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Credit Suisse and Singapore Art Museum will stage exhibitions over next three years

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ARTS REPORTER

ART lovers here will be treated to a series of exhibitions featuring Swiss, Indonesian, Vietnamese and Chinese artists over the next three years.

They are the result of a tie-up between the Singapore Art Museum (SAM) and Credit Suisse.

The Swiss bank is sponsoring a series of exhibitions called Innovation In Art, comprising nine shows at SAM, over the next three years.

It would not say how much the sponsorship deal is worth but this is the first time that the museum – which has had sponsors for one-off shows – has partnered a long-time sponsor.

The initiative kicked off yesterday with the launch of Affandi: A Painter Of Genius, an exhibition featuring 20 paintings by the late Indonesian master painter.

The other exhibitions slated include shows of Swiss artist Alberto Giacometti, as well as Indonesian, Vietnamese, Chinese and young Singaporean artists.

Dr Francois Monnet, Credit Suisse's head of private banking in South-east Asia and Australasia, said yesterday that the bank chose which exhibitions to sponsor based on the artists' innovation in their respective fields.

The bank has also signed three-year agreements with the Shanghai Museum and the Taipei Arts Museum.

He said: "Rather than engaging in individual and one-off projects, we seek to build long-term partnerships with museums. Extraordinary and lasting values develop over time, and we aim to be a reliable partner that gives cultural institutions the creative freedom to plan ahead."

SAM director Kwok Kian Chow added: "Long-term partnerships give museums added confidence in long-term programming."

He said the curatorial direction of the museum will not be influenced by sponsors, but that it "welcomes suggestions from sponsors, just as we get feedback from the public".

The Affandi show is timed with the artist's centennial birth

year. Born in 1907 in West Java, Boerhanoedin Affandi Koesoema was a renowned painter who died in 1990.

The paintings on show at SAM, described by curator Seng Yu Jin as a "small but significant collection", are on loan from collectors in Jakarta and Singapore.

Works on show include Affandi's early realist works, such as Seated Nude, a portrait of his first wife done in 1936, to the more exuberant strokes of his later paintings like Penasar Dancer, where the artist ditched the paintbrush and squeezed paint directly onto the canvas and painted with his hands.

Ms Kartika Affandi, 73, the eldest of the artist's four children and a well-regarded artist in her own right, was in town for the exhibition.

She said: "I'm happy that the works are on show in the museum. In private collections, nobody will see them."

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➤ Affandi: A Painter Of Genius is on at the Singapore Art Museum till Nov 18. Admission is \$8 for adults and \$4 for students and senior citizens. Opening hours are 10am to 7pm daily, with extended hours on Friday till 9pm.



BOLD STROKES: Indonesian artist Affandi (above) painted Penasar Dancer (left) without using a paintbrush.

PHOTOS: SINGAPORE ART MUSEUM