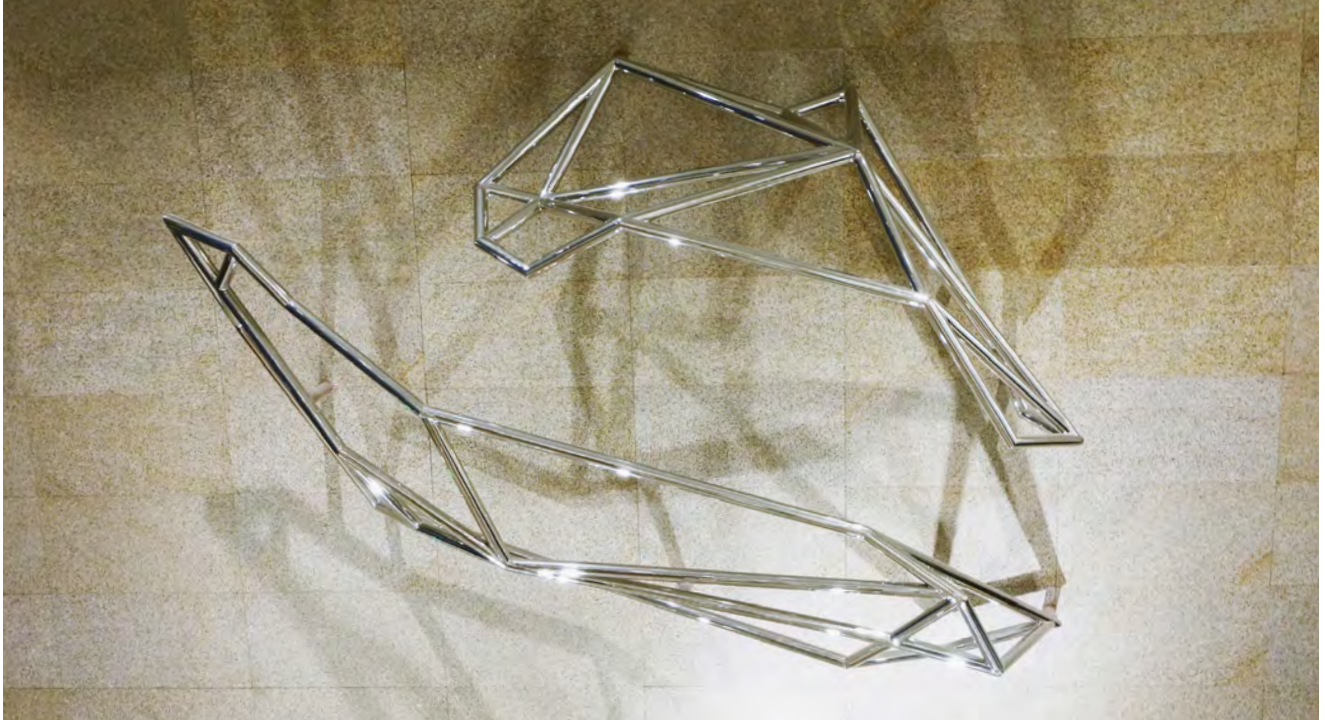


Roots of Ubi



DT27: Ubi

Staple

Zainudin Samsuri

“The artworks aim to link the public and especially towards the younger generation of Ubi history and tapioca plant wealth/ nutrition and its medicinal usage.”

- Zainudin Samsuri

About the Artwork

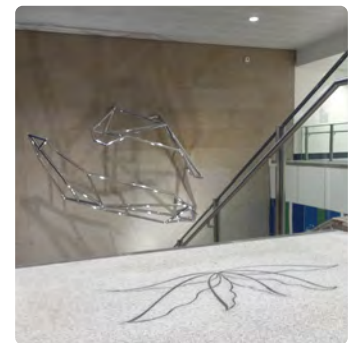
The artist was inspired by the history of Ubi and the significance of the tapioca plant. Tracing back to the Japanese occupation of Singapore, part of Geylang was renamed Kampong Ubi, or tapioca village in the Malay language. At that time, tapioca had replaced rice as the staple food as it was cheaper to farm. The plant was used for medicinal purposes: its leaves were used as a styptic agent, while its starch, when mixed with rum, can be used to treat skin problems.

‘Staple’, an abstraction of tapioca roots. The skeletal silhouette of the roots represents solidarity in Singapore's multiracial and multicultural society. It is hoped that ‘Staple’ can connect generations of Singaporeans to the history of Ubi and its association with the tapioca plant.



Trivia

If you look carefully at the stainless steel wall sculpture, you will find that the wall mounting rods were wrapped in the same granite patterns as the wall. This is to give the illusion that the sculpture is suspended in mid-air.



About the Artist

Zainudin Samsuri (b. 1974) graduated with a Master of Fine Arts and Bachelor of Fine Arts (Distinction) from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, majoring in sculpture.

Working with installation, Zainudin's practice enumerates the creative process through both draughtsmanship and physical forms. In 1997, he represented Singapore in the ASEAN Youth Sculpture Symposium in Brunei Darussalam and in 2003, he was an invited artist at the Hopea Sangal Tree Sculpture Symposium.

He has more than 15 years of teaching experience and has taught in local art institutes, polytechnics, and universities. In all his years of teaching, Zainudin played a key role in designing course syllabi that infuse fine art and product design aesthetic.

In 2005, Zainudin received the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Art Award for his excellent visual art practice.

Zainudin is currently a full-time art educator and practising artist working with young and upcoming sculpture students.