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## #CeritaKita:

### The splendour of Malaysia through mural painting on petronas gas station

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#### Abstract

Murals are works of public art that express ideas on a building's surface. The connections between how it's made, where it is, and what it represents have been demonstrated to be powerful visual communication tools for stimulating energy, activity, surroundings, social messages and patriotism spirit. Nowadays, companies like Petronas Dagangan Berhad support local artists to express their sense of local identity. By that, artists showcase their talents in a specific place, forming different styles and delivering the most imaginative affinities to the community. This activity gives hope to Malaysian artists and creatives in transforming local identity into a visual display.

Keywords: The Splendour of Malaysia; Mural Painting; Petronas Gas Station

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#### 1.0 Introduction

Art in public places, also known as site-specific art or environmental art, is the result of an artist's intervention in a specific location, resulting in a work of art that blends in with its surroundings and explores its relationship to its surroundings, whether inside or outside, in an urban or suburban setting, or in a variety of other settings. It can be cast, carved, made, assembled, or painted, and has a wide range of meanings and methods of construction. It might be site-specific or stand out as a contrast to the surrounding environment, depending on the situation. What characterizes public art as being one-of-a-kind is the association between its creation, location, and what it represents.

It is an expression of community values, enhances the environment, alters the terrain, raises awareness, or calls into question preconceived notions about what is possible. Most artists plan their creative visions inside their studios, but only a few venture outside to create their contemporary artwork in landscapes and specific outdoor locations where they have the opportunity to travel to other states or countries, meet with local people and learn about their customs and cultures, as well as develop their creative direction based on all of the experiences gained through observation and experimentation. By doing so, the spectator is able to experience the work from a variety of perspectives, situations, and contexts, which means that they can feel proud of themselves and their relationship to the work through social media, which is pleasing to the artists. It makes little difference whatever approach an artist adopts; Public Art, Site-Specific Art, or Environmental Art are all intended to become part of their environment and to reconstruct the viewer's conceptual and perceptual experience of that environment as a result of the artist's creative activity.

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Collaborate by Petronas Dagangan Berhad and Department of Fine Art, Faculty of Art and Design, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Shah Alam Selangor, During 2018 Malaysia Day, the mural can be found at the following locations: PETRONAS Station Solaris Putra, PETRONAS Station Tapah, Perak: PETRONAS Station Batu Feringgi, Pulau Pinang: PETRONAS Station The Place, Ampang: PETRONAS Station MITC, Melaka: PETRONAS Station Peramu 2, Pahang: PETRONAS Station Luyang, Sabah: PETRONAS Station Luyang, showcasing Malaysia's splendour through mural painting.

## 2.0 Literature Review

The term "public art" is extensive and can be interpreted in a variety of ways. It has been referred to as artwork visible from the outside, which can range from a national statue or monument to a mural or graffiti painted on a wall by members of the public (Muhammad Falihin Jasmia & Nik Hanita Nik Mohamad, 2016). Furthermore, public art adds enormous value to cultural understanding and the aesthetic and economic vitality of an artists' community, among other things.

In recent years, it has become widely accepted as a principle of urban design that public art contributes to a community's identity by instilling pride and enhancing its residents and peoples' unique life identities. Cities and states gain real value as a result of public art as a form of reciprocity. Murals in Malaysia cover a wide range of subjects and themes. Decorating in a significant city and forgotten places or towns, Malaysia is now taking centre stage in showcasing talented local artists and international artists worldwide. The emphasis on idea development, collaborative execution, and constructivist learning is an essential inclusive learning experience for art students, local and international artists, and other professionals in the creative field. Successful mural painting is about more than just the finished product; it's about the process as well. The one-of-a-kind mural is dedicated to learning and creation and the experiences that participants gained from their participation and the surrounding environment.

Artists frequently investigate the characteristics that determine one's personal, cultural, and social identity, which is both empowering and beautifully done in conveying the 'so-called' messages hidden behind the images they create. Observation, biography, autobiography, as a society, culture, customs, and religion, or as a nation; in the context of social lifestyle, behaviours, and critics; and the context of social lifestyle, behaviours, and critics are all sources of inspiration ([www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)). Malaysia is a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, and multilingual society, and the many ethnic groups that make up the country each have their own distinct cultural identities that they maintain.

This is concerned with the idea of how artists develop their arts as reflections of what they observe, receive, and as a means of celebrating it through art (Andaya, Barbara Watson; Andaya, Leonard Y., 1982). Through mural painting, this display of empowerment in how they look and feel can be a possession into something positive. Despite the fact that Malaysia has encountered and embraced modernity as a result of the globalization of mediascape, Malaysia talent continues to stand out as a shining example of what we are and who we are in creative response and starting to become popular in demanding forms of showcasing talents in the creative industry.

## 3.0 Mural Painting

Murals have been around since 30,000 BC when the earliest paintings were discovered in the Chauvet cave in France. The most significant number of paintings has been found in Egyptian tombs dating back to 3150 BC, Pompeii dating back to 100 BC to AD79, and Minoan sites dating back to 1700-1600 BC. The Upper Paleolithic period encompasses the entire period during which ancient paintings were discovered. These demonstrated that art had become a kind of mainstream form of evidence of early civilization. By using murals, civilization has left traces of its existence in various locations worldwide, demonstrating its existence. Our priceless knowledge of our history and predecessors is owed to the earliest carvings, etchings, and paintings. These murals are of great significance to humankind because they depicted life activities, everyday scenery, and usually religious traditions of the time they were created, providing us with a priceless look at the diversity of our cultures at various points in history.

Paintings on the walls of public buildings, such as palaces, temples and tombs; museums; libraries; churches; as well as the homes of wealthy art patrons, have become commonplace over time, while their original meaning and purpose remained unchanged: to depict a picture of a society based on stories, values, dreams and change; and to decorate the streets and architectural elements in more recent times. Murals are used to express and depict communities, nations, and cultures in modern times. Murals can be found in many locations around the world, and they are used to speak in the name of and depict communities, nations, and cultures. On the other hand, murals represent an aesthetic element that aids in integrating into environments and elevates them to authentic cultural artefacts and even monumental works of art. Besides having clearly defined meanings, murals are also created for other purposes, such as advertising or simply for the aesthetic value of a beautiful image on a wall, among other things.

In Malaysia, murals positively impacted the community were well received, especially when compared to previous years. Young generation artists, also known as muralists, are beginning to consider more diverse options. The majority of them are art field university graduates who have a different mindset from the conventional method. When this outlook became a phenomenon, it altered Malaysians' perception of the art field as having a future, thereby providing more space for young artists to express their creativity appropriately. Graffiti murals are essential in the contemporary art world because they bring art to the public and raise awareness of art among the general public. Murals are expensive and take a significant amount of time to complete; therefore, a sponsor funding the project is required for a painting to be displayed. Murals can also be used as a means of communication. The public receives the message or wishes to participate in interaction through the wall as a surface. Because of the painting's massive size, it will attract the general public's attention, making it an effective means of communicating a message.

In addition, it has an impact on the attitudes of those who pass by them. Everyone understands the painting, and as a result, they enhance the aesthetic value of the areas in which they are displayed. It also serves as a tourist attraction, resulting in the improvement of

the surrounding areas. Every painting is distinct from the others, and it's difficult to confuse one for the other. For muralists, murals are a means of expressing themselves. It is their way of communicating with people and the rest of the world. They command the attention of onlookers and leave a lasting impression on the landscape that will last for centuries to come. As it continues to grow and bloom, and as more and more people become aware of its existence, the artistic value of murals and their significance in the community and country grow more substantial and more widely accepted. However, artists must also put in the necessary time and patience. With modern technology taking over, the evolution of muralism is even more rapid than before.

#### 4.0 Results and Outcome

The whole mural painting production involves many processes, including design, wall preparation, layout plotting, painting execution, varnish and finishing protection, documentation, which allow people with different skills or abilities to participate. Petronas has unveiled a series of murals in conjunction with the upcoming National Day and Malaysia Day celebrations on August 3rd and September 16, 2018, respectively.

The murals collaborate between Petronas Dagangan Berhad (PDG), lecturers and students from Universiti Teknologi MARA's Faculty of Art and Design. The murals reflect Malaysia's pride and joy, from places of attraction to traditions that make Malaysia special. This art initiative is part of Petronas' campaign, Cerita Kita, which aims to capture the beauty of moments and places in Malaysia. As stated by Petronas managing director and chief executive officer, Datuk Sri Syed Zainal Abidin "We have engaged local students to participate in our campaign as part of our effort to showcase local talent as well as to encourage youths to demonstrate their pride in the country through their works of art. A total of seven murals are featured at Petronas stations nationwide. The murals will be joined by a series of stories which Petronas is curating, revolving around unsung heroes, including members of its staff, dealers, partners and customers.

These will be made available on Petronas Brands' social media platforms. Members of the public may also share their own stories of patriotism and tag them with the #ceritakita hashtag (Mick Chan@paultan.org, Kuala Lumpur, August 27 2018). Cerita Kita is a collective title given to collaborative mural art involving Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Melaka, Perak, Penang, Pahang, and Sabah. In conjunction with Malaysia's Independence Day, these murals establish a representation in connecting communities and developing a powerful visual communication tool meant to promote the energy, activity, surroundings and transmit social messages and patriotism spirit. This encouragement gives hope to Malaysian art and creative people in understanding the importance of being Malaysian by translating local identity into a visual presentation. This research intends to show how the elements and characters of Malaysian identity are transformed into murals as visual presentations in 7 locations of Petronas Gas Station across Malaysia.



Figure 1: 15ft x 40ft Wall, PETRONAS station Solaris, Selangor: Bound by Traditions, a showcase of our famous *pasar malam*, a tradition which we held on to even when progress and modernity surround us.



Figure 2: 15ft x 40ft Wall, PETRONAS station MITC, Melaka: Where Multi-cultural Heritage Resides, showcasing the state's heritage and the unique architecture of the famous staircase.



Figure 3: 18ft x 40ft Wall, PETRONAS station Peramu 2, Pahang: Being One with Nature, on our beautiful rainforests in particular Taman Negara



Figure 4: 15ft x 30ft Wall, PETRONAS station Luyang, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah: Of Sun, Sea, Forest and Mountains, featuring our iconic Mount Kinabalu.



Figure 5: 40ft x 60ft Wall, PETRONAS station Batu Feringgi, Penang: United by Food, featuring our love for local cuisine.



Figure 6: 40ft x 30ft Wall, PETRONAS station Tapah, Perak: Fun in the Nature, on one of the highest waterfalls in Malaysia, Lata Kinjang



Figure 7: 40ft x 40ft Wall, PETRONAS station The Place @ Ampang (formerly known as PETRONAS station Jalan Kolam Air Lama): The City of Life, where we showcase how with the convenience of being digitally connected at all times, we still enjoy our quality *lepak* time over food with our loved ones

Image Source: Image by Syed Zamzur Akasah, Fine Art Department, Faculty of Art & Design UITM Shah Alam. Selangor

**Figure 1**, 15ft x 40ft wall-size mural on Petronas Station Solaris, Selangor shown pictorial bound by traditions, a showcase of our famous Malaysia *pasar malam*, an activity we held on to even when progress and modernity surround us. **Figure 2**, 15ft x 40ft wall-size mural on Petronas Station MITC, Melaka portraying the Where Multi-cultural Heritage Resides, showcasing the state's heritage and the unique architecture of the famous staircase. **Figure 3**, 18ft x 40ft Wall, Petronas Station Peramu 2, Pahang showcasing Being One with Nature, on our beautiful rainforests, particularly Taman Negara. **Figure 4**, 15ft x 30ft wall size, Petronas Station Luyang, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah celebrate Of Sun, Sea, Forest and Mountains, featuring our iconic Mount Kinabalu. **Figure 5**, 40ft x 60ft wall size, Petronas Station Batu Feringgi, Penang presenting the United by Food, featuring the love for local cuisine and local activity. **Figure 6**, 40ft x 30ft wall size, Petronas Tapah, Perak translating the Fun in the Nature, on one of the highest waterfalls in Malaysia, Lata Kinjang. **Figure 7**, 40ft x 40ft wall size, Petronas Station The Place @ Ampang (formerly known as PETRONAS station Jalan Kolam Air Lama) visualized The City of Life, where we showcase how with the convenience of being digitally connected at all times, we still enjoy our quality *lepak* time over food with our loved ones.

## 5.0 Conclusions

When it comes to public art, murals are a way of expressing one's thoughts on a wall or other flat surface. Local big brands in Malaysia, such as Petronas Dagangan Berhad, frequently fund and collaborate with local and international artists to highlight a sense of local identity, becoming increasingly popular as urban art becomes more widespread. Known by the title "Cerita Kita," they are a collective mural art project that includes artists from states such as Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, and Melaka, and Perak, Penang, Pahang and Sabah. By translating Malaysian identity into a visual presentation, this encouragement gives hope to Malaysian artists and creative people trying to understand the significance of being Malaysian. This research aims to demonstrate how the elements and characters of Malaysian identity are transformed into murals as visual presentations in seven locations of Petronas Gas Stations across Malaysia, as part of the visual presentation. A deeper and more complex meaning is produced for the viewer by Public Art, Site-specific or Environmental Art, which investigates the relationship between the purpose of an artwork and its specific location. Site-specific mural art can comment on the ever-changing world in a public and unique way, ensuring that it remains a significant theme in contemporary art for a long time to come. According to Jean Robertson and Craig McDaniel, "artwork in which the work derives a significant portion of its meaning and form from the specific location where it is installed or painted" is defined as "artwork in which the work derives a significant portion of its meaning and form from the specific location where it is painted."

The functional site is a temporary movement of information surrounding the work, such as debates about the work and ideas, drawings, photographs, and videos. The operative area is also a temporary movement of information surrounding the work itself. Each individual's contribution to the success of a large-scale art project, such as a community mural project, is significant. Students of all ages and abilities can participate in mural paintings because they are created through teamwork or group learning. When it comes to a thriving community mural, it is not just about the final product, which is usually an original piece of art; it is about the inspiring process of art learning and creation outside, as well as the experience that learners gain from their participation in the creative work. Malaysians are beginning to recognize and appreciate local talent, as evidenced by this innovative project, which opens up the possibility of making a living in the creative industry for young artists or local talent. Documentation video can be found on PETRONAS Brands YouTube Channels <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=biOnZyqu2ww&t=15s> & <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LE676YCHxo>.

## 6.0 Acknowledgement

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