

## **Pentas Seni Merdeka Continues to Uplift Public Spaces in Downtown KL with its Second Edition – Borneo Music and Dance**

*Yayasan Hasanah joins Think City and Kuala Lumpur City Hall to bolster Kuala Lumpur as a creative and cultural district through public arts*

**KUALA LUMPUR, 10 SEPTEMBER** – Following the recent success of its launch, Pentas Seni Merdeka kicks back into high gear to reignite Downtown KL with an infusion of Borneo Music and Dance. This free monthly public arts initiative is jointly organised by Think City and Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) in their continued efforts to increase equity through the activation of public spaces. Its second edition – Borneo Music and Dance will take place on Jalan Raja on the 10th of September (Saturday) from 8:30 pm onwards.

In conjunction with Malaysia Day, the second edition of Pentas Seni Merdeka brings visitors in the city to the land of Borneo to explore its arts and culture through immersive dance workshops and musical performances. The programme for this edition is a collaboration with award-winning Alena Murang – a Malaysian singer-songwriter and the first professional female sape musician. There will also be performances by the DBKL Combo & Cultural Artists, and special activities for the visitors such as a Datun Julud Dance workshop, Magunatip or ‘Bamboo Dance’ workshop, and Sumpit or Blowpipes. The public arts initiative has also been made possible with the support of Yayasan Hasanah through its Arts For All Seasons (ArtsFAS) initiative, which is part of the Hasanah Special Grant, a collaborative effort with the Ministry of Finance.

**YB Dato’ Hajah Hanifah Hajar Taib, Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department (Sabah and Sarawak Affairs)** said, “The integration of creative and cultural activities and infrastructure are fundamental to creating a more vibrant city. Culture has the power to sustain and transform cities, to strengthen local communities and create a sense of identity. In a country as culturally diverse as Malaysia – it is through the merging of different cultural art performances and our historic infrastructure that the vibrancy of our city can be reborn. Pentas Seni Merdeka is certainly a platform to uplift and highlight the different communities within Malaysia, bringing our city together once again through the creative and cultural realm.”

**Hamdan Abdul Majeed, Managing Director of Think City** said, “Public spaces have always been a very essential part of cities and communities. A place where people meet people, spend time and make memories. Following the great reception that the launch of Pentas Seni Merdeka received last July, we are excited to see a larger crowd of Malaysians from all walks of life come together for our second edition – Borneo Music and Dance. Pentas Seni Merdeka highlights how the arts can transform the look and feel of a city like Kuala Lumpur, and reenergise the historical Dataran Merdeka. It is my hope that more collaborative efforts and community-driven placemaking will be implemented to make our public spaces welcoming to and representative of Malaysians of all backgrounds.”

“Such efforts contribute to building back businesses within the heart of Kuala Lumpur, subsequent to the immense challenges Malaysia has braved through in the last three years. Through various public art initiatives such as Pentas Seni Merdeka, we can take necessary steps to rehabilitate businesses in

Downtown Kuala Lumpur in addition to revitalising the city post-pandemic via implementation of high-quality creative and cultural content,” **Hamdan Abdul Majeed added.**

**Dato’ Shahira Ahmed Bazari, Yayasan Hasanah Trustee and Managing Director** said, “We are honoured to be able to play our part in reigniting the arts, heritage, and cultural ecosystem post pandemic through our ArtsFAS initiative. This impact area aligns with Yayasan Hasanah’s commitment in protecting and promoting our cultural heritage and diversity.”

To support the vision of Downtown Kuala Lumpur as a cultural and creative district, Think City launched the Downtown Kuala Lumpur Grants programme in 2021 to spur the local cultural economy – in addition to implementing various public realm and laneway improvement projects to improve liveability within the city centre. The grants programmes were reintroduced as part of a long-term strategic plan to activate the creative economy within the heritage district, and rooted in the spirit of recovery from the pandemic and it is once again open to applications for its second cycle. Deadline of the programme is on 16 September 2022.

The next editions of Pentas Seni Merdeka will be held on every second Saturday of the month at Jalan Raja with the third edition slated to be held on 8 October; followed by two subsequent editions on 12 November and 10 December. Each edition will feature different traditional art forms and experiences for visitors to experience.

For more information, visit [www.thinkcity.com.my](http://www.thinkcity.com.my) or use the hashtag #mythinkcity on social media. To learn more about Downtown Kuala Lumpur Grants Programme, visit [www.thinkcity.com.my/downtownkl](http://www.thinkcity.com.my/downtownkl) .

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#### **About Think City**

Think City is an impact organisation established in 2009 to create more sustainable and equitable places for the benefit of all. Our knowledge, skills and strategies focus on urban solutions, the environment, social communities, and the cultural economy. Think City is a wholly owned subsidiary of Khazanah Nasional Berhad (the sovereign wealth fund of the Government of Malaysia). For more information, log on to [www.thinkcity.com.my](http://www.thinkcity.com.my) .

#### **About Downtown Kuala Lumpur**

Downtown KL was established as part of the strategic plan to develop the nation’s first creative and cultural district at the historic and heritage core of Kuala Lumpur. The vision of Downtown KL is to create an inclusive, authentic, and viable creative and cultural places within the city that knit together its historic fabric to enhance its liveability and visitor appeal. Think City’s initiatives within Downtown KL aims to empower the creative and cultural industry to become significant contributors to the national economy in a rapidly evolving city. For more information, visit [www.thinkcity.com.my/discover-kuala-lumpurs-living-heritage/](http://www.thinkcity.com.my/discover-kuala-lumpurs-living-heritage/) .

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*For media queries, please contact Ninot Aziz: + 6019 396 6544, [ninotaziz@bzbee.com.my](mailto:ninotaziz@bzbee.com.my)*