Huang Na to be immortalised?

MRT station mural to feature people and landmarks in Telok Blangah

KOH HUI THENG

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Ert death at the hands of a murderer shocked and moved thousands of Singaporeans in a rare outpouring of sympathy.

Now, five years after her death, eight-year-old Huang Na could be immortalised in a mural to take pride of place at the upcoming Circle Line’s Telok Blangah MRT station.

The Jin Tai Primary School pupil’s partially decomposed body was found at the foot of Telok Blangah Hill in 2004.

When contacted, Huang Na’s mother, Madam Huang Shu Ying, 36, said she had received a call from Singapore about the possibility of her daughter being featured in the mural.

She said: “I’m okay with the idea, if the artist is simply adding the name (to the art piece) in her memory.” The mother of two is now living in Taiwan’s Taichung city. She runs a wholesale shoe-export business.

The artist behind the mural, Michael Lee, 36, was commissioned by the Land Transport Authority (LTA) to do the art piece at the station last year.

It is understood that it is still a work-in-progress and whether Huang will make it into the completed work remains to be seen.

An LTA spokesman said that before the art pieces were commissioned, the artists were briefed by the LTA and the tenant on the location of the station, the local landmarks, and some potential themes the artists could explore.

“Each artist was given free reign with regard to their work. Their general concepts were presented to the Art Review Panel and the proposals were refined over a few months. The final proposals were approved only after it was certain that the designs were acceptable and that the art and architectural designs were fully integrated,” she said.

“Although the concept of the art piece at the Circle Line Telok Blangah station has been accepted, the details of the art piece has yet to be approved by the art review panel.”

If approved, Huang is likely to share a spot on the mural with politicians such as the late J. B. Jeyaretnam and Sun Yat Sen, and celebrity radio presenter Lee Dai Soh who lived in the Telok Blangah area.

When completed, the mural, to measure 9m in length and 2m in width, will be seen by commuters who take the lift from the train platform to the concourse level.

Some people, like Telok Blangah resident Liew Yan Mei, 29, questioned why the girl could be featured. The public-relations executive said: “I’ll be passing through the station daily and I don’t really want to be reminded about depressing events.”

Telok Blangah MRT station is expected to open from next year.

kohht@sph.com.sg

Next Facebook craze could come from NUS

DAWN TAY

COMING up with the next big hit on social-networking sites is on the minds of a group of undergraduates here.

And while such applications – better known as “apps” – developed by the National University of Singapore (NUS) undergraduates may not become lucrative hits eventually, the young developers are not letting it stop them.

Their lecturer, Assistant Professor Ben Leong, said NUS is the second school in the world to offer a Facebook programming course. The course, which started last year, has drawn 77 students to date.

While it is still possible to develop successful money-making Facebook apps, they are not growing exponentially as they did a year back, said Prof Leong.

He said: “There are many more apps now compared to two years ago – there’s a sense of “app fatigue” among Facebook users. Other newer technologies are also emerging, like Google’s Friend Connect.”

Aspiring game developers Tan Kian Boon and Justin Lye, both 23, are part of a team of six tertiary students who have come up with a university-themed Facebook game, Varsity Chronicles.

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GAME FOR INNOVATION: (From left) Justin Lye, Bryan Yeo, Chua Yu Han, Tan Kian Boon, Jolly Lee and Koe Wei Man came up with Facebook game Varsity Chronicles. (PHOTO: NEO XIAOBIN)