

DRYING SALTED FISH

by Cheong Soo Pieng, 1978

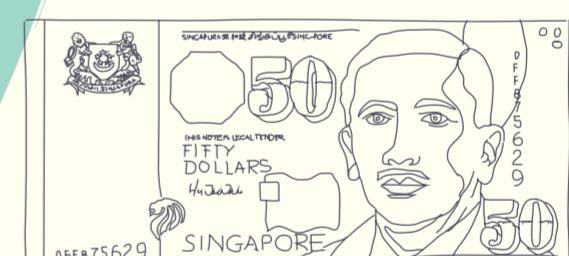


DO YOU KNOW WHAT SALTED FISH SMELLS LIKE?

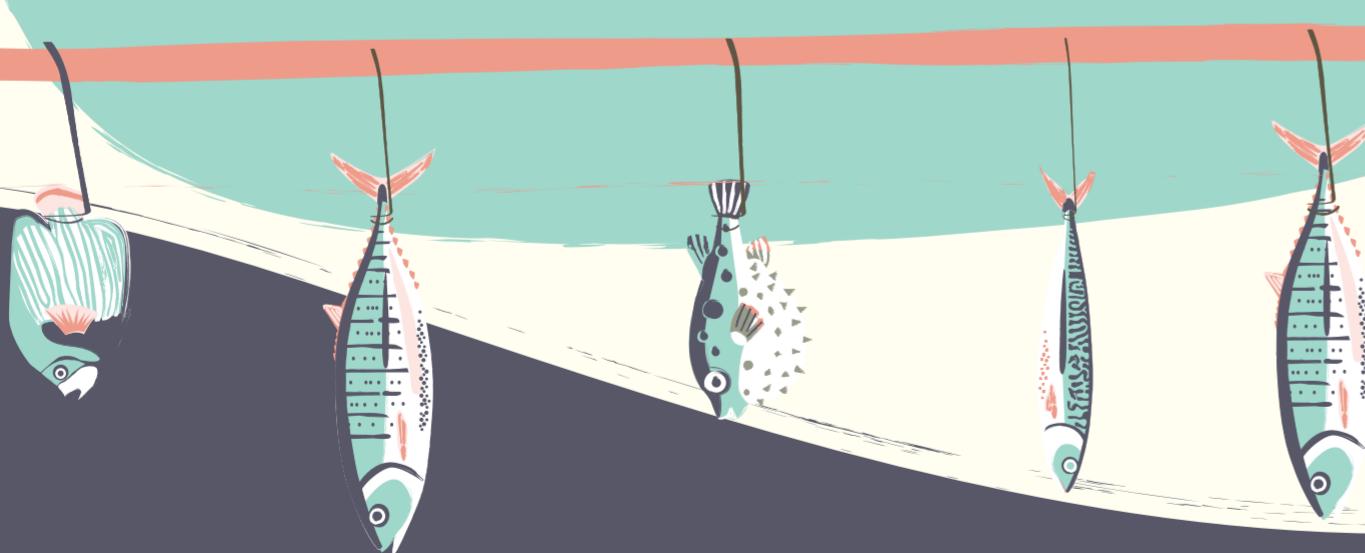
A whiff is probably enough to send you reeling! This must have also been an unforgettable smell – and sight – for the artist who made this painting.

Look at the shrubs in this painting. The fine, detailed brushstrokes used to depict them are similar to that used in traditional Chinese ink painting (Known as gongbi), as is the seal, which is stamped under Singapore artist Cheong Soo Pieng's signature. At the same time, Mr Cheong also drew upon what he had seen and liked in the region. This included wayang kulit, shadow puppets from Indonesia that have exaggerated features. This might explain why the people in this painting have such big eyes and long arms and legs!

This artwork, which is printed on Singapore's \$50 note, swims in and out of many hands daily!



LET'S
LOOK



Seals have always been an important aspect of traditional Chinese ink paintings.

Besides telling you who the artist is, seals can also be used to change the entire look of a work.



SEAL MARK

SEAL

Cheong Soo Pieng. *Drying Salted Fish*. 1978. Chinese ink and watercolour on cloth, 55.5 x 88.5 cm.
Gift of Trans Island Bus Services Ltd. Collection of National Gallery Singapore.

This poster is adapted from *Awesome Art: The Next 20 Works from Southeast Asia Everyone Should Know*, published by National Gallery Singapore, 2017.