

Digital art adds flavour to hawker centre

NYP students give live demonstrations of artwork in Ang Mo Kio food centre

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Breakfast at Block 724, Ang Mo Kio Market & Food Centre became a colourful experience for patrons yesterday morning.

More than 100 students from Nanyang Polytechnic's (NYP's) School of Interactive & Digital Media (SIDM) gave live demonstrations of digital painting and drawing at the scene, as part of the new Vibrant Hawker Centres Programme.

The programme, launched by Senior Minister of State for the Environment and Water Resources Amy Khor, strives to enhance hawker centres as social spaces.

Dr Khor said: "This Vibrant Hawker Centres Programme is the Government's effort in encouraging community partners... as well as educational institutions to adopt hawker centres and organise activities in hawker centres on a sustained basis, in order to improve the vibrancy of hawker centres and enhance the patrons' dining experience."

The Government has plans to build a total of 20 new hawker centres by 2027.

Dr Khor said: "I am happy to announce that Punggol and Sengkang will see two more new hawker centres, which will further increase the number of cooked food stalls and provide more food choices to their residents."

NYP is the first adopter of the Vibrant Hawker Centres Programme.

Working with the National Environment Agency, it plans to organise more events to improve the vibrancy of hawker centres, as well as raise awareness about the courses offered by SIDM.

At the food centre, around 20 students' hawker art, depicting hawker centre culture and heritage, were put on display.

While some members of the public tried their hand at digital painting, others voted for their favourite hawker art.

The morning's excitement had spurred Mr Cheong Ying Lin, 88, to vote for a drawing that reminded him of improvements made to hawker centres over the years.

Mr Cheong, a 17-year resident of Ang Mo Kio estate, said: "Look at the drawing and look at the hawker centre. You'll notice how spacious and clean they are today. It wasn't always this way."

Likewise, Madam Janice Tan was impressed with a drawing by second-year animation student Jamie Jessie Leong, who received a consolation prize.

Madam Tan, 41, said: "The perspective is unique because she had placed the hawker scene into a bowl, complete with chopsticks and soup spoon at the ready."

Dr Khor toured different parts of the hawker centre to speak to SIDM students who sat beside patrons in order capture the essence of the scene they were recreating.

Accompanied by Ang Mo Kio GRC MP Koh Poh Koon, Ms Amy Soon, assistant director at SIDM, and Mr Daniel Tan, director of SIDM, Dr Khor took a close look at 20-year-old Mary Cao's work, which used augmented reality technology.

Images, like dishes inside a hawker centre scene, came alive when Dr Khor viewed the picture using a mobile phone application.

Ms Cao said: "When the virtual food popped up, she (Dr Khor) was surprised. (She said) it was quite fun to do the exploring with the app."