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# Pick art, win prizes

Visitors to the Singapore Art Exhibition stand to win cash and high-tech gadgets if they vote for the most popular work of art

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**A** QUIET competition is being fought out in blue slips at the Singapore Art Exhibition.

More than 70 votes have been cast by visitors, who have chosen their favourite artwork in the exhibition. They are gunning for prizes – a mobile phone, a camera and MP3 players – if they correctly pick the most popular work that wins the contest.

The artist responsible for the winning artwork also bags \$5,000.

The ongoing competition, called My Favourite Artwork, will run until the end of the month.

The exhibition is the main platform of the Singapore Art Show, the ongoing two-month celebration of local visual arts.

It is divided into two sections. The first is an invited section, where artists are chosen to create works based on the theme, *Imagining The City*.

The result is a thoughtful show meditating on Singapore's urbanised environment and its global connections, and employing a range of media, including Chinese ink, video, photography and performance.

The second section is the open section, where creative talents from the public were asked to submit works for consideration.

Some 749 entries poured in, and 58 works from about 40 artists were selected for the exhibition.

And to introduce a sporting spirit to the competition, the National

Arts Council introduced the popularity contest.

The most popular artist so far is Christine Mak, for her whimsical Chinese ink painting, *Engrossed*, a piece that shows a child reading in a traditional Chinese house.

Two works are in second place – Jane Lee's *Purple Drapes*, a three-dimensional painting, and Valerie Ng's *Cold Storm*, a subtle and atmospheric work done mostly in white.

In third place is Lee again, for her work *Wrap*, a quirky painting that is bent around a wall.

Mak, 50, an established painter, was "elated" to hear the results. On the competition, she says: "It's an encouragement for the artist, and you get the public involved. Otherwise, going to a gallery is so detached, you just view the pieces and leave."

Ng, 32, who has been painting for five years, thinks dangling a prize can get people who don't go to museums regularly excited.

She says: "And it's good to hear that people like my work enough to vote for it."

Meanwhile, the hottest artist in the contest, Lee, 43, is surprised to hear that she is in second and third place.

What will she do if she hits jackpot? "I'll use the money to buy more materials and to explore new ideas," she said.

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> The Singapore Art Exhibition is on at the Singapore Art Museum until Sept 3. Opening hours are Mondays to Sundays 10am to 7pm, with extended opening hours on Fridays to 9pm. Admission is free.

## Make your choice

Here are the top four works in the running, and two others to tickle your fancy



PHOTOS: STEPHANIE YEOW, CHRISTINE MAK, JANE LEE, LYNN LU, VALERIE NG

### Engrossed (above) by Christine Mak, 50

This Chinese brush painting was inspired by the artist's trip to Shan Tou, China. The boy poring over his book was based on some of the studious village children she met there.

### Wrap (below left) and Purple Drape (below right) by Jane Lee, 43

These quirky artworks bend the rules of painting by breaking its two-dimensional form. *Wrap*, well, wraps itself around a wall, while *Purple Drape* looks like an unstructured, heavy piece of fabric on the wall.



### Cold Storm (left) by Valerie Ng, 32

This white-on-white painting had its own quiet drama. It uses subtle shades of blue and grey to create an atmosphere of calm, and areas of disturbance.

### Walking A Mile (right) by Lynn Lu, 33

This performance art piece on video took place in Bangkok in 2005, when the artist asked people at a performance art event to exchange pieces of clothing, shoes and accessories with her. This engaging piece explores the question of what it is like, literally, to be in someone else's shoes.



### A River Runs Through It (left) by Jason Lim, 41

This graceful, wavy ceramic sculpture depicts the movement of a river. Coming in nine pieces, these thin, delicate glazed structures are stacked loosely above one another.