

racial politics. In his guide to the peculiarities of Malaysia, Anurendra Jegadeva tries to give context to these issues. Kam Raslan in the following article writes eloquently on all the ways in which we are divided.

All the works described so far employ direct imagery of Malaysia, in the form of video, photography, or illustration, and much of it is based on urban experience. Drawing-based works by Jalani Abu Hassan and a sculptural installation by Sharmiza Abu Hassan come from deeper within the country, beginning with references from the Malay world, rich in its traditions of pantun ⁽²⁾, its proverbs and legends, its rootedness in the land. In different ways, both artists have developed a visual language and strategies out of local forms and references. Interestingly, Sharmiza Abu Hassan's work is a meditation on our attachment to our "homeland", and the idea of leaving for brighter shores.

The youngest artist in the group, Sharon Chin, is still negotiating an idea of Malaysia and learning how to engage with it. Pole Positions is about finding a place to stand, so she is at the base of the twin towers, a non-Muslim listening to the Muslim call to prayer.

"I was reading an interview with Chandra Muzaffar ⁽³⁾, he was talking about how we need more bridge builders. I identify with that concept... I don't want to give my stand on religion, nothing grand like that, only to give a representation (mine) of my experience with the towers - just sitting and listening."

- (1) In Peninsula Malaysia, the Orang Asli, made up of numerous different tribes, and in East Malaysia the Iban and Bidayuh in Sarawak, the Kadazan and Bajau in Sabah as well as many other smaller tribes, although Sabah and Sarawak only officially joined Malaya to form Malaysia in 1963.
- (2) A Malay form of oral verse from the 15th Century or earlier, built up of an abab rhyming scheme, later adopted by the French and English - "pantoum".
- (3) Dr Chandra Muzaffar, Malaysian political scientist, human rights activist and president of the International Movement for a Just World (IJM).