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## Singapore loves the shophouses of a French artist



**Nathalie Laoué embodies the saying: «there are several lives in a life». For expatriates who give up everything to follow their partner, the success of his career change is inspiring. The scientist has happily become an artist.**

**During the last edition of the Affordable Art Fair (AAF) in spring 2015, Nathalie Laoué sold all her paintings. Its 14 artworks, which celebrated the shophouses so typical of the City-State, were won mainly by Singaporeans. A success that reinforces an already marked craze on the occasion of a first exhibition at the AAF of 2013.**

Her path as an accompanying spouse becomes the trajectory of personal success. It did not take more to look at her brushes and try to decipher what drives this French woman full of energy.



**Singabuzz:** *Two participations in the Affordable Art Fair and two amazing successes? To what do you attribute this meeting between the Singaporeans and your work?*

I believe it is the simplicity and authenticity of my work that has touched people here.

I talk about them, I talk about their cultural heritage, I talk about places they know, where sometimes they grew up.

For me, who is best known in expatriate circles, I am happy that the AAF gives me the opportunity to present my work to the Singaporean public.

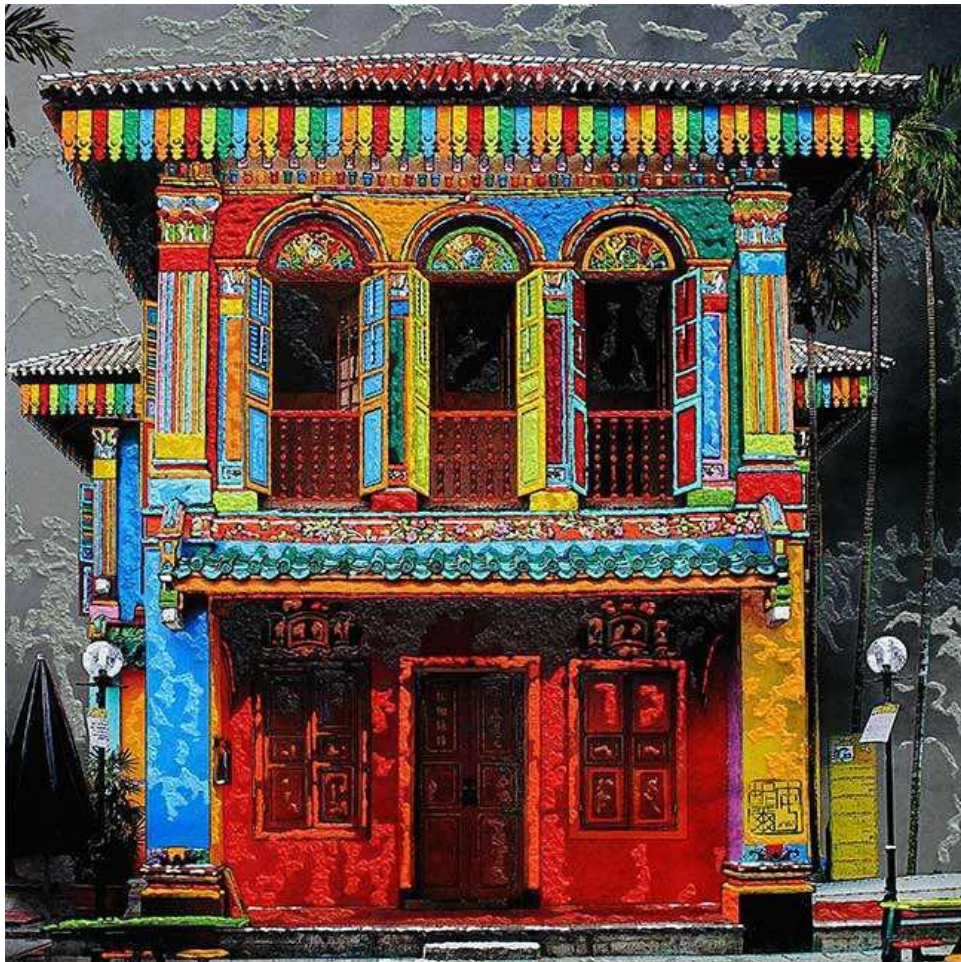
**Singabuzz:** **Where did you get the inspiration for this Shophouses series?**

**I fell in love with Singapore thanks to the shophouses**

For about ten years, one of my greatest pleasures is to stroll through the streets and alleys of Singapore. I love this city, both garden and city with its amazing architectural past and its ultramodern unfolding. I see it as overlapping lines: A green line of trees. Below the trees, a line of antique shophouses with baroque and rococo decorations. Above, a line of contemporary buildings with towers with cutting edge shapes.

It was while wandering the city that I discovered the shophouses.

I immediately loved them. In fact, I think I fell in love with Singapore because of them. Even today, more than 10 years after my arrival in Singapore, discovering a street corner with a pretty row of multicolored shophouses remains for me a magical moment.



**Singabuzz: What makes you want to start a painting?**

My goal is to make beautiful images that reflect the atmosphere and magic of Singapore that I love.

My idea is simple. I simply want to show, reveal. I want people raise the nose of the phones and rediscover their city. People in a hurry no longer see their environment, through carelessness or habit.

I would like to get people to look up, take the time to look around and discover these little treasures that surround them. I think that's my role as a painter: point and say, look it's here, it's now, it's your roots, enjoy!



**Singabuzz:** *There are many lives in one life. You were a scientist, what made you switch to the artistic field?*

**I think you can't put people in little boxes**

I don't think you can put people in little boxes. My personality is both scientific and artistic. I switched to the artistic field when I arrived in Asia. I was captivated by the light, the color. I wanted to express it and I took the plunge, but I always carried in me the seeds of an artist. I like to look at the world, its beauty that hides in little nothings.

Certainly, I have always had a taste for scientific rigor, logic, organization, but also that of reverie, imagination, fairytale.

Lead soles but head in the clouds!



**Singabuzz:** *Does your scientific know-how influence your artistic work?*

I have a rather technical scientific background. I learned technical drawing oriented towards industry when we were still working on a drawing board with layers and rotrings. Then I turned to physical measurements and sensors technology, my first job was in the Research and Development structure of an industrial company. I was testing prototypes of future products.

I think it is this taste for experimentation that influences my artistic career. I am constantly looking for new processes, mixtures, «recipes» producing interesting pictorial effects.

**Singabuzz:** You work a lot on the media mix. What «homemade recipes» specific to your work have you developed?

Mixed media is a mixture of painting techniques: collage of objects, image inlay, use of various resins, in addition to traditional painting techniques using brush or knife.

I use acrylic paint that after centuries of the supremacy of oil painting finally gains its nobility. This paint has the same properties as the resin that composes it. Once dry, it is a polymer that forms a very resistant satin plastic film, waterproof and offers great freedom of use.

The real magic recipe is when I make a mixture of resin, pigments and various texture materials that I apply meticulously, in small touches. Once dry, it produces an inimitable grainy texture. 3 or 4 weeks minimum are necessary to complete all the process for 1 artwork.

**Meet Nathalie Laoué**

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Interview by Valérie Degaulejac for Singabuzz – 28/05/2015

<http://www.singabuzz.sg/singapour-shophouse-nathalie-laoue/>

