SEEING INTO PORTRAITS
KHIN ZAW LATT
BRUCE PARSONS
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I learned how to draw and paint when I was very young from my older brother, who is an artist. I spent much of my free time in secondary school drawing and sketching in notebooks. When I entered university as an art student, I thought that the highest achievement was the creation of beautiful but realistic portraits, landscapes and still life paintings—the greater my skill, the more beautiful these images would become. At some point I realized that art is not only a mirror of beauty, but also a reflection of the artist, and discovered that the perspective which I might bring to the subject was as important as my technical skills.

I usually paint portraits, as I am very interested in people and their lives. But I try to paint their lives, their hopes and their strengths, and not just their faces and bodies. I spend some time talking with nearly all of the subjects of my work—what are their lives really like? What are their experiences? I did this at home in Yangon when I created the “Moving Forward” series, and also when I was travelling to Mandalay, which formed the basis for my “Street People” series. I try to incorporate the reality of their lives into my paintings, and look beyond visual beauty to capture their internal worlds. It is from this perspective that I would like the viewer to see my works.

To create a painting, I plan the person that I want to show, but I do not plan the technique. I just let it happen, and it is influenced by my mood at the time. I use many different techniques, including brush strokes, dripping, rolling and stamping to create the image and saturation of the painting—whatever makes sense at the time. The color of my paintings is not the color of nature but the color of my mind. When I feel that a work is finished I stop and sign the painting, and do not rely on theories of painting.

For this book, I would like to thank my parents in helping me throughout my life. I would especially like to thank my artist older brother Soe Soe (Laputta) who encouraged me to become an artist, and helped me develop my skills when I was young. I would also like to thank all of my art teachers from the National University of Art and Culture. A very special thanks to my wife Ohmmar, who is also an artist; she has not only encouraged me but more importantly, understood me throughout my adult life. I would like to thank Gill Pattison (River gallery) who has promoted my artworks since 2005, and the collectors who have supported me during these years. I would also like to acknowledge Artist Zay Yar Aye, who is responsible for the design and layout of the book and Warren Emanuel, who provided editorial assistance. Special thanks to Bruce Parsons for his interest in my artwork, and for writing about me and my paintings.
Khin Zaw Latt was born in Myanmar in 1980 in the delta village of Ywa Thit, Laputta. He is the youngest of 6 children and comes from an artistic family; his mother was a dancer, his father was a musician. His older brother by 15 years, Soe Soe Laputta, was already an established artist in Yangon when Khin Zaw moved to the capital with his family in 1996. Although he had little exposure to the visual arts as a child, Khin Zaw Latt knew from a young age that he wanted to be an artist and would draw or sketch in his notebooks whenever possible. His brother encouraged him to study art after his matriculation exams, and he entered the National University of Art and Culture in Yangon in 1998, receiving his B.A. in painting in 2002.

Art training in Myanmar is a formal process, often centered on drawing and illustration, landscape and portrait painting, and mastering the art of water coloring. Students are guided by one or more master instructors, and gradually identify themselves with their prominent teachers, the most influential of whom are named on their resume. Many artists paint pagodas, portraits of family or acquaintances, scenes from rural life and the nearby countryside, or realistically capture city life. Until quite recently, few have had the opportunity to study—or even travel—outside of Myanmar.
access has been available for less than five years, art books are too expensive for artists to afford. It has been difficult for Burmese artists to create new artistic styles. New ideas and voices often come from travel, the firsthand opportunity to view art historically across many cultures, and the ability to engage in dialog with artists and others who may view the world from a different perspective.

After he graduated from art school, KZL moved from his brother’s home to his own apartment as he wanted to create independently. He supported himself by teaching art to children and with an occasional graphic design project, scouting his environment for inspiration for a style of painting that he could call his own. KZL started looking at wooden stamps, and decided to experiment with stamping as the basis for what became the first paintings in his Buddha series. These paintings established Khin Zaw as a young Burmese artist with a fresh voice, and identified him as an artist in complete control of his medium. This earned him a Myanmar Contemporary Art Award in 2004 for one of these paintings.

His next series is entitled “Moving Forward”. KZL received an award in Myanmar in 2008 and his first international award in Hong Kong in 2009 for two of these paintings. It was in 2009 that Khin Zaw painted his self portrait which is shown on the book cover. He describes the process as “not knowing where or how it would finish”. He started to paint, put the brush in his mouth, and took a few steps back. He turned and saw his face in the mirror: eyes expanded, eyebrows raised, facial muscles tensed. He moved back and forth from the painting to the mirror to lay down the basic composition. After he no longer needed to see his reflection in the mirror, he quickly completed the painting 2 or 3 days later.

The year 2010 saw the completion of three remarkable portraits, two of which were exhibited in the National Portrait Exhibition sponsored by River Gallery in 2011. One, which won the first prize, is entitled “A tale for my daughter” (fig-1). This basis for this painting started with a visit to his parent’s home. Khin Zaw Latt’s daughter, who was two years of age at the time, starting playing with an old coin which is no longer in use, and would be valued as less than one cent in the US or one Kyat in Myanmar today. His mother began to describe what could be purchased at the market with such a coin when it was in circulation: food for a family for the day, a bar of soap and perhaps other basic necessities. The contrast between old times and the present was the basis for Khin Zaw’s painting: his daughter will have a very different future in the 21st century, but she is linked to
past and to her family by the image of the coin stamped on the painting. Her image is strikingly beautiful, bold and poised to experience and master her future.

The portrait of his mother (fig-2) is linked to his daughter by the same stamped image of the coin. Here we see a striking woman, elegantly dressed, and painted in a room that clearly is not the present: the décor, the radio and her demeanor suggest a different era. The coin is a conduit to her grand daughter and to the life that she will experience.

The second painting in the 2011 National Portrait competition was a portrait of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi (fig-3). Her father, Aung San, founded the modern Burmese army and negotiated independence from the British Empire in 1947. He is considered to be the architect of the Union of Burma, but was assassinated by his rivals six months before Burma gained independence. Suu Kyi grew up in Rangoon and New Delhi, and lived abroad during her adult life. She returned to Myanmar in 1988 to care for her ill mother. Myanmar had been under military rule since 1962, and 1988 saw the first pro-democracy demonstrations. Suu Kyi decided to stay in Myanmar to lead the pro-democracy movement, and remained in the country although most of her time—15 years—was spent under house arrest until her release in November of 2010.

During the time of her house arrest, her portrait or picture could not be displayed, she could not be discussed publically, and even a drive by her house was ill advised.

Khin Zaw created this portrait shortly after her release, and made the bold decision to submit the painting for the competition. At that time, all works of art shown to the public had to be reviewed by a panel to determine “suitability”. When the panel came to this striking red painting, there was much discussion. After several minutes, the head of the panel concluded that it was “just a portrait” and it was allowed to be shown.
The emotion with which Khin Zaw Latt paints is clearly conveyed in this startling portrait. The red background of this painting is not an arbitrary choice. Red had been a color not previously allowed by the authorities, as it is the color of the pro-democracy movement. The face of Suu Kyi confronts the viewer directly, she appears tired but beautiful. Her expression suggests composure, but conveys a palpable air of uncertainty. The white flowers which she characteristically wears in her hair can be seen in the lower left corner of the painting. As with “A tale for my daughter” this portrait is connected to the past, present and future—the link with the past is the image stamped throughout the painting, which is that of her father. The link with the present and future is the face of Suu Kyi herself, who undoubtedly has helped to define modern Myanmar, and will play a unique role in shaping its future.

A more recent portrait shown here is a portrait that Khin Zaw Latt painted of his wife, Ohmmar(fig-4). This painting was painted for her as a New Years gift for January 1st, 2015. Ohmmar is shown dressed in period clothing, which evokes the same time period as that seen in his mother’s portrait. The style of the painting links the artist’s feelings for his wife to those for his mother, and simultaneously demonstrates Ohmmar’s strong and very positive feelings for her past experiences with family. Finally, the image of the same coin that appears on his mother’s and daughter’s painting is stamped on the surface, uniting the 3 generations of Khin Zaw’s family.

Children bring surprises. The final portrait of this series is the most recent--Nay Cin(fig-5), his son, is 5 years old and is captured going in and out of the plastic curtain before his shower. His parents know that although he is inherently shy and happy to be by himself, he can be focused and occasionally assertive, as he is shown
here. The stamped coin which covers the Khin Zaw’s painting of his daughter, mother and wife is also seen in the painting for his son, providing temporal continuity for his family.

Military rule in Myanmar formally ended in 2011; the transition towards democracy is in progress. Since 2011, the country has experienced a much greater sense of freedom than in the past, and contemporary painting is undergoing a renaissance. While beautiful paintings and watercolors of traditional life are still being created, they now stand beside abstract paintings, the occasional nude portrait, and paintings that may convey an implicit or explicit social commentary. Artists in Myanmar are beginning to express not only the beauty but the complexities of life, much as they do in New York, Berlin, Paris or Tokyo. It is in this climate that Khin Zaw Latt is painting his new series, “Street people”. All is not tranquil or harmonious, but the unflinching nature of these paintings gives them a beauty of their own.

Myanmar Toy, 90 x 45cm, Mixed medium, 2003
Not to do all evil, to cultivate good, 138 x 158cm, oil on canvas, 2004
Honourary mention at Myanmar Contemporary Art Awards 2004
Private Collection
(Fig-8) **Moving Forward/ Black and white**, 150x 120cm, Acrylic on canvas, 2008
First Prize at Myanmar Contemporary Art Awards 2008
Collection of U Ye Htut Win, Yangon
(Fig-1) **A tale for my daughter**, 150 x 120cm, acrylic on canvas, 2010
First prize at National Portrait Competition 2011
Collection of Jane Brooks, Yangon

(Fig-2) **My Mom’s portrait**, 180 x 120cm, acrylic on canvas, 2010
Collection of Artist
(Fig-3) Just a portrait, 120 x 150cm, acrylic on canvas, 2010
Finalist at National Portrait Competition 2011
Collection of Gill Pattison, River Gallery
(Fig-4) **My wife in her favourite dress**, 150 x 120cm, acrylic on canvas, 2013
Collection of Artist
(Fig-5) **My son’s portrait**, 150 x 120cm, acrylic on canvas, 2015
Collection of Artist
Khin Zaw Latt studied English in a monastery from 2002-2004. It is therefore not surprising that the Buddha served as the inspiration for his first series of paintings. These paintings were made by first applying a background of deep blue, at times extending the shade to almost black, or, in one painting, adding some brown. He carved a number of wooden stamps of Buddha images of different sizes and forms, and used different colors, ranging from white to lighter shades of blue to stamp the canvas, creating the image of the Buddha’s face and body. The complexity of the image is created by hundreds of overlapping stamps. From a distance it appears that much of the image has been completed by brushstrokes—but upon closer inspection it is clear that it has not. The numerous stamps are juxtaposed with delicate intricacy, forming an image of simplicity and serenity.

KZL does not view Buddha as a God, but rather, a man who was deeply spiritual, philosophical and morally correct. Buddhism in Myanmar is primarily of the Theravada tradition, practiced by 85-90% of the population. By some measurements, Myanmar is the most religious of all Buddhist countries: at any given time it has the highest proportion of its population residing in monasteries, and the highest percentage of religious donations as a proportion of income. The five precepts of Buddhism described in the ancient Pali texts include abstaining from killing, not taking what is not given, avoiding sexual misconduct, abstaining from false speech and abstaining from excessive, fermented drink that causes heedlessness. Some Burmese observe these principles by moral behavior, charity and good deeds (dana) because they believe that they will have a more favorable rebirth in their next life. Others, including KZL, observe these principles because they see the benefits to society provided by this philosophical guidance and because it provides them with a moral compass for their daily life.

The second phase of KZL’s Buddha series was a brief experiment with abstraction. Here, he used brushstrokes of blue, different shades of red, black and orange to provide a backdrop that does not convey a feeling of time, place, or...
religion. In one painting, Buddha is depicted by the sparing use of stamping, using the same image approximately one dozen times in a non-overlapping pattern. In another, it is the use of a stamp of a male dancing ogre holding a bow, which conveys the religious nature of the painting sometimes seen in the Jataka. A third reveals its religious nature only by showing a tile similar to those seen on pagodas—but this is an imaginary creative tile, not a literal representation of one 50 or 700 years old.

Not convinced of the success of this experiment, KZL returned to the stamping technique for the third phase of his Buddhist paintings. Now, he introduces elements of the present to the blue canvas by painting images—usually white—over the Buddha image created by the dark background and intricate stamping. These are usually white flowers which seem to pop out of the canvas, forming a necklace on the torso of the Buddha, or held in his hands. These elements of the present remind the viewer that the meaning of Buddha is the relationship of this historical person and philosopher to current life, extending from those who live in elaborate city homes to those in temporary shelters.

The fourth and final phase of the Buddha series features dark backgrounds, more sparing use of stamping, and paint that appears as gold leaf. Gold leaf is traditionally applied by worshippers in Myanmar to objects of veneration; these may include objects as diverse as a huge bolder teetering on a cliff, or more typically, a Buddha image at a temple. The continual application of gold leaf to these images is a costly process, demonstrating profound respect, and providing Buddhists in Myanmar with both an immediate and long lasting connection to their images of worship.

Two paintings from this series are shown here. The first is the face of Buddha, stamped with non-overlapping heads of Buddha, and partially covered with streaks of gold painting suggesting gold leaf(Fig-6). The second one is an ogre or protector of a temple, commonly seen at temple entrances. He appears to be smiling, the stamped ogre with a bow floats on the canvas, and the gold on his face indicates his status as a guardian of treasured temple(Fig-7).
Indian Buddha, 136 x 68cm, acrylic on canvas, 2007
Collection of Dr. Olivier Cattin, France
Offering gold leaf
122 x 168cm, acrylic on canvas, 2004
Past and present-2, 92 x 122cm, acrylic on canvas, 2006
Collection of Mr. Amer Baig, UK
Enlightenment, 180 x 90cm, acrylic on canvas, 2008
Collection of Mr. Conor Greene, Hong Kong
Age old Buddha
120 x 90cm, acrylic on canvas, 2007
Enlightenment-2, 92 x 122cm, acrylic on canvas, 2008
Collection of Mr. James Langer, USA
Rakhine buddha
153 x 153cm, acrylic on canvas, 2011
Past and present, 168 x 122cm, acrylic on canvas, 2005
Collection of Artist

Reflections-4, 122 x 92cm, acrylic on canvas, 2005
Collection of Professor Klaus Schwab, Chairman Of World Economic Forum
(Fig-6) Shan Buddha, 137 x 92cm, acrylic on canvas, 2010
Collection of Ichihara Yumiko, Japan
Age old Buddhas
122 x 92cm, acrylic on canvas, 2008
Mudra, 122 x 91cm, acrylic on canvas, 2006
Collection of Mrs. Andrea and Mr. Christian, Germany
Buddha in three different lives
137 x 137cm, acrylic on canvas, 2014
Golden peace
137 x 137cm, acrylic on canvas, 2015
Tranquility, 92 x 122cm, acrylic on canvas, 2006
Collection of J.Charles Schencking and Janet Borland, Hong Kong
Peace, 92 x 122cm, acrylic on canvas, 2011
Collection of Ms. Rosa Noboa, Singapore
Emerald Buddha, 107 x 107cm, acrylic on canvas, 2011
Collection of Mr. Conor Greene, Hong Kong
Offering flowers, 92 x 122cm, acrylic on canvas, 2005
Collection of Ms. Nuchanart Krusatayanon, Thailand
Red Reflection, 137 x 107cm, acrylic on canvas, 2010
Collection of Jean Yves Branchard and Amy Branchard, Myanmar
Reclining pe...
Blue Buddha, 107 x 107cm, acrylic on canvas, 2010
Collection of Mr. Ed Anderson, USA
Cold and hot, 122 x 122cm, acrylic on canvas, 2007
Collection of Ms. Nancy Qiu, USA
(Fig-7) Guardian from pagoda
122 x 92cm, acrylic on canvas, 2006
Monday corner, 92 x 122cm, acrylic on canvas, 2006
Collection of J.Charles Schencking and Janet Borland, Hong Kong
Buddha in peace
92 x 137cm, acrylic on canvas, 2008
Inspiration of pagoda-2
92 x 61cm, acrylic on canvas, 2006
Inspiration of pagoda, 61 x 92cm, acrylic on canvas, 2006
Collection of Dr. Olivier Cattin, France
**Beauty of old**, 122 x 92cm, acrylic on canvas, 2005
Collection of Ms. Kathy Lai Sou Tien, Singapore
Reclining Buddha
90 x 180cm, acrylic on canvas, 2010
Reflections, 122 x 152cm, acrylic on canvas, 2005
Collection of Artist

Reclining Buddha
90 x 180cm, acrylic on canvas, 2010
moving forward
series
INSPIRATION OF MOVING FORWARD SERIES

The inspiration for KZL’s next series of paintings, “Moving Forward” came from life in Yangon. Each day many thousands of people travel from their villages for as long as two hours in each direction to catch a ferry across the river to the center of Yangon. They seek daily, seasonal or long term employment and most will travel to Yangon merely to receive one or two dollars a day more than they would if they worked closer to home. Although many hope to find a job with a greater financial reward in the future, most will accept very modest gains in the present to have the possibility to move forward.

While perhaps an even greater number of people experience long commutes in metropolitan areas such as New York and Tokyo, they do so for greater financial rewards and travel safely and in comfort: trains and cars have air-conditioning or heat when needed; the number of rail passengers is often limited, buses that transport commuters to ferries and rail stations may have many commuters in the bus, but none on top of the bus.

The scenes of “Moving Forward” are from a specific ferry location on Strand Road, and show people boarding at the end of a long workday. The paintings illustrate the challenges of people who struggle twelve to fourteen hours a day to make ends meet by travelling to a large city. This struggle is shared by many in Mexico City, Calcutta, Cairo and Lagos, to name a few other cities. What is so striking about the “Moving Forward” paintings is their universality, yet they also capture something uniquely Burmese and provide a subtle visual commentary that is the work of a master painter.

The first painting in this series is in black, white and shades of grey, showing tired people patiently inching forward to board the ferry(fig-8). The Burmese people are not aggressive by nature: they move forward in crowded circumstances in an orderly fashion and do little to call attention to themselves. Only one face is seen in the crowd. The fact that we see the group almost entirely from the back may at first seem logical, but if one watches similar boarding in Calcutta, Cairo or Bangkok the scene is comparatively more animated: people are talking, sometimes gesturing, occasionally smiling or snacking. Here, we see a part of a society that has grown up with the understanding that moving forward may require decades of hard work, and may often result in sideways movement. They are resigned to their circumstances and move forward one step at a time towards the ferry because there is no choice. This painting won the first prize at the Myanmar Contemporary Art Awards in 2008.

The second painting produced in this series was a finalist at the Sovereign Art Award in Hong Kong in 2009 (fig-9). The painting is primarily...
in black, white and a disconcerting shade of red. All but two are shown from the back. The exception is a father, whose face is shown in profile looking at his small boy in his arm who faces but does not look at the viewer. How or if this child will move forward in the future is intentionally unclear.

One painting in the “Moving Forward” series contrasts with the others. It is painted in shades of blue, black and white(fig-10). Although these figures also appear from the back they are much larger, and therefore more individualized. A mother and daughter stand out: the mother’s blouse is red and her daughter’s nice dress is pink. Her daughter also wears red sandals, which compliment both her mother’s blouse and her dress. The care shown for this child by her mother suggests that she may have opportunities in the future that are not clear in the present, and certainly would have been precluded in the past.

Myanmar has three seasons: hot, during which temperatures in Yangon can exceed 40C; rainy, during which time rainfall can average 200 - 300 mm per month, and a short but pleasant cool season which provides a respite. Each season poses unique challenges for commuters from the villages to Yangon, and these challenges are captured in the “Moving Forward” paintings that are season specific.

Two paintings from the series show people moving forward during the rainy season(fig-11,12); the canvases show heavy rain and are awash with cheap umbrellas, of Burmese or Chinese origin. But when one looks more carefully, there are as many people directly exposed to this downpour as those with umbrellas. Some men wear baseball caps, some people try to stay dry with a towel wrapped around their head, many men and women make the best of it by squeezing under another umbrella for short periods, others are simply standing in the downpour waiting to board the ferry. Most will be very wet during their long journeys back to their villages.

The “Moving Forward” paintings from the hot season may also show an occasional umbrella(fig-13); here the umbrella provides shelter from the intense sun which is seen as a stream of red light. It is clearly sweltering, and bright sun illuminates a number of people. The stripes of one man’s shirt are clearly visible, as is a women’s red blouse and the bright yellow baseball cap of a young boy. The heat of the city during the day has been and continues to be oppressive, relief may only come several hours later when the villagers return home and the sun has long set.

Winter is the most comfortable season as it is cool in Yangon, but not cold(fig-14). There can be a marked difference between sunny warm days and cool nights, and sometimes there is fog in the early morning or evening hours. The fog envelops the people in these paintings, making it difficult for them to see what is before them. Nevertheless, they continue to move forward, much as they have done for years.
Under midday sun, 107 x 137cm, acrylic on canvas, 2009
Collection of J.Charles Schencking and Janet Borland, Hong Kong
Crowd in purple
90 x 122cm, acrylic on canvas, 2009
Going to the market-2
137 x 68cm, acrylic on canvas, 2013
Sunny day-2, 138 x 69cm, acrylic on canvas, 2009
Private collection
A day in life, 107 x 137cm, acrylic on canvas, 2010
Collection of Mr. Frankie Tan, Singapore/ Myanmar
Moving forward-20
62 x 186cm, acrylic on canvas, 2015
**Winter**

250 x 200cm, acrylic on canvas, 2013
Raining day, 138 x 93cm, acrylic on canvas, 2011
Private collection
Monsoon-5, 138 x 107cm, acrylic on canvas, 2012
Private collection
(Fig-12) **Crowd in rain**, 122 x 152cm, acrylic on canvas, 2011
Collection of Dato’ Seri Kalimullah, Malaysia
(Fig-10) **Going back home-2**, 137 x 107cm, acrylic on canvas, 2010
Collection of Yee Lay Nwe and Mr. Raymond Imperiali, Switzerland/Myanmar
(Fig-9) \textbf{Crowdscape-2}, 135 x 105cm, acrylic on canvas, 2008
Finalist at The 2009 Sovereign Asian Art Prize
Private collection
Crowd in blue, 137 x 137cm, acrylic on canvas, 2011
Collection of Sultan of Perak, Sultan Nazrin Mizzuddin Azlan Shah, Malaysia
Monsoon, 137 x 107cm, acrylic on canvas, 2011
Collection of H.E. Katja Nordgaard, Norwegian Ambassador
(Fig-13) Sunny day, 250 x 200cm, acrylic on canvas, 2013
Collection of Angela and Lee Warner, Malaysia
Going back home-3
250 x 200cm, acrylic on canvas, 2014
Moving forward-7, 153 x 122cm, acrylic on canvas, 2012
Collection of Farah Massart, Belgium
Raining day-2
137 x 107cm, acrylic on canvas, 2013
In the heavy rain
122 x 92cm, acrylic on canvas, 2012
Going back home-8, 180 x 90cm, acrylic on canvas, 2009
Private collection
Crowd in brown, 137 x 107cm, acrylic on canvas, 2010
Collection of Mr. Wilson Lee, Singapore
Crowd in fog-2
137 x 107cm, acrylic on canvas, 2014
Moving forward-11
183 x 92cm, acrylic on canvas, 2014
Monsoon-3, 137 x 92cm, acrylic on canvas, 2011
Collection of Ms. Joan Platt, USA
(Fig-14) **Crowd in fog**  
150 x 120cm, acrylic on canvas, 2010
(Fig-11) **Rainy**, 250 x 200cm, acrylic on canvas, 2012
Collection of Mr. Arne Wennberg, Sweden
Moving forward-2, 137 x 92cm, acrylic on canvas, 2008
Collection of Jane Brooks, Yangon
street people series
Khin Zaw Latt’s third series is entitled “Street People”. He started to think about this series after a visit to Mandalay, where he encountered a number of children who were intentionally keeping themselves at the perimeter of a temple festival. Myanmar is a highly devout Buddhist country; many, if not the majority, of people have spent some time living in a monastery, ranging from 1-2 weeks to many years. The monasteries provide a needed refuge: they educate and shelter poor children who may have no alternative, and offer spiritual education and guidance for all when alternatives need complementation. Like Tibet, monasteries are so interwoven into the fabric of Myanmar that it is impossible to conceptualize Burmese society as separate from their moral and spiritual guidance. A temple festival summons everyone - they are associated with preparations of gifts and temple visits, time with family and time for renewal. The most important festivals may involve a pilgrimage to a site considered particularly holy or a simple walk or drive to the local temple, and are awaited by entire families with eager anticipation. Giving to the monasteries, particularly during festivals, is universal and necessary to sustain the continuity of life in Myanmar.

What struck KZL was the contrast between the integration of the society at the temple, and some of the children standing at the perimeter, who clearly were not with their families and who were isolated from the mainstream of events. As he is fond of children, he began speaking with them to find out why they were so conspicuously on the outskirts. These are children who spend much of their lives asking for money. They rarely have the opportunity to go to school. Most live with their parents, an uncle, a concerned grandparent or perhaps less concerned distant relative. Very few are homeless, although many live in a temporary shelter by a train station or on the occasional unoccupied lot. Perhaps they have a disabled father who is unable to support the family, or they come from a family which has recently migrated from the country to the city in search of work. Frequently, but not always, their parents or caretakers are uneducated and may fail to understand the role that education plays in social and economic advancement. Alternatively, the caretakers may be educated or understanding, but harsh economic reality has intervened. What these caretakers seem to have in common is their grasp of the fact that their family must first have food and shelter before other needs can be entertained. Thus, the children are on the street during the day, but most are sheltered at night. For these children, temple festivals provide an opportunity to tap into the spirit of giving, and they hope to receive a bit of gener-
osity. Unlike the adults in KZL’s previous series of paintings, they are unlikely to be “moving forward”, but rather, left behind.
The “Street People” series is an objective but emotional view of these children’s experiences. Their eyes adamantly peer at you from the canvas, pleading not to be ignored. They are not cloying, cute, cunning or curious. These eyes are steeped in survival. The paintings show a spectrum of children and their daily lives. Yet the paintings of street kids use color sparingly, as begging is a monochromatic existence.
One large canvas is of a girl with a dirty face who appears almost feral. Another is very pretty and attractively dressed so that she will sell the most flowers. A boy in front of a motorcycle is obviously shy and reluctant to communicate; he was first seen by Khin Zaw in 2004 in Mandalay, waiting for the generosity of festival gifts. Two girls are engaged in the playing or fighting of those who are close.
A few paintings merit special attention. A large canvas is that of a poor boy who is eating corn (Fig-15). He eats the kernels a few at a time, as these are the precious means to squelch hunger. Another painting of two brothers shows two survivors of the devastating cyclone, Nargis (Fig-16). They are now orphans as their parents have perished, but their hold on life is symbolized by the red EKG spanning the portrait. A third is of a homeless family walking past a doorway, on which “Do Not Enter” is posted (Fig-17). A fourth is of a young man eating an apple on the street (Fig-18). He would like to become a musician, the bamboo reeds of hope appear in the lower right hand corner. The fifth is of an older man, slumped in a chair (Fig-19). He is selling snacks for people waiting to board the jetty; their feet are pointed in the opposite direction and suggest that they may have the potential for a brighter future. Sadly, he does not. Two portraits have children touching their ears over their heads, using their opposite hands (Fig-20,21). This gesture has a very clear meaning to the Burmese. In older times, if you were old enough to attend school in the village, the opposite hand would reach the ear in this position (at about the age of 5), and schooling would be offered. The arms of these children clearly reach but they do not extend, as education will not be possible given the need to support their families.
These children and families likely will have different futures. The feral child will always be apart. The attractively dressed child who attends school during the day has already learned how to be noticed in her present world and will continue to do so. The shy boy who does not want to attend school has not sorted out a path forward, and the fate of the Nargis survivors is unknown. The future of the older man selling ferry snacks is obvious. As with many of the street kids, his circumstances are unlikely to change. For others, their future is linked to that of Myanmar—there may be opportunities that will be unlocked.
Still Alive-2, 92 x 122cm, acrylic on canvas, 2012
Collection of Julia Charlton, Hong Kong
(Fig-16) **Still alive**, 102 x 92cm, acrylic on canvas, 2009
Collection of Mr. Frankie Tan, Singapore/Myanmar
What is the future-5
122x 92cm, acrylic on canvas, 2015
(Fig-17) What is the future-6
122x 92cm, acrylic on canvas, 2015
What is the future-1
122x92cm, acrylic on canvas, 2015,

Flower seller, 250 x 200cm, acrylic on canvas, 2014
Collection of Mr. Arne Wenn Berg, Sweden
Street story-9, 122 x 92cm, acrylic on canvas, 2012
Collection of Mr. Bruce Persons, USA
What is the future-8
152 x 122cm, acrylic on canvas, 2015
A girl from Chaung Tha Beach
105 x 180cm, acrylic on canvas, 2014
Collection of Mascha Matthews and Harald Friedl (Netherland/Austria)
(Fig-19) **Street story-5**, 122 x 152cm, acrylic on canvas, 2013
Collection of Mr. Robert Bulger, USA
Still alive-3
102 x 92cm, acrylic on canvas, 2009
Two Sisters, 137 x 107cm, acrylic on canvas, 2013
Collection of Mr. Warren Emanuen, USA/Taiwan
(Fig-20) **The first day to school**, 92 x 62cm, acrylic on canvas, 2014
Collection of Cynthia Anderson and Ivn Schouker, Switzerland
Street boy, 200 x 250cm, acrylic on canvas, 2012
Collection of Jeff Tsui, Hong Kong
Street boy-2, 200 x 250cm, acrylic on canvas, 2012
Collection of Meret Deeg, Switzerland
Street boy-4, 200 x 250cm, acrylic on canvas, 2014
Collection of Mr. Arne Wenn Berg, Sweden
Street girl-2, 122 x 92cm, acrylic on canvas, 2012
Collection of Mr. Jan Kerj, Sweden
What is the future-7
122 x 153cm, acrylic on canvas, 2015
Street girl
250 x 200cm, acrylic on canvas, 2013
Street story-7, 92 x 122cm, acrylic on canvas, 2012
Collection of Julia Charlton, Hong Kong
(Fig-15) **Street boy**
200 x 250cm, acrylic on canvas, 2015
What is the future-4
107 x 137cm, acrylic on canvas, 2015
Street story-11, 92 x 122cm, acrylic on canvas, 2012
Collection of Mr. Wilson Lee, Singapore
(Fig-18) **Street boy-6**, 137 x 107cm, acrylic on canvas, 2012
Collection of Mayvor and Bengt Sjogren, Sweden
Chaung tha girl-2
122 x 92cm, acrylic on canvas, 2013
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Birth</th>
<th>December 1980</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Place of Birth</td>
<td>Laputta, Irrawaddy Division, Myanmar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Graduated from University of Culture Majoring in Painting (1998-2002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art Awards</td>
<td>First Prize at Myanmar Portrait Awards 2011</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Finalist at Sovereign Art Awards 2009</td>
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<td></td>
<td>First Prize at Myanmar Contemporary Art Awards 2008</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Honorary mention at Myanmar Contemporary Art Awards 2004</td>
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<td>Second Prize at Myanmar Youth Art Contest (2000)</td>
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<td>Solo Show</td>
<td>2014 &quot; Giving a Hand&quot; Art exhibition in Myanmar</td>
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<td>2012 &quot; A Ten Year Story&quot; Art Exhibition in Myanmar</td>
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<td>2011 &quot; Introduction of Current Works&quot; by Khin Zaw Latt in Myanmar</td>
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<td>2010 &quot; My Myanmar” by Khin Zaw Latt in Bangkok (Thailand)</td>
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<td>2010 &quot; Moving Forward&quot; by Khin Zaw Latt (Hong Kong)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2009 &quot; Crowdscape&quot; by Khin Zaw Latt in Myanmar</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2008 &quot; Simplicity&quot; by Khin Zaw Latt Exhibition in ( Hong Kong)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2007 “Eternal Bliss” by Khin Zaw Latt Exhibition in (Hong Kong)
2006 “Blissful Buddha” by Khin Zaw Latt in Shanghai (China)

Two Men Show
2013 “Two Burmese Painting Brothers” Art Exhibition in (Belgium)
2012 “Portrait of Myanmar” Art Exhibition in Bangkok (Thailand)
2009 “Two Burmese Brothers” Art Exhibition in Greenwish(USA)
2008 “Vision of Myanmar” Art Exhibition in Newyork (USA)
2007 “Two Burmese Brothers” Art Exhibition in Kathmandu (Nepal)
2006 “To Tranquility” Art Exhibition in (Hong Kong)
2005 “Two Burmese Brothers” Art Exhibition in (Hong Kong)

Oversea Group Show
2015 “Art of Asean” Our Exhibition in KL in (Malaysia)
2015 “Maritime Silk Road Art Festival” in Shanghai (China)
2015 “Masters of Myanmar Art” Art Exhibition in KL (Malaysia)
2015 “Myanmar Art Crossing” LA Art Show in (USA)
2015 “Myanmar Art out of the Box” Exhibition in Philadelphia (USA)
2014-15 “Myanmar Art exhibition” at Munich Museum(Germany)
2014 “Myanmar Art Collection” Art Basel Miami (USA)
2012 “Affordable Art Fair” presented by Lalanta Gallery (Singapore)
2012 “The East Gallery Anniversary Show” in Toronto (Canada)
2012 “7th Annual Summer Exhibition” in (Hong Kong)
2012 “Burma Raising” Art Exhibition in Hamptons,NY,(USA)
2012 “Eye on Burma” Art Exhibition in Toronto (Canada)
2010 “New Beginnings” Art Exhibition in Princeton (USA)
2010 “Myanmar Art & Culture Lecture & Exhibition” Boston (USA)
2010 “Myanmar Contemporary Art Exhibition” in (Hong Kong)
2010 “Sovereign Asian Art Prize” Exhibition in (Hong Kong)
2009 “Myanmar Discovered Through the Painter’s Eyes” Exhibition in (Hong Kong)
2009 “Asia Contemporary” Art Exhibition in (Hong Kong)
2007 “Myanmar Contemporary Art Exhibition” in Washington (USA)
2007 “Homage To Buddha” Art Exhibition in (Hong Kong)
2006 “Singapore Art Fair” presented by River Gallery in (Singapore)
2006 “The Quiet Wind” Art Exhibition in (San Francisco)
2006 “Myanmar Scene” Art Exhibition in (Hong Kong)
2004 “Sound Art” in (Singapore)
2004 “Myanmar Contemporary Art Award 2004” in (Hong Kong)

Local Group Show
Participated over 20 local group shows

Other Art experiences
2013 30 days Art Tour to Belgium, Germany, France and Switzerland
2008 Artist in Residency in Malaysia
2007 Two months Art Tour to India and Nepal
Artist’s Family-2015
Khin Zaw Latt, Kyal Cin Khin Zaw, Nay Cin Khin Zaw, Ohmmar