

Something New with Textiles

Singaporean artist Eng Tow has made different types of works from prints to sculptures but first became known for using textiles such as cloth in her art-making. Today, we will explore her earlier works that showcase this interesting medium.



Eng Tow. *Chameleon*. c. 1978. Stitched clothwork (cotton and cotton mixture), 98 x 170 cm. Gift of the artist. Collection of National Gallery Singapore.

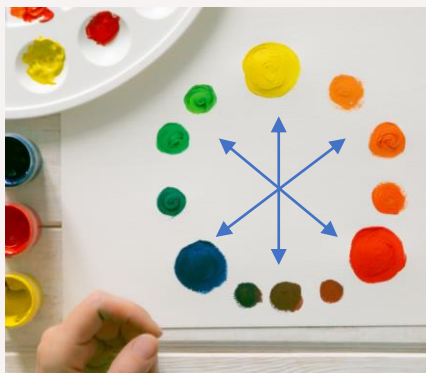


Image of a colour wheel

The artwork above is titled *Chameleon*. An image of a lizard that can change the colour of its skin might come to your mind. Why do you think Tow chose to give her artwork this title?

- What colours do you see on the cloth in the artwork?
- What do the lines remind you of?

The panels feature complementary colours, or opposite colours on the colour wheel. Tow uses red with green in the top panel, orange with blue in the middle panel, and yellow with purple in the bottom panel. By using complementary colours in pleats, the colours seem to blend and appear grey when they meet in the middle. Tow plays with light and textures in this work to explore the different ways we observe colour.



Eng Tow. *Untitled – Palms*. 1983–1984. Cloth relief commissioned for the endpapers of *A Salute to Singapore* (Singapore: Times of Singapore, 1984), 63.1 x 78.8 cm. Collection of National Gallery Singapore.

This cloth relief shows a burst of pleats arranged in diagonal rows along a central spine. What does this artwork remind you of?

- Tow was inspired by the Traveller's palm when creating this artwork. Have you seen a Traveller's palm in Singapore before? Take a look at the plants and trees in your neighbourhood. Are you able to identify them?
- This artwork was later used as the endpaper for the book *A Salute to Singapore* (1984). Endpapers are pasted on the inside cover of a book, with one side pasted to the inside cover, while the other side becomes the first page of the book.

Do come to National Gallery Singapore to visit **Gallery B** of the **Singtel Special Exhibition Gallery, Level 3**, and view her artworks today!



Image of a Traveller's palm



Sketch some of the trees that you see in the space here!



Try creating the endpaper of a book using materials you can find at home, such as colourful yarn or loose pieces of cloth from clothes you have outgrown. What would this book be about?

