

Getting into the shoes of the visually impaired at art exhibition



(From right) Chng showing her mixed media sculptures to volunteer Andrew Pang and iArtsg founder Kim Ong at the Arts Beyond Sight exhibition at Penang Science Cluster, George Town. — CHAN BOON KAI/The Star

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WHEN you enter the Arts Beyond Sight exhibition, you will experience art using the four senses without sight.

Currently ongoing at Penang Science Cluster in Gat Lebu China, George Town, visitors are guided through three different galleries in pitch dark, using only their sense of touch, smell, hearing and taste to envision the world of the visually impaired.

The event features the work of Singaporean artist Chng Seok Tin, 70, who was devastated when she was robbed of 90% of her sight after a brain abscess surgery in 1988 due to an accident.

This is the first time Chng, who has 31 solo exhibitions under her belt, is featuring her artwork in Malaysia.

A recipient of the Singapore's Cultural Medallion in 2005, she has also participated in more than 100 group exhibitions across the globe.

Chng said the feat did not come easy as with only 10% vision, she had to mark the colours with symbols to differentiate the shade.

"I included sculptures and other mixed media works.

"Art is not limited by sight. You can use other senses. Life is very unpredictable. Even when the odds are against you, do not give up what you like to do.

"I want to express more on social and environmental problems, and feelings with my artwork," she said.

Also featured in the exhibition is a mixed media sculpture named Extraordinary Talent which is to emulate the aspect of being flexible in order to bend to the forces of life.

Another mixed media sculpture is Moistening with Spittle, which is inspired by a Chinese idiom, to reflect the value of sharing meagre resources in humble circumstances, as in how a fish would dampen another fish with spittle in a dry lake.

Arts Beyond Sight is an event under George Town Festival Organised by Save Ones Sight Missions Berhad, Dialogue in the Dark Malaysia and Did My Innovations Sdn Bhd.

The event is being held until Sunday from 10am to 5pm.

Admission is free.