



tom fleming / creative consultancy /

Appendix 1: Case Studies

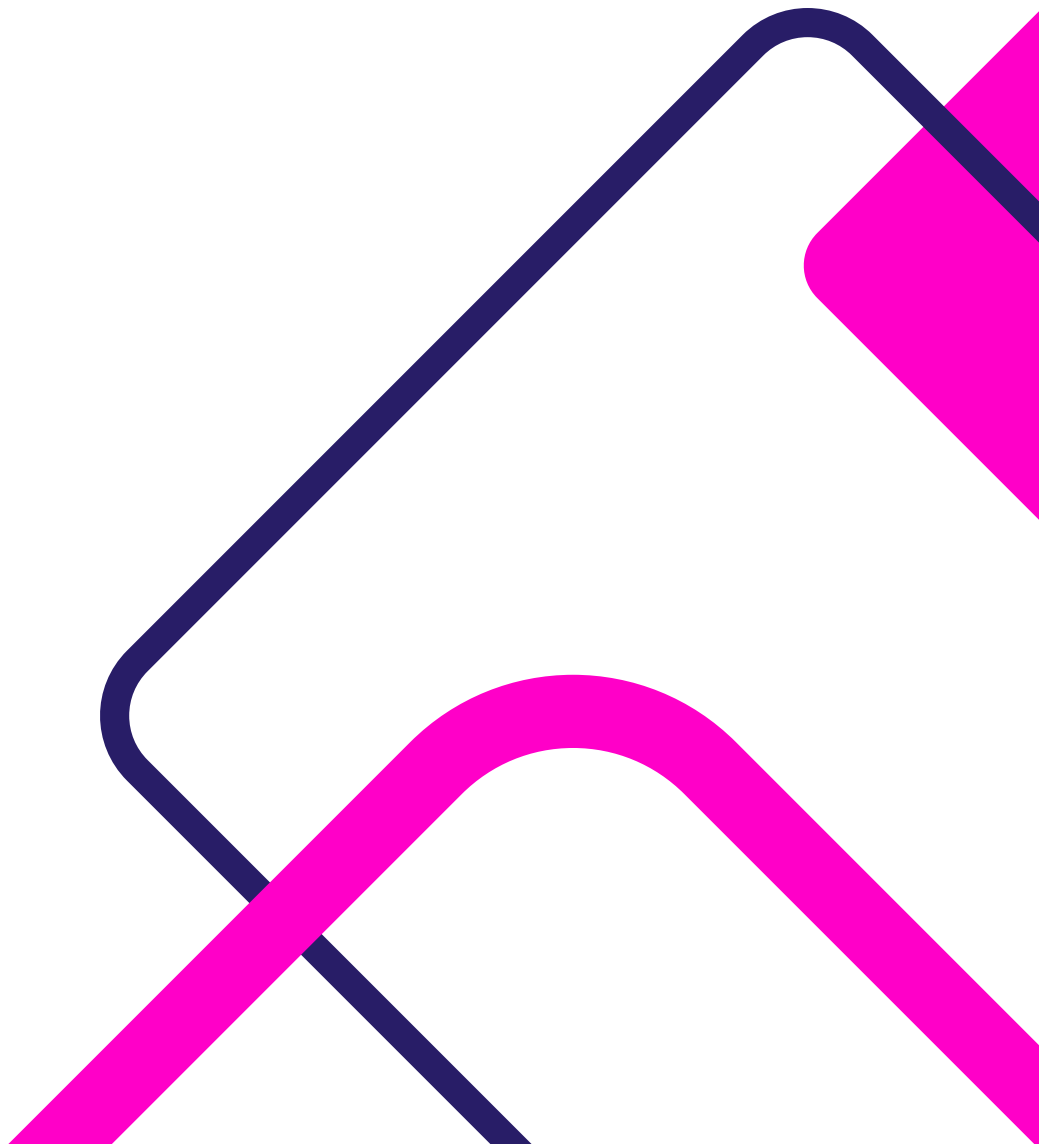


TABLE OF CONTENT

APPENDIX 1 : CASE STUDIES

INDONESIA	1
ART JAKARTA	1
Backgrounds and goals	1
Approach and programmes	2
Success and Achievements	2
Developmental needs and future planning	3
KUSTOMFEST : Indonesian Kustom Kulture Festival – Bridging Custom Builder to the World Stage	3
Background and distinctive qualities	4
Approach and programme	4
Success and outcome	5
Developmental needs and future development	6
FESTIVAL KABA – NAN JOMBANG, PADANG	7
Backgrounds and distinctive qualities	7
Approach and Programmes	8
Success and Achievements	9
Diversity	9
FESTIVAL TEATER JAKARTA	9
Background and Distinctive Qualities	9
Programs and Approach	10
Success and Achievement	10
Diversity	11
Makassar Biennale: Biennale as a Momentum, not Event	12
Backgrounds	12
Approach and Programmes	13
Success and Achievements	13
On Diversity and Inclusivity	14
Future Developments	14
PAPUAN FILM FESTIVAL	14
Background and distinctive qualities	14
Approach and programme	15
Success and outcome	16
Developmental needs and future development	16

MALAYSIA	17
The Refugee Fest – refugee empowerment	17
Background and distinctive qualities	17
Approach and programme	19
Success and outcome	19
Developmental needs and future development	19
Yayasan Sime Darby Arts Festival	
– a fun, inclusive, free-for-all festival	20
Background and distinctive qualities	20
Approach and programme	21
Success and outcome	21
Developmental needs and future development	22
George Town Literary Festival –	
connecting and showcasing Malaysian independent literature circle	22
Background and distinctive qualities	23
Approach and programme	23
Success and outcome	24
Developmental needs and future development	24
Ipoh International Art Festival – putting Ipoh on the ‘map’	25
Background and distinctive qualities	26
Approach and programme	27
Success and outcome	27
Developmental needs and future development	28
Rainforest World Music Festival – celebrating diversity in the	
backdrop of the Borneo rainforest	29
Background and distinctive qualities	30
Approach and programme	30
Success and outcome	31
Developmental needs and future development	32
Urbanscapes – putting Ipoh on the ‘map’	33
Background and distinctive qualities	34
Approach and programme	34
Success and outcome	35
Developmental needs and future development	35
Kuala Lumpur Fashion Week (KLFW) – mobilising the fashion and	
textile industry	36

Background and distinctive qualities	37
Approach and programme	38
Success and outcome	38
Developmental needs and future development	39
THE PHILIPPINES	40
Art Fair Philippines – elevating the international standing of Filipino art	40
Background and distinctive qualities	41
Approach and programme	41
Success and outcome	42
Developmental needs and future development	42
Escolta Block Party – celebrating the city’s creativity with jubilation	43
Background and distinctive qualities	43
Approach and programme	44
Success and outcome	44
Developmental needs and future development	45
Ibagiw: The Baguio Creative City Festival – emerging community vitality and grit	45
Background and distinctive qualities	46
Approach and programme	47
Success and outcome	47
Developmental needs and future development	48
Philippine International Comics Festival (PICOF) – expanding domestic and global footprint of Filipino comic and graphic literature	48
Background and distinctive qualities	50
Approach and programme	51
Success and outcome	51
Developmental needs and future development	51
Fringe Manila – a safe space for freedom of artistic expressions	52
Background and distinctive qualities	53
Approach and programme	53
Success and outcome	54
Developmental needs and future development	54
VIETNAM	55
Vietnam Festival of Creativity & Design – Creative Future for Vietnam	55
Background and distinctive qualities	56

Approach and programme	57
Successes and outcomes	57
Developmental needs and future development	58
Vietnam Design Week – Connecting Vietnamese Craft Traditions to Contemporary Design	58
Background and distinctive qualities	59
Approach and programme	59
Success and outcomes	60
Developmental needs and future development	61
Hanoi New Music Festival – “Make a silence” - for the experimental music of Vietnam	61
Background and distinctive qualities	62
Approach and programme	63
Successes and outcomes	64
Developmental needs and future development	64
No Cai Bum Contemporary Art Week– Dynamo for Vietnam’s Contemporary Art Scene	65
Background and distinctive qualities	66
Approach and programme	67
Successes and outcomes	67
Developmental needs and future development	68
Hoi An Full Moon Festival – Bringing “Soul” back to the Ancient Town	68
Background and distinctive qualities	69
Approach and programme	70
Successes and outcomes	70
Developmental needs and future development	71
Da Nang International Firework Festival DIFF – Lightening up the Dynamic City	72
Background and distinctive qualities	73
Approach and programme	74
Successes and outcomes	74
Developmental needs and future development	74
THAILAND	75
Bangkok Theatre Festival – Cultural buffet in the city of contrast and a world tourist hotspot	75
Background and distinctive qualities	77
Approach and programme	78
Success and outcome	79

Developmental needs and future development	79
THAILAND BIENNALE – Installing contemporary arts in world-famous beach resort town	80
Background and distinctive qualities	82
Approach and programme	82
Success and outcome	83
Developmental needs and future development	84
Chiang Mai Design Week – Local meets global in the northern capital	85
Background and distinctive qualities	87
Approach and programme	88
Success and outcome	89
Developmental needs and future development	89
SINGAPORE	91
European Film Festival (EUFF)	91
Background and distinctive qualities	92
Approach and programme	92
Success and outcome	93
Developmental needs and future development	93
Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA) – An Arts Festival Reimagined for the Future	94
Background and distinctive qualities	95
Approach and programme	96
Success and outcome	96
Innovation takes centre stage	97
Developmental needs and future development	97
Festival of Women N.O.W. – Not Ordinary Work	99
Background and distinctive qualities	101
Approach and programme	101
Success and outcome	102
Developmental needs and future development	103
References	104

INDONESIA

ART JAKARTA

Backgrounds and goals

Art Jakarta was first known as Bazaar Art Jakarta, which was founded by MRA Media Group in 2009. It was part of the development of new art markets in Asia that had started since the mid 2000s, and followed the steps of Art Beijing, Art Hong Kong, Art Shanghai and such. The boom period of the Indonesian market itself happened intensively between 2004 to 2008, so the fair happened just slightly after the boom ended. Nevertheless, it worked quite well and even had the younger generation of collectors blossoming to play a more important role in the Indonesian art scene. Then it continued as mostly local fair—sometimes they had foreign galleries but the vibe was strong for Jakartans and Indonesian art market, until they rebranded the fair in 2018 when Tom Tandio stepped in as Fair Director. They declared themselves as a regional Asian Fair and focused on putting Indonesia as a highlight of Asian art market. Part of the rebranding efforts was to move the fair location from the hotel's ballroom to Jakarta Convention Center that obviously became one of the keys to success in the new identity of the fair.

“Indonesia is still one of the strongest art markets in South East Asia. And we have distinctive social capital, where it is very embedded in our culture and people genuinely support and collaborate. In Art Jakarta, the success was the result of this strong “gotong royong”, that makes this fair feel different to others that is more in bubbles.”

Tom Tandio, the fair director of ART JAKARTA

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Presentation of high profile Asian artists (including Indonesia) with special projects- The distribution of contemporary art discourses between markets and institutions through series of talks, discussions, guided tour, etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Strengthen the Asian and Indonesian market- To collaborate with government institutions so they could see the importance to create policies for healthy art market	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Inclusiveness- Collaborative efforts of various stakeholders- Active engagement with digital native generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Strong policies from government in term of taxes incentive- Government to promote the events abroad (Asia)

Approach and programmes

While maintaining a high profile collectors and art market, Art Jakarta 2019 also works to develop a new market that targets the younger generations and to open a more inclusive social class. To achieve the latter, they created another section where they engaged with art collectives or community and created an affordable booth for affordable arts. The fair also collaborated with the Creative Economic Agency where they provided a platform for younger generations of artists through curated exhibitions to show their talents and ideas, including the inclusion of new media arts and the use of digital technologies in art making. This also had given opportunity to young artists who had not particularly worked with a gallery to be able to show their works.

During the fair they also organised various talks that brought together experts and art practitioners all over Asia, and this had built the bridge between art discourses and art markets that usually strongly separated. For the collectors, they had some tour programmes, where foreign collectors were moving around to see different private collections in Jakarta, and also visited public institutions such as Galeri Nasional and Fine Art Museums so that they gain deeper knowledge on the context of Indonesian art histories and its connection to recent development of contemporary arts in the country.

In 2020, because of the pandemic situation, they decided to move the platform to digital one, and become the first art fair in Asia that fully presents their works in a 3D online fair. Tom Tandio underlined the urgency to create a dynamic online art market through curated sessions that can be held in a longer period of time and this had enabled a collector to have deeper engagement with galleries to learn more about the artists and art works.

Success and Achievements

As an art fair, there are some aspects as indicators of success in relation to markets and art systems. For Art Jakarta 2019, they saw the attendance of big and important galleries in Asia as one of significant indicators that could put them in the same level as art fairs in HK, Seoul, Taipei and such. Secondly, the marketing strategy has successfully created a new understanding that art (market) is not only for the elite, but it is part of the everyday life of the young middle class in Jakarta. They have banners all over public spaces to give the sense of “art belongs to everyone” instead of only advertising the event. Third, the strong sales that makes the proof for increasing interests of the international or Asian art market towards Indonesian arts. Their efforts of big branding also proved by the wide reviews of the fair in different mass media, from local, national to international.

Another success was the Art Jakarta virtual 2020 had included participation of 38 galleries local and Asian galleries, and the online fair itself shows quite good sales over the period of 4 months (October 2020 to January 2021), where in Tandio’s opinion leads to, again, the strong social commitment where collectors, galleries and artists are collaboratively working to keep the contemporary art alive, amidst difficulties during pandemic situation.

Developmental needs and future planning

In his optimistic tone of how the Indonesian art market will rise again after the pandemic, Tom Tandio highlights the importance of intervention by the government in making policies that will share responsibilities of the state and private sector to contribute to the development of art. He mentions some policies such as tax deduction for artwork buyers, or the obligation for property companies to allocate some of the construction budget for commissioning artists, so that artists and creative industries benefit from these infrastructure projects.

KUSTOMFEST : Indonesian Kustom Kulture Festival - Bridging Custom Builder to the World stage

KUSTOMFEST is a custom culture festival, collaborative performances of various types of Indonesian custom works, including: Kustom Bike Show, Hot Rod & Kustom Cars, Kustom Bicycle & Pedal Car, Kustom Paint Battle, Helmet Kustom Paint Kontest, DieCast Show & Kontest, Body Art Show & Kontest, BMX Kontest, Photo Kontest, Kustom Art & Klasik Island, Stunt Rider Show, Junkyard Festival, Kustom Kulture Performance, and Lucky Draw in one concept of Indonesia's annual Kustom Kulture celebration.

<https://kustomfest.com/>

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spread the message the important of kustom kulture - Art engineering for better Innovation - Discovering engineers and makers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Large creative performance and exhibitions - Indonesian engineers and brand meeting - Various brand and product research development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Global kustom kulture community engagement - How important creativity and innovation affects Indonesians in the future - Social business development through festival 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear government regulations for Kustom industries - Easy access festival facilitation - Policy reform for festival ecosystem - The needs to reach global network



KUSTOMFEST a big playground for global kustom kulture enthusiast -
Photo credit by: Gilang Braja - KUSTOMFEST

Background and distinctive qualities

KUSTOMFEST is held as an annual event in October in Yogyakarta-Indonesia, a city famous for its rich culture and historical heritage. KUSTOMFEST invites and involves all elements of Indonesian kustom kulture activists and global custom industry players, presenting the best custom works as a reflection of the cultural richness of the Indonesian nation.

“We want our friends in Yogyakarta, Indonesia to be able to work every year, and have a platform for their work, then their works will be displayed, appreciated, and documented because those three elements are the most important. Finally, we agreed in 2012 to organise KUSTOMFEST which is held every year. The main goal of KUSTOMFEST is to give pride and appreciate the work of the nation's youth...”

– Lulut Wahyudi, Director, KUSTOMFEST

Kustom Kulture is thought to be about inclusiveness and diversity in the work, this is an important part of the development of Kustom Kulture in Indonesia, a good work is an inclusive and diverse work, this is an important part of the communication that is released. KUSTOMFEST does not view ethnicity and religion as a composition because custom culture is the idea of working in diversity.

Approach and programme

KUSTOMFEST Indonesian Kustom Kulture Festival is a celebration of “Kustom Kulture” activists, a global culture that brings together designers in the field of art engineering (motorcycles, cars, bicycles) and the things that accompany them (fashion apparel, painting, artwork, music and lifestyle). Held annually in Yogyakarta attended by more than 30,000 visitors, it introduces Indonesian intellectual property and creative innovations.

The aspect of audience segmentation distribution is something that KUSTOMFEST continues to maintain, the mapping of areas of origin, economic class, family and community segments have to be maintained in a balanced manner and in accordance with the purpose of this festival being presented. Moreover, the need to reach a global network is faced with the challenge of the availability of competent resources, KUSTOMFEST remains consistent in providing assistance to all parties to increase capacity and skills in various aspects according to the needs and actualisation of festival continuity.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, KUSTOMFEST was held in contrast to the festival that had been held so far. In the midst of "limited" conditions, it did not dampen the enthusiasm of the community to enjoy the works at KUSTOMFEST 2020 #UNRESTRICTED. With the health protocols, visitors who are limited to each day can enjoy custom works with an art gallery flavour. All elements are carefully arranged to produce artistic visuals. KUSTOMFEST 2020 #UNRESTRICTED says out loud that current limitations do not mean prohibition/stop working, but invites every custom entity to continue working and make use of the limitations from this condition into a process to the next level as well as inspiration for future works ¹.

Success and outcome

KUSTOMFEST actively encourages the Indonesian people to improve their competence and capacity in the field of innovation and the ability to create products. KUSTOMFEST became a broad bridge for all parties involved (audiences, participants and stakeholders) to share roles for the good of the creative ecosystem in Indonesia, besides that KUSTOMFEST also builds a global network to inform various factual matters of Indonesian cultural custom works throughout the world.

Furthermore, through this festival, young Indonesian custom builders/makers can have the media to introduce their work to a wider public. The presence of visitors from abroad also allows participants to reach a wider network. KUSTOMFEST has now attracted several kustom makers or builders from abroad. The willingness of global builders to take care of all permits and processes to be able to present their works at KUSTOMFEST, shows the prestige of the event and also the potential Indonesian market for kustom builders (makers)².

“Networking is the most expensive. Once we get together, it becomes a melting pot. We no longer talk about the work from each individual anymore, but this is the work of Indonesian youth... ”

– Lulut Wahyudi, Director, KUSTOMFEST

¹ <https://kustomfest.com/menjadi-festival-penanda-tutup-tahun-2020-lebaran-kustom-dirayakan/>

² <https://mediaindonesia.com/weekend/409840/lulut-wahyudi-wadah-builder-muda>

KUSTOMFEST has successfully bridged Indonesian custom builder (maker) to the world stage kustom festival. Additionally, with their professional competence, they have become the largest kustom kulture festival in South East Asia (number two in Asia after Mooneyes, Japan) for the number of participants, exhibition quality, media coverages, festival guests stars (namely as Roland Sands, Cole Foster, Steve Caballero, Sinya Kimura, Shige Suganuma, Yaniv Evan, Hideki Hosshikawa, Kaichiro Kurosu, Cristian Sosa, and many more global attendees). It is no wonder that Bikeexif.com mention this festival as one of the top kustom kulture show in the world³, following with the 10 million views across digital media during the festival, and supported with good audience engagement.

Developmental needs and future development

KUSTOMFEST has been established for 10 years, following with their experience as a support system for the festival ecosystem in Yogyakarta, Indonesia needed to progress with key issues of economic growth and various festival facilitations that are more accessible.

Supported by open access, good economic growth, public awareness, and policy reforms in favour of the festival city ecosystem. In addition, the government's concern and various regulations must be in favour of the festival organisers. Moreover, the custom industry can be more promising and can develop in the hands of young people as custom builders with the clarity of custom industry regulations.

“Through the festival, we want to foster the imagination and dreams of every generation in Indonesia, that the best Indonesian talents must align themselves with global competition. Not only the generation that only buys but builds...”

– Aan Fikriyan, Vice Director, KUSTOMFEST

³ <https://www.bikeexif.com/royal-custom-enfield-continental-qt-650-cafe-racer>

FESTIVAL KABA – NAN JOMBANG, PADANG

Backgrounds and distinctive qualities

Festival Kaba started in the late 1980s, initiated and organised by Nan Jombang Dance Company, in Padang, West Sumatra where they called it “gelanggang”⁴ in the beginning. They turned it into a Festival in 2015, and had been greatly developed since then with the growing popularity of Nan Jombang Dance Company in the performing art fields across the globe. The festival started as a platform for artists in West Sumatra to show off their new works and was joined by theatre maker, musicians, and others, in previous editions before becoming more focused on dance performances in later years, with duration variably changing between four to seven days. Started as a local festival, KABA Festival now has become an international event with the participating artists from Japan, Taiwan, Europe, Singapore, and others, in addition to Indonesian choreographers from outside Sumatra. Most of the time, the festival is held at the grounds of Nan Jombang Company, with their unique architectural style and half-open amphitheatre, even though once they worked with Padang Art Center (Taman Budaya Padang) in 2017 to host some of the performance since they wanted to contribute for the programme in this government-owned venue.

“For us the festival is really the choice chosen by Nan Jombang Dance Company to give back to our community so we can further develop the performing art ecosystem in Sumatra. We also want to build the regeneration process so young choreographers can perform widely in other parts of Indonesia or even in international festivals.”

Angga Djamar, choreographer/dancer/
Director of KABA Festival”

⁴ <https://www.contextualdictionary.com/translate/indonesian-english/gelanggang>

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New skill and knowledge development for art students in Padang - New generation of choreographers and dancers had performed in national and international art events - Site specific performances from international dance companies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Growing network of regional and international dancers and choreographers - Local community engagement as part of the festival - Stronger bond between organisers and local community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Independency - Collaboration - Longer term relationship between organisers and performers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Funding support for programming - Research and development

Approach and Programmes

One of the strengths of the festival was that the organisers are almost fully independent in supporting this project, without constant funding from any other parties. Most of the performers came with their own efforts to get funding from their government, and happily volunteered for community projects where they engage. However this limits their curating perspective and tends to be more grounded in internal organisation - curating each edition on their own without inviting guest curators

Aside from creating platforms for different performances, from traditional to contemporary, from local to international performers, they also organise different outreach programmes for local art communities such as workshop, master class, talks, and others, where usually they collaborate with local art universities or schools.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the festival was off (in 2020) and they were unlikely to transform into digital or online festivals. They believe that physical meetings still become the strongest attraction for everyone who are involved, and this social relationship built through the real connection is still important to be maintained. In 2021, the plan is to make the festival on a smaller scale with mostly local performers invited, with a limited audience and strongly applying health protocol.

Success and Achievements

To be able to bring contemporary international dance artists and companies to Sumatra with their own efforts and to perform their works to audiences in Padang, is one of the biggest achievements. While the festival also aims to be a showcasing platform for younger generations of artists and choreographers, one of the success indicators is the connections and collaborations created inside the festival.

“During five years of our festival, some young choreographers had the opportunity to perform in other cities, other festivals, in Indonesia and abroad. This is an important step for the future of the art scene in Sumatra as well,”

Angga Djamar, choreographer/dancer/Director of KABA Festival”

With their limited facilities and resources, the festival successfully ensures the participants and performers to re-create their performances and technical requirements to adjust with the local situation, and this shows the respect and enthusiasm from the participants in joining the festival. This has shown an achievement in negotiating the standards of international festivals and capabilities in building trusts from participants.

FESTIVAL TEATER JAKARTA

Background and Distinctive Qualities

Festival Teater Jakarta was first organised in 1974 as a competition for theatre groups around Jakarta. Jakarta has five sub-regions, so each of the sub-region would choose some groups to represent their area, and compete with other sub-regions. After a few years, the competition/festival was vacant for quite some time, until 2006 when some theatre activists met with Jakarta Art Council's theatre section to discuss the future of the festival. Since then, the Art Council decided to take over the organisational part of the festival, and change the concept to make it more of a festival than a competition. Dewi Noviami, one of the key figures during the transformation, mentioned that they kept the format of collaboration with five sub-regions in Jakarta, so that they could reach the groups under the radar. In the first few editions of the new format, they still did not have a specific curatorial approach, and intentionally went fluid with the theme and discourses.

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - preparation of each performance (longer time for preparation) - More experimental and diverse forms of theatre performance being staged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - open wider connections of theatre groups from Jakarta with groups from other cities in Indonesia - More diverse audience, including audience from other disciplines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - semi-governmental festival - non-theme curation - emphasise on regeneration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - collaboration with other disciplines - to open possibilities of working with new media

Programs and Approach

During the festival, since the cooperation with Jakarta Art Council, there are many different activities instead of focusing only on stage or performances. They have discussions that involve other experts or art critics from various disciplines, or workshops and screenings. Noviami also mentions there were some exhibitions done that came as a result of gathering and reading the archives related to the history of theatre development in Jakarta in particular or in Indonesia in general. This program was conducted with film makers and curators with visual art backgrounds.

Collaboration with theatre associations in five sub-regions in Jakarta also enabled them to have diverse participants for the festival, and this also underlines the importance of regeneration of theatre makers and audience in Jakarta. Interestingly, every group has their own groups of audience so the committee does not have to struggle to collect audience, which is one of the big problems for performances in Indonesia

“The programming process of the festival is always quite interesting because we have to find the balance between working on the historical foundation of the festival itself, and the new vision we want to bring to give more relevant contexts. “

Dewi Noviami,
one of members of Theatre Department of the Jakarta Art Council
(2006 – 2012)

Success and Achievement

While the festival has its important roots and history from early years of modern theatre in Indonesia, to bring them into life again was indeed already one of the successful indicators. The organisers, the theatre association and the whole community seemed to be on the same wavelength to pay more attention to the festival and establish it as one of the identities of

the theatre ecosystem in Jakarta. Within years, they have better and more professional festival management, including technical aspects such as lighting design, sound engineering, artistic and stage management, and so on.

“Working for six years for the festival, I witnessed how it has been transforming into an open platform for younger theatre makers and other sections of the performing art ecosystem,”

Dewi Noviami,
one of members of Theatre Department of the Jakarta Art Council
(2006 – 2012)

As FTJ is part of the Jakarta Art Council, the members of the theatre department and organisers change every three or six years, and this also usually brings new approaches and encourages transformations. In the last five years, there are many new curatorial approaches being introduced that are related to more contemporary discourse in performing art studies.

Diversity

In her long experience of organising the festival, Dewi admits that theatre is still dominated by male agents and leaders, even though there is a significant increasing number of women involved in the stage and behind the stage. She witnesses the growing number of female theatre directors, followed by actresses and sometimes singers on stage. While in the management team, women were quite active already in the management aspect, but these days they are also involved in various roles as stage managers, stage crews, and documentations. The technical aspects such as sound and lighting are still dominated by male workers, but slowly some female crews take part to be able to learn working in these fields.

The diversity in terms of the artists and audiences are something strongly evidenced with their position to work with community theatre from different regions in Jakarta that indirectly bring them to work across generations, across social statuses and classes, as well as ethnicity. The audience usually comes from the social circle of the group who perform, so this also helps in order to bring diversity of theatre goers. Dewi believes that the festival has become a strong platform to create discussions and to bridge differences of ideological standpoint, aesthetic visions and world views among the theatre artists in Jakarta.

Makassar Biennale

Biennale as a Momentum, not Event

Backgrounds

Makassar Biennale was established in 2015 to provide an alternative platform for the visual art scene in Makassar. The city has a stronger tradition in performing arts and literature sectors, therefore to create an international event for visual arts would need a different approach that relates to existing traditions and communities. For example, in Makassar, they established the Makassar International Writers Festival, as well as the Makassar Film Festival. To build the dynamic of the art scene within the current situation, MB team developed strategies that are quite different from those events, even though they are collaborating with them in some aspects. Since 2017, they have declared ‘Maritime’ as their permanent theme to be explored further in each edition, as their awareness of the importance of digging local knowledge and conducting research on maritime cultures across eastern part of Indonesia. Makassar Biennale believes that its unique visions and forms in making art festivals should be based on their capability to look for their local strength and positioning, instead of copying the forms of biennales in other cities.

“We need to challenge ourselves on definition. The way we create biennale is much more than exhibition making, therefore it is not about making products of visual arts. This is a long process of knowledge exchanges and local engagement.”

Anwar Jimpe Rahman, Direktur Makassar Biennale

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alternative forms of exhibition formats for Makassar context - Interdisciplinary research and art making of film, visual arts, literature, performing arts, etc - Research based presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wider networks of artists and researchers in cities around Makassar and other parts of Eastern Indonesia - Strong bonding of activism and artists, using art and literature for tools of social movement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating workshops and activities in different parts of South Sulawesi as part of exhibitions. - Focusing on development of local art history and contexts that are strongly based on maritime culture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opening more networks and open platforms to discuss with various stakeholders in the area - Strengthen the interdisciplinary approach not only between art fields but also arts and other fields.

Approach and Programmes

As a biennale, MB has a very distinctive approach that they started to apply in 2019 where they move around in cities across South Sulawesi instead of only focusing on Makassar City itself. In 2019, they performed in Bulukumba, Pare-pare, and Mandar as part of the exhibition in Makassar Art Centre. Also in 2019, they had collaborated with more foreign artists from Japan and Taiwan, where they involved the international residency process as part of the production process. In 2020, the network goes wider with their collaboration with Labuan Bajo and Papua, even though the process was quite difficult with the pandemic hitting the area as well.

For the MB Team, the exhibition is just one part of the goals and activities of Makassar Biennale. It is important to underline that for MB, the sharing and distribution of local knowledge, and the act to understand their local situations and contexts have always been the main vision they want to achieve. Within this perspective, programmes that focus on knowledge production and distribution such as publishing books, workshops, discussions, are in equal position as exhibition.

Success and Achievements

For Jimpe, as the director, it is important to see the spirit of independence as one main indicator of their success as an organisation. As it is not easy for them to ensure the local government can secure funding for them, they believe that networks and collaborations are the main resources they have.

“Even without funding, we would still do what we are doing now. All the activities and programmes are well planned within the networks, so the funding usually is used to spread the impact and to reach wider communities, such as to print the books, to have proper video documentations, and so on.”

Anwar Jimpe Rahman,
Makassar Biennale co-Founders and Director

Another achievement is the regeneration of artists and art organisers in South Sulawesi. In Jimpe’s opinion, the art scene in the city and beyond has been dominated by the older generation for such a long time, and usually they are the ones who hold the access to government funding and resources. With the biennale, and the larger scale of activities they create, they work mostly with the younger generation of artists, art workers, managers, writers, film makers and other groups with a new horizon and bring critical thinking as part of the discourse. This movement of the young generation becomes one of the urges in sharing spaces in the city, so the cross boundaries and multicultural perspectives could be visible as part of everyday life practice.

“Makassar Biennale is a Momentum instead of only an event, so with momentum it is necessary to bring people to move forward.”

Anwar Jimpe Rahman,
Makassar Biennale co-Founders and Director

On Diversity and Inclusivity

In the Makassar Biennale Team, Jimpe mentions that most members of the organisations are women. They are not only active in logistic sectors, but also became part of decision makers. Many of them also exhibit their works for the exhibitions, or take part in editing films and books. One of strong presences is the group Bomb Benang that is a collective of women who uses crafts such as sewing and embroidery to create installations sometimes in public space.

Future Developments

While many organisations think that infrastructures and physical resources are always a fundamental need for making large scale exhibitions or festivals, such as biennale, the MB Team is not particularly keen to demand infrastructures in their future plans. The curators are challenged to work with existing spaces, even something quite different from the conservative notion of galleries or art spaces, but usually these spaces had given better artistic experiments. For Jimpe it seems that opening discussions and maybe collaborations with local governments is more strategic since in past periods governments avoided collaborating with younger generations, and consequently, there is a big gap of understanding of local cultural policy with the dynamics of contemporary situations.

PAPUAN FILM FESTIVAL

Background and distinctive qualities

Papuan Film Festival is an annual film event that has happened since 2017, organised by Papuan Voices film community that focuses on the development of the documentary film ecosystem in Papua. This festival features stories and narratives that focus on the voice of people in Papua, to compete with the stories created by non-Papuan film-makers or journalists. It is important also to underline that the collective is an important platform for learning together and developing channels to distribute the discourse on West Papua social political context that are constructed by the Papuan themselves. The Festival and organisation reach out to many different cities in Papua, not only focused in a city to give also a sense of decentralisation.

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are many films about Festival made by young generation of Papuan filmmakers - Increasing skills of audio visual technology among the young generations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Networks with different film festivals in Indonesia and abroad - Supported by social organisation for further collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Decentralisation of the events to other cities - Developing workshops and classes for the young generation of filmmakers and programmers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More network with various parties in Papua - Publication and other materials to be distributed widely.

Approach and programme

Interestingly, the organisers choose different cities each year to host the festival so it becomes a more moving festival; starting from Wamena, Merauke and then Jayapura. This strategy to move around cities in West Papua, also had inspired the younger generation to be more involved with film as a medium and also the practice of storytelling (in the form of documentary). Papuan Voices also organises workshops for young generations not only in film-making, but also to learn how to think critically and to build dialogues in regard to Papuan issues. During the festivals, they also held some discussions to have a platform for different activists, artists, scholars and others.

Papuan Voices also works collaboratively with other organisations to have screenings in other cities, for example with the Documentary Film Festival in Yogyakarta, to introduce the works from Papuan artists to bigger arenas. In the future, they also plan to have routine screening in other parts of Indonesia.



Success and outcome

Papuan film festival has encouraged younger generations of Papuan activists and filmmakers to present themselves in rewriting history and battling the notion of identity as Papuan. They have involved hundreds of young talents to speak up about various Papuan-related issues, and critically challenge the established representation of Papuan that have been exposed for more than 50 years as part of the archipelago. This very much local based dedication had raised a sense of belonging and encouragement for the organisers from the community. They also started collaboration with some other film festivals such as the Documentary Film Festival in Yogyakarta to be able to reach a wider audience.

The community of Papuan Voices itself has continued their activities across three years, and this is especially possible because the members have other jobs to earn living, so the organisation does not have to pay their salary as full time staff. Their involvement in other professions also enabled them to expand their networks that also enriched the festival.

Growing numbers of the audience also has been measured as one of key indicators of their success and potential development in the future.

Developmental needs and future development

Papuan Film Festival is one of most consistent art event in east part of Indonesia, together with Makassar Film Festival and the emergence of Sumbawa Film Festival, that could generate a wider network of artists and film-makers in that area, to break the dominance discourse of centre and periphery, and to merge the voices from alternative narratives about Papua. Thus they expect to build networks with artists and directors not only between the makers and producers but also to consolidate with a wider audience and community across Indonesia.

Development need and future :

1. Expanding the networks between documentary film makers of Papua and other film communities in Indonesia so that they can share experiences and urgencies
2. Bringing documentary not only as form of working but also as a method of activism and art, so there is a need to connect also with activists and artists from other platforms so the issues and discourses brought by the movies could be shared to wider public
3. Skill innovation and Knowledge Management: Workshops or learning platforms with experts either from Papua or other parts of Indonesia to update the use of technology particularly in the digital age and to manage the local methods of production to be acknowledged as a local knowledge based process.

With their critical view on Papua's positioning towards Indonesia, they also expect that the films and festivals would bring discussion on Papua to a wider audience and give a more balanced perspective that includes more voices from Papua itself.

MALAYSIA

The Refugee Fest – refugee empowerment

Organised by the non-profit organisation Beyond Borders Malaysia, The Refugee Fest was set up in 2017 to celebrate the talents of the stateless people in Malaysia and to create platforms for them to speak up. It has evolved from a refugee theatre group, Parastoo Theatre, set up by Saleh Sepas, a writer in theatre, radio and television from Afghanistan who fled the Taliban with his wife and three children to Malaysia. It has then become a fixture held at the Black Box, Publika with programmes of arts, cultural and educational for refugees.

<https://www.facebook.com/TheRefugeeFestMY/>

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community engagement - Cultural heritage preservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social awareness and exposure of plight facing the refugee community - Social, ethnic and religious tolerance and understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community empowerment - Activism and advocacy for refugee rights, including awareness and supports for gender equality and domestic violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government and international support - Donor supports - Community partnership that welcomes collaboration with refugee artists

Background and distinctive qualities

Since 2017, Mahi Ramakrishnan, president of Beyond Borders Malaysia has been the mastermind behind The Refugee Fest. The directorship was handed over to refugee artist Saleh Sepas.

There are approximately 500,000 refugees in Malaysia and around half are from Myanmar. Among which, the Rohingya made up the largest group. None of the refugees currently residing in Malaysia has legal status, with no right to work, receive education or health

care, and primarily relies on UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) for support.⁵

The week-long festival features music and dance performances, theatre play, poetry readings, photo presentations, film screening and panel discussions on issues the refugee communities face. Beyond Borders Malaysia also provides capacity building programmes, advocacy campaigns to name a few.



“I founded this festival five years ago because I believe the refugees are much more than the experiences they have gone through. They have talents, abilities, hopes and dreams just like you and me. And I wanted to highlight those immense, awe-inspiring talents... We have writers, poets, theatre artists, photographers, dancers, musicians, rappers and singers amongst us. Through profound conversations, sharing of food, lots of laughter, seeing each other through heartaches, we have grown to become a big family.”

– Mahi Ramakrishnan, president of Beyond Borders Malaysia

⁵ <http://rightstrack.org/covid-and-refugees-protecting-the-rights-of-the-other>

Approach and programme

According to Ramakrishnan, there are currently three to four generations of Rohingya in Malaysia but many of them have not had the opportunities to continue their cultural practises due to displacement. Not being able to work or receive education, further exacerbates the cyclical situation. Within the refugee community, women, young girls and the LGBTQ people frequently face domestic violence and unfair treatment.

The Refugee Fest has been a safe environment where the community can practice their cultural traditions and speak out on gender and LGBTQ issues.

Success and outcome

The festival went virtual for its 2020 edition due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It has enabled the wider diaspora communities from across the world to participate – e.g. Kurdish-Iranian journalist Behrouz Boochani. Facing heightening domestic xenophobic sentiment, the Refugee Fest acted as a platform that voices opposition toward Malaysian government's turning away of Rohingya people, citing fears of spreading the virus.

The festival worked with Malaysia theatre groups in 2019. The collaboration resulted in Syrian actor/poet Mwaffaq Al Hajjar and Afghan actor, Farzana Hussaini to perform in a local production written by Iranian play writer Nassim Soleimanpour. This marked the first foray by refugees into the Malaysian theatre scene.⁶

Developmental needs and future development

For the long term, more domestic backing and government support are needed to change the condition of refugees with concerted efforts by the international organisations such as UNHCR, The World Health Organisation and the International Labour Organisations to provide education, healthcare, livelihood and push for policy change.

On-going partnership with the Malaysian creative community is also critical to provide refugee artists employment and opportunities to actualise their craft and expertise.

⁶ <https://beyondbordersmalaysia.org/our-work-2/>

Yayasan Sime Darby Arts Festival – a fun, inclusive, free-for-all festival

Established in 2014, Yayasan Sime Darby Arts Festival (YSDAF) is the largest free-for-all arts, community-engagement festival in Malaysia. Presented by Yayasan Sime Darby (Sime Darby Foundation) and The Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre (klpac), the biennial event features local creative talents from the traditional to the contemporary, dance to theatre, mainstream to the experimental.

<https://ysdartsfestival.com.my>

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cultural heritage preservation - Local talent showcase - Underserved community engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Free and accessible art and culture programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inclusiveness and accessibility – arts and culture for all (gender equality and special needs) - Community partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Content and programme development - Community partnership maintenance and development - Production team retention and development

Background and distinctive qualities

Yayasan Sime Darby Arts Festival (YSDAF) is an art festival that takes place every other year. Initiated in 2014, the events are presented by the leading non-profit organisation Yayasan Sime Darby (Sime Darby Foundation) and The Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre (klpac). The two-day festival prides itself as ‘buffet of all things artsy’, presenting events across art forms and with community collaboration at its core. These include children’s theatre, comedy, performances, workshops, screenings, exhibitions, installations and a host of arts-related activities covering genres such as dance, drama, music and visual arts.

Approach and programme

Inclusive in its approach and programming, YSDAF is the largest free-for-all arts festival in Malaysia. To increase reach and accessibility, the festival provides special shuttle services for event goers across the city of Kuala Lumpur. It has a diverse line up including underserved communities. To better serve its mission, the festival staff have received Disability Equality Training (DET) and Disability-Related Services Training (DRST). YSDAF also made it a focus to engage underserved communities to provide access to cultural and educational programmes.

“YSDAF is proud to feature almost entirely local talent. Nowhere else will you be able to sample such a wide variety of what the local arts scene can offer from the traditional to the contemporary, dance to theatre, mainstream to the experimental. And by sample we don’t mean just performances but hands on workshops, demonstrations, installations, screenings and more.”

– Yayasan Sime Darby Arts Festival (YSDAF), About the Festival

Success and outcome

In 2018, YSDAF presented over 350 arts activities and performances, put together by over 500 Malaysian artists, arts activists and volunteers. Besides arts offerings, their 2018 edition joined forces with several NGOs to raise awareness on accessibility and inclusion – e.g. Women’s Aid Organisation, Malaysian AIDS Council, IDEAS Academy, HumanKind, UNICEF, YMCA Deafbeat and The National Autism Society of Malaysia – to present arts-driven programme in collaboration with community-based groups and grassroots causes.

Expanding on accessibility and inclusive experience, its programming also plays up interactivity and multi-sensory art forms for hearing and visually impaired audiences, including a touchable museum and workshops such as Disability Equality Training. Dance Movement Therapy in 2018 was also launched to raise awareness for Special Needs and gender equality workshops.⁷

One of its usual highlights is a traditional showcase curated by Pusaka, a cultural organisation that works with the leading custodians of ritual and traditional performing arts in Malaysia and the region. Featuring cultural heritage from across various regions of the country, the festival also presents traditional arts forms from each state, such as the Kuda Kepang from Johor, the Wayang Kulit and Mak Yong from Kelantan and the Sumazau from Sabah.

“Full ovations to klpac and all the curators and humans who took part. YSDAF was well-organised. Everything went right. And it was international-level while still beaming with Malaysian identity. More importantly, it was enjoyable.”

– The Daily Seni

⁷ <http://www.yayasansimedarby.com/media/arts-fun-and-conversations>

Developmental needs and future development

Despite being co-organised by the Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre (klpac), production capacity is in high demand to realise a festival of this scale and intensity. The special programme also requires additional training for staff and volunteers to respond to special-needs audience groups.

George Town Literary Festival – connecting and showcasing Malaysian independent literature circle

Established in 2011, the George Town Literary Festival (GTLF) is an international literary festival and the premier event of literature in Malaysia celebrating world literature, translations and literary arts. Free of admission, the 3-day event is organised by the Penang Convention and Exhibition Bureau (PCEB), Penang State Government and Penang Global Tourism (PGT). GTLF features on average approximately 30 writers from 15 countries and has won the Literary Festival Award at the London Book Fair 2018 as the first South East Asian festival to win.

<https://www.georgetownlitfest.com/>

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Independent publishers to network- A leading platform where Malaysian and ASEAN writers break out	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- A marketplace for independent works- Festival economy and cultural tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Through leadership, advocacy and activism – focusing on the social role of art and literature (gender issues as a key focus)- Placemaking, dialogue, identify consolidation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Continue state government support- Welcoming socio-political environment for dissent and healthy debates



George Town Literary Festival 2018 (credit: [the Star](#))

Background and distinctive qualities

George Town Literary Festival (GTLF) is the premier festival of literature in Malaysia. Its programme celebrates world literature, translations and literary arts. The events have remained free of charge for years and often take place over a period of 3 days. The event features book launches and book sales, readings, keynote speech, discussion and performances.

GTLF was founded in 2011 with writer, poet and educator Bernice Chauly as inaugural festival director. Translator Pauline Fan and broadcaster Sharaad Kuttan have been serving as new festival co-directors since 2020. Organised by the Penang Convention and Exhibition Bureau (PCEB), the annual event is fully supported by the Penang State Government and Penang Global Tourism (PGT).

Approach and programme

Taking place in George Town with the backdrop of a UNESCO World Heritage Site, GTLF takes advantage of the strong government backing in leveraging art and culture as a placemaking tool to consolidate community identity and create dialogue, while capitalising on the cultural tourism value from the wider festival economy.

Gender equality and empowerment has been a strong pillar of the festival. As a part of social issue advocacy efforts, in 2016, a partnership with Penang Women's Development Corporation (PWDC) to launch VOICES programme to empower women writers with a mentorship with the then Festival Director, Bernice Chauly.⁸ In 2017, the programme returned and was curated by author Anna Tan, titled 'Woman I Rise'.⁹ It included an open

⁸ <https://pwdc.org.my/voices-call-for-writers/>

⁹ <https://d.facebook.com/443249329099253/photos/a.443277739096412/1433669676723875/?type=3&p=0!!>

call for female creatives to submit their work for reading at the festival and share their gender perspective on current issues. This initiative later evolved to encompass a wider scope on sexuality, gender, queer rights.

GTLF also inherits Penang's vibrant independent literary legacy and benefited from a strong community comradery. Its programme frequently cross-path with wider ASEAN issues frequently conveyed through the literary works of the diaspora community, including that of identity and displacement, language policy and cultural inclusion, and wider socio-political concerns over freedom of speech and government censorship.

For instance, the 2020 edition showcases a network of independent publishers and Gerakbudaya Bookshop Penang, founded by former political detainee, Chong Son Tin (fondly known as 'Pak Chong' was part of the alternative publishers that presented a series of talks.¹⁰ It's 2018 keynote address featured Dato' Anwar Fazal, a prolific Penang-based writer and advocate for human rights, interfaith relations and peace.

Success and outcome

Since its first edition in 2011 with only five writers, the GTLF has grown to become Malaysia's largest literary festival and one of the most reputable literary festivals in the region. It has become a crucial platform where the diverse communities and cultural experience are recognised and celebrated. The 2018 edition drew over 6,000 people over 3 days. GTLF today features on average approximately 30 writers from 15 countries and has won the Literary Festival Award at the London Book Fair 2018 as the first South East Asian festival to win.

“George Town Literary Festival stands out as a vibrant, diverse and brave festival that engages with a wide community of voices, speaking to the world from a complex region.”

– Judges, Literary Festival Award at the London Book Fair, 2018

Developmental needs and future development

With the backing of a strong, liberal state, GTLF is steadily securing its regional importance as a key platform where ASEAN diaspora community and its literary works are presented. For the next phase of its development, focuses are placed on advocacy and activism to push for social awareness and policy change.

“Malaysia is a very complex place, linguistically and in terms of literature. So we want the GTLF to be a place where people can come to explore the various dimensions of Malaysian literature in all its forms.”

– Pauline Fan, Co-Director of the George Town Literary Festival, Translator¹¹

¹⁰ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fkS3Mg9ZSGxN-ZspM89YeNtx8qicLfq/view>

¹¹ <https://www.thestar.com.my/lifestyle/culture/2019/11/12/george-town-literary-festival-2019-what-to-expect/>

Ipoh International Art Festival – putting Ipoh on the ‘map’

Organised by Port Ipoh and Tourism Perak, the Ipoh International Art Festival (IIAF) is a free week-long event that aims to help Ipoh become one of the major cities carrying its own ‘signature’ annual art festival for domestic and international artists, tourists, art lovers, cultural researchers and art collectors. The first festival was held in 2019 and involved more than a hundred arts practitioners across the country, as well as artists from more than ten countries. The festival offered programmes and events such as art exhibitions and workshops, bazaar, film screenings and many more. The inaugural Ipoh International Art Festival (IIAF 2019) presented its showcase under the theme, CLIMATE, prioritising works that incorporate recycle/upcycle materials as support to the eco-tourism of Perak. The second edition is scheduled to be held in December 2021.

<http://portipoh.com.my/iiaf.html>



Performance art piece titled 'Si... Tua... Si' by Azizan Paiman and Percha Art Space
Ipoh International Art Festival
(IIAF) 2019 (credit: IAAF)

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International collaborations and exchange - Partnership with local artistic community to showcase independent projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ipoh as a new destination for cultural tourism - Network expansion for local-international cultural practitioners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Climate-themed for its inaugural showcase - Cultural ecosystem building for Ipoh city - Artivism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Team building and talent retention

Background and distinctive qualities

The Ipoh International Art Festival (IIAF) is a free-of-charge, week-long event with an ambition to help Ipoh to grow into one of the major cities carrying its own ‘signature’ annual art festival for domestic and international artists, tourists, art-loving public, cultural researchers and art collectors.

Initiated in 2019 and headed by artist and curator Nur Hanim Dato’ Mohamed Khairuddin, IIAF is fully sponsored by the Perak State government via a local cultural delivery PORT with a focus on talent cultivation and cultural access and co-organised by Tourism Perak with a hope on energising cultural tourism.

“The Ipoh International Art Festival...fully sponsored by the Perak State government via PORT, can be seen as benchmarks for making Ipoh an important city for world class arts and culture festivals...What we need is to grow arts appreciation in the public realm by holding regular festival events, symposiums, residencies and workshops. Ipoh also needs more arts centres such as galleries, black box venues to hold small and medium performances, resource centres or archives dedicated to the visual arts, music and performance arts both traditional and contemporary...In addition, we need to increase the publication of books on arts and culture, artists’ directories and journals for documentation and education purposes.”

– Nur Hanim Dato’ Mohamed Khairuddin, director of IIAF 2019¹²

¹² <http://klfashionweek.website/founders-note-2019>

Approach and programme

The inaugural Ipoh International Art Festival (IIAF 2019) presented its showcase under the theme, CLIMATE, prioritising works that incorporate recycle/upcycle materials as support to the eco-tourism of Perak. Educational programme includes artmaking sessions and eco-conscious recycling workshops.

CLIMATE also alluded to the socio-political environment art and culture is situated in and urges community actions to affect change.

Community participation and collective spirit is at the core of IIAF. The event has collaborated with local artist group Projek Rabak and urban lifestyle brand PBUY Store, as well as national hubs such as Rimbun Dahan and Kuala Lumpur Biennial 2020. A partnership with the National Art Gallery Malaysia brought a dynamic line-up of established artists, collectives and newcomers.

“Ipoh is a city that is very open to stage contemporary and fresh culture without neglecting traditional art and culture. The Ipoh International Art Festival...fully sponsored by the Perak State Government through PORT, can be the best example of the benchmark to make Ipoh as an important city for arts and cultural activities that meet international festival standards.”

– Nur Hanim Dato’ Mohamed Khairuddin, director of IIAF 2019

Success and outcome

With a line-up of nine curators, its inaugural show featured more than 100 arts practitioners from across 10 countries, including artists from Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Philippine, Myanmar, Denmark, Italy, Switzerland, Finland, Turkey, Austria, Lebanon, Sweden and Syria.

With over 2 years of planning, its programmes included a contemporary art exhibition, photography exhibition, performance art, theatre, film and video art screenings, workshops and forums. Experimental and new music gigs, indie rock music and graffiti art competitions are also prominent in the festival listings.¹³

A 2-hour drive from Kuala Lumpur, IIAF aims to become a regular annual event that brings domestic and international tourists from the capital. The second edition is scheduled to be held in December 2021.¹⁴

¹³ <https://www.thestar.com.my/lifestyle/culture/2019/11/26/ipoh-international-art-festival-celebrates-the-strength-of-city039s-creative-communities>

¹⁴ Ipoh International Art Festival 2021 Pre-Fest. [https://www.jfkl.org.my/events/iiaf2021prefest/!](https://www.jfkl.org.my/events/iiaf2021prefest/)

Developmental needs and future development

As a young festival facing a post-pandemic uncertain time, IIAF recognises the need to grow its team to ensure the smooth planning of future events. It is also in alignment with their mission to grow the local talent pipeline and build up expertise through the annual events.

“The arts festival model is changing rapidly. It’s not about a big tent circus coming to town. We have to recognise and support local artistic communities, and create a festival platform that has a lasting impact and place in a city’s contemporary culture. Ipoh today is a vibrant city for the arts and the IIAF (International Ipoh Art Festival) has arrived at the right time to engage the masses.”

– Nur Hanim Mohamed Khairuddin, director of IIAF 2019¹⁵

¹⁵ <https://www.thestar.com.my/lifestyle/culture/2019/11/26/ipoh-international-art-festival-celebrates-the-strength-of-city039s-creative-communities>

Rainforest World Music Festival – celebrating diversity in the backdrop of the Borneo rainforest

Organised by the Sarawak Tourism Board (STB), the Rainforest World Music Festival (RWMF) is an annual music festival in Kuching to celebrate the world music’s diversity. The festival contains music workshops, cultural and craft displays, food stalls and concerts.¹⁶ From its independent beginnings in Kuching, Sarawak, over 20 years ago, this festival has showcased world music including traditional music, world fusion, and contemporary world music. Today it is an annual three-day festival with the main-stage evening concerts plus daytime workshops, indigenous craft, culture and food. It was awarded one of the best 25 world music festivals by Songlines for six years from 2010 to 2015.

www.rwmf.net

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exciting performance line-up - Activation and discovery of world music - Technical and professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Music tourism - Enablement of creative economy - Cultural exchange and diplomacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tolerance and harmony through world music - Eco practices and sustainable development - Community engagement – local universities, students and social enterprises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programming diversification - Funder relationship maintenance - Talent development - Community relationship building

¹⁶ <http://www.rwmf.net/>



Rainforest Music Festival 2019 Tabanka (credit: RWMF)

Background and distinctive qualities

Kuching is rich in indigenous and diasporic cultures. The city has a long history in festival celebration and organisations. Its cultural heritage and biodiversity continue to inspire generations of creative and social practises across the city and the State of Sarawak.

“The festival has a complex history because when it started we had to validate local indigenous people that their culture matters and that people would be interested in their traditional music like the nose flute. By bringing in traditional music from across the world, local people could see they have something distinctive and of value. The breakthrough came in year 4 or 5 when the audiences really started to grow.”

– Jun-Lin Yeoh, director, Rainforest World Music Festival

RWMF was conceptualised to celebrate the richness and possibilities in the fusion of contemporary and traditional world music. Recently, the rich cultural heritage has been embraced by the younger Sarawakians and expatriates eager to innovate and introduce a contemporised form of heritage craft to the local and global market. Kuching and Sarawak have a vibrant festival scene – it is not only an important platform to discover and cultivate local talents but also a contributor to the cultural tourism industry.

Every year, the now iconic event is held at Kuching’s Sarawak Cultural Village – renowned as a ‘Living Museum’ at the foothills of Mount Santubong in Damai Beach area. It aims to promote and preserve indigenous cultural heritage, while bringing tourists to the city. The event has successfully brought regular crowds across the country and the region. It becomes a linchpin for the wider cultural tourism and hospitality industries.

Approach and programme

The Sarawak State has been able to successfully market its arts and culture in the form of events such as the Rainforest World Music Festival and its recent addition The Rainforest Fringe Festival. The Sarawak Tourism Board (STB) has also dedicated resources to under the need and profile of its audience with consumer research, in collaboration with local

universities.¹⁷ It also receives regular funding and support from the national agencies such as the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Cultural Malaysia as well as Tourism Malaysia. Over the years, it has also accumulated a stable of regular commercial sponsors for technical equipment and facilities, event organisation, merchandise and more.

In celebration of the diversity of world music, cultural display, craft booths, food market and tutorial workshops are regularly programmed with community participation, in addition to the main stage events. Aside from showcasing indigenous musicians from across Borneo island, cultural exchange and showcases is another pillar of RWMF to better position and connect the local communities with its global peers.

“We are growing the ASEAN dimension, such as connecting with indigenous Taiwanese culture and Indonesia. But we also want to collaborate with artists from across the world – from Madagascar to Europe.”

– Jun-Lin Yeoh, director, Rainforest World Music Festival

Sustainability and eco-education take an increasing role in its fringe programme to raise awareness around the climate crisis and the threat toward the cultural rights of the indigenous communities worldwide. Initiatives such as exposition of works from local organisations and social enterprises that are in alignment with UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were featured. The concept of sustainable development was carried from event production with responsible procurement practises, to ethical supply chain, and biodegradable tableware, to waste management.¹⁸ Alongside tree planting efforts, upcycling workshops are carried out in collaboration with local students to turn event banners in previous editions into merchandise and souvenirs of the festival. Concept of wellness is also introduced to collateral programming.

Success and outcome

According to the STB, RWMF attracts 20,000 audiences on average each year. Among which, 70% are local and domestic visitors. The Festival has also become one of the key reasons for first time tourists and repeated travellers to visit the Kuching city. Word of mouth from friends and family has proven to be a primary source of information for RWMF. Online is a critical point of sales for festival tickets and a main source where audiences receive promotional information.

For local, domestic and international visitors alike, the Festival is a place to relax and rest. The performance line-up and quality of live band/music are among the top three impressed programmes at the main stage, while representation of tribes, drum circle and DJ set and other mini breakout activities are proven to be satisfactory as fringe events.

¹⁷ <https://sarawaktourism.com/stb-research-library/>

¹⁸ <https://rwmf.net/green-initiatives/>

Among which, green and sustainability initiatives. Technical proficiency and delivery of the audio-visual set up are also ranked as highly satisfied by local visitors. Foreign visitors also rate venue and event security and safety as one of the most impressive experiences.

In addition to a strong business impact, RWMF has also been catalytic in aiding the breakout and career growth of local and regional world music talents. It was instrumental in shaping the career of young musicians, especially for local artists to gain recognition of a homecoming success. It becomes a unique feature of the festival to introduce lesser-known talents in world music fusion.¹⁹

Developmental needs and future development

As a 20-year-old established brand, it is critical for the RWMF to continue diversifying to bring forth innovative programming and performance line-up. Among which, community engagement and scouting and capacity building of a refreshed talent pool becomes key.²⁰ It is also a balancing act to maintain its relationship with the state funders, while keeping the programming independent and fresh.

“Because [the Rainforest World Music Festival] is managed by the tourism department, it is a balancing act to have the more crowd-pleasing fusion music and the traditional and rooted activities. For the last two festivals, we have had an indigenous stage and in 2012 we set up an indoor theatre stage. Also arts, crafts and cuisine have a role to play...so the festival gives a blend of diverse cultural experiences...”

– Jun-Lin Yeoh, artistic director, Rainforest World Music Festival

¹⁹ <https://www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/travel/2020/03/all-you-need-know-about-sarawaks-rainforest-world-music-festival>

²⁰ Interview by TFCC with Tempatico.!

Urbanscapes – Kuala Lumpur

Organised by Freeform Sdn Bhd, Urbanscapes festival is one of Malaysia’s biggest and longest-running annual art festivals. Founded in early 2000, the Kuala Lumpur-based Urbanscapes brings together fields of music, the arts, design, film and other creative disciplines. Running over 9 days and now one of the longest-running festivals in the country, this city-wide festival regularly attracts festival hoppers not only across the country but also internationally.

<https://www.urbanscapes.com.my>

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Platform for interdisciplinary art forms - Talent showcase - Rediscover the city scape and imagine new relationships with the urban environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Festival tourism - ‘Experience’ economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community partnership that provides funding, scholarship and content - City intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sponsor development - Partnership and programming diversity - Regional marketing supports and talent development



Urbanscapes frequently presents city-wide 'take over' during its festival period. (credit: [Rojak Daily](#))

Background and distinctive qualities

Founded by Malaysian-born Adrian Yap in 2002, the art festival aims to provide a platform for local and international upcoming and established talents, artists and musicians. Branching out from presenting musical gigs, Urbanscapes has grown into a city-wide, 9-day international event attended by both locals and visitors from abroad. With a mix of free and ticketed events, the festival features creative communities from the fields of music, arts, design, films and other experimental art forms. Collateral events also include art competition, workshops, cultural tours, maker's market and culinary events.

“We started Urbanscapes with the idea that whatever was on the printed page or computer screen could be brought to life so that people can experience the stuff that we wrote about in person. And even if we did have personalities and projects from outside KL, at the heart of it, Urbanscapes has always been a KL festival. It’s a once-a-year opportunity to tell the stories of the many things that make up this city.”

– Adrian Yap, founder, Urbanscapes²¹

Approach and programme

Urbanscapes frequently collaborates across art forms and has become a significant platform where interdisciplinary and experimental works are presented. For example, in 2018, MyDance Alliance, a leading non-profit organisation supporting dance in Malaysia, presented an iteration of their flagship programme Dancing in Place, a weekend of site-

²¹ <https://www.optionstheedge.com/topic/people/urbanscapes-founder-adrian-yap-evolution-kl-longest-running-creative-arts-festival>

specific dance performances at Urbanscapes. The event also collaborated with local artist Nawwar Shukriah Ali, often going by her alias Bono Stellar, on a set of interactive outdoor installations.

It also works with corporate partners to present collateral events such as BMW Shorties, one of Malaysia's most prestigious and longest running short film competition, in a week-long screening of genre films from South East Asia; as well as the Colours of Life programme sponsored by NIPPON PAINT commissions emerging and established street artists to breathe new life and colour to the city.

Its success in connecting across the city won it the support from Visit KL and has also made the art festival an 'unofficial guide' to the art scene of Kuala Lumpur. Its website presents a curated section KL Stories to introduce trends and key players in the city.

Success and outcome

The event had 80 programmes, across over 20 venues that attracted a record turnout close to 85,000 in 2019.²² Every year it provides a platform where the Kuala Lumpur creative communities connect and present their best programme. The events take place across multiple venues through partnerships with key creative hubs such as the Medan Pasar, River of Life, REXKL, Sentul Depot, Kwai Chai Hong, to name a few. In 2019, it was scheduled during the Gallery Weekend Kuala Lumpur (GWKL) and was a part of the URBN.SENI: The Inaugural Triennial Malaysia-Singapore Cultural Showcase. Such a collaboration-driven model made it a winning formula to draw crowds, coverage and sponsors.

Developmental needs and future development

Urbanscapes has developed a stable model of collaborations and operations. It is proactively seeking international connections to bring in new and returning visitors. Programming innovation and renewed community partnerships are key in presenting a fresh perspective to encounter with the city.

“We want Urbanscapes to inspire people to get out of their homes and explore their city, to discover new experiences and create meaningful conversations around all the festival has to offer.”

– Adrian Yap, founder, Urbanscapes²³

²² <https://www.bangkokpost.com/life/arts-and-entertainment/1813334/terrain-for-talent>

²³ <https://rojakdaily.com/lifestyle/article/7852/malaysia-s-longest-running-creative-arts-festival-urbanscapes-is-returning-this-november>

Kuala Lumpur Fashion Week (KLFW) – mobilising the fashion and textile industry

Organised by Andrews Models, Kuala Lumpur Fashion Week (KLFW) is the country’s largest fashion event and has become a fixture since 2013. Regularly held in August at the capital city of Malaysia, the week-long series event showcases the country’s ready-to-wear designer brands to buyers, media and the general public. In addition to catwalk showcases, KLFW presents industry talks, exhibitions, mentorship programmes and competitions annually. The event is supported by Tourism Malaysia and industry sponsors. Covid-19 has forced the 2020’s event to go digital. The event went live on hurr.tv youtube channel over three days with 15 episodes.

<http://klfashionweek.website/>

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Showcase A - list designers - Incubate emerging local designers - Providing opportunities for supporting industries – e.g. modeling, hair and make-up stylist, event organizer, etc. - Media exposure and industry leadership for designers, sponsors and Malaysia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Synergise the fashion and textile industry in Malaysia - Connect the Malaysia design brands with local and regional buyers - Provide a career pipeline for homegrown talents and industry professionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heritage preservation through the promotion of traditional batik - Ethical, sustainable and conscious fashion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Post - pandemic industry recovery - Programme innovation - Sponsorship development - International buyer development - Expanding the event reach to global market



KL Fashion Week (KLFW), Malaysia

Background and distinctive qualities

KL Fashion Week (KLFW) is Malaysia's largest fashion event, attracting a stable local and internal following since 2013. Founded by Andrew Tan, CEO of Andrews Models, KLFW has become a significant platform for homegrown designers to grow their career and connect with the market.

In addition to support from Tourism Malaysia, its fanfare and track record has attracted stable corporate sponsorship from design and technology-related international firms such as Huawei, HP, Lexus, Panasonic; and international hospitality chains. Industry partners often present a corporate responsibility programme during the event week that promotes creativity and innovation, such as mentorship scheme with HP and doodle competition by Lexus in 2019.

“The Kuala Lumpur Fashion Week is a platform that does more than just showing the latest collections from many of our Malaysian designers. It is an incubation and networking hub for our bravest and brightest creative minds to facilitate and further their businesses. Whether selling to consumers or pitching to potential buyers, it is without a doubt that KLFW is also a trade accelerating event.”

– Andrew Tan, Founder of Kuala Lumpur Fashion Week²⁴

²⁴ <http://klfashionweek.website/founders-note-2019>

Approach and programme

Heritage-minded, KLFW 2017 initiated a partnership with the Malaysian batik pioneer, Kraftangan Malaysia, and provided batik textiles to 2 Kraftangan in-house designers and 4 young designers to design a range of modern and contemporary pieces to be showcased. This collaboration has evolved into a flagship programme – Fashion Forward Batik Malaysia initiative – to upscale the craft of batik making. In 2019, a batik textile exhibition was organised in tandem with the main event and during the national independence month of Malaysia to promote appreciation of traditional craftsmanship.²⁵

Dialogues and events around design, manufacturing, inventory, new technologies, distribution channels and customer relations often accompany the main fashion shows as satellite events. Symposia KLFW was held in 2018 where local and international speakers discussed the latest trends and shared experience on career development.

“We must think less about survival and more about our strategic agenda. We must self-disrupt our own business models in response to the growing appetite to newness.”

– Andrew Tan, Founder of Kuala Lumpur Fashion Week²⁶

Sustainability and ethical-minded, the Design to Sustain programme is a partnership with Air Asia. The programme is in alignment with international standards set by the Commonwealth Fashion Council of UK and the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals. Designers from Malaysia and ASEAN countries were pre-selected and awarded with funding to realise their eco-conscious projects and be showcased at KLFW events.

With a message on diversity, KLFW held an event on the International Women’s Day to celebrate female leadership and entrepreneurship in fashion and its adjacent industries.²⁷

Success and outcome

The week-long event regularly attracts around 15,000 people each year.²⁸ Before its founding, there was little career prospect and career building platform in Malaysia for homegrown designers for showcasing after graduation. KLFW has become a significant connector for B-2-C ready-to-wear retail designs. The events collaborate with e-commerce platforms such as FashionValet, Shopee and Zalora as exclusive partners.

It has also served as a hub where industry professionals and support personnel get employment. The industries around the fashion and textile businesses such as modelling

²⁵ <https://www.editionklfw.com/content/the-most-influential-fashion-event-is-back-this-august>

²⁶ <http://klfashionweek.website/founders-note-2019>

²⁷ <https://kory-tung-2knz.squarespace.com/content/21st-century-women-photo-exhibition>

²⁸ [https://blissisaigon.com/all-you-need-to-know-about-the-kuala-lumpur-fashion-week/!](https://blissisaigon.com/all-you-need-to-know-about-the-kuala-lumpur-fashion-week/)

agencies, hair and make-up stylists, event organisers, etc are also mobilised every year around the event.

Developmental needs and future development

The once invitation-only, closed door event, had to adapt to the pandemic and went digital for the first time in 2020. KLFW created an urgency to raise awareness of the hard-hit industry and attempt to help the designers to continue to connect with a wider marketplace. The 2020 edition homed in on the power of digital marketplace and programme around sustainability in fashion design. Out of the need to cater to changing consumer habits to shop online, KLFW has launched an e-store platform O.C.M. (One Common Mission) that features Malaysia brands in April 2021.²⁹

KLFW is looking for ways to collaborate with industry partners to innovate its programme offer. It has been on the agenda of the organiser to continue attracting international buyers – from ASEAN, China, Middle East and Europe – to help designers connect with the global and regional markets.

“The platform (KLFW) that I have created could put Malaysia as the Fashion Hub in the world Fashion Map in Asia or South East Asia. I want to grow with the designers as their brands evolve and we (KLFW) have a huge pool of designers who have been with us since the inception of our platform, I am really grateful for that.”

– Andrew Tan, Founder of Kuala Lumpur Fashion Week³⁰

²⁹ <https://www.prestigeonline.com/my/style/fashion/klfw-ocm-one-common-mission-malaysian-designer-brands/>

³⁰ <https://gentsome.com/2018/12/17/insiders-gentsome-meet-andrew-tan-founder-of-kl-fashion-week/>

THE PHILIPPINES

Art Fair Philippines – elevating the international standing of Filipino art

Managed by Philippine Art Events, Art Fair Philippines was founded in 2013. The 3-day event has risen to prominence and now plays a pivotal role to exhibit and sell premier modern and contemporary artworks in the country. The fair aims to elevate the international standing of Filipino art scene, promote access to culture and raise awareness for art connoisseurship. In addition to the main art fair, its programme also includes residency, screening, talks, workshops, public art projects – to name a few. It has become a social fixture for art collectors, socialites and the art loving public every year.

<https://artfairphilippines.com/>

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commission new works - Showcase Filipino artists and artworks - Build local pride around cultural vitality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enable local galleries to connect and do business with collectors - Facilitate a marketplace for affordable works and promote literacy around art appreciation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase public access to art - Educational workshop - Programme partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exhibitor service and development - Business partners and sponsorships cultivation - Audience expansion to attract ticket-buyers



Background and distinctive qualities

Founded in 2013, Art Fair Philippines is the most influential platform for the display, sales, and promotion of Filipino modern and contemporary art. The fair works with local and international partners to create a healthy ecosystem for the local art market.

Taking place in an alternative venue, the fair transforms a multi storey car park into a well-presented booth where galleries showcase local works and meet with collectors. In addition to the main blue-chip event, a twin out-door art fair Arts in The Park promotes artworks at an affordable price point.

The 3-day art fair has shifted digital in 2021 due to the disruption of the Covid-19 pandemic. Its 2021 edition pivots on digital arts and commissions new digital short films along with a playlist in collaboration with Daata, an international digital media production platform.

Approach and programme

The fair works with community partners to organise collateral educational workshops, tours, open studios and talks to increase knowledge of modern and contemporary art. Promote homegrown creativity, the organising team also collaborates with local spirit brand Don Papa Rum to sponsor five residency slots to support continued creation and production of art. In its 2019 edition, the fair presented a mixed medium public installation titled Plastics in Our Oceans to raise awareness for ocean waste and sustainable maritime resource development.

Founded and managed by three power ladies Geraldine “Dindin” Araneta, Trickie Colayco-Lopa, and Lisa Ongpin-Periquet, the fair has over 80% of females in management and leadership positions. It empowers women through employment, collaboration and outreach.

Success and outcome

The business model of a trade show has enabled sustainable growth, drawing around 10,000 people per day in its physical fairs. It also encourages the sharing of scholarship with media partnership and researchers to elevate the international profile of the Filipino art scene.

Its quality and international standing attracts exhibitors from across the region and lead sponsors such as the Swiss private banking group Julius Baer.

The programme is often scheduled in parallel to annual visual culture events, such as the Manila Biennale and Metro Manila Film Festival. This joint efforts across the country's art industry makes Art Fair Philippines a social fixture for art collectors, socialites and the art loving public across the nation and region.

“Art Fair Philippines has undoubtedly become a tradition for many people in the metro. Art enthusiasts — visitors or exhibitors — gather annually to appreciate and support the booming local art scene through the fair.”

– Tatler Philippines³¹

Developmental needs and future development

With operational income generated from exhibitor participation fee, sponsorship and event ticket sales, business growth beyond its staple of exhibitors, collectors, and audiences requires a strategic plan to cultivate and develop wider ASEAN connections for the next phase of the fair's development. Innovation and freshness in programming is a primary focus of the team to ensure renewed appeal to attract repeat and new ticket-buying audiences.

³¹ <https://ph.asiatatler.com/life/art-fair-philippines-2020-what-you-should-know-about-the-countrys-premier-art-exhibit>

Escolta Block Party – celebrating the city’s creativity with jubilation

Organised by Manila Creative Exchange (TMCX), Escolta Block Party is the biggest street party that celebrates the history and creativity of Manila. Its month-long programming aims to inspire participants to see and enjoy the city from a new perspective. Founded in 2016, the festival continues to present a diverse range of activities with a focus of homegrown talents, including performances, exhibitions, pop-up marketplaces, parades, talks and much more.

<https://www.escoltablock.ph/>

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cultural heritage promotion and activation - Place - making and identity building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish cultural leadership of Escolta - Draw in tourists, consumers and investments for Escolta, benefiting local business owners - Inspire creative solutions to social problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local talents showcasing and incubation - Community building and engagement - Public space activation and intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stable socio - political environment and strong government support for culture - Audience development – repeated live audience - Partnership cultivation among creative professionals - Develop digital capacity to increase programming reach

Background and distinctive qualities

Escolta Block Party was founded in 2016 and presented by Manila Creative Exchange (TMCX) with support from Manila Tourism and Cultural Affairs Bureau (MTCAB) and local

chambers of commerce. By working with the Escolta Commercial Association (ECAI), the festival quickly expanded from a one-day event to a month-long celebration within a course of three years. Its programming features a diverse lineup of performances, open studio, tours, exhibitions, screenings, pop-up marketplaces, parades, workshops, talks to name a few.

Approach and programme

Escolta Block Party reinvigorates city blocks with a rich portfolio of arts and culture activities. The organiser emphasises the significance of public space intervention to encourage a (re)imagination of urban design and access. With its theme 'Future Forward' the festival's 2019 edition drew attention to a chronic lack of space in Manila and invited discussions around a collective solution for the city.

Events such as Civic Saturdays present city-wide pop-up libraries to promote open access to knowledge and support for independent publishers. In addition to civic awareness around heritage conservation and urbanism, other auxiliary social issues in celebration also includes queer rights and inclusive growth.

“During the last festival, we invited creatives from different parts of the Philippines for collaborations, did an open call for portfolio reviews, exhibits, and volunteers, and made sure that 90% of our programming was accessible and free of charge.”

– festival director Reymart Cerin³²

With an emphasis on showcasing local talents, an incubator was created to invite homegrown creatives to present their works in a public forum in front of the iconic art deco First United Building. The festival also frequently commissions new works to contribute to new ways of conceptualising relationships with urban space.

Success and outcome

Its 2019 edition kickstarted the month-long programming with a bazaar and a series of street performances. The main activities were complemented by satellite programmes, including exhibitions, art talks and workshops.³³ The series of events drew over 22,000 people over the course of a month.

Collaborating with like-minded community groups and hubs, Escolta Block Party embodies a successful platform that brings in crowds, media attention, private investment and public funding. It has become a critical platform where local creatives come to gather and bring out one of their flagship showcases and hits of the year. In addition to local agency

³² <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/lifestyle/hobbiesandactivities/714469/the-escolta-block-party-has-become-a-month-long-festival-here-s-a-list-of-activities-to-en/story/>

³³ <https://www.spot.ph/things-to-do/the-latest-things-to-do/79737/escolta-block-festival-manila-a833-20191107!!>

support, it attracts high-profile funders such as telecom company Globe and local beverage brands such as San Miguel.

Developmental needs and future development

With a track record of popular events, the festival aspires to further leverage its impact to advocate for policy change and drive the city agenda around public access and heritage conservation.

The festival has a focused core production team and relies heavily on community partnership to generate content and programming. Strategic partnership development and relationship cultivation with local and national creative networks becomes central to ensure innovative programming and activities. With 75% operational budget provided by private and public funders, business planning and relationship maintenance with funders also becomes a key priority of the festival.

In terms of audience growth, the festival will devote attention to sustain their appeal with local, repeated visitors and actively expand reach among new live audiences to bring in visitors from across the country.

The team also acknowledges the need to pivot to digital platforms to increase the reach, impact and longevity of its programming such as artist talks and panel discussions.

Ibagiw: The Baguio Creative City Festival – emerging community vitality and grit

Inaugurated in 2018, the Ibagiw: The Baguio Creative City Festival celebrates community creativity of local artists and creative practitioners. This ten-day multi-venue and interdisciplinary event to promote crafts and folk arts. The event is organised by the Baguio Arts & Crafts Collective (BACCI) with support from the City of Baguio.

<https://www.facebook.com/ibagiw.art>

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Placemaking and community pride - Increase exposure and opportunities for local artisans - Build local cultural infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cultural tourism and festival economy - Elevating local and regional profile of Baguio city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government sponsorship for annual artistic showcase - Community partnership - Civic engagement and government outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Funder education - Stakeholder relationship development and management - Event production, programming and curation - Management and marketing expertise



Performance at Ibagiw: The Baguio Creative City Festival 2019
(credit: [adobo magazine](#))

Background and distinctive qualities

Ibagiw: Baguio Creative City Festival is an artist-driven initiative promoting local artists and artistic and cultural endeavours for the community. Ibagiw was jointly supported by the Baguio City local government, the Department of Tourism-Cordillera Administrative Region Office (DOT-CAR), Tourism Promotions Board (TPB), and the Baguio Arts and Creative Council, under the management of the Baguio Arts & Crafts Collective (BACCI).

The inaugural showcase was a celebration that marks the membership of Baguio city to the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) as a Creative City of Craft and Folk Art. It was rebranded as the Ibagiw Festival in 2019. The ten-day events were held at Baguio Heritage Hill and Nature Park – which was transformed into a cultural hub from its previous life as a Diplomatic Hotel – and with satellite events across the city. The festival and the unveiling of the Baguio Heritage Hill and Nature Park marked a new era of the city’s ambition to attract cultural tourists.

The festival is an active member of national art groups, including the Cultural Centre of the Philippines (CCP) and National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA)-initiated networks.

Approach and programme

As a main delivery programme of the UCCN commitment, the festival is a culmination of activities by activating cultural sites across the cities, including major museums, community cultural villages, local creative collectives, and independent art hubs. The showcase highlights indigenous art, crafts and the contemporary expression of heritage assets. The festival is a critical delivery project aimed to build an inclusive, resilient and sustainable city while facilitating intergenerational transfer of knowledge and skills through traditional art and craft.

Taking inspiration from the spirit of a local grown moss bagiw the festival pivots to the reinvigoration of the local creative economy scene featuring community initiatives and collective projects. This included a series of exhibitions, performances, talks, workshops and educational programmes. In alignment with this mission, the festival also presented awards to recognise local artisans and female creative talents, and encourage innovation.

“iBagiw Festival is borne of the artful creativeness and prideful sense of community here in Baguio City in which the sprawling heritage site is put to a most ideal use and the nobler purpose of supporting the arts, as well as boosting local tourism.”

– OIC Director Jovita Ganongan, Department of Tourism-
Cordillera Administrative Region Office (DOT-CAR)

Success and outcome

Over 500 pieces of artworks were showcased at the 2019 festival, including murals, paintings, sketches, portraiture, sculptures, pottery, basketry, metal crafts, woodcarvings, tattooing, textiles, photography, short art films, and literary works. The festival has contributed to the rise of domestic tourists to Baguio before Covid-19.

“Most of the events we staged were intimate productions and exhibitions designed for an average of 50-100 and a maximum of around 500-1000 (for the opening and closing galas). This was by design as we wanted the events to allow for meaningful interactions between the artists and the audiences.”

– Karlo Marko Altomonte, Executive Creative Director

Developmental needs and future development

The festival enjoys strong backing from the local government but relies on the community to generate programmes and participation. Stakeholder relationship development and partnership cultivation is recognised as a priority to the longevity and success of the festival's future iteration. Reliant on public funding and local government buy-in, the organiser believes a win-win formula for the festival to reach full potential is to continue educating and engaging its funders on the need (infrastructure investment, art education, etc) and value of the creative industry.

The festival also is a platform where local expertise and infrastructure can develop. Event production and management, programming capacity as well as marketing and promotional expertise are ranked as the top fields for growth.

Philippine International Comics Festival (PICOF) – expanding domestic and global footprint of Filipino comic and graphic literature

Inaugurated in 2020, Philippine International Comics Festival (PICOF) is a trade event that promotes comic and graphic literature. The festival presents a mix of free and ticketed events – from book launch, workshops, talks, new work commissioning, research and publication. It facilitates business opportunities between local graphic creators with potential partners in TV, film, animation, publishing, and gaming development, through licensing and collaborations.

www.komiket.org

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Showcase and empower local comic industry - Raise international profile of the Filipino comic community - Create local pride 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enable a marketplace for comic and graphic literature - Build public appreciation and create scholarship around Filipino comic genre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tolerance and equality for LGBTQ community - Inclusive growth featuring disabled artists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awareness building and inward investment to the underrepresented comic genre - Expand international network of publishers and collaborators to expand market opportunities for Filipino talents - Sustainable funding opportunity and business planning



Inaugural Philippine International Comics Festival (PICOF) pivoted online due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
(credit: [PICOF](#))

Background and distinctive qualities

Organised by Manila-based non-profit organisation KOMIKET, Philippine International Comics Festival (PICOF) aims to develop the production, appreciation and research of Filipino comics and graphic literature. Due to the disruption of the Covid-19 pandemic, the inaugural showcase was moved online. Physical event is planned to kickstart in 2022.

The festival features book launches, artist talks, seminars, business accelerator and licensing partnership enablement to facilitate deals between comic and graphic creators with film producers, merchandisers and publishers. An international jury was invited to judge the Komiket Awards, where the winning creator can take home a cash prize of Php150,000. It also has an open submission system where creators are invited to present and pitch their works under development.

“If Komiket’s mission is to nurture and grow the comics community, PICOF’s mission is to grow the readership of local comics and graphic novels...by publishing world class Filipino comics and graphic novels for international readers.”

– Paolo Alessandro Herras, Festival Director³⁴

³⁴ <https://downthetubes.net/?p=115403>

Approach and programme

Leveraging the festival to drive social agenda, PICOOF has diversity and inclusion at the core of its programming. They provide a safe space to voice underrepresented issues such as gender inequality and sexual harassment. The festival is currently expanding its special project portfolio to work with creators with hearing disability and mental health issues.

“In our projects, we communicate we are open to all types of creators (age, sex, location) and works (genres, themes and art styles). We published a LGBTQ+ comics anthology to declare us as a safe space, and organised a webinar on sexual harassment.”

– Paolo Alessandro Herras, Festival Director

Success and outcome

The festival shifted online in both 2020 and 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The digital pivot helped the festival reach new audiences from across the country. PICOOF is the only international comics festival in South East Asia and they have established partnerships with peer festivals from the UK, Japan, and Australia. Its inaugural partners include the British Council and the Lakes International Comic Art Festival.

Among its critical features is a business matching and idea pitching element that runs in tandem to the main event. Industry stakeholders were invited to explore publishing, licensing and additional opportunities with comic and graphic creatives. These include film, TV and Animation producers accredited and registered with the Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP), publishers from the National Book Development Board (NBDB), toy / board game makers and gaming developers.

Developmental needs and future development

In the next phase of development, the festival will establish a stronger network of trade alliance to continue raising domestic awareness on comic and graphic art; and at the same time, proactively expands its partnership portfolio with international peer festivals, publishers, creators, scholars and research institutions to further the cause of elevating the Filipino comic community.

“The comics community is an underprivileged community and a fringe art. However, it is also an entry point to content creation and other creative fields. We have the opportunity to grow our value.”

– Paolo Alessandro Herras, Festival Director

Fringe Manila – a safe space for freedom of artistic expressions

Fringe Manila celebrates the freedom of artistic expressions, with a diverse portfolio of free, non-curated and uncensored programmes. The event features experimental works and groundbreaking programmes across the world of theatre, literature, music, dance, visual art, film, cabaret, performance art, circus and everything in between. <https://www.facebook.com/FringeMNL/>

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce boundary pushing art form - Create a safe space for experimental art 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Platform for local and international artists to be connected with a wider audience group - Building tolerance and gender inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Art advocacy LGBTQA+ and gender inclusivity - Experimental programming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Audience development for non-traditional art practices - Funder development - Community / venue partnership - Talent scouting and invitation



Performance at Fringe Manila Festival (credit: [Fringe MNL](#))

Background and distinctive qualities

Fringe Manila was founded in 2015 and saw the blossoming alternative art scene in the country. Produced by Pineapple Lab, the festival aims to create a safe space for experimental art practises to connect with a wider audience.

It presents a growing line-up from art exhibitions, stand-up, cabaret, circus and burlesque acts. The festival seeks to cultivate an audience for non-conventional art practice by challenging what art is and where art is allowed.

“Fringe [Manila] has redefined what Filipinos think of as art; it’s not just another painting or a drawing anymore.”

–Rosario Juan, commune owner and long-time Fringe Manila
Festival supporter

Approach and programme

Fringe Manila also advocates for social issues, including LGBTQIA+ rights and gender inclusion. It creates a safe environment for artistic expression and discusses issues that concern the queer community, in the backdrop of a predominantly religious country. Film screenings and talks by human rights activist Rhadem Morados discusses the sensitive

issue of marginal community memory and its lack of representation in national discourse.³⁵

“What I hope is, that the LGBTQ artists see Pineapple Lab [and the Fringe Manila festival] as one of the many safe spaces where their voices and artistry are seen and heard. What makes a safe space? Openness, selflessness, and honesty within the community.”

–Festival director Andrei Pamintuan

Success and outcome

The festival produced over 180 shows in more than 100 venues in 2018 alone.³⁶ In collaboration with international cultural bodies such as the Japan Foundation and British Council, the festival frequently invites budding international talents to present their works.

As a part of the global Fringe network, the festival also enables artistic exchange partnerships between the wider diasporic community and facilitates collaboration with local Filipino artists.

“[Fringe Manila serves as a] mediator between artists and venues while highlighting alternative spaces, and engaging artists abroad who are part of the Filipino diaspora to reconnect with their roots.”

– Festival director Andrei Pamintuan

Developmental needs and future development

Celebrating experimentality, programme innovation and freshness is key to its growth. To further enable experimental practises, the festival looks to expand its investment portfolio to commission and co-produce more new works.

Stable community partnership allows access to funding and venues across the city. Heavily reliant on ticket sales, event promotion and audience reach are two developmental priorities in safeguarding financial solvency.

³⁵ <https://lifestyle.inquirer.net/356628/bigger-fringe-manila-promised-this-year/>

³⁶ <https://www.britishcouncil.ph/creativeinnovatorsdti/stories/pineapple-lab>

VIETNAM

Vietnam Festival of Creativity & Design – Creative Future for Vietnam

Established in 2019, Vietnam Festival of Creativity & Design is a national cultural event taking place annually in Hanoi, Hue, and HCMC. The Festival is initiated by RMIT University Vietnam in partnership with United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), Vietnam National Institute of Culture and Arts Studies (VICAS), and COLAB Vietnam. With contributions from across the creative industries, the festival is an opportunity for creative organisations and individuals to connect and celebrate the role and value of design and creativity. The festival aims to build a global brand for Vietnam and develop its local resources through establishing a “belt of creativity” — encouraging the expansion of UNESCO Creative Cities Network in Vietnam with events in Hanoi, Hue and Ho Chi Minh City. VFCD 2021 will mark the third annual edition of the festival. The programme will be organised with extended partners from public, private and the NGO sectors.

<https://vfcd.events/>

<https://www.facebook.com/vfcd.events>

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy advocacy for creative and cultural industries - Cultural heritage preservation and promotion - Community engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social awareness and appreciation for creativity and cultural diversity - Social inclusion - Freedom of artistic expression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community development - Inclusiveness - Cultural diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government support and proactive participation - Donor supports - International partnership



Yen Lam performance by Do Hai Anh, Ha Loc and Kim Nuong from Saigon Contemporary & Ballet Dance (SCBC Việt Nam) at the Closing Ceremony of VFCD 2020. Photo by Yet Bang

Background and distinctive qualities

In 2016, National Strategy for the Cultural Industries Development of Vietnam to 2020, vision to 2030 was approved by the Prime Minister of Vietnam. This has mobilised a range of strategic interventions to support sector development – including a growth in the use of festivals as drivers of the creative economy. In 2019, RMIT Vietnam initiated the festival in partnership with the Vietnam National Institute of Culture and Arts Studies and UNESCO Hanoi Office. In 2020, Colab Vietnam, a social-enterprise working in the field of creative industries joined the partnership and helped drive further collaborations with creative, media and technology businesses, as well as galleries, co - working spaces, and other cultural and creative organisations.

The festival champions the role of design and creativity for national development – with a distinctive theme for each participating city: Creativity & Culture for Hanoi, Creativity & Heritage for Hue, and Creativity & Innovation for Ho Chi Minh City.

“I hope Vietnam Festival of Creativity and Design 2020 will become an event which has the ability to connect and mobilise sources of a number of creative organisations, communities and individuals in a shared vision with the Government, relevant Ministries and agencies as well as provinces and cities to realise goals and action plans set out in the National Strategy for the Cultural Industries Development of Vietnam to 2020, vision to 2030, creating more positive and sustainable impacts on culture, arts and creativity in Vietnam in the coming years.”

– Remarks of Vice Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism Ta Quang Dong at the Opening night of Vietnam Festival of Creativity & Design 2020

Approach and programme

Cultural and creative organisations, groups and individuals in Vietnam have been operating independently, hence the festival provides a platform to connect them and showcase the creativity of Vietnam and to promote the role of creative education in national policies.

The Festival also prioritises inclusiveness and community development via cultural heritage exploration tours, talks/seminars, workshops, exhibitions, and various online.

“New partnership, new collaboration, new opportunities for creative and cultural industries in Vietnam, helping us to move away from the notion of things that were made in Vietnam to things that designed by Vietnam, created and innovated here.”

– Professor Julia Gaimster - Dean of School of Communication & Design; and School of Science & Technology, RMIT Vietnam

Successes and outcomes

In 2019, the Vietnam Festival of Media & Design worked with 25 partners from the cultural and creative sectors to successfully deliver 35 events and activities attended by more than 2,500 people in Hanoi. The Festival directly supported Hanoi’s designation as a member of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) by showcasing the cultural and creative talent within the city while providing opportunities for future collaboration. The 2020 version offered 33 multidisciplinary events organised, both online and face-to-face. This attracted more than 6,000 people online and nearly 1000 people attended the offline events in Hanoi & Ho Chi Minh City.

“We hope that young people will find inspiration and connections to help them realise their potential. We want to bring a clear and sustainable direction towards a greater future for Vietnam – one that focuses on next-gen creative education and growth.”

– Mr Thanh Bui - Founder of COLAB Vietnam

After two versions of the VFCD, the creative talent and cultural diversity of Vietnam has been vividly featured and presented to the wider communities. It has increased the appreciation of both public and private sectors for the potential of cultural and creative development in Vietnam and generated partnerships between domestic and international creative partners. A long term partnership MoU between VICAS and Colab Vietnam has been signed with a focus on creative education and research.

Developmental needs and future development

For the sustainability of the Festival as a national platform to showcase Vietnamese creative talent and cultural diversity, more support from the central government is needed to encourage cities to be more active in implementing their own strategy for cultural and creative industries and be more open toward art and creative activities in their locality.

More participation and support from the private sector will help to ensure the growth of creative communities and their activities are more in line with the development of industry needs. Increased international partnership is also a priority as it will help to build the international recognition for the Festival and improve the creative knowledge and skills of Vietnamese partners and international partners.

Vietnam Design Week – Connecting Vietnamese Craft Traditions to Contemporary Design

With the theme of Regeneration, Vietnam Design Week (VNDW) is organised by the Vietnam National Institute of Culture and Arts Studies (VICAS) (Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism) in collaboration with Ashui.com, ConsMedia and other specialised partners. The festival’s activities include a series of city-specific exhibitions, workshops and design shows aimed to increase the international and domestic value of Vietnamese products and promote the development of the national design industry. The organisers seek to create an annual national event to showcase the creativity of Vietnamese design and establish design as one of the country’s spearhead cultural industries.

<https://vietnamdesignweek.com/en/>

<https://www.facebook.com/vietnamdesignweek>

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cultural heritage preservation and promotion - Vietnamese creative talent showcase - Increasing investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Free and accessible art and culture programme - Valorisation of traditional and inclusive crafts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inclusiveness: ethnic cultural preservation - Sustainability regeneration in materials using and responsible design - Designer Industry partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mentoring and expertise in design - International partnership - Industry partnership and support



“Be Still – Be Now” by Tran Thao Mien, Nguyen Linh Chi, Trinh Linh of Phuong Son Collective, 1st prize of Vietnam Design Week 2020. Photo by Nguyen Ha

Background and distinctive qualities

Initiated in 2020 by Ashui.com, an Architecture and Construction Forum, in partnership with Vietnam National Institute of Culture and Arts Studies (VICAS) and ConsMedia, Vietnam Design Week is a design festival is an annual event which aims to showcase Vietnamese design talent and promote sustainable way of thinking, designing and consuming within Vietnamese society while fostering the growth of design as one of the main creative sectors.

Regeneration and reimagination are vital and at this point of the pandemic, the whole world is interested. Materials that are considered to be discarded, or destroyed yet we still can utilize them again thanks to design ideas where we're going to revive those things and put them into new products.”

– Le Viet Ha, Founder and Chairman of Ashui.com, Director of VNDW.

The key component of VNDW is “Designed by Vietnam” contest where designers (regardless of nationalities who are living and working in Vietnam) have the opportunity to create “regenerated” products of high design value which are then prototyped and invested by industry ad turned into marketable products. Designers are given mentoring support from 5 experts working in the following thematic areas: Food & Beverage - Living - Fashion - Souvenirs – and Public Art.

Approach and programme

Sustainability development is put at the heart of the festival with the theme “Regeneration”. VNDW encourages creative ideas and designs that renew and make the best use of the old values and materials and promote the sustainable development

process in the design industry to mitigate the industrial impact of natural resource overexploitation and waste.

Inclusiveness is also central. VNDW is a platform that prioritise creative ideas that connect traditions and cultural heritage, especially traditional crafts and indigenous knowledge of diversified ethnic communities of Vietnam such as Dao, H'Mong, Thai, Raglai,

“With the idea of connecting contestants and businesses, we aim to create a design idea trading platform that can then generate transactions that transform design into real products.”

– Nguyen Anh Tuan, Director of Heritage Space, VNDW Mentor

Vietnam Design Week 2020 took place in HCMC, Hanoi and Hoi An, and focused on promoting and encouraging people using materials in an economical, sustainable and optimal way. In each city, key VNDW 2020 events included the “Regenerative Design & Products” seminar and exhibition (282 Design, Thanh Ha Terracotta Park, Cspace), the “Designed by Vietnam” Finalist Contest Exhibition, and the Awards Ceremony at Soul Live Complex in HCMC.

Success and outcomes

In 2020, VNDW received more than 60 contest entries of which 20 excellent ideas were shortlisted to be improved via mentorship and prototyped and to be exhibited. 19 larger ‘industry businesses’ supported and sponsored the festival.

“With criteria such as changing the mind-set of using materials at an economical and optimal level - based on locally available materials, Vietnamese cultural characteristics and values to design and create new products used in everyday life, moving towards sustainable development, the outcomes of “Designed by Vietnam” contest make me believe that Vietnam Design Week 2020 will bring us an international creative brand for Vietnam's design industry in particular and for Vietnam's creative economy in general; spread more widely a sustainable development approach in all aspects of life.”

– Assoc.Prof., Dr. Bui Hoai Son, Director of VICAS.

Phuong Son Collective, the 1st Prize winner of VNDW contest, have since been commissioned for reproducing their works. Di, designer of Artist Uu Dam Tran Nguyen, owner of VNDW's Conceptual Prize, has continued to exhibit his works and widely share his ideas on the social role of artists and creative people in environmental protection and sustainability development.

“Vietnam is a great place to be able to work with artisans and craft villages. Not only do we use and regenerate the traditional materials, but I also revitalize the craft villages and traditional professions.”

– Trinh Linh, Designer, VNDW’s contestant.

Successful integration of ethnic culture and heritage in contemporary designs featured in the festival presents great potential for young Vietnamese designers to continue to explore Vietnamese traditional crafts and culture as a material input and inspiration for product design. It will also help sustain the livelihoods of thousands of traditional craft villages and artisans in Vietnam.

Developmental needs and future development

International partnership with international designers or institutions is a priority - to improve the knowledge and skills of Vietnamese designers and creative people; and to open-up fresh collaboration opportunities. The Festival also needs more support and sponsorship from the industry in prototyping and realising the best design ideas of the Designed by Vietnam Contest into high value products.

Hanoi New Music Festival – “Make a silence”³⁷ - for the experimental music of Vietnam

Founded in 2009 by Composer/Improviser Tran Kim Ngọc and organised by Dom Dom - The Hub for Experimental Music & Art in Hanoi, Hanoi New Music Festival is the largest festival of exploratory forms of new music that has ever been held in Vietnam. The concert programme includes contemporary classical music, music-theatre, improvisation and connected traditional and electronic sounds. Alongside these elements, the programme includes talks and discussions, and a symposium on opportunities for researchers and musical scholars to contribute to the discourse on South East Asia, a region traditionally absent from the global contemporary music scene.

<https://www.facebook.com/hanoinewmusicfestival/>

³⁷ Title of Hanoi New Music Festival 2018

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community and audience for experimental music in Vietnam - An education and training platform for experimental music artists in Vietnam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Environment to nurturing experimental music practice and performance in Vietnam - Social awareness for new music practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leadership of pioneer contemporary musicians and artists - Training and education is a key component to achieve festival goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - State and city support (venue) - Donor support (international expertise, travel expense, equipment) - International partnership



Ho Nguyet Co Hoa Cao – a music theatre composition by Composer/Improviser, Artist Tran Kim Ngoc at Hanoi New Music Festival 2018. Photo credit: Hanoi New Music Festival 2018 Facebook

Background and distinctive qualities

Hanoi New Music Festival was first organised in Hanoi in 2009, then known as Hanoi Electronic Music Festival 2009. It attracted participation from artists from Germany, Austria, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Netherlands, Denmark, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia. The second version was in 2013 and the most recent version is Hanoi New Music Festival 2018 (16-21 December 2018, funded by FAMLAB Fund) with the theme “Make a Silence”, inspired by the impossibility of absolute silence. The series of musical events featured in the festival is a journey to identify the identity of South East Asian contemporary music, a region that is often considered “silent” in the discourse on the world contemporary music map. It explored the interplay and dynamics between

traditional and contemporary forms of sound-making and music, between academic contemporary music and underground contemporary music.

“Hanoi New Music Festival encourages young people to explore new languages and new forms. This is a very good thing as if the artistic life develops, there will be much variety of needs to enrich our musical life.”

– Assoc. Prof., Dr. Do Hong Quan, Chairman of Vietnam Music Association³⁸

Approach and programme

The festival provides a nurturing environment for Vietnamese artists to explore, to learn and to practice contemporary & experimental music in a sector which is still very emergent in Vietnam. Since 2004 when she came back to Hanoi from 3 years studying abroad majoring in Musical Composition in Germany, Artist Tran Kim Ngoc recognised the importance of creating a new favourable environment for people to enjoy and practice experimental music. Hence she founded Dom Dom – an NGO dedicated for creating a new generation of contemporary music and sonic artists and new community for experimental music with a series of training courses in Electronic Music and Contemporary Music Orchestra and a series of events and projects of which Hanoi New Music Festival is the most prominent showcasing event. Together with continuous training and education programmes, Ngoc and her team have moved steadily in the journey to build up an “Experimental Music Ecology” in Vietnam.³⁹

“Hanoi New Music Festival creates a playground, a forum, a shared house for creative people to be able to create new meetings, experience, and connects two music scenes that seem to be very far apart: academic contemporary music and the non-academic contemporary music scenes and in audience engagement as well connection with the audience is also a very valuable experience.”

– Composer Tran Kim Ngoc, Founder and Art Director of Hanoi New Music Festival⁴⁰

The 2018 Festival consisted of 6 nights of concerts and performances with 5 different music forms ranging from contemporary classical, music theatre, sound art, to noise and free- improvisation; 4 night clubs organised after 22:30 offered a space for artists to break all the rules in music; and a symposium with 4 themed discussions: Evolving Heritage; Technology On The Move; Post-colonial impact in music education and the context of music-politicisation in South East Asia; and Academia and non-academia in music.

³⁸ Extracted from Art and cultural space - 12/01/2019 - Video broadcast on VTV1 | VTV.VN. Source: <https://bit.ly/3toLwvm>

³⁹ Ut Quyen (2019), Tran Kim Ngoc and The Journey to Build Up an “Experimental Music Ecology” in Vietnam, Hanoi Grapevine. Retrieved on 9 May 2021 at <https://bit.ly/33qrVjZ>

⁴⁰ Extracted from Art and cultural space - 12/01/2019 - Video broadcast on VTV1 | VTV.VN. Source: <https://bit.ly/3toLwvm>

Successes and outcomes

Three versions of Hanoi New Music Festival have brought to the public and music lovers of Hanoi and Vietnam a unique musical journey. The festival has become a reference for contemporary experimental sound art in Vietnam and South East Asia⁴¹. The participation of international artists has increased after every version. Hanoi New Music Festival 2018 had participation of more than 30 musicians, artists, researchers, musical curators coming from 9 South East Asian countries (Thailand, Indonesia, Cambodia, Singapore, Philippines) and European countries (Sweden, UK).

“In Vietnam, festivals like these are very few. Practitioners have the opportunity to sit down together, see each other's work and receive the opinion of each other and of the audience as well.”

– Nguyen Bich Tra, Theatre Writer, Director and Performer,
Founder of The Run – A Theatre Project⁴²

With her significant contribution to the Hanoi New Music Festival and Dom Dom - The Hub for Experimental Music & Art in Hanoi, Artist Kim Ngoc was recognised by Forbes Magazine in 2019 as one of the 50 most influential women in Vietnam. Kim Ngoc and her team have gradually brought experimental and contemporary music into the wider cultural landscape of Vietnam. They have also showcased a new generation of music artists such as Tam Thi Pham Ha Thuy Hang, Luong Hue Trinh, Huong DonNa, Bong Hoa Nguyen Do Minh Quan, Nguyen Thu Thuy, Nguyen Huu Hai Duy, etc. As a consequence, experimental, contemporary music from Vietnam and South East Asia is no longer silent in the world's contemporary music map.

Developmental needs and future development

As the community for experimental & contemporary music in Vietnam is still in its initial development, recognition and support from the state (municipal and national), donors and funds for the festival will help to sustain the regularity and impact of the festival. Support to invest in festival venues, equipment (music and digital technology sponsor), and production are in need for the festival's development.

International partnership is also vital as it enables the festival to build the contemporary experimental music scene in Vietnam in particular, in South East Asia in general and contribute to develop artist networks in the South East Asia region.

⁴¹ Raquel Guerra Aragonés (2019), Tran Kim Ngoc, a Pioneer of Experimental Music and Mixed-Media Art in Vietnam, Urbanist Hanoi. Retrieved on 9 may 2021 at <https://bit.ly/3vXAZTf>

⁴² Extracted from Art and cultural space - 12/01/2019 - Video broadcast on VTV1 | VTV.VN. Source: <https://bit.ly/3toLwvm>

No Cai Bum Contemporary Art Week– Dynamo for Vietnam’s Contemporary Art Scene

No Cai Bum 2020 is the first large-scale contemporary art event in Hue city. Co-initiated and organised by NEST Studio, Mo Do Art Space and the Symbioses project, with the support of sponsors and of the art community nationwide, the event took place over the course of a week in July 2020. 56 artists from across Vietnam exhibited in 6 spaces: Hue Museum of Fine Arts (Diem Phung Thi Art Center), Mo Do, NEST studio, Then cafe, and Nam Mua Gallery. The festival also received support from public institutions such as Thua Thien Hue Department of Culture and Sports, Hue Museum of Fine Art, and Hue University-College of Arts, and independent artists such as Phan Hai Bang of Truc Chi Project, Le Brothers of New Art Foundation. Attended by hundreds of artists and art lovers, the event offered artists and art makers of different generations the opportunity to exchange and share ideas. The young art-loving community in Hue was also very enthusiastic about the inclusion of new art forms including contemporary dance, performance art, installation, and video art alongside traditional art forms. No Cai Bum 2020 was an important driver within the current context of contemporary arts in Vietnam in general, and in Hue in particular. In 2021, using the same format, No Cai Bum was supposed to take place in Dalat city. However, due to the resurgence of Covid pandemic, the festival was postponed until the situation allowed.

<https://www.facebook.com/nocaibum.hue>

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creative collaborations and exchange amongst local artists - Creative capacity building (curatorial, event management, fund raising) - Creative platform to showcase newly-created contemporary artworks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social awareness on contemporary arts and diversity of artistic expression - Network building for local contemporary artists - Hue repositioned in Vietnam’s contemporary art map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Artist - run event - Public partnership for the sustainability of the festival 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partnership with local public institutions - Sponsorship - Capacity building for festival management



An art performance at No Cai Bum Contemporary Art Week 2019, Hue City. Photo by Nguyen Anh Tuan

Background and distinctive qualities

Initiated in 2020 by Nguyen Thi Thanh Mai, Truong Thien, Hoang Ngoc Tu of Mo Do (Hue) and Dao Tung and Ngo Dinh Bao Chau of Nest Studio, No Cai Bum was warmly received by the contemporary art sector in Hue and across Vietnam.

No Cai Bum is a free of charge and an intensive week-long contemporary art event with the aim to connect Vietnamese artists together, to invigorate the atmosphere of Vietnam's (and Hue's) contemporary art scene, and provide audiences with fresh exposure to diversified contemporary art activities.

“When starting to do this event, we just want to give you, brothers and sisters, an atmosphere of the art community. Hopefully, after joining the event, the artists will return knowing that they are not alone. And from there, who knows what will thrive?”

– No Cai Bum 2020's Organisers

The festival was crowd-funded and sponsored by the participating artists and some donors such as Japan Foundation and private donors as well as venue support from Hue's public institutions such as museums, universities and colleges.

Approach and programme

Using the approach of artist-curated programmes, No Cai Bum 2020 has created an open and friendly atmosphere for Vietnamese artists, especially for young and emerging artists to showcase their works and to be connected with networks where they can meet, exchange and partner with each other for future collaboration and support.

The festival organisers recognise the importance of partnership with the public sector. Hence they approached some key public institutions in Hue to support the festival - such as the Department of Culture and Sports, Hue Museum of Culture, Hue University - College of Arts. This did attract some investment and, vitally, state backing.

“During the No Cai Bum event in Hue in 2020, we received support from the Hue University of Arts and the Hue Museum of Culture for the venue. I think if underground spaces like us operate in the format of working together and try to approach state / city organisations for a continuous period of 3 to 4 years, then maybe the situation will be more positive. Connections and support will be less intimidating.”

– Nguyen Thi Thanh Mai, organizer of No Cai Bum 2020, HueCity

In addition to exhibitions of artworks (56 artists in 6 spaces across the city), the Festival has also created a series of public programmes. This includes opening 5 artist studios, staging artist and curatorial talks, presenting performance art shows and contemporary dance shows.

The Festival aims to become an annual event for contemporary arts across Vietnamese cities. One priority is to attract more international and Vietnamese artists to join the festival.

Successes and outcomes

Over 6 days in 2020, No Cai Bum 2020 featured artworks by 56 Vietnamese and foreign artists. It helped catalyse a new energy for the contemporary arts in Hue and raised the profile of the talent and innovation of the contemporary arts across Vietnam.

“This is a stimulus and we need a lot of such stimulus over many years, plus a good supporting policy from the government for an art market to develop. The impact of the No Cai Bum is like a poke, that's all.”

– Le Thien Bao, Founder of Symbioses Project, co-organizer of No Cai Bum 2020⁴³

Following the success of the 2020 version in Hue, No Cai Bum 2021 - The Dreaming Da Lat, received 109 art applications of which 8% are in video art, 30% performing arts, 5% films, 16% performances, and 41% other arts. Most of the participating artists in the 2021 festival are newly established artists who have not had many opportunities to display their works or exchange with other colleagues in such an art event. The number of artists, both Vietnamese and foreign, is almost twice as many as the Hue version.

⁴³Retrieved on 11 May from https://luxuo.vn/culture/tuan-le-nghe-thuat-no-cai-bum-cach-tiep-can-mo-hinh-dai-trien-lam-tuoi-moi-va-thoi-mai.html?fbclid=IwAR0Emi7sIZKiG8d00ff8SkxLVZAB0TyeFFgnAo_h9CLoqFg98hmrwDKoK0

Developmental needs and future development

The festival organisers are very keen to build a strong partnership with city governments and public institutions for their long term development - in both resource support and policy support. One way of leveraging state support is by demonstrating the impact of the festival on the brand and profile of the city, on the creative industries, and on cultural tourism. The festival organisers are interested in building a festival which is impactful for the local economy as well as a driver of audience and market development for the contemporary arts. The Festival aims to become an annual contemporary art event in Vietnam, with bold plans for international partnership. To achieve this requires support in capacity building and in establishing a blended business model which allows for a range of investment sources.

Hoi An Full Moon Festival – Bringing “Soul” back to the Ancient Town

Developed in 1998 as a means to boost tourism in the old town of Hoi An, the festival takes place on the 14th day of each lunar month. The old town celebrates the moon deity by limiting electrical lighting and using silk lanterns to illuminate the old streets. The festival attracts both tourists and locals and features traditional food, poetry, singing, games and different cultural events.⁴⁴ Thanks in part to this initiative, many intangible cultural elements including art performances, music, crafts, dragon dancing, food and traditional games have been revitalised as part of Hoi An’s local culture.

<http://www.hoianworldheritage.org.vn>

<https://www.facebook.com/VisitHoiAn>

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Cultural heritage preservation and promotion- Cultural tourism development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Understanding on local culture and tradition- Social cohesion within local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Community engagement – local artists, artisans and local community members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Partnership development for more diversified programming- Local talent development

⁴⁴ <https://rove.me/to/vietnam/hoi-an-lantern-full-moon-festival>



Ancient Town Hoi An in a full-moon day. Photo by Nguyen Vu Tu Hang, 2016

Background and distinctive qualities

Hoi An Full Moon Festival originated from the traditional Mid-Autumn Festival, a traditional cultural event for children held annually on the 15th of Lunar August in all Viet communities; and from the tradition of celebrating the full-moon day (every 14th day in the lunar calendar) in the agricultural culture of Vietnam.

The festival has been one of the most successful initiatives promoted by the Hoi An City Government in an attempt to develop new and distinctive cultural tourism products for the Old Town since it was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage Site List in 1999.

“The Full Moon Night of the Ancient Town” was first held in 1998. This unique idea comes from the wish of a Polish architect Kazimier Kwiatkowski, who has spent a lot of effort in the preservation project of two world heritage sites Hoi An and My Son. The People’s Committee of Hoi An City assigned Hoi An Department of Culture and Information to implement this programme in order to create a unique cultural tourism product of Hoi An, contributing to attracting more tourists to visit.”

– Vo Van Trung, specialist of Culture and Information
Department of Hoi An City⁴⁵

Normally called as “Full moon night of the ancient town” or “Night at the Ancient Town”, the event has offered visitors a profound cultural experience with a diversity of activities

⁴⁵ <https://baogialai.com.vn/channel/8210/201308/lang-thang-dem-ram-pho-co-o-hoi-an-2255123/#:-:text=Anh%20V%C3%B5%20V%C4%83n%20Trung%2Dchuy%C3%AA,t%E1%BB%95%20ch%E1%BB%A9c%20v%C3%A0o%20n%C4%83m%201998.>

such as poetry singing, hut singing and game playing, chess playing, pot breaking game with covered eyes, and craft making workshops. The festival also provides a deeply evocative cityscape.

Approach and programme

With the aim to contribute to the preservation and promotion of Hoi An's cultural heritage, tourism development and inclusive growth, the festival has been initiated and implemented via a community-based approach. Local people have been proactively engaged in organising all programmes and activities of the festival, including traditional art performances such as hut singing, traditional game playing, houses and streets decorating and cleaning; and most of all, open and warmly engaging with guests and visitors.

“With Hoi An, people are the main subject of all cultural activities. Because...in all traditional performances and local folk festivals, local people play an important role..... In craft village festivals or in rituals, communities are the key actors while public institutions just play as facilitator or supporter for those activities.”

– Ms. Truong Thi Ngoc Cam - Director of the Centre of Culture - Sports & Radio - Television of Hoi An city

On every monthly lunar 14th day, streets along the Hoai River in the Hoi An Old Quarter are closed to traffic to create a peaceful atmosphere without the sound of engines and electric lights, making way for lanterns and candles to be lit from 6pm to 9pm. Local people prepare portable worship altars in front of their houses with food, fruit and flowers, and burn incense to pray for good luck. Meanwhile, tourists and visitors can drop lanterns on the Hoai River to pray for peace and immerse themselves in the fanciful shimmering space along old streets of the town with diversified art and cultural activities and enjoying local food at the night stalls and distinctive Hoi An vendors such as cao lau, Quang noodles.

Successes and outcomes

In 1998, the total number of tourists visiting Hoi An Ancient Town was roughly 150.000.⁴⁶ In 2019, the total number of tourists staying in Hoi An is estimated at 5.35 million, with 4 million international visitors. Every year the City organises more than 1,000 performances of cultural and artistic activities, sports, and traditional art performances⁴⁷. The Hoi An Full Moon Festival has contributed significantly to the scale and energy of this cultural programming.

⁴⁶ Data extracted from reports of Hoi An City's Statistic Office in 1998.

⁴⁷ Data extracted from internal reports of Hoi An Department of Culture, Information, Radio and Television, 2017-2020.

Hoi An has just been honoured on Google Doodle with the beauty of "Reappearance of Hoi An legendary night in the early 20th century" on the 14th day of the lunar calendar⁴⁸, the day of Hoi An Full Moon Festival. This ancient town has been named as "The Best City In The World" by Travel + Leisure, "Asia's top cultural city destination 2019" by Travel & Leisure Magazine⁴⁹.

“The Hoi An full moon night was formed on the basis of tradition and an exchange between local culture with Chinese and Japanese cultural elements; hence it has both cultural and humane value and good impacts on cultural preservation, tourism development, improving spiritual life of Hoi An people. The festival also has profound educational value for many generations of Hoi An people and visitors.”

– Nguyen Thi Thu Trang, senior researcher, Vietnam National Institute of Culture and Arts Studies

The Festival has helped to preserve and revitalise some of the significant intangible cultural heritage of Hoi An such as hut singing and game, lion and unicorn dance, star-lantern kid marching, and lantern craft. These had almost disappeared and were rarely practised just a decade ago. than ten years ago in this small town of Hoi An. Now, the younger generations of Hoi An appreciate, understand and are able to practice in these traditional cultural activities. They are also more likely to be able to access employment in the creative industries and cultural tourism.

Developmental needs and future development

Established for more than 20 years, the festival has much emphasis on the city’s traditional cultural heritage, which consequently led to the lack of contemporary arts and cultural practice. The festival can provide a platform for a meeting between traditional and contemporary cultural practice. New partnerships which work to deliver on the national Cultural Industries Strategy will enable a future festival which marries the old and the new, further reinvigorating Hoi An as a culturally rich and relevant city. This will require a process of skills and capacity building, partnership with technology and creative design firms, and additional investment from the State to modernise and re-energise the festival.

⁴⁸ <http://www.hoianworldheritage.org.vn/vi/news/Hoi-An-24h/google-doodles-vinh-danh-hoi-an-la-thanh-pho-quyen-ru-nhat-1823.hwh>

⁴⁹ <https://www.travelandleisure.com/trip-ideas/city-vacations/hoi-an-vietnam-best-city-worlds-best!>

Da Nang International Firework Festival DIFF – Lightening up the Dynamic City

Since 2008, Da Nang International Fireworks Festival has been developed into a world-class cultural and tourist event. Hosted on an annual basis from April to June, the festival attracted 1.5 million visitors to Da Nang during 2018’s edition. Each year, the festival has a different theme, where each ‘fireworks team’ uses fireworks and music to tell stories related to the theme. DIFF 2019 had the theme of “Stories by the Rivers”, inspired by the nation’s many rivers and two major deltas. Since 2020, the event has been temporarily cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic yet in the coming years, the festival will be back for sure as one of the biggest cultural events in the region.

<https://www.diff.vn/>

<https://www.facebook.com/diffvietnam>

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creative exchange - Talent showcase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Festival tourism - International creative brand development for city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - City initiative for tourism development - Public - private partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programming diversity - Community engagement



Da Nang International Firework Festival 2019
(Credit: Da Nang International Firework Festival Facebook)

Background and distinctive qualities

Da Nang International Fireworks Festival (DIFF) was first organised by the People's Committee of Da Nang City in 2008. During this time, the contest usually takes place within 2 days from March 27 to 28. Since 2017, the DIFF takes place over two months from April to July every year, 8 to 11 participating teams from other countries.

“Through 10 versions, the Da Nang International Fireworks Competition (DIFC), now known as the Da Nang International Fireworks Festival (DIFF), has made significant strides in terms of scale, format and artistic quality, become an exciting festival of the city and its people as well as of foreign visitors, contributing to the expansion of international cultural relations of the city. This event always receives the attention and support of the local people and visitors, and at the same time contributes to the development of culture and tourism, as well as building Da Nang the brand "The City of Events".

– Mr. Le Trung Chinh - Vice Chairman of the People's
Committee of Da Nang City,
Head of the Organising Committee of DIFF 2019⁵⁰

Each festival version has its own theme, evolving around the city's landscape and identity, such as the Han River, Marble Mountains, Tien Sa port and its bridge. The participating

⁵⁰ https://www.diff.vn/news_event/diff-2019-mot-mua-phao-hoa-thanh-cong-ngoai-mong-doi/

firework competing teams have to create and present their work in reflecting the festival theme. The performances of the participating teams are judged based on their creative ideas, uniqueness, artistic quality, scale and visual effect quality.

During the festival, local people and tourists have opportunities to immerse themselves in a festive atmosphere with the firework competition, art performances and cultural events taking place all over the city.

Approach and programme

DIFF was initiated as a specialised initiative of the Da Nang City's People Committee with aims to boost tourism development and international brand building, The city also works with corporate partners, Sun Group, to scale-up the festival and sustain its development.

Each festival consists of firework showcasing among participating national teams within the framework of international firework competition and a series of art and cultural performances and activities such as international food festival, flash mod competition, carnivals and music performances. All are organised and produced by the city's public organisations and private businesses.

Successes and outcomes

The number of participating firework teams has increased from 4 in 2008 to 8 in 2019, including teams from Vietnam, Russia, Brazil, Poland, Belgium, Italy, China and UK. The festival programmes have been more diversified and of a higher quality. The festival helps to re-affirm the city's international brand as "Asia's Leading Event & Festival Destination". It also contributes to the economic development of the city in terms of tourism revenue.

“Da Nang International Firework Festival 2017 will put Da Nang on the list of top performing arts cities and festivals in the world.”

– Mr. Le Quy Duong, Artistic Director of 2017 Da Nang International Firework Festival⁵¹

According to the report of the Organising Committee, in a month of DIFF 2019, the number of visitors to Da Nang reached 937,076 visits. The hotel room capacity during the festival is always at 65-70%, creating more jobs and income for local people and businesses. This achievement contributed to increase the total number of visitors to Da Nang City in the first half of 2019 reached 4.3 million visitors⁵².

Developmental needs and future development

Other than the negative impact of Covid-19 pandemic that led to the cancellation of DIFF 2020, programme diversity is also a challenge for the festival. The festival has to keep

⁵¹ <https://zingnews.vn/le-hoi-phao-hoa-da-nang-2017-lay-y-tuong-tu-yeu-to-ngu-hanh-post712191.html>

⁵² https://www.danang.gov.vn/de/chinh-quyen/chi-tiet?id=36385&_c=3

evolving each year being more sensational than the last. This is expensive and a challenge to build momentum. The Covid-19 pandemic may have a positive influence on the festival, meaning in 2021 or 2022 it will come back with renewed energy and passion.

THAILAND

Bangkok Theatre Festival – Cultural buffet in the city of contrast and a world tourist hotspot

Since 2002, Bangkok Theatre Festival (BTF) has become Thailand's largest annual showcase of contemporary theatre with the highest number of participating artists, works and audience. Organised every November by Bangkok Theatre Network (BTN), a group of theatre artists, scholars and critics, with support from the Bang Lamphu community where the festival hub was in the first ten years in addition to Ministry of Culture's Office of Contemporary Art and Culture (OCAC) and Thai Health Promotion Foundation, this fringe-style festival aims to create and raise the public interest in theatre, provide support and space for both established and aspiring theatre artists and strengthen their network. As small theatre studios significantly emerged throughout the city in late 2000s and early 2010s, especially along the lines of Bangkok Mass Transit System (BTS) and Metropolitan Rapid Transit (MRT), BTF has also included these venues, while moving its hub to Bangkok Art and Culture Centre (BACC), the country's largest multidisciplinary arts centre since 2015, as part of the latter's Performative Art Project (PAP), formerly Performative Art Festival (PAF). www.bangkoktheatrefestival.com

Creative outcome	Business outcome	Approach	Developmental needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exciting and diverse performance line-up - New works - New theatre troupes - New artists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exchange of cultural knowledge - Job creation for the young generation and amateur theatre makers - Better business for shops around festival venues - Income for theatre troupes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building of theatre makers' network with connection to colleagues in other arts disciplines - Building of economic sustainability through performing arts - Creation of public awareness in significance of performing arts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Venue support from public and private sectors - Development of new audience base - Production budget support for participating works - Connection to international theatre scene - Building of competent festival management team



(Bangkok Theatre Festival 2019. Dalang: Thai Classical Court-Style Dance Drama (All-Male Cast), episode of Inao Disguises Himself as a Tranvestite by Ong Jarupong Theatre.

Directed by Jarupong Chantriya.
Photo credit – Ritirong Jiwakanon)

“In a time when we are going through the crisis in every direction, Bangkok Theatre Network has had discussions since the beginning of the year [2020]. Back then, no one could predict that in November, the month of the Bangkok Theatre Festival, the COVID-19 pandemic would be more severe or resolved.....But finally, in April we decided to proceed.....The seemingly greater crisis, though, is the deep conflict within Thai society from the increasingly political irregularities.....Where should the festival's role be in this circumstance? This is not the first crisis the festival has to face...the festival should be an "independent space" where artists and audiences can express and communicate. Healing or empowering each other without any restriction. Artists are responsible for their work as they have been for every past year”.

-- Pradit Prasartthong, director, Bangkok Theatre Festival 2020

Background and distinctive qualities

A non-curated festival, BTF is an “independent space” where artists can create freely and the public can witness the diversity of performing arts. One of the country’s longest running contemporary festivals, BTF has built a sustainable network of Thai theatre makers as well as connection between performing arts and communities, enhancing their economy. As a national stage, participating theatre makers can develop their careers and gain more recognition from their peers and the general public. Moreover, BTF Awards, the jury of which comprise senior artists, producers, critics and scholars, are effective stimuli for young and mid-career artists to create quality and intriguing works. In cooperation with other organisations such as Alliance of Performing Arts in Higher Education of Thailand (PATH) and International Association of Theatre Critics (IATC)—Thailand centre, BTF has regularly hosted seminars, forums and workshops for knowledge exchange in the theatre community as well as public education.

“All works were not presented at purpose-built theatres, but at a variety of venues in the Bang Lamphu neighborhood, a pivot of Bangkok arts and culture from the past and the present. A significant message from the BTF to our society is that performing arts can take place anywhere as ‘All the world’s a stage.’ The recent political unrest has considerably affected the artists’ contemporary theatre creation. Unfortunately, a few private theatres had to close their curtains permanently. The audience, an integral part of the theatre community, has decreased in number. This turmoil has resulted in stress and emotional instability among artists, audience members and the community of contemporary Thai theatre.”

-- A message from Office of Policy and Strategy, Ministry of Culture, (m-culture.go.th)



Bangkok Theatre Festival 2020. OK Land by Circle Theatre Bangkok. Written by Nuttamon Pramsumran.
Directed by Paspawisa Jewpattanagul. Photo credit – Monsuntorn Surach)

Approach and programme

Similar to the membership of BTN, BTF's participating artists and troupes are put in four categories for the sake of both the festival's management and the audience's selection. First are the well-established and generally recognized professional artists and troupes; second, the recognized troupes with characteristics of professional ones; third, the troupes with certain portfolio and management notwithstanding their instability; and lastly, the amateur and student troupes.

“I would recommend you imagine a restaurant buffet where you can taste and try a wide variety of food in accordance with your taste. Likewise, once you visit Bangkok Theatre Festival, you can find that there's plenty to choose from and our line-up of programmes fully meets the diversity of our audience.”

Pradit Prasarthong, permanent secretary, Bangkok Theatre
Network

Success and outcome

Bangkok Theatre Festival (BTF) gives many opportunities for theatre artists and practitioners to express their creativities freely from the professional theatre company, university/college theatre group, experimental theatre troupe, to amateur theatre participants. The festival gets more attractive by having a BTF Award for the outstanding performance in each year. All performances could be divided in categories that are, traditional theatre, contemporary theatre, youth and children theatre and theatre on commission.

Although the festival budget does not allow for invitation of foreign works, some cultural agencies, such as Japan Foundation and Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Thailand, supported either presentation of works by their respective countries or new productions by the collaboration of them and Thai counterparts in BTF for cultural diplomacy. Moreover, Thai works premiered at BTF have been invited by international festivals such as Festival/Tokyo, Singapore Arts Festival, Offene Welt and Kunstenfestivaldesarts, notwithstanding the lack of travel support from the local government. This foreign relations aspect of contemporary Thai theatre, however, has already been taken up by Bangkok International Performing Arts Meeting (BIPAM), born out of BTF in 2017 and now almost entirely separated from it, as BTF focuses on domestic networking.

“BIPAM was created as an international platform to facilitate collaborations and Exchanges between Thai artists and producers and foreign counterparts. Our major government funding has been from MICE agency TCEB (Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau), and not OCAC. This means that BIPAM has an economic commitment [in drawing a considerable number of foreign visitors]. To counterbalance this, we’re diversifying our funding sources and recently CEA [Creative Economy Agency] has come aboard.”

- Chavatvit Muangkeo, co-founder and executive advisor
Bangkok International Performing Arts Meeting (BIPAM)

Developmental needs and future development

In order for an independently run festival like BTF to develop further, and faster, certain shortcomings need to be dealt with. The annual operational budget of BTF fluctuates significantly, as it almost entirely relies on support from the public and private sectors. Clearly, the festival needs to claim other values in creative economy and tourism, for example, apart from its cultural ones in order to find new supporters such as CEA and TCEB. In addition, as the festival’s management team rotates among members of BTN every year, the artistic direction of BTF changes from one year to another. Plus, as a fringe-style festival that is open for all, the number and characteristics of participating works are not predictable, resulting in difficulty of future planning. Despite the

aforementioned connection to overseas festivals, a nineteen-year-old BTF has shown little attempt to develop to become an international festival as if it does not want to take advantage of the fact that it is a major festival in one of the world's most visited cities. Lastly and unfortunately, audience development, like in other festivals, is already a concern but the organisers do not seem to find time and effort to seriously tackle this issue yet. During the pandemic, theatre activities are scarce as artists realise they do not have enough experience in presenting their works online, nor can they broadcast the archived productions as they were not well recorded. At the time when infection rate was low, BTF 2020 was presented on-site with physical distancing, yet without any attempt to present some works online or in a hybrid mode. With some of these issues solved, sooner rather than later, BTF can prove the significance of performing arts to Thai society and the world.

THAILAND BIENNALE – Installing contemporary arts in world-famous beach resort town

The Office of Contemporary Art and Culture (OCAC), Ministry of Culture, has been responsible for developing and promoting contemporary Thai art and culture both domestically and abroad since its inception in 2002. Apart from a wide range of promotional services for Thai artists as well as international artists wishing to collaborate with Thailand, OCAC has been expanding the number of art centres to serve as exhibition centres and learning spaces in several prime areas. Accordingly, OCAC's inaugural grand-scale visual arts festival namely Thailand Biennale (TB) was held in the Southern beach resort town of Krabi in 2018. The purposes are to support the roles of OCAC in value creation and increase for contemporary artworks; to support the exchange of arts and culture both domestically and internationally; to develop the Thai artists' potentials towards international career progress; to develop personnel in contemporary art management and curatorial work; and to generate income from cultural capital and resource and to develop arts as creative economy and cultural tourism with the organisation of international arts festivals.

<https://www.biennialfoundation.org/biennials/thailand-biennale-thailand/>

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long - lasting site-specific arts - Environment sustainability in art making process - Adventurous and unique arts viewing experience - 100% outdoor exhibition in tropical resort town 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arts and nature tourism - Increase in employment for Krabi locals - Expansion and development of arts, tourism and cultural networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exploration of arts and nature tourism - Community engagement – with local universities, students and social enterprises as facilitators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication between festival and local communities - Cooperation among and working skills of festival staff - Post - biennale sustainable development of arts and tourism in Krabi



(Thailand Biennale Krabi 2018. Photo source – Music and Art Magazine)

Background and distinctive qualities

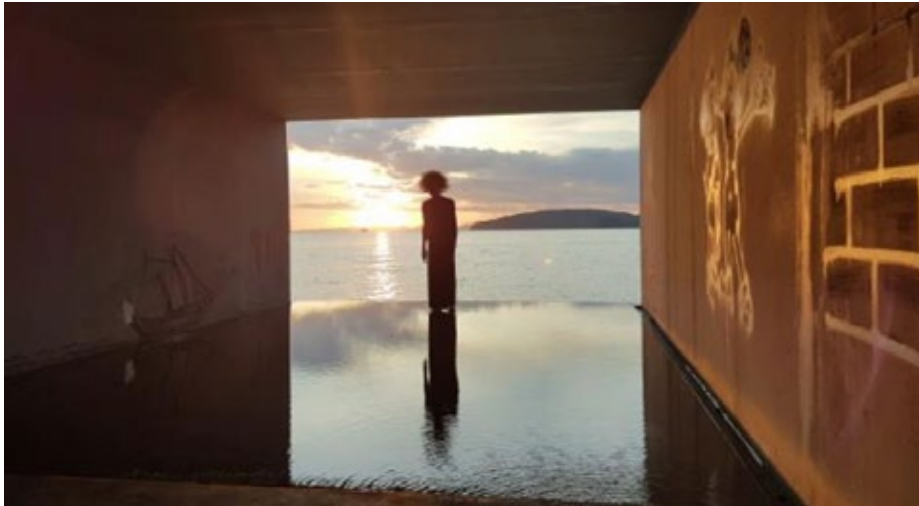
Krabi is a national initiative of contemporary art, the institution of this biennale is planned to choose different cities and sites in Thailand for each edition. Unlike conventional art museum exhibitions, Thailand's first Biennale will be staged outdoors on natural sites in Krabi with its majestic mountain ranges, beautiful beaches, stunning coasts, and hundreds of fertile islands is truly the wonderland of the Andaman.

TB 2018 was curated by UK-based curator, scholar and writer Jiang Jiehong. Under the theme of 'Edge of the Wonderland', more than 50 artists from 25 countries and territories were invited to respond to the topic, collaborate with local communities and to create new work for the natural sites and public spaces for the site-specificity and site-sustainability. TB 2018 engenders a new way of thinking, provides opportunities for meetings between nature, art and everyday life and encourages a creative journey, an adventure, to the wonderland.

Approach and programme

All works of TB 2018 are site-specific art created by Thai and international artists from various disciplines and exhibited in different areas of Krabi. More than 50 works are exploration of both arts and nature tourism. Major sites, all well-known tourist attractions, include Noppharat Thara National Park, Than Bok Khorani National Park, Khao Khanap Nam, Ko Klang, Railay Beach, Ko Poda, Thara Park, Khlong Muang Beach and Tha Pom Khlong Song Nam.

National Innovation Agency (Public Organisation) or NIA in cooperation with Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (Public Organisation) or TCEB and OCAC used the GPS technology to help biennial visitors locate the artworks, equipped with QR codes providing detailed description of both works and locations. Six recommended routes were also created to better accommodate diverse visitors: 'Solo', 'Couple', 'Family', 'Selfie', 'Urban' and 'Art Lover'. In addition, private company Zipevent provided additional support in social media accessibility. This can be regarded as a major step in the development of arts accessibility and an important approach to the development of arts management on the community, city and region levels.



(Thailand Biennale Krabi 2018. No Sunrise No Sunset by Kamin Lertchaiprasert and Suriya Ampansirirat. Photo source – OCAC)

Success and outcome

The post-biennale survey reveals that Krabi succeeds in attracting more foreign tourists than domestic ones. There were 17,502 foreign tourists while the number of Thai tourists decreased by 8,532. Most TB 2018 visitors, both domestic and foreign, were from Generation Y: the majority of the former were casual visitors while the latter biennale participants.

Economically, the direct, indirect and induced impacts of TB 2018 have been assessed. In terms of GDP, TB 2018 generated 864 million baht of income and 321.31 million baht of taxes for Krabi and created 3,394 jobs during the festival.

The provincial government has also realised the importance of the role of an arts town. There had been many attempts in developing Krabi as an arts town; TB 2018's international standard of management was a major turning point. Krabi locals had been almost completely dependent on tourism; TB 2018 created awareness and appreciation of contemporary arts among them as they were spectators, artwork production assistants and docents for both Thai and foreign visitors.

“Unlike Italy where arts have always been an integral part of daily life and people have learned about arts since their childhood, Krabi children do not have such accessibility to arts and adults here do not understand its importance. This is a great

opportunity in which world-class artworks are here, and so our educational council should encourage our kids to come to experience them so that their arts appreciation begins to develop at a young age.”

-- Preeya Jivanantapratvat, member of Krabi City Council and vice-president of Krabi Chamber of Commerce

“If a work of art can also merit tourism along with others, then that can be considered an immense success as its benefit goes beyond the usual artistic one. [As for the extension of the display period] Personally, I think if it’s still considered useful to be there, then I’m happy with it. I did my work the best I could and its status as a tourist attraction is in fact a by-product.”

-- Kamin Lertchaiprasert, Silpathorn Award laureate and co-creator

Developmental needs and future development

While art biennales have been organised around the world for decades, TB 2018 was Thailand’s first national-level biennale, in the same year when its capital hosted its first two city-level biennales, namely Bangkok Biennial (BB) and Bangkok Art Biennale (BAB). The preparation for TB 2018 was full of obstacles. For example, there was a shortage of personnel and lack of experience in the organisation of international festivals. In addition, with a foreigner as the chief curator, it took time for him to understand Thai social and cultural contexts. Moreover, the local communities did not completely understand the values of TB. More effective public relations work was needed to encourage their participation both as local guides providing information to the visitors and spectators opening their minds for contemporary arts appreciation instead of their limited outlook of TB as simply a part of tourism. Furthermore, while some art installations of TB 2018 still remain intact and become part of Krabi’s cultural tourism, arts is not the first thing that comes to people’s mind when they think of this resort town. Anyhow, the sustainable impact of TB 2018 on Krabi’s status as an arts town cannot yet be assessed now as less than a year after its conclusion, the pandemic started and the construction of the new international arts museum behind the Andaman Arts Museum has been delayed.

Postponed from 2020 due to the global pandemic, TB 2021 is now being planned by OCAC for Nakhon Ratchasima, the gateway to the northeastern region and Thailand’s largest and second most populated province, with all lessons from TB 2018 learned.

Chiang Mai Design Week – Local meets global in the northern capital

Since 2014, Chiang Mai Design Week (CMDW) is an annual creative festival organised by Thailand Creative and Design Centre (TCDC) Chiang Mai, a subsidiary of Creative Economy Agency (Public Organisation) or CEA, with the collaboration from different industries, Chiang Mai-based established and upcoming designers, craftspeople, artists and entrepreneurs. Apart from presenting to the public their innovations or new projects that cater to modern living through various activities such as exhibitions, large-scale installations and performances, they share creative knowledge and insights with their counterparts from other provinces and countries as well as the younger generation, local communities, tourists or anyone interested in the creative industry.

In this UNESCO Creative City of Crafts and Folk Art rich with millennia-old cultural and artisanal heritage, the two hubs of the city-wide CMDW 2020, with the topical theme of “Stay Safe, Stay Alive”, are the historic Three Kings monument and TCDC Chiang Mai, a source of modern design and creativity. The formats of activities have been adjusted in accordance with the COVID-19 prevention measures. Four categories of exhibitions include ‘Industry’ with self-manufactured products; ‘Designer and creator’ with individual and brand-commissioned designs; ‘Craftsman’ with artisanal and creative skills; and ‘Organisation’ with agencies which support design works or innovations. Also present are seminars, workshops and markets. With 122,866 visitors, CMDW 2020 generates 936.67 million baht for the city of Chiang Mai.



Chiang Mai Design week 2020 - photo credit: [timeout.com/Bangkok](https://www.timeout.com/Bangkok)

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New innovations and design works - Increase of designer networks - Chiang Mai as a design heritage city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New markets - Exchange of knowledge and cultures - Job creation for the young generation and amateurs - Better business for affiliated stores - Linkage of business with local creative industry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building of designers' networks with connection to colleagues in other arts disciplines - Building of economic sustainability through creative works - Creation of economic value by local wisdom - Building of public awareness in the importance of local wisdom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More participation of local artists/designers, business developers, entrepreneurs and local people to create a strong society of creative economy - Long - term support from governmental agencies for a sustainable creative community

“I’m delighted to be opening Chiang Mai Design Week 2019 which confides in the significance of creative economy and creativity as the origins of a number of innovations, technologies, products and services which need support for further improvement. Creative people are thinkers who are adding distinctiveness and value to products and services. Such support and raise of awareness can lead to entrepreneurship and development of products to international standards. Take this fifth annual edition of Chiang Mai Design Week, for example: in nine days of the festival, it will generate 960 million baht of income for the host city.”

Somkid Jatusripitak, PhD, vice premier,

opening speech for CMDW 2019

Background and distinctive qualities

The first five years of CMDW focus on the development and support of designers, enabling them to connect their design knowledge to local wisdom. Subsequently, CMDW expands its focus and begins to develop places for creative industry in accordance with the economic ideology which aims to highlight the distinctiveness of local wisdom. In sum, CMDW has been developing ‘Creative People’—value creation for products and services as well as solution of social problems; ‘Creative Business’—development of high-quality products and new business opportunities in creative industry; and ‘Creative Place’—development of existing creative areas for communities and public into those for creative industry.

“CEA is aware of the urgency of the use of creativity as an economic stimulus and hence is determined in organizing this Chiang Mai Design Week 2020. The key goals are, first, to revitalize tourism to provide business opportunities to local entrepreneurs and creative people; and, second, to promote creative industry in Chiang Mai and the upper part of northern Thailand. Creation of works continues and we are preparing for Thailand’s return to normalcy.”

Atchaka Sibunruang, PhD, chairperson of CEA executive committee (Chiang Mai News: 5 Dec 2020)



Chiang Mai Design Week 2020, Palilayaka Land by Pollavat Prapatong and Chatnabadhana Panyaphet - Mekong Sub-region Arts and Culture Research Unit, MFU.
Photo credit – Pollavat Prapatong

Approach and programme

As part of UNESCO Creative Cities Network, CMDW develops creative districts in the urban area of Chiang Mai as well as mechanisms for creative industry. Besides, CMDW develops local cultural capital using the ‘Storytelling to Branding’ strategy. These are well in line with TCDC Chiang Mai’s, established in 2013, missions of supporting the enhancement of creative ideas and skills for Thai people, developing creative industry sources as the centre in collaboration with local academic institutions and entrepreneurs and helping incubate new generations of creative people. While its main focus is craft and design, CMDW is not a genre-specific festival like many other festivals in Thailand. Its diverse activities promote creativity and convey different ideas to various groups of visitors, including the relationship between design and business; exchange of ideas and perspectives and sharing of experience; and creation of creative districts in, and in many cases by, the local community. Furthermore, with a wide variety of partners, ranging from local communities, design and craft studios, city, provincial and national governmental agencies to international organisations like British Council, Japan Institute of Design Promotion (JDP) and Taiwan Designers’ Week (TWDW), CMDW brings designers, creatives and entrepreneurs from other regions of Thailand and overseas to interact with their local counterparts.

“Chiang Mai is truly a Creative City. It’s our temple who initiates and organizes this event and then invite people to join in creating a walking street in the centre of our community.”

Phra Khru Palat Anon Wisuttho, abbot of Wat Lam Chang who curates Earth and Us:

Success and outcome

CMDW takes place in the urban area of Chiang Mai where the general public rub shoulders with designers, creatives and entrepreneurs as they leisurely visit and conveniently participate in a variety of exhibitions and activities. They experience first-hand creative works resulting from the blending of local wisdom, remarkable talent and artisanal skills and modern design and creative industry, with northern Thailand-based artists and designers as the major force. Unlike organisers of many festivals in Thailand, TCDC Chiang Mai has been working with local stakeholders for many years and, with their understanding of the local scene, organising various relevant activities year-round. In other words, their highlighted annual event CMDW is never like a UFO arriving in and leaving this city without any interaction with or impact on the local community. Even in the midst of the pandemic, the 2020 edition managed to draw 123,616 visitors, generating 1,533.51 million baht of economic value.

“Based on the local wisdom of papermaking, our 18-year-old [two-generation] company is now able to create fire-resistant, water-resistant, odour-absorbent and PM 2.5-protective paper filter...The name is in honour to my dad, a local who’s originally an umbrella maker...In 2019, we’re affected by digital disruption and our marketing needed digital transformation. Then in July 2020, our exports were disrupted by the pandemic and so we started to look more at the domestic market, which had accounted for only 5% of our sales. Masks were short in supply at the time and paper is disposable and so we worked with university scholars and medical professionals in making water-repellent and virus-protective disposable paper masks.”

Thanakorn Supasa, CEO of Simply Décor (Papa Paper Craft)

Developmental needs and future development

Challenges facing CMDW have brought about not only the development of new creativity based on local wisdom but also a larger perspective on the development of areas and community lifestyle. Meanwhile, CMDW still serves its economic purposes with the key indicator of the competitiveness of the newly developed creative district in terms of entrepreneurs, designers and people in the community. Anyhow, the social and economic growths are being assessed as CMDW and TCDC Chiang Mai aspire to create sustainability for all designers and communities more of whose involvement is needed for the future. Besides, as 60% of CMDW’s funding is from the government, it is evident that the festival

needs to secure the long-term commitment of this for its longevity. It is notable that while Chiang Mai is ranked highly in the world's top cities lists and was, pre-pandemic, visited by more than 10 million visitors yearly—about 30% of which foreign ones—, approximately 80% of CMDW audience was local, only 10% from elsewhere in the country and 10% from overseas. This means that CMDW, despite being held in the cooler months and high season, does not yet reach its full potential in terms of cultural tourism and international networking. It can and should, considering its existing partnership with TAT and affiliation with World Design Weeks, a global network of design weeks and festivals.

Notwithstanding the COVID-19 pandemic, support for job creation and market search for designers, manufacturers and entrepreneurs still continue, so do the commissioned projects, while hoping that when the situation improves, CMDW will bring livelihood to this northern capital again.

SINGAPORE

European Film Festival (EUFF)

Co-organised by the EU Cultural Committee and the Singapore Film Society (SFS), the European Film Festival is an annual event that showcases a selection of European films, giving local audiences a taste of Europe’s diversity and creativity. Films screened are recent and have encountered success in their country of origin. The films showcased in this festival may belong to a specific country, but they are all representative of Europe’s common cultural heritage. This film festival, now in its 30th year, is a window into the intriguing world of European cinema but also offers a platform to showcase films by young Singaporean film-makers. The annual ticketed European Film Festival (EUFF), took place from May 6th-23rd 2021 at The Projector.

Co-organised between the European Union Delegation to Singapore and the Singapore Film Society. The long-time partnership demonstrates how a volunteer-run Singapore Film Society can partner overseas partners to grow the love for films in Singapore.

<https://euff.com.sg>

<https://singaporefilmsociety.com>

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partnerships with embassies to showcase the best films from the European countries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular screenings to foster the love for films and cultural awareness - Using regular cinemas makes the films more accessible to the public. - Grow creative economy through corporate sponsorship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SFS becomes the institutional continuity for the constantly changing EU Cultural committee due to posting cycles. - Social Engagement with current interests SFS members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Talent showcasing of student films alongside the professional films. - Grow cultural capacity - Empowering young programmers to work on country based or genre based film festivals

Background and distinctive qualities

Set up in December 2002, the EU Delegation to Singapore formally opened on June 30, 2004. Since then, the EU's diplomatic representation has worked to promote closer ties between the EU and Singapore. The wide-ranging relationship has strengthened over the years. In close coordination with the diplomatic missions of the EU Member States, the Delegation ensures consistency and effectiveness of the EU's external action in Singapore.

With 27 countries, more than 450 million people and the largest GDP in the world, the EU is of increasing importance to Singapore, especially since the entry into force of the EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (EUSFTA) on 21st November 2019, as well as ASEAN.

The Delegation covers a range of issues such as trade, foreign policy, climate change, environment, transport, industrial policy, research, science, technology as well as education activities such as the Study In Europe fair and on the cultural front presents the annual European Film Festival (EUFF), which took place from May 6th-23rd 2021 at The Projector. This year's festival presents 23 films over a longer festival period, reflecting on the diversity of perspectives, histories, languages and cultures from across the European continent. While the films showcased in the festival may belong to a specific country, they are all representative of Europe's common cultural heritage.

The EUFF's co-partner is the Singapore Film Society (SFS). Officially registered as a Society in 1958, since SFS's establishment, it has grown from strength to strength, building a strong foundation, collecting film lovers, and kicking into motion a community that consistently brought in regular screenings of exceptional films.

From the 1970s, SFS collaborated with embassies and started a series of long running film festivals. Today, SFS is the largest collaborator of film events and annual festivals, namely Japanese Film Festival (1983), British Film Festival (1984), French Film Festival (1986), Italian Film Festival (1988), European Union Film Festival (1991), Chinese Film Festival (2013), MINDS Film Festival (2016). The inaugurated MINDS Film Festival aims to raise awareness for persons with intellectual disabilities (PWDs). The festival is a testament to the powerful ability of film to promote social impact. Through the festival, SFS hopes to build an inclusive community for our differently abled friends.

Approach and programme

SFS is the 'institutional continuity' of the EUFF. The foreign diplomats typically have postings of 3-4 years, and so the composition of the Cultural Committee changes all the time as different member attachments start and complete their postings at various points in time. SFS has worked on EUFF since its inception in 1990. SFS' role anchors the Festival as a long-term event on Singapore's annual arts and culture calendar. They also advise on and guide the Cultural Committee on local audience tastes, regulatory considerations (e.g.

film classification guidelines / sensitivities), and juxtaposition of programme content (e.g. other film festivals happening, de-conflicting content / themes / schedules);

SFS curates the film line-up. What typically happens is that each country liaises with its respective national film institute, or equivalent, in each country of origin. They then submit and discuss potential titles for the forthcoming year's EUFF. SFS also plans the screening schedule, and ensure that things like content file formats, subtitling, programme notes (for the publicity material), and director's bios / availability for Q&A sessions after the screenings of their films, are prepared and managed / disseminated;

SFS also recommends, and ultimately arranges for, the screening venue(s), as well as take care of the logistical, operational and administrative workflows;

SFS runs the screenings (meaning they staff the reception counter, ensure the films are tested in advance, liaise with IMDA for certification, interface between the screening venue/s and the embassies / high commissions to help with any troubleshooting needed).

Success and outcome

EUFF is SFS's flagship festival. 2021 was SFS' 30th, and it is also one of the largest film festivals in terms of average number of movies screened. As the number of member states in the EU grows, so does the number of films SFS gets. In recent years, non-EU-member countries (e.g. Norway) also participate, which is why the full name of the Festival is now simply the European Film Festival.

“The European Film Festival's landmark 30th edition takes place at an unprecedented moment in time as the Covid-19 pandemic continues. In these truly trying times, many of us have reached out to the arts in its many forms – be it literature, music, or films. In the current context, when travel remains a challenge, cinema offers us just the lens we need to experience and understand the many complexities and cultures that shape and define our world and make it what it is.”

Barbara Plinkert, European Union Ambassador to Singapore

Developmental needs and future development

Singapore Shorts at EUFF

This film festival is not just a window into the intriguing world of European cinema but also offers a platform to showcase films by young Singaporean film-makers. The Festival continues EUFF's long tradition of collaborating with a Singaporean film school. Partnering for the sixth time with Ngee Ann Polytechnic's School of Film and Media Studies, the EUFF features short films by students of the school alongside the official film selection. Please see Annex C for a list of short films by the students.

“When I was told that my film was chosen to be screened at EUFF, I was extremely shocked and proud because I did not plan for the film to be so successful, yet it received praises and positive comments. Being selected to be screened at EUFF means it will be exposed to other filmmakers and can potentially inspire them or even give them the opportunity to provide me with feedback. It is an astonishing feeling.”

Kiefer Kang, director of drama short Milk Powder, a student film from Ngee Ann Polytechnic

As a volunteer-run society, SFS might want to consider having a secretariat to manage and support the numerous film festivals it organises throughout the year. It is amazing that the SFS does not receive any government funding thus allowing it to programme films independently that are great, rather than films that are ‘good for the public.

Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA) – An Arts Festival Reimagined for the Future

As Singapore’s annual pinnacle performing arts festival, the Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA) presents captivating and diverse works across theatre, music, dance, film and visual arts. First launched as the Singapore Festival of Arts in 1977, the festival has gone through several evolutions and inspired generations of arts lovers and practitioners. Today, the highly anticipated festival is a high point on Singapore’s arts and cultural calendar. SIFA continues its festival mission to champion the creation and presentation of Singaporean and international works.

SIFA 2021 was organised by Arts House Limited, commissioned by the National Arts Council, and part of the #SGCultureAnywhere campaign.

<https://www.sifa.sg>

SIFA2021 Wrap Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KmTbgJ7myqU&t=36s>

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commissioning new artistic local work. - Presenting international performing arts work. - The festival activates public spaces as well as has a centre for exchanging of ideas and skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grow and enhance Festival tourism - Experience economy - Facilitate other Creative talent exchange. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build local pride - Inclusive programming beyond Singapore artists and arts groups to include environmental, health, mindful living groups. - Organising related talks and panels to facilitate dialogues between artists and audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Longer commission period - Flexible responsive programming - Partnership programming. i.e. Arts Equator - Working with different Embassies in Singapore to present international arts groups outside of SIFA window. i.e. four programmes in August 2021



Nine Years Theatre and The Pond Photography

Background and distinctive qualities

Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA) is an annual arts festival held in Singapore. It is organised by Arts House Limited (AHL) for the National Arts Council (NAC). The festival is usually held in mid-year for a stretch of one month and incorporates different forms of theatre, music, dance, film and visual arts etc. Besides featuring local artists/arts groups, the festival also brings in international productions and commissions collaborations between international artists/companies with Singapore artists/companies.

SIFA's roots began as the Singapore Arts Festival, organised by the National Arts Council, in 1977, and was a biennial event until 1999. Since 2012, it was rebranded as SIFA, helmed by a rotating Festival Director for three to four years, supported by a festival team of producers, production and marketing team.

For the 2021 festival, SIFA presented over 60 shows and 300 performances, with artists from Switzerland, Australia, USA, Lebanon, Japan, Malaysia and Philippines performing alongside hundreds of Singaporean artists and freelancers within the 16-day festival period. SIFA 2021 led the way in showing what an international festival might look like in the future, with its format of live, hybrid, and digital programmes.

Approach and programme

SIFA offers an important stage for Singaporean works. The 2021 edition championed 9 new Singaporean Festival Commissions, with 500 artists, production crew and freelancers employed during SIFA v2.020 and SIFA 2021. There is a mix of free and ticketed events.

“SIFA enables Singaporean companies to do their best work because we’re measured against the best in the international art scene. The Festival offers us the resources and platform to rise to that challenge. Every production at SIFA is a wonderful opportunity to push ourselves artistically in the creative process.”

Huzir Sulaiman, Joint Artistic Director of Singapore-based Checkpoint Theatre

Responding to the trends of digitalization and the involvement of technology for live performance, SIFA commissioned several international collaborations.

“When SIFA 2020 got cancelled, SIFA facilitated both Nine Years Theatre and SITI Company in New York adopting digital technologies to continue our work. Three Sisters was successfully presented in a hybrid format, with actors from the SITI Company appearing ‘on-stage’ via film – a first.”

Nelson Chia, Artistic Director of Singapore’s Nine Years Theatre

Success and outcome

Reshaping SIFA, growing audiences. Over the last four years, SIFA has seen an over 47% increase in its first-time festival-goers, affirming SIFA Festival Director Kripalani’s approach of strategically curating a wide range of programmes for diverse audiences.

In addition, over 800 local artists, production crew and freelancers were involved in SIFA 2018 to 2021, with a total of 18 productions commissioned.

“Gaurav and his team from AHL have together with our leading artists and companies indelibly shaped SIFA through their resilience and innovation. They have given us the gift of the arts to uplift our spirits and open our minds to exciting possibilities.”

Rosa Daniel, Chief Executive Officer of the National Arts Council

Innovation takes centre stage

After SIFA 2020 was cancelled due to the COVID-19 outbreak, Kripalani and his team pivoted to create SIFA v2.020, a six-month-long digital festival programmed in real time. Key to SIFA 2021’s success were the lessons gleaned from SIFA v2.020, which saw SIFA piloting new online programmes and performances and implementing new safety protocols at venues amidst tight restrictions, presenting Festival offerings to a global audience.

Curating a wider spectrum of hybrid performances in SIFA 2021 meant the Festival would be able to proceed under various scenarios. Equally crucial was the adoption of digital technologies to facilitate live performances. These included shows where artists interacted digitally with audiences, such as *As Far As Isolation Goes* and *The Journey*, to live theatre that utilised video to stream international actors who could not travel to Singapore.

SIFA’s commitment to working closely with various government agencies and health and safety protocols enabled international artists to bring their works here despite restrictions on international travel.

“SIFA has become one of the most exciting and important festivals to watch in Asia. It is inspiring to see what SIFA 2021 has achieved, despite the trying conditions. It offers festivals around the world a roadmap for how to adapt in these times.”

Nicole Taney, Director of Artistic Planning for
the Spoleto Festival

Developmental needs and future development

Another lesson learnt from COVID was the importance of investing in high-quality recordings of live performances. SIFA On Demand, a new video-on-demand platform, extended the Festival’s reach internationally and allowed more audiences to enjoy shows from SIFA 2021.

With the upcoming change of the Festival director, and a new CEO at the AHL, there might be new approaches to programming and audience engagement.

“This year's festival is a testament to the dedication and 'never say never' attitude of the Singapore arts scene. In the face of great constraints, all the artists, technical and supporting teams, media, patrons and the public stood by us. SIFA 2021's success shows how the arts are loved and how important it was to have a pinnacle arts festival happen as part of Singapore's recovery from the ravages of the pandemic. Thank you all for being our champions nationally and internationally.”

Tan Boon Hui, Executive Director of Arts House Limited

Festival of Women N.O.W. – Not Ordinary Work

Celebrating women creators, thinkers, and change-makers, and their approach to making a difference.

N.O.W. is a three-week interdisciplinary annual festival spotlighting women creatives, change-makers and thought leaders working across the arts, social sectors as well as business. Through the prism of performance, exhibition and talks, it raises questions and generates awareness on the less seen, less heard, or often ignored issues affecting women, their lives and society.

Conceptualised by theatre artist Noorlinah Mohamed in 2019, and presented by T:>Works, Festival of Women N.O.W. celebrates alliances and solidarity between women through engagement, collaboration and dialogue.

N.O.W. 2021, marks its third and final iteration as an all-digital festival.

www.notordinarywork.com

Creative Outcomes	Social Outcomes	Approach	Development needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explored taboo topics that are seldom heard or seen within the diverse communities of women - Commissioning new artistic work - Talent incubation and development - Awareness building - Talent showcasing - Social Engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Experience Economy - Art meets life through social causes and fundraising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transdisciplinary, transcultural, and inclusive processes in programming women artists and creators - The digital offers a wider reach, cutting across the divides of geography, age and time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 24-Hour Playwriting Competition continues to discover new Singapore plays. - T:>Care, a Creative Action Resilience Enabling initiative, by T:>Works - Ways to continue engaging new audiences

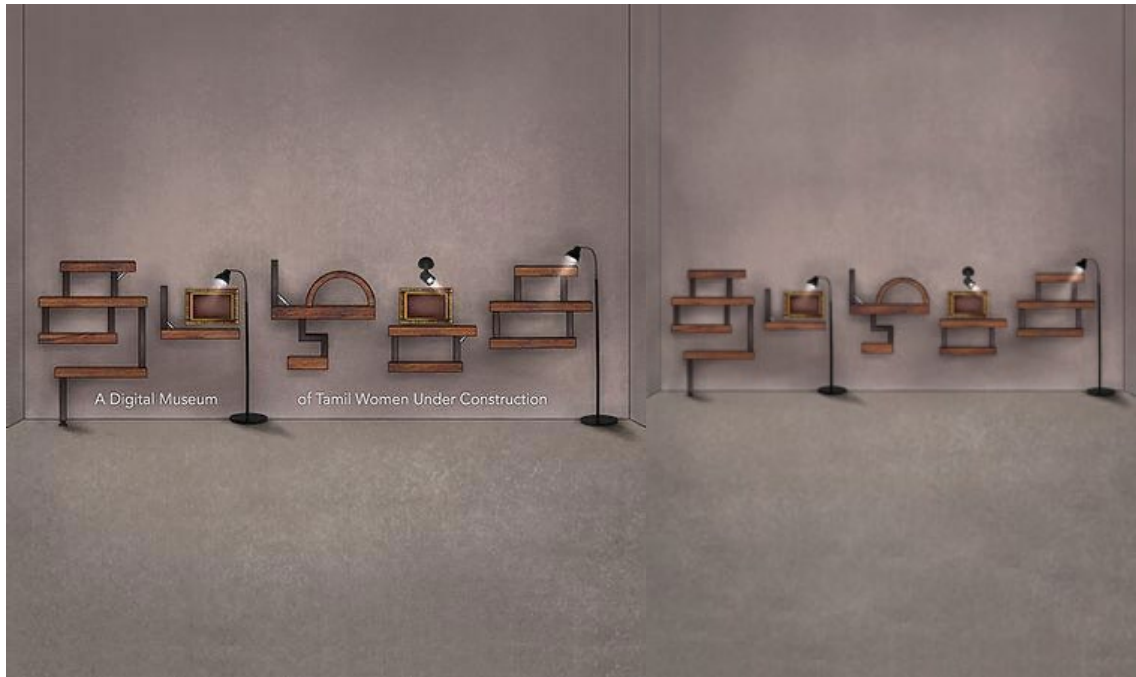


Photo credit: courtesy of Vimal Kumar.



Photo credit : Jeannie Ho Photo



Photo Credit: Courtesy of ila & Sonia Kwek

Background and distinctive qualities

Established in 1985, T:>Works is an independent and international arts company based in Singapore at its space, 72-13. It is currently led by Artistic Director, Dr. Ong Keng Sen. T:>Works' mission and vision is the pioneering of thought leadership in the arts focused on transdisciplinary, transcultural, and inclusive processes. To this end, there is a strong educational perspective with research and discourse contextualising the histories, contemporary experiences, and art practises of South East Asia. T:>Works also serves to investigate the current urgencies of being located in Singapore through different creative expressions in the public sphere. It is a recipient of the National Arts Council Major Company Grant for the period from 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2022. T:>Works is an Institute of Public Character with charity status.

T:>Works is Singapore's oldest professional English theatre company that has always been ahead of its time. Ong Keng Sen has been instrumental in thinking deeply about Singapore content with The Writers Lab (1990), the publication of original Singapore plays (from 1993), 24-Hour Playwriting Competition (1996) and thinking beyond Singapore with the Flying Circus Project (1994).

The NOW programme features free online talks and digital exhibitions and ticketed performances and workshops.

Approach and programme

With 15 programmes including four livestreamed productions alongside three digital exhibitions, online conversations and workshops, the line-up of N.O.W. 2021 explores

taboo topics that are seldom heard or seen within the diverse communities of women. T:>Care, a Creative Action Resilience Enabling initiative that was established in 2020, also returns to encourage donations in support of projects that make positive changes in our communities. In solidarity and alliance, T:>Care identifies a select group of urgencies and projects working at the intersection of gender, class, and race. Contributions received through T:>Care will be divided equally and donated to this select group of beneficiaries.

“The creation on the digital requires a re-thinking of what it means to make engaging performance, and propels us creators to not only think about the narrative but also the environment for the audience. In digital performance, the ritual of attending, witnessing, as well as partaking in the artistic process is being investigated, developed and thought through, and that is an exciting domain. In N.O.W. 2021, each creator gamely considers what it means to make work for a digital space and how to support each other. The creators also have to ensure that the audience is completely immersed and is given space to receive, respond and care for the work they encounter. That is both the challenge and excitement of creating in the digital.”

Noorlinah Mohamed, Artistic Director, Festival of Women, N.O.W.
2021

Success and outcome

Three of the NOW 2021 programmes that demonstrate a diversity of experiences for the digital audience include:

Thamizhachi: A Digital Museum of Tamil Women Under Construction, led by anthropologist and writer Vithya Subramaniam and Brown Voices, a collective of Indian theatre practitioners, privileges the voices and labour of Tamil women, which are often less visible than their male counterparts. Initiated by Grace Kalaiselvi, Brown Voice’s purpose and vision is to generate and encourage narratives expressing the perspectives, concerns, and aspirations of Singaporean Indians.

In Cabaret Joy, cameras on-site will reveal the inner workings of digital cabaret, bringing the chaos of a ‘live’ cabaret onto the digital world. It will be an interdisciplinary, interactive performance, with live performances merging with film, and audiences are invited to appear on screen and interact with the cabaret by sharing their own stories of joy. Cabaret Joy unpacks joy within the LGBTQ community, where stories of triumphs and success are often eclipsed by narratives of tragedy and trauma. This cabaret thus positions ‘joy’ as a narrative of liberation and reclamation by a historically marginalised community.

Let’s Talk About Circumcision, led by Crit Talk, a platform for alternative views in the Muslim community, is an online workshop raising awareness and understanding of the ritual of circumcision across cultures. With the use of small group activities and moderated discussion, including drawing and writing through a digital interface, participants are

invited to enter the workshop space with openness and respect for honest and critical conversations as well as reflections to emerge on this topic.

“Annually, the themes identified, such as Invisibility (2020) and Intimacy and Fear (2021) frame issues that are less seen in mainstream media or other arts events. We identify women collaborators (cultural works, social sector advocates, entrepreneurs, medical and education specialists) that are developing urgencies connected to the themes and who are working within intersections of race, gender and class. This process usually takes 12-8 months of ground research. We announce this on social media and interns and volunteers who are drawn to the themes and the named collaborators write in to us. We also receive recommendations from the public.”

Noorlinah Mohamed, Artistic Director, Festival of Women, N.O.W.
2021

At least 50% of the Festival staff are women from minority groups (incl. LGBTQ+). In terms of Festival programming, every year at least 5 projects are led by women from minority groups (Indian, Malay, Bi-racial, LGBTQ+). This year, 9 of the 15 programmes are examples of that.

Developmental needs and future development

One certainly hopes the Works continues to reflect on the learnings and impact of the three years NOW project, from content to performance and presentation forms. With the challenges of attracting new audiences to the arts, The Works needs to think of ways to continue engaging the 59,000 new audiences they attracted across different platforms, Facebook Live, SoundCloud, Vimeo and YouTube.

REFERENCES

<http://m-culture.go.th/>

<https://biennialfoundation.org/biennials/thailand-biennale-thailand/>

<https://biennialfoundation.org/2018/11/the-first-thailand-biennale-edge-of-the-wonderland/>

<https://nia.or.th/thailand-biennale-krabi-2018.html>

<https://ocac.go.th/>

<https://www.thaiquote.org/content/243553>

<https://www.facebook.com/TCDCChiangMai>

<https://chiangmaidesignweek.com/>

<https://www.cea.or.th/>

<https://thematter.co/>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/TCDCThailand>