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Artist Yan Sook Leong's Copper Tooling Artwork Finds Its Home At EQ Kuala Lumpur

Patrick Loh

~3 minutes

In conjunction with [EQ Kuala Lumpur's 50th anniversary](#), the establishment honoured its artistic legacy with Yan Sook Leong, the artist behind the copper tooling artwork prominently displayed in EQ Kuala Lumpur's lobby. This piece, rich in historical significance, reflects the ancient artistry of copper tooling—a craft that involves manipulating sheet metal through techniques such as embossing, stamping, denting, piercing, rub-transferring, folding, and hammering. Spanning over 10,000 years, this stands as one of humanity's earliest metalcraft innovations.



Commissioned by EQ's founder, this artwork had once graced the main reception area wall of the original hotel from 1974 to 2012. Following the hotel's transformative journey into Plaza Equatorial and EQ, the piece has found its way back to the heart of the hotel. This return handily coincides with the group's commitment to sustainable practices and environmental stewardship, marking not only a revival but also a [preservation of artistic heritage](#).



Embarking on this artistic journey at the age of 30, Yan poured his passion into immortalising the simplicity of Malaysia's villages. "After obtaining approval for my initial sketches, I set out on a journey through various kampungs, hoping to capture the essence of Malaysia's countryside life," says the artist, who is affectionately known around EQ Kuala Lumpur as Mr. Yan. His three-month artistic endeavour comprised eight-hour workdays, bringing forth not just a portrayal of pastoral scenes but also an evocative tapestry of traditional pastimes such as *wayang kulit* (shadow puppetry) and Kelantanese kite-flying. As the copper tooling artwork took shape, it evolved beyond a snapshot of village life. Yan blended images of agriculture practices such as ploughing, planting, harvesting, threshing and

winnowing—all symbolic of industrialisation.



Now residing in New Zealand, Yan finds satisfaction in knowing that his creation is housed within the celebrated halls of [EQ Kuala Lumpur](#). “I find contentment that my work retains its significance within this establishment,” he says. “I’m holding hope that its continued exhibition will serve as an inspiration for emerging artists and young talents to adopt this fading art form, especially as the practice of copper tooling gradually slips into anonymity.”

[EQ Kuala Lumpur](#)