

Singapore Sketchbook

By Janette Maxey

For an artist, life in another country opens up endless possibilities for exploration. After living some time in Singapore, places and big things matter less than the everyday. Everyday objects, habits, symbols and even turns of phrase matter more. These common things are the gateway to the culture of my new country. My goal is to explore these everyday happenings and appreciate not only their purpose, but also their beauty. My immersion in Singapore has reawakened my curiosity. When something catches my eye, it triggers a "Why? What is the background, the history, the origin, evolution or adaptation that led to today?"



Taken for Granted, Grateful

A car park worker cleaning up detritus shields his face from the intense afternoon sun and dust with a very familiar yet often overlooked towel. This 'Goode Morning' towel has been a mystery and fascination for me since the day I arrived in Singapore. Its humble beginnings are perhaps just a way to decorate an otherwise plain white towel with a few friendly words. The famous '96', however, is still a mystery to me. Cheap and sturdy, it is in many a coffee shop, hawker centre, fine dining restaurant, and home. It is used to mop up, scrub, clean, shield and conceal. It is ubiquitous and to me it is the part of Singapore I am most grateful for.



Will it Grow, Grow it Will

During an otherwise mundane late afternoon of errands I came upon a man writing on a palm tree. Curious, I asked him what he was writing.

Without looking away from his task he replied, "Telling it to grow". I looked up and noticed it was shorter than the other two trees next to it. I can only hope the encouragement works.

Janette Maxey is an American artist (and grateful FOM member) who has been living and painting in Singapore since 2009. She holds a BFA in Painting with a minor in Western Art History. For more information on Janette's art and coming exhibition please go to her website: www.jrmaxey100.wordpress.com
