life to intertwine with heritage. This visual dialogue is my way of balancing cultural dualities and also honoring traditional identity while embracing contemporary influences. Thus, it reflects a belief in respecting the past while adapting to the present.

Through the narration of my life experiences, I aim to create imagined environments that are both intimate and symbolic. Using vibrant colours, flattened space, and theatrical composition, I invite viewers to reflect on their own identity and sense of belonging. I hope my works can serve as a catalyst to reconnect viewers to reclaim the space within their heritage and exploration of their identity formation.

Hana Tan  
August 2025

### **About Arash Jabbar**

**Arash Jabbar** (Yash) (b. 2001, Johor Bahru) works in water-based colour pencil to render everyday scenes from Malaysian suburbia. Chairs, utensils, wiring, floor tiles—all become vessels for fading memory. These works carry the softness of recollection, as if pulled from just before forgetting. Rather than polish or control, Yash leans into dissolution—allowing things to remain suggestive, incomplete, and emotionally unresolved. He is based in Shah Alam.



## Artist Statement

My work traces fleeting moments—of joy, memory, and everyday life—and translates them into visual experiences that linger. I take photographs, revisit old images, and carry these impressions with me as I move from place to place, shifting between studios and chapters. This process gives shape to a language of remembrance, rooted in observation but filtered through time and feeling.

I build compositions from the materials of my own life: objects, people, places, gestures. Each subject carries the residue of a moment, often shared with friends or family, and becomes a stand-in for something that's passed but still emotionally present. Life moves quickly, and I'm drawn to what disappears—how memory distorts, how images fade. My aim is to hold space for these moments, to invite viewers into a shared field of recognition.

I work primarily with coloured pencil, a medium tied to childhood and nostalgia, but one that I approach with intentionality and depth. Through repetition and layering, I build texture and density, often combining pencil with acrylic and emulsion paint. These techniques allow me to explore surface, colour, and gesture in ways that feel both intimate and open-ended.

This series maps a visual diary—part archive, part reflection. I hope the work offers a kind of quiet access point, where others might recognise something of their own experience. Even as the forms remain personal, the images are meant to evoke a shared memory space—one that values the quiet details before they slip away.

Arash Jabbar  
August 2025

## About Loqman Zainal

**Loqman Zainal** (b. 1995, Melaka) constructs paintings from lived interiors—spaces pulled from his childhood home in Melaka and his current life in Kuala Lumpur. His works explore how decor, furniture, and arrangement function as extensions of identity. Figures are absent, but their presence is felt in the staging: a corner chair, a rug, a shaft of light. Loqman's palette balances pop vibrancy with pastel quietude, offering a visual language of stillness and trace.



## Artist Statement

My work explores the relationship between space, interior design, and human presence using vibrant compositions that evoke both nostalgia. These painting also reflect of how we, as individuals, engage with our environments and how room become silent witnesses to our routines, our solitude and our gatherings.

Through the space and interior, I investigate how furniture, decor, and arrangement articulate identity and emotional memory. The absence of figures in the paintings draws attention to the traces people leave behind. Suggesting presence through colour, arrangement and atmosphere.

The function of space in human life is central to this series. A living room or a corner chair becomes a sanctuary, a place of comfort and expression. The interior becomes a stage for the rhythms of everyday life—rest, reflection, creativity, and connection.

The process of making these works involved collecting data and imagery from real-life interior spaces, observing how others decorate and inhabit their rooms. I carefully studied color schemes that fuse pop vibrancy with pastel calmness, balancing energy with serenity. This interplay of hues and texture creates a tactile and emotional resonance, drawing the viewer into a moment that feels both familiar and idealized.

Ultimately, these paintings celebrate the beauty of personal spaces—not as static designs, but as evolving, living extensions of human experience.

Loqman Zainal  
August 2025

## About Hafizuddin Azman

**Hafizuddin Azman** (b. 1994, Kuala Terengganu) approaches painting as a site of psychological transformation. His earlier works channeled memories of political unrest and social dislocation from his youth on the East Coast. In recent years, his surfaces have become more direct—painted in oil, charcoal, and bitumen, with thick brushwork, expressive gesture, and fragmented forms. His figures, often distorted or torn, drift through surreal terrains charged with both inner turmoil and spiritual restlessness. He lives and works in Selangor.



## Artist Statement

*Lintasan Jiwa* is a body of work born from personal transitions—physical, emotional, and spiritual—that have reshaped my sense of self. These movements are not simply geographical but deeply internal, marked by ambiguity, loss, and quiet reinvention. In navigating this liminal space—between fading identities and ones still forming—painting became a way to hold the tension of becoming.

The series reflects moments when something is dissolving while something else is emerging. In these suspended states, where logic recedes and emotion takes precedence, I turn to visual language as a means of expression. The figures I depict are fragmented, distorted, or incomplete—mirroring the instability of transition. They drift through surreal, shifting landscapes where shadows, architectural fragments, and unnatural elements create a world untethered from physical laws.

My style draws from three core influences. From Metaphysical Art, particularly Giorgio de Chirico, I adopt a quiet unease—open, tranquil spaces that conceal tension, and perspectives that defy rationality. Contemporary surrealism allows me

to explore intuition and memory through floating forms, symbolic objects, and fractured atmospheres. And Figurative Expressionism, shaped by artists like Francis Bacon, informs how I treat the body—as a site of psychological conflict rendered through layered brushwork, rough textures, and volatile colour.

In this series, light and shadow act not as tools of clarity, but of concealment. Emptiness, glances, and obscured forms suggest rather than explain. I am interested in the mystery that sits within transformation—the moment before definition, where instinct and uncertainty coexist.

Ultimately, *Lintasan Jiwa* is not about offering resolution. It is an invitation to inhabit the in-between—a space of silence, rupture, and reformation. Through figuration, symbolism, and emotional gesture, I aim to reflect a state that is often lived but rarely acknowledged: the strange, beautiful uncertainty of becoming.

Hafizuddin Azman  
August 2025

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