

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **George Town Festival is Back and Everyone's Invited!**

*The 16-day long arts and culture Festival to return from 13 to 28 July*

**George Town, Penang, Malaysia, 3 June 2019:** ONE of Asia's leading arts events, the George Town Festival (GTF) is making a return for its tenth edition from 13 to 28 July 2019. The 16-day long Festival will feature a total of 150 programmes, including visual art, theatre, music, dance, comedy, film to photography and more.

Over 500 talented performers from 20 countries are slated to take part in the Festival, turning the event into a platform for local and international artists to forge connections with the community and to foster artistic and cultural experience for residents and tourists.

Keen to deliver its 'A Festival for Everyone' promise to festival goers, some 70 per cent of events in the Festival are free-to-attend. Meanwhile, 60 per cent of the Festival are earmarked for local artists to showcase their talents so that everyone will have a chance to experience the Festival. Event venues will be scattered throughout historic George Town and various locations across the island and mainland.

Visitors will have a rare opportunity to marvel at mesmerising programmes from local and international alike, thus keeping Penang and its arts communities alive and intact. Alongside a host of homegrown talents, the Festival will feature performers from other parts of the world, such as the Netherlands, France, Thailand and Taiwan.

Details of the George Town Festival 2019 highlighted programmes are as follows:

### **1.0 GEORGE TOWN FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTED PROGRAMMES**

This year, GTF 2019 brings you three highlighted programmes over three weekends namely, *When Night Falls*, *Art in the City* and *The Extravaganza*, carried out in and around the George Town World Heritage Site.

## WHEN NIGHT FALLS

*When Night Falls* is a two-day event of an eclectic array of illuminated artworks from across the globe. Moz Drums and *Compagnie des Quidams* from France as well as Teatro Pavana from The Netherlands are joining forces with FILAMEN, a local projection mapping community group to transform the areas around Esplanade, a waterfront location in the heart of George Town, into a glowing playground of lights, rays and projection mapping.

Date : 13 & 14 July 2019

Time : 7pm - 11pm

Venue : Padang Kota Lama (Esplanade)

The following table lists the programme line-up for *When Night Falls*:

**Table 1: WHEN NIGHT FALLS PROGRAMME LINE-UP**

Programme/ Performer	Description
<i>FierS à Cheval</i> ( <i>Compagnie des Quidams</i> from France)	<i>Compagnie des Quidams</i> is set to trot into the streets with a captivating visual odyssey in <i>FierS à Cheval</i> , where visitors will get to witness a ringmaster put to motion a drove of luminous horses.
The Lighted Drummers (Moz Drums from France)	Enjoy a weekend of high-energy choreography and magical display of lights designed to the thunderous rhythms of the drums! Moz Drums are set to excite the crowd with a combination of spectacular display of sparkling LED and thunderous rhythms of the drums.
<i>Le Ballerine</i> (Teatro Pavana from the Netherlands)	Walking on stilts is a tall order to some, but to the performers from Teatro Pavana, it's a walk in the park. Dressed in vibrant coloured tutus, the ballerinas on stilts will get the crowd asking 'From what wondrous ballet, these dancers have walked away?'
Night Colors (Teatro Pavana from the Netherlands)	Towering over the revellers, the white or silver costumes of the performers on stilts are beautifully illuminated with lighted wires. An enchanting treat for young and old alike.

<p>Projection Mapping: World of Fantasy (FILAMEN from Malaysia)</p>	<p>World of Fantasy is set to transform the heritage buildings of Town Hall and City Hall of Penang into a modern living canvas. In collaboration with FILAMEN and powered by EPSON Malaysia, World of Fantasy will be reimagined with the creative use of video mapping to create the 3-dimensional art to excite the audiences. Visitors can also expect ten 30-second videos of local and international finalists who took part in the open call for projection mapping on City Hall.</p>
---	--

## ART IN THE CITY

Based on the concept of art-is-everywhere-and-anywhere-in-the-city, the two-day event will get the clan houses, shophouses, back alleys, and five-foot ways buzzing with a multitude of artistic activities covering music to child-friendly entertainment, and from dance to theatre across intriguing venues, happening all at once in the city. Set within the George Town World Heritage Site, the programmes are slated to run simultaneously in separate locations yet within a reasonable distance, allowing visitors to enjoy most, if not all, of the programmes. Among some of the exciting programmes are Garden Gig, Tiny Touts, Puppet Stage, Malaysia Inside Out, Dance @ 74, Mai Main Kaki Lima! and many more.

Date : 20 & 21 July 2019

Time : 5pm - 11pm

Venue : George Town World Heritage Site

The following table lists the programme line-up for *Art in the City*:

**Table 2: ART IN THE CITY PROGRAMME LINE-UP**

Programme	Description
Garden Gig	If you're a music lover, there's only one place to be. Experience an unforgettable evening at the Garden Gig where Penang Jazz Society, UiTM Chamber Choir, 92PLAY5 and SADA BORNEO are set to serenade you with light and relaxing music, ranging from jazz, a cappella to pop-soul, amidst a serene ambience of a lush, green park.

<p>Tiny Touts</p>	<p>A contemporary clown, Mr. John, will be making a special appearance at Tiny Touts, performing an interactive comedy show. Meanwhile, children can learn about love and family in <i>Colour Your Soul</i>, an enlightening theatre suitable for the family. Also, <i>Music around the Toy</i> brought by <i>Ting A Tong</i> from Thailand will feature three musicians using toys to tell a story through sound, music and movement for the kids. A must-go for the little ones.</p>
<p>Puppet Stage</p>	<p>Puppets from Penang, Kuala Lumpur and Indonesia are taking over the stage! Teochew Puppet and Opera House will bring iron-rod puppetry shows which revolve around two traditional Chinese stories. Fusion Wayang Kulit from Kuala Lumpur is set to present a traditional Malay shadow play in a science-fiction fusion and modern-day multimedia components. Last but not least, Flying Balloons Puppet from Yogyakarta, Indonesia, will be presenting <i>Pongo Abellii</i>, a collection of scenes about orangutans who lost their homes.</p>
<p>Malaysia Inside Out</p>	<p>Malaysia Inside Out will showcase the beauty of multiculturalism in Malaysia. Visitors will get to feast their senses on traditional cultural performances of the three main ethnics: Malay, Chinese and Indian. Look out for Malay Mak Yong, Chinese glove puppetry and Indian dance plus dhol drum performances.</p>
<p>Dance @ 74</p>	<p>Dance @ 74 gathers the finest performing contemporary dance groups from Penang and Kuala Lumpur onto one stage to showcase their graceful movements at a formerly derelict shophouse to give it a refreshing breath of life.</p>
<p>Mai Main Kaki Lima!</p>	<p>Mai Main Kaki Lima! is an invitation to play the Kaki Lima board game at various pop-up play-stations placed at different stretches of five-foot ways over two days. The homegrown Kaki Lima board game was inspired by walking around Penang's George Town, and is about pedestrians navigating their way through a grid of five-foot ways. Join in the fun and</p>

	banter about community and accessibility, under the city's iconic pathway arches where locals and visitors, young and old, have traversed, traded, and communed for centuries.
--	--

## THE EXTRAVAGANZA

The Festival's grand finale – *The Extravaganza* – will cast local and international street and performing artists to form an enormous art bash that worth a universal celebration. This free-to-attend street event is brimming with diverse selections of performing and installation arts ranging from contemporary to traditional and novelty performances at selected spots, inviting visitors to experience arts in a new way. Visitors can look forward to taking a short trip back in time in a specially curated photo exhibition featuring photos captured during the first 15 days of the ongoing Festival. There will also be a runway presentation designed to speak for the voiceless, bringing about much-needed awareness on environmental conservation as well as animal abuse prevention. Taking centre stage is our locally-renowned choreographer and dancer, Aida Redza, who will be mesmerising visitors with a dance performance. International and local aerial silk and rope performing artists will hit the stage, delivering eclectic live performances for all to enjoy. Other acts who will be joining the grand finale include Angika Fine Arts which will be presenting varied Indian dances and Incredible Mallakhamb which is set to deliver spellbinding acrobatic movements of Mallakhamb - a traditional Indian sport in which a gymnast performs feats and poses in concert with a vertical wooden pole or rope.

Date : 28 July 2019

Time : 5pm - 11pm

Venue : Lebuhraya Pantai

## 2.0 TICKETED SHOWS

Those looking for a more epicurean indulgence can do so at the Festival's 14 specially curated ticketed shows covering dance, theatre, forum, talk, fashion, music, comedy, and film. Among the highly anticipated ticketed shows are *BIRD*, a dance collaboration between visual theatre company WHS from Finland and Pichet Klunchun Dance Company from Thailand, *Armour and Skin 2019* which will be presented by HANDS Percussion and Gamelan Yuganada as well as *Great New World - From Free Port to World Heritage Site*, a symposium in collaboration with Penang Art District.

Details of the highly anticipated ticketed shows are as follows:

**BIRD (THAILAND & FINLAND)**

*BIRD*, created in artistic collaboration between visual theatre company WHS from Finland and Pichet Klunchun Dance Company from Thailand, approaches human society from the perspective of birds. Dark and contemplative but also corrosively beautiful, the show led us to ponder if we are all living in a glorified birdcage we call home.

Date : 26 & 27 July 2019

Time : 8.30pm

Venue : Dewan Budaya, Universiti Sains Malaysia

**ARMOUR AND SKIN 2019 (MALAYSIA & INDONESIA)**

Under the direction of treasured Balinese musician and artist I Wayan Sudirana and Malaysian writer, actor and director Ghafir Akhbar, the conversations between drumsticks and metal, song and drums, mallets and skin, body and soul, as well as artists and instruments are explored in *Armour and Skin 2019*. Presented by HANDS Percussion and Gamelan Yuganada, *Armour and Skin 2019* is a celebration of our inner spirits, instruments and music, as well as the magic that happens when everything, even discord seems to fall in place for a single purpose - hope.

Dates and times: 26 July 2019 at 8.30pm and 27 July 2019 at 3pm & 8.30pm

Venue : Dewan Sri Pinang

**GREAT NEW WORLD - FROM FREE PORT TO WORLD HERITAGE SITE (SYMPOSIUM IN COLLABORATION WITH PENANG ART DISTRICT)**

For the longest time, the art history of Malaysia has always focused on Kuala Lumpur as the centre of activity. Join us on this occasion as we decenter this commonplace narrative, to discover what we can learn about Penang's artistic past, in order to understand what is happening in Penang today, so that we can begin to recognise new horizons for Penang's artistic future.

Date : 27 July 2019

Time : 9am - 6pm

Venue : Bangunan U.A.B

### **3.0 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME**

As part of the Festival's community engagement programme, *Macam Macam Macallum* and *Macam Macam Berapit* are designed to help the local residents to make the most of the Festival while inviting crowds to take a deeper dive into the sights and sounds of the friendly Macallum Street Ghaut and Berapit neighbourhoods.

Details of community engagement programme are as follows:

#### **Macam Macam Macallum**

Dive deeper into the sights and sounds of the friendly Macallum Street Ghaut neighbourhood through glove puppetry, workshop, dance, music and more! *Macam Macam Macallum* will showcase traditional performances known to the local residents while attracting crowds to the former mangrove swamp with specially curated contemporary performances. Renowned artists and performers such as Yudi Yap 友弟 & WVC - Malaysian Jazz Ensemble, Culture Shot, and Euphoria Penang Modern Dance Ensemble are set to helm this community engagement programme.

Date : 24 & 25 July 2019

Time : 7pm - 10pm

Venue : Gat Lebu Macallum

#### **Macam Macam Berapit**

Arts and culture will take over the streets of Berapit, transforming the local neighbourhood into an international arts stage. Residents and visitors will be treated to performances, installations, and collaborations from international and local artists.

Date : 7 July 2019

Time : 7pm - 10pm

Venue : Public Market Berapit

### **4.0 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Adding colours to the Festival are various artistic activities and performances ranging from visual art, fashion, film to photography and more, including exhibitions such as GERIMIS: A Collaborative Orang Asli Art Exhibition as well as a runway presentation by THISNORTHAT fashion label from China. The

OBSCURA Festival of Photography returns to George Town Festival, much to the delight of shutterbugs everywhere. Meanwhile, The Unsettled Dust - Asian Short Film Festival will make its debut at GTF 2019, presenting works from artists and filmmakers from various parts of Asia.

### **5.0 GEORGE TOWN HERITAGE WALK 2019**

A 5KM heritage walk will be held in conjunction with the upcoming George Town Festival and George Town Heritage Celebrations. The George Town Heritage Walk 2019 encourages participants to appreciate the alluring beauty, sights and sounds of the heritage city of George Town. Keep your eyes peeled for great pop-up performances. Register now to kick-start George Town Festival with us! You will be entitled to special merchandise of the Festival, too!

Details of the George Town Heritage Walk 2019 are as follows:

Date : 7 July 2019

Time : 7.30am

Venue : Lebuhraya Pantai

Registration link: <https://georgetownfestival.com/pre-festival/heritage-walk/>

For more information, please visit [georgetownfestival.com](http://georgetownfestival.com) and follow us on Facebook at George Town Festival.

For media enquiries, contact:

Ms Ng Kim Theng

Public Relations Executive

George Town Festival

+6012 421 8365

[kimtheng@georgetownfestival.com](mailto:kimtheng@georgetownfestival.com)

- Ends -



## **About George Town Festival**

In an effort to commemorate the inscription of George Town as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, a fine idea to organise George Town Festival came across. Being inaugurated in 2010, this Festival aims to promote arts, cultures and heritage in Penang. The annual George Town Festival is endorsed by the Penang State Government with the full support by City Council of Penang Island, George Town World Heritage Incorporated and Penang Global Tourism in celebration of local and international works of art.

George Town Festival as well serves as a leading art platform in the region for both local and international artists to connect which could grant them an opportunity for further collaboration to bolster the arts communities from local and international alike. The Festival is committed to promoting the beauty of arts, cultures and heritage to all as a not-to-be-missed major arts event.

Returning for its tenth edition in 2019, a whole new way of experiencing arts would be brought forward with the management and curation by TLM Event. This year, George Town Festival embodies the idea of making arts accessible to all, regardless of age or background. A vast amount of visual art, theatre, music, dance, film, photography and more will be stuffed into 16 days for all to feast their senses. From traditional auditoriums to halls, shophouse walls, historic buildings, cafes and *kopitiams* (traditional coffee shops), the Festival will see world-class performances, installations and collaborations such as thought-provoking artistic activities, intimate talks, interactive sharing sessions and more to make sure that there is something for everyone.