

# Pointers on art and wealth

SMU students picked up more than expected at a special Citibank event recently, reports **KELVIN SAM**

**I**T WAS a rainy and gloomy evening but the mood of the 40 students from the Singapore Management University (SMU) entering MacDonal House was upbeat. And they had good reason to be pleased.

They had been invited for a CitiGold Wealth Management Banking presentation which included a tour of *Power & Passion: Art in South-east Asia*, an exclusive presentation of Asian works chosen from the Singapore Art Museum's collection.

Organised by *The Business Times*-Citibank Young Investors Forum, the presentation on July 15 sought to raise student awareness of both the fine arts and the nature of private banking in Citibank.

Standing in the majestic foyer of Citibank's largest wealth management centre in Asia at old Macdonald House, the students listened with rapt attention to a commentary of South-east Asian Art by Silvia Chan, a Singapore Art Museum project manager.

Expecting a grave commentary on the nature of the paintings, the students were pleasantly surprised when Ms Chan encouraged comments and even bantered with them on the relationship between art and private banking.

When approached for comments after the guided tour, Ms Chan seemed pleased by the interested responses of the students.

"I'm trying to break away from the notion that art isn't widely accessible by everyone," said Ms Chan.

"During the tour, I wanted to keep things informal because I wanted the students to ask as many questions as possible. I'm glad we (The Singapore Art Museum) managed to reach out to so many young minds today!"

After the guided tour of the inventive paintings, the students were subsequently given an informative presentation on private banking by Dennis Tan, a CitiGold wealth management branch banking director.

While speaking on the inner workings of CitiGold's priority banking programme, Mr Tan proceeded to debunk the myth that wealth management was a glamorous line of business.

"There's always this concept that wealth management is a very glitzy job with very little hard work involved. But it's not! Before seeing the clients, we need our bankers to be very self-disciplined in making their calls to clients,



**Art's for everyone:** Ms Chan showing students the finer points of a painting during her tour, *'Power & Passion: Art in South-east Asia'*

churning out portfolio reviews and monitoring trends in the financial markets," explained Mr Tan.

### Qualities required

Mr Tan also pointed out the traits he looked for in a potential priority banking candidate. "This person should have a good work ethic, be passionate about existing financial services by following trends in the financial markets and, lastly, he must show commitment to this line of business because it takes a lot of training to be a good banker," said Mr Tan.

With a dinner buffet served after the presentation, the participants were also given ample opportunities to mingle with Citibank

priority bankers and relationship managers present. The entire event was warmly received by the students, especially aspiring bankers such as Janice Loh, a final-year business undergraduate.

She said: "I've always wanted to find out more about private banking, so this event has been quite an exciting experience for me.

"I have a better idea now of how Citibank leverages its asset size to serve clients effectively."

Apart from the finance enthusiasts, art aficionados such as Mak Chui Ling, another final-year business undergraduate, also found the event extremely impressive.

"I'm very interested in unique paintings.

During my foreign exchange semester in Europe, I spent most of my time visiting galleries and museums and since then, I've wanted to learn more about South-east Asian art," piped Chui Ling.

"I'm glad Citibank is giving more people a chance to learn more about our Asian culture!"

Rayner Woo, an SMU graduate student pursuing a masters in applied finance summed up the general sentiment of the participants.

He said: "It's always interesting to learn how a global bank such as Citibank competes on the value chain, especially in a competitive field such as wealth management."