



Pilot boat "Captain Cook II", North and South Head, Sydney 1925 (Size incl. frame ± 125 x 95 cms)

“HARBOURS OF ASIA AND AUSTRALIA, NOW AND IN THE PAST”

By Dutch Maritime Painter Peter J. Sterkenburg

**APRIL 16 - MAY 2, 1996
11:00am to 7:00pm DAILY, incl. weekends
THE GRILL FOYER, 1st FLOOR
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160 Jalan Bukit Bintang, 55100 Kuala Lumpur**

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The artist

Peter J. Sterkenburg was born in the centuries old fishing port of Harlingen, which lies in the northern part of the Netherlands on December 18th, 1955. As a child, his favourite pastime was to sit at the harbour entrance every day to watch ships pass by. His father was a sailor who came home after every voyage with many adventurous maritime tales. At a young age Peter spent most of his time drawing and soon displayed a remarkable talent in sketching pictures of sailing ships.

As a young adult, and in the footsteps of his father, Sterkenburg joined the Dutch army. While in service, his officers discovered his talents and before long he was commissioned to make many military and maritime paintings. After his tour of duty, he studied at the Academy of Arts in Leeuwarden and also made several study trips to France and the United States.

During his stay in the United States, he became fascinated by the paintings of Montague Dawson, a maritime painter he admires very much. Like Dawson, Sterkenburg has a strong alliance with the sea.

In 1980 he held his first collective exhibition in Breukelen, Holland. This show proved very successful and included buyers from all over the world.

“Sterkenburg’s gift is in being able to bring his seascapes to life” says one Sterkenburg collector. “One is so easily pulled into the reality of his work, to feel the wind in one’s hair, hear the surf, move with those waves”.

The artist’s talent in depicting romantic maritime landscapes gives his paintings a unique colour and style and makes him part of the long



Penang, Georgetown 1850 with the old fort in the background (Size incl. frame ± 95 x 75 cms)

tradition of Dutch maritime painting. Sterkenburg has the extraordinary ability to paint skies and water that appear almost real.

The living room of his small house, annex studio is littered with hundreds of books from which he studiously obtains details of hulls and riggings of ships which he depicts in his maritime paintings. His strength lies in his ability to paint old ships and harbours as though he lived in that particular century. This often requires days of study because he needs to know exactly which buildings lined the waterfront at that particular period of time. In order to define the angle of light on his historical

paintings, he also needs to find out where and when the sun used to rise or set - fine details which make a maritime painter, a master.

Peter Sterkenburg does not just paint sailing vessels, although they are clearly his favourites. Oil-drilling platforms in the North Sea, modern yachts, naval vessels, container ships and even jet-fighter planes flow out of his brush like magic. Once he starts on a painting, he becomes obsessed, working through the day and night.

Numerous commissions made it difficult for the artist to hold a solo exhibition abroad. It was not until November, 1992 that art lovers in Asia



Hong Kong 1995, Victoria Harbour (Size incl. frame ± 115 x 85 cms)



Singapore 1995, skyline (Size incl. frame ± 95 x 75 cms)

had the opportunity to view the master’s work. His first Asian exhibition was held in Hong Kong and became a sold-out best seller. His depiction of Hong Kong harbour both contemporary and as it must have been in the 19th century enthralled many art aficionados.

Sterkenburg’s works can be found in private collections and museums in the United States, Hong Kong and Europe. He also accepts commissions and has painted many private yachts, merchant vessels and other special assignments.

“Harbours of Asia and Australia, now and in the past” will be his second exhibition in Asia and his first in Australia. For the 20 paintings on display at the exhibition, Sterkenburg made an earlier reconnaissance trip last spring to study the harbours and seascapes of Penang, Melaka, Singapore and Sydney. Maritime art collectors will be able to see and appreciate in living colour the ships and ports of the past as well as contemporary portrayals.

Peter Sterkenburg accepts special commissions and will be present at all exhibition venues.

Note:
All paintings in the exhibition are for sale but will only be available to the buyers after July 1st 1996 when the exhibition has toured Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Sydney and Jakarta.

Painting on the cover:
Melaka around 1650, Dutch East India vessels and a junk in the foreground ready to anchor and the old town in the background
(Size incl. frame ± 155 x 125 cms)



Hong Kong 1860, Victoria Harbour (Size incl. frame ± 115 x 85 cms)



Penang 1995, with Penang Bridge (Size incl. frame ± 115 x 85 cms)



The “Cutty Sark” in a tea race, 1870 (Size incl. frame ± 95 x 75 cms)



Sydney Harbour 1995 with Bradleys Head on the right (Size incl. frame ± 150 x 115 cms)