

# The Man Below the Wind

"The Man Below the Wind" may be an unfamiliar name to some, but every time Chinese New Year rolls around, this regal gentleman makes appearances around town, fascinating mall shoppers and hotel guests with his truly unique talents. With quick, deceptively simple strokes, he crafts works of art using a variety of brushes, writing Chinese characters and accompanying illustrations with the greatest of ease. The Man Below the Wind really pulls in the crowds, however, for the fact that this master of Chinese calligraphy is, in fact, Indian.

Huang Poh Lo, or N. Poolohgasingam, is a self-taught calligrapher who has perfected the art of Chinese brushwork. Poh Lo started practicing calligraphy at the age of 45 in 1995, with his first resource being a book dating back to 1947, entitled Teach Yourself Mandarin. He has come quite far since his first brush stroke, and proudly shares that he can write Chinese well and also speaks it fluently.

Sabah being a delightfully harmonious melting pot of many, many races, Poh Lo stands as an example of cultural integration in a truly unique sense. It is sufficiently unusual for someone with no Chinese heritage to take up the complex yet beautiful art of calligraphy. The Man Below the Wind took it a step further and incorporated elements of Arabic calligraphy, or Jawi, into his work. The result is a typographic style that he calls Shah Rumi-Jawi.

Shah Rumi-Jawi demonstrates a mastery of control and discipline, with Poh Lo using brushes expertly to create impressive pieces within a matter of minutes. While he is fully capable of writing and illustrating entire works purely in Jawi, Poh Lo's variation on the font uses the style of Arabic script to write in the standard alphabet. A word may appear to be completely written in Jawi from afar, but reveals upon closer inspection that it is actually written in highly stylised Roman letters. The process is difficult to describe, yet fascinating to observe.

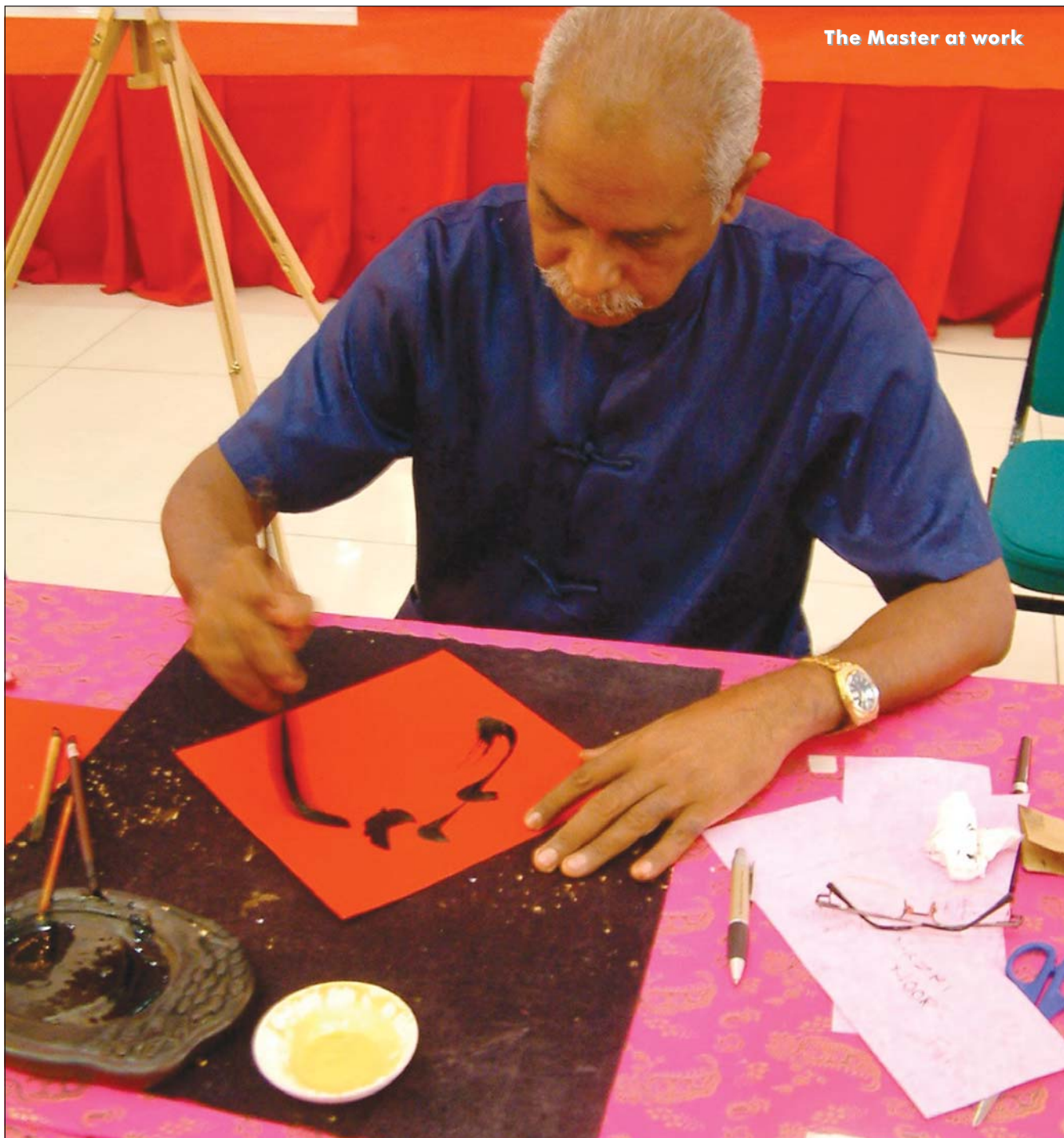
A great part of Poh Lo's activities involves raising funds for Chinese schools, especially during the lunar month. He invests much time in his work, sitting at his decorated booth dressed in traditional clothing and effortlessly turning out page after page of calligraphy, yet he never asks for payment. Poh Lo gives away his work free of charge, but wholeheartedly appreciates any donations that his audiences may offer in the name of education.

Such skill in calligraphy and the prestige of having created a new font deserve to be preserved, but Poh Lo says that his family have little interest in carrying on his legacy themselves. He looks forward to establishing a foundation one day, where aspiring calligraphers may absorb his style, and perhaps even build upon it.

More immediate plans are in store, however, as Poh Lo intends to begin selling one-of-a-kind pieces over the internet. The man has garnered an international following, maintaining correspondence with a network of friends and fans that has grown steadily over the years. Poh Lo's unique, limited edition works will be sold at a much higher price, which is definitely well deserved after 15 years at the grindstone.

A biting sense of humour and a charming demeanour combined with natural talent make Huang Poh Lo an interesting individual to seek out this lunar month. Don't be intimidated by the strong presence and personality that he possesses, for underneath it all lies a steady sense of humility. When complimented by this writer on his gifts, he simply said, "When you mix love and skill, you get a masterpiece." And masterpieces are exactly what you can expect to leave with when you pay a visit to The Man Below the Wind.

Huang Poh Lo is currently based at 1Borneo Hypermall during weekends, and can be contacted via email at [huangpohlo@hotmail.com](mailto:huangpohlo@hotmail.com) or through his mobile at 019-8993248.



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Hotel Deleeton  
Phone: 60 088 252222  
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Best Western Kinabalu Daya Hotel  
Phone: 60 088 240000  
Fax: 60 088 263909

The Palace Hotel  
Phone: 6 088 217 222  
Fax: 6 088 211 600

Hotel Shangri-La  
Phone: 60 088 212800  
Fax: 60 088 212078

Likas Square Business Suites  
Phone: 60 088 252233  
Fax: 60 088 251122

Tang Dynasty Hotel  
Phone: 60 088 263389 / 251155  
Fax: 60 088 263989 / 265566

Beverly Hotel  
Phone: 60 088 258998  
Fax: 60 088 258778

Promenade Hotel  
Phone: 60 088 265555  
Fax: 60 088 246666 / 253980

Hyatt Regency Kinabalu  
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Fax: 60 088 225972

Le Meridien Kota Kinabalu  
Phone: 60 088 322222  
Fax: 60 088 322223

Nexus Resort Karambunai  
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Phone: 6 088 318 888  
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Sutera Harbour Resort - Pacific Sutera  
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