

An abstract painting with a warm, textured background. The upper half is dominated by vibrant orange and red hues, while the lower half features bright yellow and green. A dark, horizontal band of black and dark brown paint separates the two main color sections. On the left side, there are vertical streaks of orange and yellow paint, suggesting a sense of movement or dripping. The overall style is expressive and painterly, with visible brushstrokes and a rich, layered appearance.

UNTITLED

Memory and the Reimagining of Homeland

Than Htay

Untitled - Memory and the Reimagining of Homeland Than Htay

Than Htay (b. 1958) is among the generation of contemporary Myanmar artists whose artistic identity has been profoundly shaped by migration. After relocating to Chiba, Japan, in 1990, where he developed his artistic practice for more than a decade, he briefly returned to Myanmar in 2006 before settling in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Viewed through the perspective of diaspora, his recent "Untitled" series reflects not the physical geography of Myanmar, but an emotional and imagined homeland shaped by memory, longing, and hope.

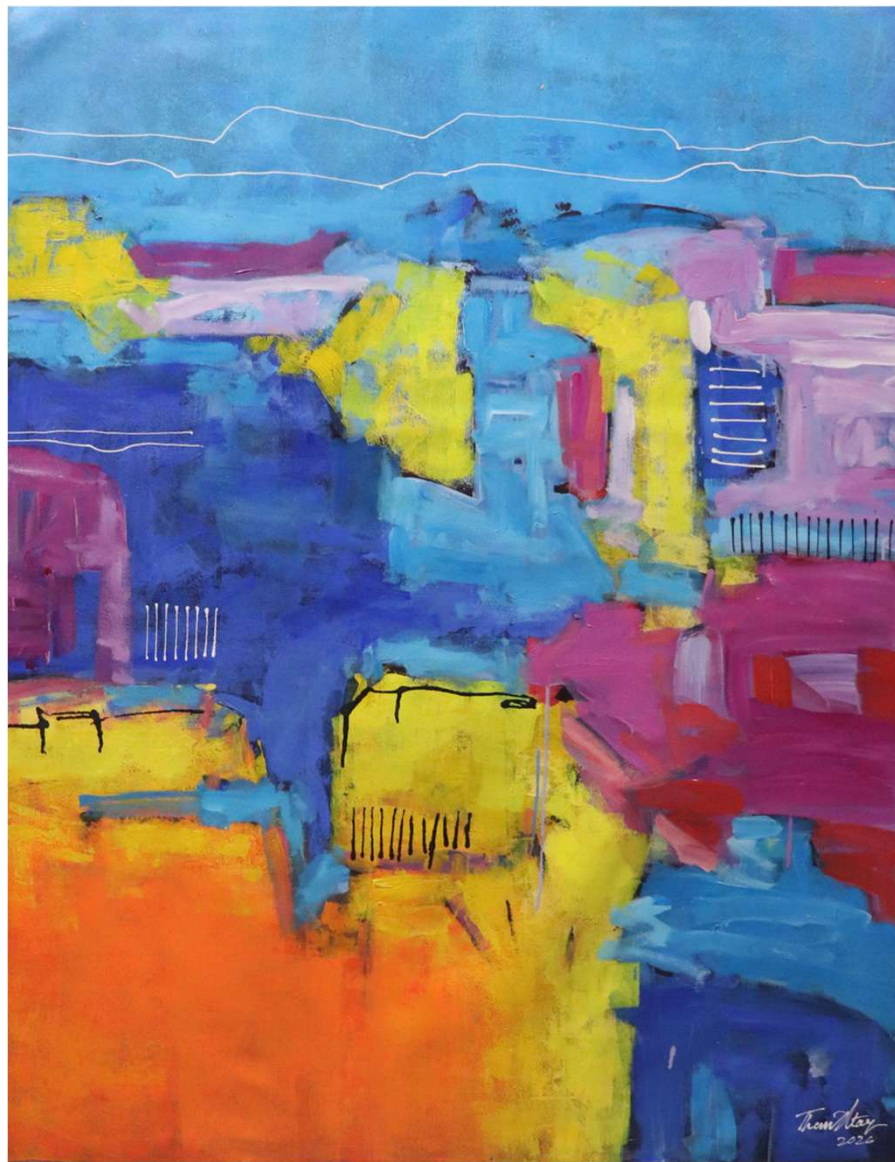
The artist explains that these paintings emerge from "the deep sorrow I carry for my country's present crises." Rather than depicting Myanmar's political turmoil or devastated landscapes, he envisions "a place of peace, dignity, and belonging," where harmony, equality, and safety prevail. His paintings therefore become expressions of aspiration rather than documentation, transforming landscape into a metaphor for healing and renewal.

Abstraction is central to this vision. Than Htay removes identifiable landmarks and instead constructs landscapes through fluid forms, gestural brushstrokes, and luminous colours. Mountains, rivers, and horizons dissolve into rhythmic compositions that evoke emotional rather than geographical space. These imagined terrains reflect the experience of diaspora, where homeland exists not as a fixed location but as a memory continually reshaped by distance and imagination.

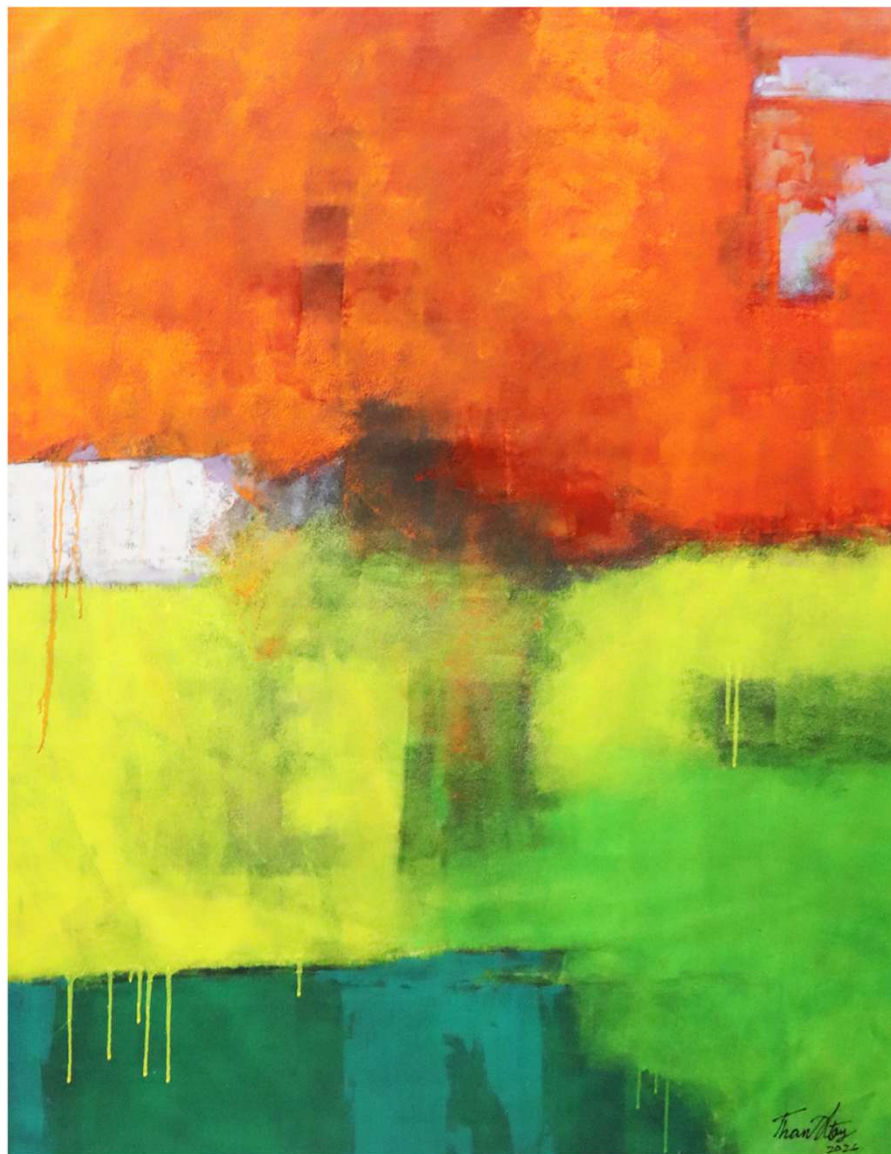
Colour serves as the primary vehicle of expression. Brilliant blues, greens, yellows, and warm earth tones create atmospheres of optimism that contrast with the realities of conflict and displacement. The artist's use of layered colour, expressive lines, and organic forms communicates both personal regret and enduring hope, while deliberately allowing viewers to interpret the works through their own emotional experiences.

Living outside Myanmar for more than three decades has enabled Than Htay to view his homeland from both geographical and emotional distance. This separation has transformed landscape into a symbolic language through which he reflects on identity, belonging, and cultural memory. His paintings avoid overt political narratives, yet their quiet optimism offers a powerful response to national trauma by imagining the possibility of reconciliation and peace.

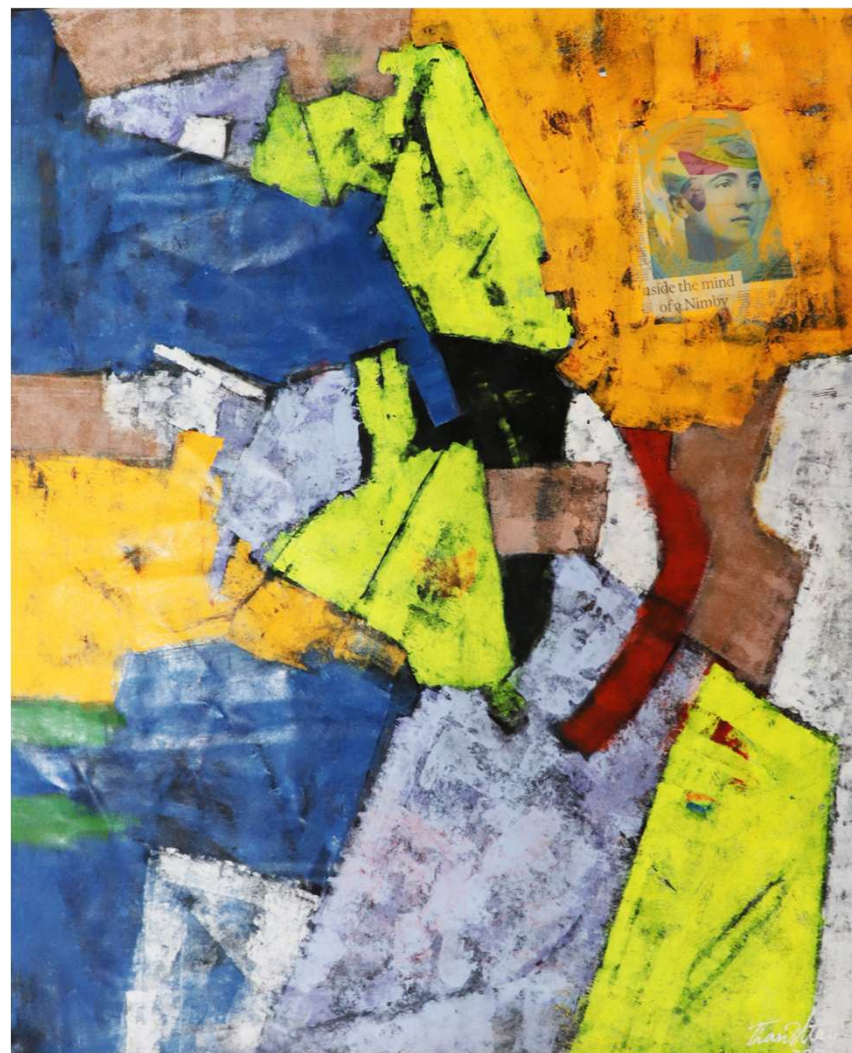
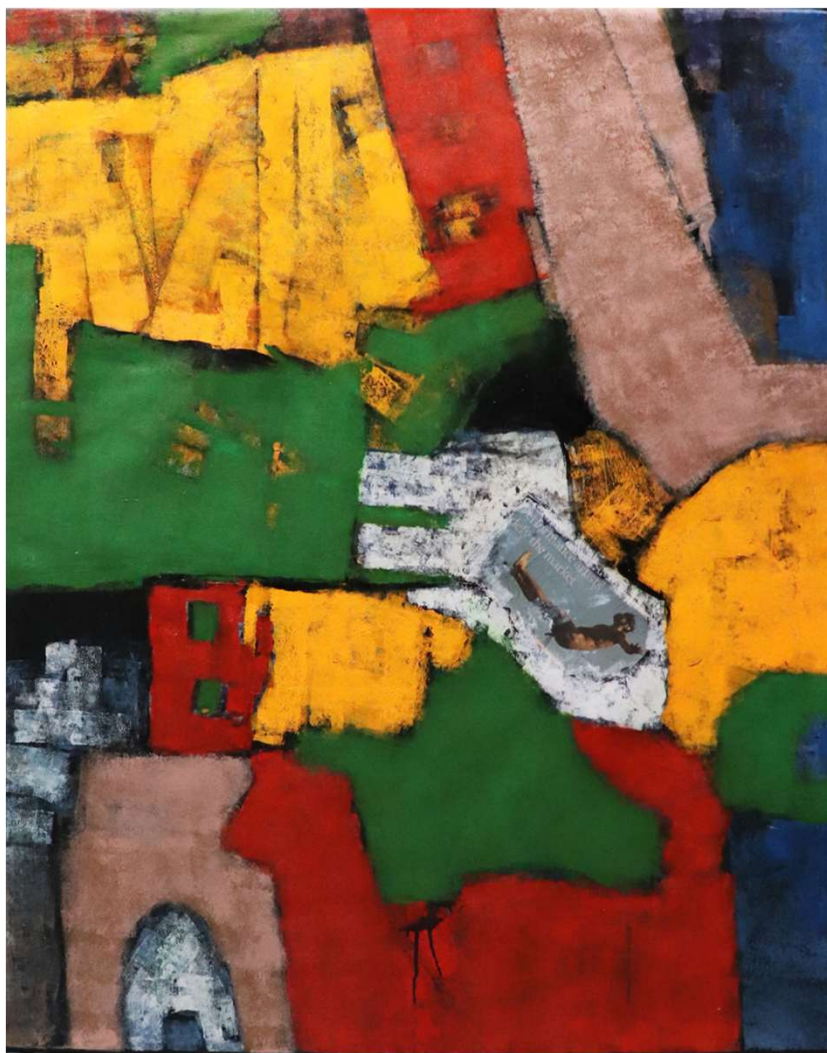
Ultimately, Than Htay's "Untitled" demonstrate how abstraction can function as both personal reflection and collective remembrance. Through colour, movement, and imagination, he reconstructs Myanmar not as it exists today, but as a homeland sustained by hope. His works affirm that painting can preserve memory while envisioning a



Untitled. 2026. Acrylic on Canvas. 117 x 151 cm.



Untitled. 2026. Acrylic on Canvas. 117 x 151 cm.



Untitled. 2026. Acrylic on Canvas. 121 x 152 cm x 2 Panels (242 x 152 cm).



Untitled -3. 2025. Acrylic on Canvas. 150 x 122 cm.



Untitled -3. 2025. Acrylic on Canvas. 150 x 122 cm.



untitled. 2024. Acrylic on Canvas. 121 x 182 cm.



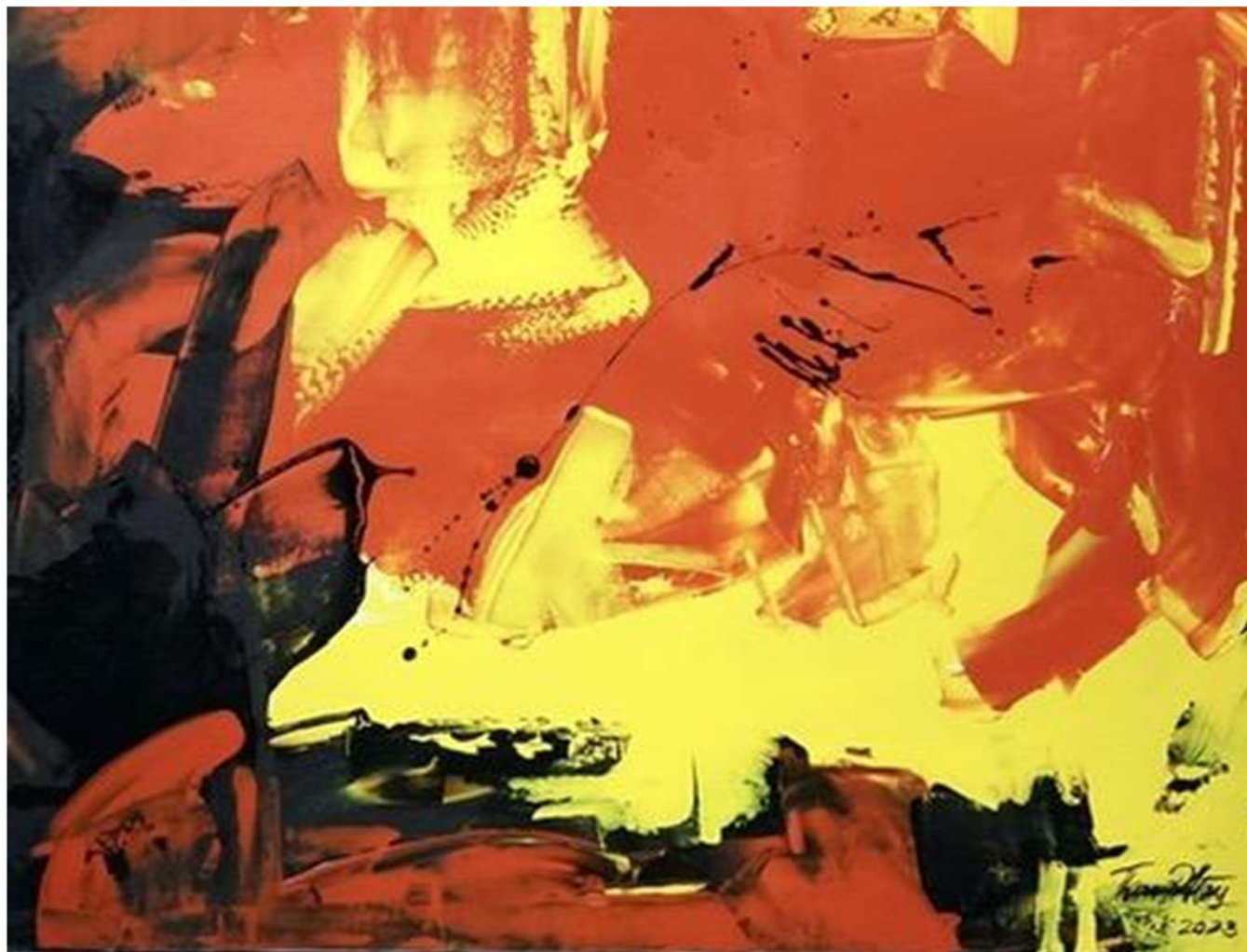
untitled. 2024. Acrylic on Canvas. 121 x 182 cm.



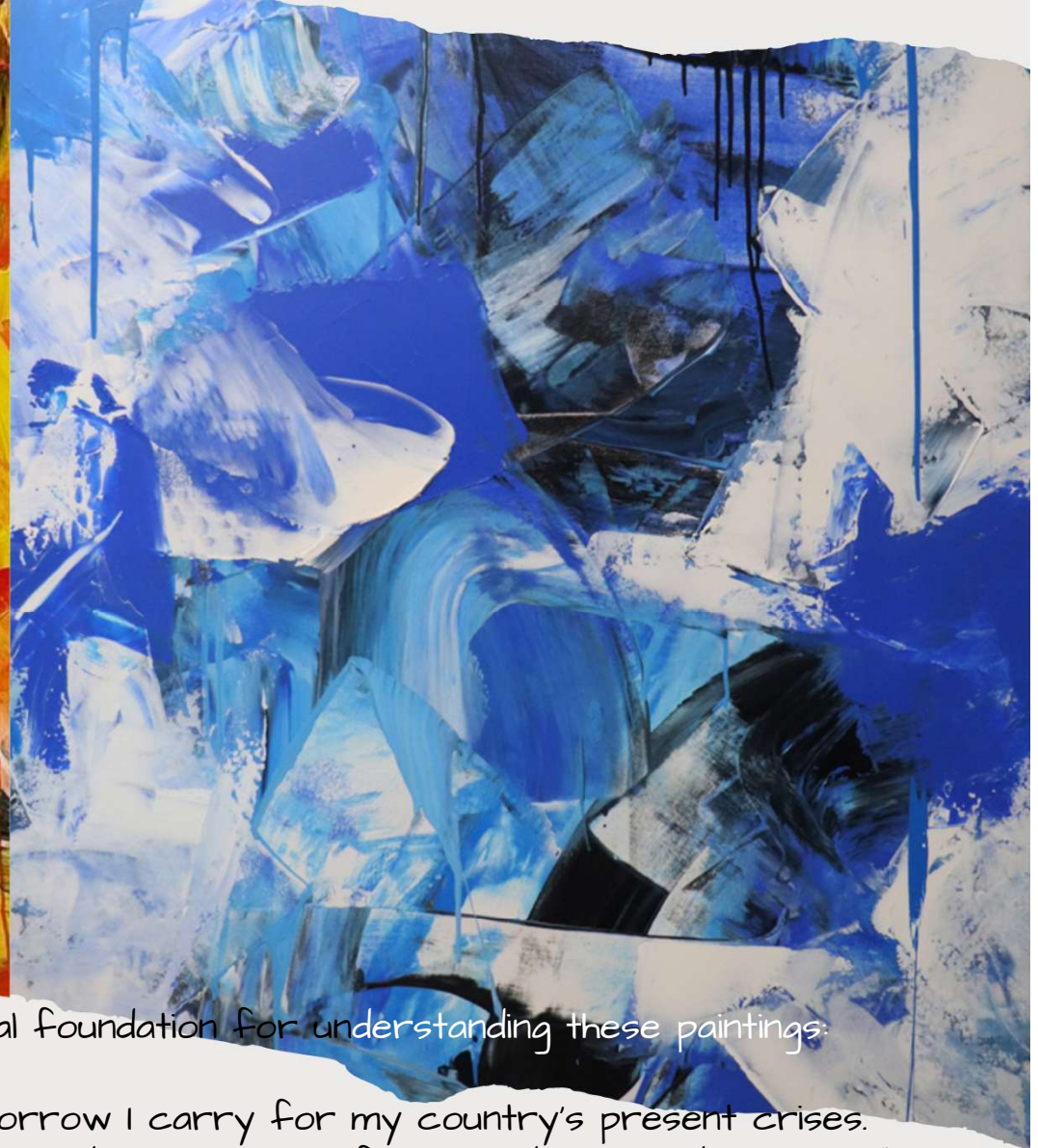
Untitled. 2024. Acrylic on Canvas. 122 x 91 cm.



Untitled. 2024. Acrylic on Canvas. 120 x 90 cm.



Untitled. 2023. Acrylic on Canvas. 121 x 91 cm.



The artist's own statement provides the conceptual foundation for understanding these paintings:

"My abstract landscapes emerge from the deep sorrow I carry for my country's present crises. Through each painting, I imagine a homeland transformed into a place of peace, dignity, and belonging."

This declaration reveals that the landscapes are not geographical representations but psychological terrains. They belong to what cultural theorist Svetlana Boym describes as "reflective nostalgia," where memory does not attempt to reconstruct the past literally but instead contemplates loss while imagining alternative futures. Than Htay's paintings are therefore less concerned with documenting Myanmar than with preserving an emotional relationship to it.



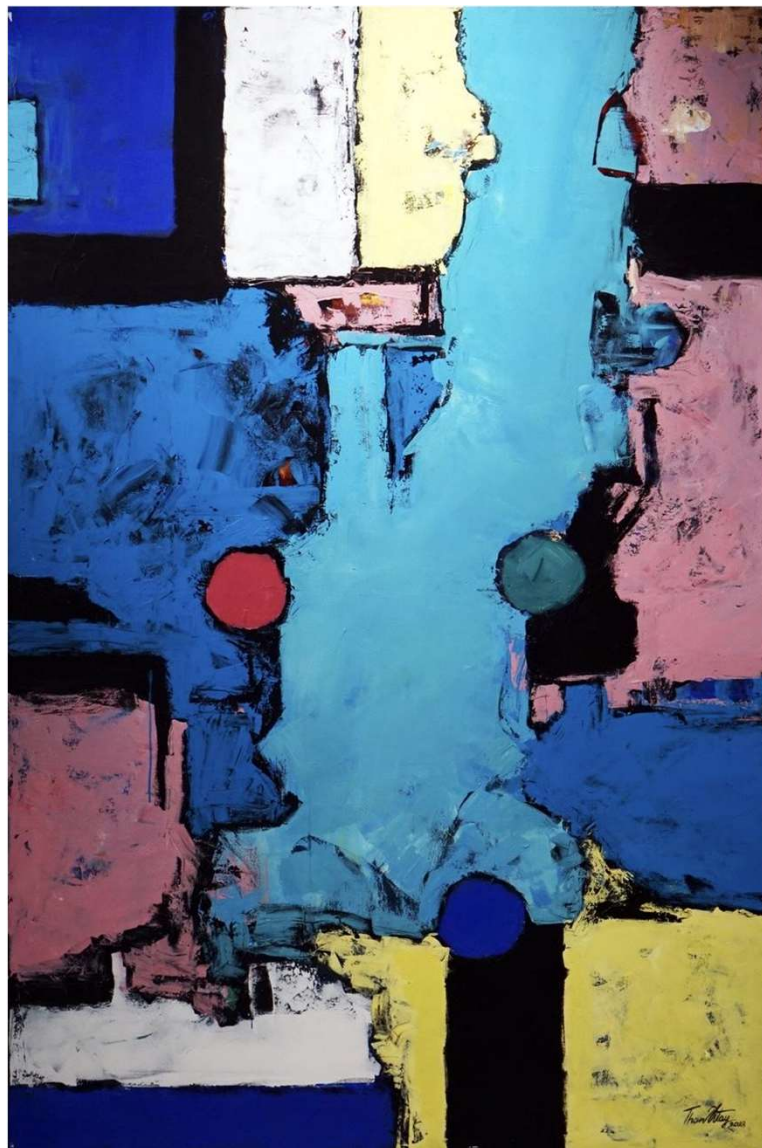
Untitled. 2023. Acrylic on
Canvas. 101 x 177 cm.



Untitled. 2023. Acrylic on
Canvas. 101 x 177 cm.



Untitled. 2023. Acrylic on Canvas. 122 x 182 cm.



Untitled. 2023. Acrylic on Canvas. 122 x 182 cm.



untitled -3. 2023. Acrylic on Canvas. 147 x 120 cm.



Untitled. 2023. Acrylic on Canvas. 91 x 122 cm.



untitled. 2023. Acrylic on Canvas. 79 x 99 cm.



untitled. 2022. Acrylic on Canvas. 79 x 99 cm.



untitled. 2022. Acrylic on Canvas. 79 x 99 cm.

Than Htay (b. 1958, Yangon, Myanmar)

Among the generation of contemporary Myanmar artists shaped by migration and transnational experience, Than Htay occupies a distinctive position. After relocating to Chiba, Japan, in 1990, he developed his artistic practice over more than a decade before briefly returning to Myanmar in 2006. He currently resides in Chiang Mai, Thailand. His artistic trajectory reflects the experiences of many Southeast Asian artists whose creative identities have been formed through displacement and cross-cultural encounters rather than geographical permanence. A self-taught painter, Than Htay began painting at an early age and gradually developed a distinctive visual language that combines imagination, emotional expression, and technical experimentation. He is particularly recognised for his vibrant use of colour, expressive compositions, and innovative painting techniques.

Following the political upheaval of 1988 in Myanmar, Than Htay established his career in Japan, where his artistic achievements gained international recognition. During this period, he received several prestigious awards, including the Fuji TV Award and a Mayor's Award at Japanese art competitions. In 2013, he was awarded the Best Painting Prize at the Tun Foundation Bank Art Awards in Myanmar, further consolidating his reputation as one of the country's leading contemporary artists.

A modernist in both vision and practice, Than Htay has held eighteen solo exhibitions and participated in more than fifty group exhibitions in Myanmar and internationally. Throughout his career, he has explored a diverse range of subjects, including luminous landscapes, figurative compositions, abstract works, and historically inspired series. His paintings are represented in numerous public and private collections across Myanmar and abroad, including Japan, China, South Korea, Singapore, France, and the United States.

As a member of the Artist Friendship Association of Asia in Japan, Than Htay continues to produce works distinguished by their dynamic energy, richly layered surfaces, and compelling visual narratives. His sustained contribution to the development of contemporary Myanmar art has earned him critical recognition and an international reputation that extends well beyond his homeland.

ART SEASONS is a contemporary and fine art gallery in Singapore and Beijing that represents Asia and Southeast Asian contemporary artists. ART SEASONS is today a leading art gallery in Singapore and has made its presence felt in Singapore, the region and beyond.

Established in 2022, **Myanmar Ahla Gallery** is dedicated to showcasing Myanmar's celebrated old masters alongside outstanding contemporary artists. The gallery provides a dynamic platform where artists, collectors, and audiences come together to discover, appreciate, and engage with exceptional works of art.

Our curatorial vision is rooted in preserving Myanmar's artistic heritage while supporting the creativity of today's artists. Through thoughtfully curated exhibitions and educational initiatives, we promote art collecting, encourage dialogue, and advance the appreciation, preservation, and conservation of both historic and contemporary artworks.

By presenting exhibitions that connect tradition with contemporary practice, Myanmar Ahla Gallery seeks to enrich Myanmar's cultural landscape and celebrate the enduring power of art to inspire, educate, and connect communities.



@July 2026 Art Seasons