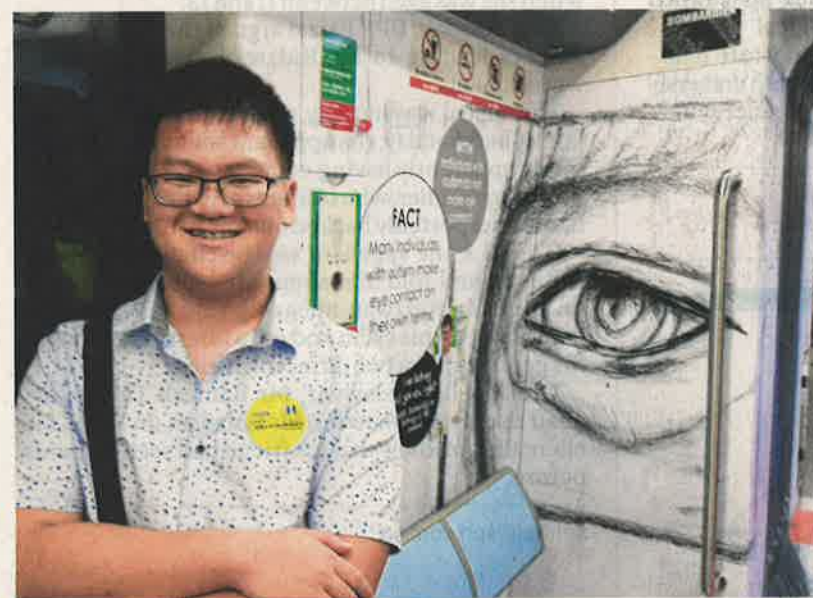




A woman walking by works of art by Ng Li Jie, 21, (on the left), and Sean Bay, 22, on a Downtown Line train. Choo Jian Wei (below left), 17, with his sketch on the same train. ST PHOTOS: NG SOR LUAN



## Works by artists with autism find gallery on train, stations

**Rachael Seow**

Seventeen-year-old Choo Jian Wei is not only a first-year bioengineering student at Singapore Polytechnic, but also an accomplished member of Pathlight School's Artist Development Programme (ADP).

His Sketch Of An Eye is one of 10 works of art on display on Singapore's first autism-themed MRT train and at four interchange stations. "The eye is a window into the soul," he said, when discussing the inspiration for his pencil sketch.

He lamented that this organ is too

often used for judgment instead, mirroring the lack of understanding people often show towards those with disabilities.

The works of art unveiled yesterday are part of a month-long community outreach programme to raise awareness of autism in conjunction with World Autism Awareness Day on April 2.

A Downtown Line train and four interchange stations – Bugis, Newton, Serangoon and Tampines – are showcasing the works of artists from ADP until May 9. It is a collaboration between Autism Resource Centre (ARC), Land Transport Au-

thority and SBS Transit.

The 10 art pieces were specially chosen to highlight and dispel myths about autism, as well as to illustrate the artistic talents of those with autism.

"It is time to celebrate what they can do, instead of thinking of them as persons with disabilities," said Ms Denise Phua, president of ARC and school supervisor of Pathlight School Board. "When people in commute see and internalise the works of art and the message behind them, their mindsets and behaviour will change."

She hopes society will be more in-

clusive towards those with disabilities, and believes that giving them space to be seen and heard is key to cultivating that inclusivity.

Another ADP member, Mr Ng Li Jie, 21, whose work is also on display, said: "It is a tremendous honour to have my piece displayed to raise awareness that we are equal and no different from any other person."

Besides Pathlight School, the initiative also involves AWWA School, Eden School, Rainbow Centre and the Day Activity Centre of St Andrew's Autism Centre.

[rachseow@sph.com.sg](mailto:rachseow@sph.com.sg)