

ATA AWARDS EDRIC ONG



Aid to Artisans (ATA), an international organization based in USA has recently presented its prestigious award “2006 Aid to Artisans Advocate Award.” to **Edric Ong, President of Society Atelier Sarawak** in New York.

This award acknowledges:

Individuals whose leadership in their artisan and design communities has created new opportunities for artisans to improve their livelihoods, to reach new audiences with their creations, to bring increased recognition to their traditions and to pursue their individual and/or communal visions with integrity.

For four years, ATA has celebrated achievement in the artisan community through annual awards for *Innovation in Craft*, *Preservation of Craft*, and *Artisan Advocacy*. Other recipients of ATA awards this year included Barbara Tober, longtime chairwoman of New York City's Museum of Art and Design, for *ATA Preservation of Craft Award*; Christina Kim, founder of the fashion house Dosa, for *ATA Innovation in Craft Award*; and Ted Muehling, for *ATA Lifetime Visionary Award*.

Previous recipients of the ATA Awards include Her Majesty Queen Sirikit of Thailand, and Marie Therese Hemand de Arango of Mexico. The Awards evening was held at the ABC Carpets and Home Store in Broadway, attended by over 500 invited guests with media support from Domino magazine.

During the silent auction, David O'Connor, President of ATA said that The Awards event will raise over \$500,000 towards ATA's projects and programmes in 24 countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe. These projects affect the lives of almost 30,000 artisans, two thirds of whom are women.

Clare Brett Smith, President Emerita of Aid to Artisans in presenting the Award to Edric Ong said:

“Edric Ong is truly a world citizen; he is known all over the world though his own world centers in Sarawak, where he and his forebears have lived for generations. Edric's high skills in design, fashion as well as architecture, his books, and his gently persuasive advocacy have made Sarawak widely known. We are honoured that he is here to widen our world. On behalf of Aid To Artisans and our friends and sponsors here, we are pleased to present to Edric Ong, the 2006 ATA Artisan Advocacy Award.”

In accepting the Award, Mr Ong said that the Award was as much for him as for all his colleagues in Society Atelier Sarawak, Crafts Council of Malaysia and AHPADA (ASEAN Handicrafts Promotion and Development Association.) He hoped that people will not only look at the physical beauty of objects, but also learn to appreciate and acknowledge the spiritual significance of the arts and crafts.