

---

Malaysia

# Bandaraya Melaka Melaka

**Cultural Cities Profile  
East Asia**

May 2021

tom fleming / creative consultancy

## Contents

<b>Introducing Melaka</b>	05
City Vision/Mission/Slogan	05
Creative Industries and Cultural Services	06
<b>Bandaraya Melaka and Central Melaka in Numbers</b>	07
<b>Context</b>	08
Location/Region	09
Ethnic Diversity	09
<b>Cultural, Arts and Civic Policy</b>	10
Environment and Sustainability	12
Capacity Building,	17
Digital Development and Wellbeing	
<b>Cultural Ecosystem and Infrastructure</b>	20
Cultural Funding and Partnership	20
Heritage Assets and Activation	23
Sample of 'Movers and Shakers' in the Cultural and Creative Sector of Melaka	30
Events, Festivals and Creative Marketplaces (selected)	35
Creative Infrastructure, Hubs and Assets (selected)	37

## Special Thanks

Commissioned by the British Council, the research is led by Dr. Tom Fleming, director, Tom Fleming Creative Consultancy (TFCC); Nana Yu I Lee, senior researcher, TFCC and in collaboration with Jia Ping Lee, Founder and Principal, Tempatico; Ee Lin Lim, consultant, Tempatico; and Lim Sok Swan, Special Project Officer, Penang Institute (PI); Morana Lefilliatre, Administrator & Research Assistant, PI; Joyee Yap, Analyst, Socioeconomics & Statistics Programme, PI; Mohammad Zulhafiy Bin Zol Bahari, Intern, Heritage & Urban Studies, PI.

The **British Council** builds connections, understanding and trust between people in the UK and other countries through arts and culture, education and the English language. <https://www.britishcouncil.org>

**Tom Fleming Creative Consultancy** is the leading international consultancy for culture and the creative economy. We offer research, strategy and policy leadership across the creative, cultural and arts sectors. We offer technical expertise, strategic thinking and the tools to position creativity to the heart of society. With offices in London and Porto and associates in 12 countries, we are an international agency operating in every region. <http://tfconsultancy.co.uk>

**Tempatico** is a place consultancy offering place strategy, placemaking and place narrative in creating or rejuvenating cities or organisations. We EMPOWER governments, corporations with the know how on creating and managing human centric workplaces, districts and cities. <https://tempatico.com>

**Penang Institute**, one of Malaysia's most influential policy think tanks, raises local and regional socio economic, urban and environmental issues through its events, its political, social and academic network, and its publications, such as Penang Monthly and ISSUES. <https://penanginstitute.org>

# Introducing Melaka

Melaka, a beautiful coastal city, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, with a plethora of heritage assets which are being restored as spaces for contemporary cultural practice, with a growing festival and events sector. Both tangible and intangible, these heritage assets have been developed over 500 years of trading and cultural exchange between East and West in the Straits of Malacca. Today, Melaka, which is just about reachable for day trips from Kuala Lumpur, is a major cultural tourism draw and is becoming a key cultural hub in its own right.

Bandaraya Melaka or Melaka City, is the capital of the Melaka<sup>1</sup> State. It has been exposed for more than 500 years to many different cultures and influences such as Portuguese, Dutch, British, Indian, Chinese, Peranakan and others, which are reflected in its architecture, culture, traditions and rituals, as well as in some local communities like the Kristang and Peranakans.



## Liveable heritage city.

Melaka Historic City Council

## City Vision/Mission/Slogan

The Melaka State Government's vision is to lead the public service with integrity with a mission to provide a first-class state civil service in the Administration and Management System.<sup>2</sup> The new slogan launched in 2020 aims to align with the ambition of the state government: *Melakaku Maju Jaya, Rakyat Bahagia, Menggamit Dunia* ("My Melaka as a progressive state, people's happiness and beckoning globally." The new slogan is also in tandem with the objective of the state government in increasing economic development, enhancing the well-being and standard of living among the local populace.<sup>3</sup>

The vision of the Melaka Historic City Council is to establish Melaka as a sustainable and smart historical

city while its mission revolves around driving a livable heritage city via efficient and responsive governance.<sup>4</sup> "Melaka, Where It All Began" by Tourism Melaka points to the city's historical importance as the first city being colonised and one of the most powerful cities in the region in a critical era in regional development.<sup>5</sup> In the State Structure Plan Melaka 2035,<sup>6</sup> the city aims to: reconstruct physical living conditions, improve connectivity and socio-economic wellbeing, promote economic growth, facilitate sustainable development and traffic management. Four pillars underpin these goals, including achieving economic resilience, a Green City State, sustainable and inclusive development and identity-making.

<sup>1</sup> In this research, the city and state are referred to as Melaka while the term 'Malacca' is used to refer to other geographical terms, such as the Malacca Straits.

<sup>2</sup> Vision, Mission, Objective & Function. <https://www.melaka.gov.my/en/jkmm/corporate-info/vision-mission>

<sup>3</sup> Melaka CM unveils new state slogan. <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2020/07/02/melaka-cm-unveils-new-state-slogan>

<sup>4</sup> Melaka Historic City Council. <http://www.mmbmb.gov.my/en/mmbmb/profile/mission-vision>

<sup>5</sup> Melaka, Where It All Began. <https://tourismmelaka.com/where-it-all-began>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.thegpsc.org/sites/gpsc/files/partnerdocs/gpsc\\_delhi\\_meeting-melaka\\_2035\\_plan-final2-311017.pdf](https://www.thegpsc.org/sites/gpsc/files/partnerdocs/gpsc_delhi_meeting-melaka_2035_plan-final2-311017.pdf)

## Creative Industries and Cultural Services

Melaka follows the federal government direction on creative industries whilst many of the cultural policies are centred around tourism. The city has put a lot of emphasis and effort towards the preservation and management of heritage buildings and is advocating as well as encouraging local art and cultural performances. Many of these cultural and religious festivals such as The Majestic San Pedro Festival, Moon festival, Hari Raya, and Thaipusam are still being celebrated to this day.

“

**The Malaccan culture is diverse and rich with history and heritage. As a historic city with a multi-cultural living heritage that is both tangible and intangible, the town reflects a mixture of influences which have created a unique identity of pluralism and complex diversity whereby the culture, belief and architecture forged here permeated eccentric and polyglot aspects. This is heavily expressed in the great variety of religious buildings of different faiths, ethnic quarters, the many languages, cultures and religions.**

Ee Soon Wei, Managing Director of The Royal Press<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Interview with Penang Insitute

# Bandaraya Melaka and Central Melaka in Numbers

Central Melaka has

**2 government hospitals,**  
**5 private hospitals, and**  
**35 government clinics** as of 2018

Melaka is one of the

**forerunner states**

in Malaysia to launch  
**smart grid technology**

Central Melaka  
Population

**≈ 579k**  
**citizens**

in 2019

Climate

**≈ 27°C**

on Average

Bandaraya Melaka

**13 metres**

(43 feet)

Above Sea Level

Central Melaka  
Land Area

**≈ 359 km<sup>2</sup>**

Melaka State GDP  
RM49,172

**≈ GBP8,578**

in 2019

1 Malaysian Ringgit  
(RM)

**≈ 0.2 Pound**

(GBP)

in 2019

Melaka's historic centre  
was crowned a

**UNESCO  
World  
Heritage Site**

in 2008

**792 units** of  
cultural resources  
(tangible assets) have  
been identified in the

**Old Quarter  
of Melaka**

Cultural mapping  
projects by

**Melaka  
In Fact**

has conducted  
interviews with

**2,000+  
households**

Melaka recorded **17M visitors** in 2018.

**Domestic** visitors accounted for **67%**

# Context

“

Although there were earlier polities (in the Malay peninsula), the rise of Melaka marked a significant point of interest because in half a century from the 1400s, this obscure fishing settlement had become one of the famous ports in the world.

Datin Saidah Rastam, Melaka In Fact project director and cultural activist<sup>8</sup>

The Stadthuys, Melaka.

Photo © Tourism Malaysia



<sup>8</sup> <https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2019/08/513698/revisiting-glorious-tales-melaka>

Melaka was founded around 1400 by a Sumatran Prince by the name of Parameswara, who fled to Temasek (Singapore) then settled down in Melaka, after being defeated by the Majapahit Empire.<sup>9</sup> The Melaka City gained municipality status in 1977. It was declared a Historic City in 1989 and achieved City Status in 2003.<sup>10</sup>

Melaka Historic City Council and Hang Tuah Jaya Municipal Council are administered under the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, and the Melaka State Government's policies. According to the decision of the Melaka state executive council in 2017, the spelling of the state 'Malacca' has been changed to 'Melaka'.<sup>11</sup>

## Location/Region

Bandaraya Melaka, the capital city of Melaka, is located in the southern part of the Malaysian Peninsular, near the mouth of the Melaka River which flows into the Straits of Malacca.<sup>12</sup>

## Ethnic Diversity

Malay language, as the national language, is the most common language in the city. English is another compulsory language subject in the national education system. Other common languages in Malaysia are Mandarin, Tamil and dialects of different ethnic groups.

The Melaka-born Hindu community, also known as Melaka Chetti or Chitty Melaka, has adopted another language which consists of the Malay language interspersed with Tamil words.<sup>13</sup> For the Melaka Portuguese community, their Creole language is known as Papiá Kristáng, Língu Máí or simply Papiá or Kristáng.<sup>14</sup>

According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia in 2019, Central Melaka records a total population of 579K:

- Bumiputera 339K
- Chinese 179K
- Indians 23K
- Others 5K
- Non-citizens 32K

<sup>9</sup> Melaka History. <https://www.melaka.gov.my/en>

<sup>10</sup> Melaka Historic City Council. <http://www.mbmb.gov.my/en/mbmb/profile/background>

<sup>11</sup> It's "Melaka", not "Malacca", from now on. <https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2017/05/236218/its-melaka-not-malacca-now>

<sup>12</sup> Elevation of Bandaraya Melaka, Melaka, Malaysia. [https://elevation.maplogs.com/poi/malacca\\_malaysia.119185.html](https://elevation.maplogs.com/poi/malacca_malaysia.119185.html)

<sup>13</sup> Melaka Chetti Community. <https://melakachetti.com/index.php/about-us>

<sup>14</sup> Papiá Kristang: The Creole Portuguese of Malacca and Singapore. <https://kreolmagazine.com/culture/history-and-culture/papia-kristang-the-creole-portuguese-of-malacca-and-singapore>

# Cultural, Arts and Civic Policy

The cultural economy and planning of Melaka City focuses on heritage preservation and heritage activations.

Tourism is a vital part of the city's economy and, according to the State Structure Plan 2035, the state envisions an increase of 10 million visitors by 2035.<sup>15</sup>



**The state government will focus on further increasing investment in tourism by taking several measures. This includes adding new tourism products to attract more tourists to Melaka including Ecotourism and Heritage Tourism; upgrading existing tourism products so that they are always an attraction to visit; attracting the world's leading brands to open outlets in the state and organising MICE (Meeting, Incentives, Conferencing and Exhibitions) programmes of an international standard in Melaka.**

**Datuk Seri Dr Hasim Hasan, Melaka State secretary<sup>16</sup>**

<sup>15</sup> [https://www.thegpsc.org/sites/gpsc/files/partnerdocs/gpsc\\_delhi\\_meeting-melaka\\_2035\\_plan-final2-311017.pdf](https://www.thegpsc.org/sites/gpsc/files/partnerdocs/gpsc_delhi_meeting-melaka_2035_plan-final2-311017.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2020/10/630820/melaka-target-tourism-and-manufacturing>



## Tourism-led Policy



The Tourism Promotion Division under the Melaka Chief Minister Department aims to propel Melaka as one of the top tourist destinations in Asia to increase job opportunities in the state.

The Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) tourism is one of the types of tourism targeted by the State Government.

- To further attract tourists, the Melaka Art Brigade (*Briged Seni Melaka*) unit, the official cultural dance and music performing group in

the state, has been introduced throughout the country to promote Melaka's cultural art and dance as one of the tourism products.

Melaka recorded 17M visitors in 2018. Among which:

- Domestic visitors accounted 11M (67%)
- International visitors accounted 5M (33%)
- Top five international tourists came from China, Singapore, Indonesia, Taiwan and Vietnam<sup>17</sup>

## Key Projects in the Cultural Industries

### Melaka City Context Report, 2018. Prosperity Fund Global Future Cities Programme, UN Habitat.

The Global Future Cities Programme (GFCP) is a distinct component of the Prosperity Fund which seeks to conduct targeted interventions to encourage sustainable urban development and augment prosperity whilst diminishing high levels of urban poverty.

- Two mobility interventions were proposed for Melaka in this report: a Green Transport Corridor Implementation Plan, and a Heritage Area Integrated Mobility Plan.<sup>18</sup>

### Melaka Historic City Council Strategic Plan 2020 – 2024. Melaka Historic City Council.

Launched in 2020, the Melaka Historic City Council Strategic Plan 2020 – 2024 seeks to position Melaka City as a sustainable and smart historic city.

- Its strategies include efficient and effective governance; financial management and revenue collection; smart, green and clean city; world heritage historic city; social well-being; and sustainable development.<sup>19</sup>

### Ceritera Melaka Pioneer. Melaka Historic City Council.

The Ceritera project organised by Historical Melaka City Council is an effort to empower and protect the city's cultural heritage through cultural mapping.<sup>20</sup> This ongoing project shares data online and aims to ensure it is interactive, easy to access and user-friendly.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Melaka Tourism Promotion Division Melaka Tourism Promotion Division.

<sup>18</sup> Melaka City Context Report. [https://www.globalfuturecities.org/sites/default/files/2020-08/Malaysia\\_Melaka\\_CCR.pdf](https://www.globalfuturecities.org/sites/default/files/2020-08/Malaysia_Melaka_CCR.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> Pelan Strategik MBMB 2020 – 2024, P. 33. <http://www.mbmb.gov.my/en/node/1908>

<sup>20</sup> <http://msdesk.mbmb.gov.my/myshare/ceriteramelaka.cfm>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.myhometown.com.my/malacca/ceritera-melaka-pioneer-project>

## Environment and Sustainability

Melaka has led national practice in Green City and Smart City initiatives, thanks to the City's long-term planning, strong public-private collaborations and public engagement.<sup>22</sup>

2020 was the target set by Melaka to achieve its goal of being a Green Technology state. Many public-private partnerships were pursued, and the state government has also supported this with relevant policies and governance measures in order to build the sustainability mindset and eco-friendly practices.

- Under the MBMB Strategic Plan 2020 – 2024, Melaka city aims to be a smart and sustainable historic city in line with the state's goal.

The Melaka River project was primarily a flood mitigation measure. However, it also allowed for a waterfront beautification project that took into account its heritage architecture and traditional trades and enhanced it for tourism and wellbeing agendas.

The Green City Action Plan is the result of a partnership with The Asian Development Bank (ADB) since 2014.

- ADB provided a technical assistance to underwrite the project. It also played a critical role in helping the city implement the roadmap, such as devising financially-viable schemes for solar energy and street lighting, setting up a database to track indicators in environment and economic growth, and providing personnel training.
- For ADB, the Melaka projects are its pilot under the Green Cities Initiative of the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT), an ADB-supported sub-regional cooperation programme focused on the development of 32 provinces in these three countries.



**Melaka has made great strides toward building a sustainable, green city... a public-private partnership installed 100,000 LED street lamps along the Alor Gajah–Central Melaka–Jasin (AMJ) highway, which will improve road safety and reduce carbon dioxide emissions... walkable neighbourhoods with mixed-use development have increased foot traffic and reduced car use in the fast-growing state.**

**Ramesh Subramaniam, Director-general, ADB Southeast Asia Department<sup>23</sup>**

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.nst.com.my/opinion/letters/2018/09/416341/melaka-green-city-example>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.nst.com.my/opinion/letters/2018/09/416341/melaka-green-city-example>

## Melaka Waterfront Economic Zone



The Melaka Waterfront Economic Zone (M-WEZ) is highlighted as a main pillar of the Melaka's Melakaku Maju Jaya Strategic Plan (PSMJ) 2035 economic development plan.

Its main objectives are to diversify the state's economy through maritime-related activities and strengthen key infrastructure.

- The next phase of Waterfront development will focus on: International Tourism Centre,

Lifestyle-based Commercial Centre, Smart City, Industrial Revolution 4.0, Marina Logistics Centre, Modern Lifestyle Cultural Centre and others.

- The Melaka state government will also empower the entrepreneurial ecosystem to strengthen the tourism sector to attract 7.45 million tourists by 2023 and extend their overnight stay to three nights in the state.<sup>24</sup>



**Melaka Waterfront Economic Zone (M-WEZ) will comprise the Kuala Linggi International Port (KLIP) as the oil and gas industry services hub, the Tanjung Bruas Port as the container port and Melaka Gateway as the Melaka International Cruise Terminal (MICT).**

**Datuk Seri Sulaiman Md Ali, Melaka Chief Minister<sup>25</sup>**

<sup>24</sup> PSMJ 2035.

<sup>25</sup> The Star.

## Key Policies in City Planning

### Green City Action Plan (GCAP). Asian Development Bank.

The Melaka state government endorsed the Green Technology Blueprint in 2011, and formalised a vision to convert Melaka into a Green Technology City State by 2020. It also set up the Green Technology Council to monitor its efforts. The United Nations Urban Environmental Accords ratings method was used to evaluate their 'green' performance and achievements.

- The Green City Action Plan, the next step towards assisting Melaka with its vision, consists of five action plans.<sup>26</sup> In August 2020, the Melaka state government and Melaka Green Technology Corporation (MGTC) signed an MoU with Micro-E Holdings (M) Sdn Bhd to pursue the Melaka Green City Action Plans.<sup>27</sup>

## Culture, Environment and Urban Landscape – case studies

### Sustainable Tourism Strategy Document, 2017 – present

The Sustainable Tourism Strategy, outlined by UNESCO, seeks to impart long-term direction to the World Heritage Sites in both Melaka and George Town to ensure the sustainable management of tourism industries and activities, which are projected to grow in the coming years. The Strategy also encourages the involvement and participation of relevant representatives from local communities to ensure the protection and preservation of buildings in heritage zones.<sup>28</sup>

### Melaka Green Technology Council, 2011 – present

The Melaka Green Technology Council was established in 2011 to achieve the development and application of products, equipment and systems, to protect the environment and natural environment, and minimise or decrease the negative impacts of human activities.

- Melaka World Solar Valley (2007 – present) is an area of 7,248.43 hectares as per the Draft Local Plan of Alor Gajah District 2007 – 2020. This is positioned to trigger a paradigm shift towards a sustainable life and environment. Its vision is to create world-class quality of life and sustainable development based on solar energy, by providing a solar valley that uses solar energy as its main alternative energy.<sup>29</sup>
- Melaka River Preservation Project (2013 – present). The river has been successfully cleaned to become a tourism product. The preservation project received the 'Green Apple Awards' on 11 November 2013 in London.<sup>30</sup>
- Meterai Hijau Melaka (MHM) (2014 – present) is a guide that contains the minimum requirements to construct a green building to ensure that developers meet, at least, the minimum green building recognition. Kings Green Hotel was awarded the first Meterai Hijau Melaka on 23 March 2015.<sup>31</sup>
- Hang Tuah Jaya Green City (2017 – present) was established as a sustainable green city. All urban development in the area must comply with the green building standards, like the Meterai Hijau Melaka, Green Building Index (GBI) and Leadership In Energy & Environmental Design (LEED). The City presently occupies an area of 5,152 acres.<sup>32</sup>
- Electric Bus launched, operated by state-owned Panorama Melaka Sdn Bhd, was introduced in 2015 and reintroduced in 2021 to boost the domestic tourism industry which had been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.<sup>33</sup> The company seeks to offer more comfortable public transport services to passengers, incorporate the latest technology in Melaka's public transportation system, help the Melaka State Government achieve the vision of a 'Green Technology City', and become one of the best public transport companies in the country.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Green City Action Plan (GCAP). P. 10 – 11.

<sup>27</sup> MoU signed to continue Melaka Green City Action Plan. <https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2020/08/615451/mou-signed-continue-melaka-green-city-action-plan>

<sup>28</sup> Sustainable Tourism Strategy Document, 2017. UNESCO & George Town World Heritage Incorporated (GTWHI). P. 9.

<sup>29</sup> Melaka World Solar Valley. <https://www.melakagreentech.gov.my/projek>

<sup>30</sup> Projek Pemuliharaan Sungai Melaka. <https://www.melakagreentech.gov.my/projek>

<sup>31</sup> Meterai Hijau Melaka. <https://www.melakagreentech.gov.my/projek>

<sup>32</sup> Bandar Hijau Hang Tuah Jaya. <https://www.melakagreentech.gov.my/projek>

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.thesundaily.my/local/melaka-to-introduce-electric-powered-buses-for-tourists-next-year-DM5592137>

<sup>34</sup> Local bus. <http://panoramamelaka.com.my>

### Melaka Gateway, 2014 – present

Launched by KAJ Development Sdn Bhd, Melaka Gateway, a premier mixed Harbour City, was launched by Hatten Group Sdn Bhd. Situated on Pulau Melaka's eastern coast, this six-acre mixed-use marine-themed development will feature a shopping mall with a water theme park on five of its six floors, and three hotel blocks development project consisting of three reclaimed and one natural island and totaling 1,366 acres.<sup>35</sup> However, as the reclamation project with the developer was cancelled by the Melaka State Government in November 2020, the status of the project currently remains unknown.<sup>36</sup>

### Harbour City, 2015 – present

Although the project stopped in 2020 due to a legal dispute, it is expected to be taken over by Singapore-based Tayrona Capital Pte Ltd.<sup>37</sup>

### Impression City, 2017 – present

Yong Tai's Impression City is being developed as the ultimate leisure destination in Melaka. This 138-acre mixed-use development, with an estimated gross development value of RM6 billion, is currently 35% complete and is projected to be finalised by 2027.<sup>38</sup>

### Greenwood City, 2017 – present

This 10-acre integrated commercial development will consist of retail space, 4 and 5-star hotels and serviced apartments. It is going to feature the tallest

tower in Melaka with the proposed tallest building bungee jump in the country and proposed first zip line adventure in the state.<sup>39</sup>

### Cheng Ho City, 2018 – present

Located near Melaka Old Town, Cheng Ho City (CHC) is a development that combines tourism, and commercial and residential developments on a 900-acre reclaimed land in Klebang. CHC is sectioned into 4 zones being Admiral Gateway, Zheng Island, One World Island and Iconic Heart-Shaped Island.<sup>40</sup>

### The Sail Melaka, 2019 – present

With a Gross Development Value (GDV) of RM6.5 billion and a built-up area of 991,096 square meters (sqm) in total, the Sail Melaka will feature luxury hotels, high-end condotels, business suites, a million square feet luxury shopping mall, and a Melaka-Nanjing themed cultural square with shop lots.<sup>41</sup>

- This project is in line with the Belt and Road Initiative (OBOR), a massive project initiated by the Chinese government to strengthen economic and cultural ties among Asian, European, African and American countries. Its strategic partners and contractors, PowerChina and China Railway Engineering Corporation, are some of the biggest infrastructure corporations in Asia and also members of the OBOR initiative.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Melaka Gateway. <https://melakagateway.com/introduction>

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.theedgemarkets.com/article/melaka-gateway-developer-fails-challenge-states-directive-halt-project>

<sup>37</sup> Harbour City project expected to be revived. <https://www.thestar.com.my/business/business-news/2020/08/13/harbour-city-project-expected-to-be-revived>

<sup>38</sup> With no silver lining seen in tourism and property, Yong Tai banks on vaccine move. <https://www.theedgemarkets.com/article/no-silver-lining-seen-tourism-and-property-yong-tai-banks-vaccine-move>; Official website: <https://impression-city.com>

<sup>39</sup> Greenwood City. <https://greenwoodcity.my>

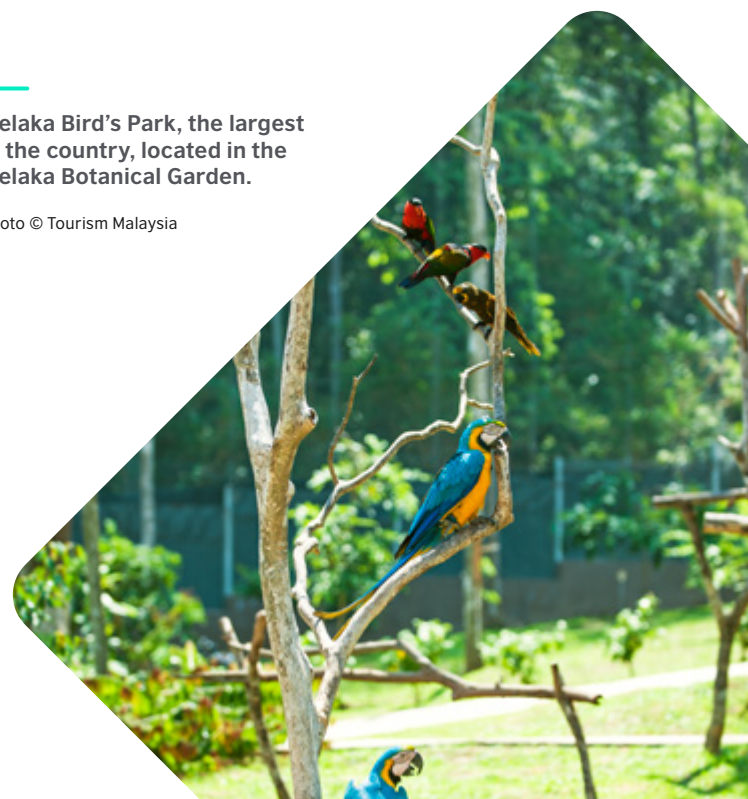
<sup>40</sup> Cheng Ho City. <http://chenghocity.com/index.html>

<sup>41</sup> The Sail Melaka Sets Course Towards International Excellence. <https://shengtaiinternational.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/NR-The-Sail-Groundbreaking-Ceremony.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> The Sail. <https://thesailmelaka.com>

**Melaka Bird's Park, the largest in the country, located in the Melaka Botanical Garden.**

Photo © Tourism Malaysia



### Tanjung Tuan Recreational Forest, 1921

Located in Cape Rachado Permanent Reserved Forests (Tanjung Tuan), one of the oldest reserved forests, gazetted as a permanent forest reserve in 1921, Tanjung Tuan Recreational Forest is home to a wide range of flora and fauna. It is a well-known and popular location for bird watching and hiking.<sup>43</sup>

### Sungai Udang Recreational Forest, 1987

This 335-acre recreational forest is part of the Sungai Udang forest reserve which was gazetted as Permanent Reserved Forest in 1987. It offers recreational facilities such as jungle trekking and camping.<sup>44</sup>

### Melaka Botanical Garden, 2006

Formerly known as the Recreational Forest Ayer Keroh, this botanical garden contains several recreational facilities such as camping, jungle trekking, and special gardens namely the Prehistoric Park, Garden Stories and Deer Park.<sup>45</sup>

### Bukit Batu Lebah Recreational Forest, n.d.

Bukit Batu Lebah Recreational Forest is located in Senggeh's Forest Hill and covers 208 hectares. It offers many activities such as hiking, caving and others.<sup>46</sup>

#### Melaka waterfront.

Photo © Tourism Malaysia



<sup>43</sup> Tanjung Tuan Recreational Forest. <https://forestry.melaka.gov.my>

<sup>44</sup> Sungai Udang Recreational Forest. <https://forestry.melaka.gov.my>

<sup>45</sup> Botanical Garden (Recreation Forest Ayer Keroh). <https://forestry.melaka.gov.my>

<sup>46</sup> Bukit Batu Lebah Recreational Forest. <https://forestry.melaka.gov.my>



## Capacity Building, Digital Development and Wellbeing

Although there is no official education policy at the state and local government levels, efforts are being made by the Melaka State Government to turn Melaka into an educational hub through its Melakaku Maju Jaya Strategic Plan (PSMJ), where youth development is a primary pillar to increase citizens' well-being.<sup>47</sup>

In terms of digital enablement, the plan outlines Digital Melaka project and focuses on strengthening the development of telecommunication and digital infrastructure; consolidating digital platforms and smart application developments; promoting the Smart Melaka project; and launching a Blueprint document for Smart Melaka.



“

**Five Melaka Key Result Areas (MKRA) were set in line with the implementation of Melakaku Maju Jaya Strategic Plan (PSMJ) 2035, the second MKRA was the sustainable development of the people's well-being through the provision of complete public infrastructure facilities, including providing a sustainable road network, resolving road congestion issues, quality healthcare service facilities, public parks, sports complexes, water supply facilities, floods and so on.**

**Chief Minister Datuk Seri Sulaiman Md Ali<sup>48</sup>**

<sup>47</sup> PSMJ 2035, P. 15 – 16.

<sup>48</sup> <https://www.bernama.com/v2/en/news.php?id=1939066>

## Key Policies in Digital Infrastructure

### Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Strategic Plan. Melaka Chief Minister Office.

Launched in 2018, the ICT Strategic Plan is one of the major references of the Melaka State Government for the ICT strategic planning of the state. It contains the direction, strategies and framework for the planning and development of ICT.

- The core strategies are strengthening ICT infrastructure and security, governance, capabilities and service delivery; and empowering service delivery applications.<sup>49</sup>

### Taman Anjung Gapam Digital Home Project

The first Digital Home project in Melaka was launched in 2009 by Telekom Malaysia Berhad (TM) through its enterprise and public sector business solutions arm, TM ONE, and a local property developer, Bintang Urusjuta (M) Sdn Bhd, at Taman Anjung Gapam. This represents the first housing project in Melaka that includes various digital home solutions.<sup>50</sup>

### Smart Grid Technology, 2020

The Smart Grid Technology project of Melaka is under the initiative of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), with the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation as global project manager. The execution of the project is under the responsibility of the Housing and Local Government Ministry as well as the Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology (MIGHT).

- Melaka is one of the forerunner states in Malaysia to launch smart grid technology. It was part of the 28 cities from 11 countries worldwide that were selected for the smart grid demonstration project. This five-year-long project seeks to transform Melaka into a sustainable city by lowering greenhouse emissions and raising renewable energy.<sup>51</sup>

“

**Melaka is one of the pioneer states in the country to debut smart grid technology with an aim to spearhead its high-tech city concept.**

**Chief Minister Datuk Seri Sulaiman Md Ali<sup>52</sup>**

<sup>49</sup> ICT Strategic Plan, P. 5.

<sup>50</sup> TM Collaborates with Bintang Urusjuta for the first Digital Home in Melaka. <https://www.tm.com.my/Newsroom/Pages/TM-COLLABORATES-WITH-BINTANG-URUSJUTA-FOR-THE-FIRST-DIGITAL-HOME--IN-MELAKA.aspx>

<sup>51</sup> Melaka to debut smart grid technology as part of global project, says MB. <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2020/09/15/melaka-to-debut-smart-grid-technology-as-part-of-global-project-says-mb>

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2020/09/15/melaka-to-debut-smart-grid-technology-as-part-of-global-project-says-mb>



## Culture and Inclusive Development – case studies

**The Poverty Defender Division** under the Melaka state government, seeks to achieve a zero-poverty status in the state through the implementation of the Melaka State's Development Plan.

**The Women Development Office** is another Government agency in Melaka that runs programmes and activities related to the development of women. It aims to promote and achieve gender equality to accelerate national development.<sup>53</sup>

### **Welfare Department's Financial Assistance, Melaka Social Welfare Department, 2020 – present**

The Melaka Social Welfare Department provided monthly financial assistance to 24,530 recipients from January to September 2020. The Melaka Tengah district recorded the highest number of recipients at 11,476.<sup>54</sup>

### **Joy Workshop, Persatuan Kebajikan Insan Istimewa Melaka, 1999 – present**

Joy Workshop was initiated in 1999 to train people with learning difficulties in vocational and independent living skills to help them secure jobs in sheltered workshops and home-based industry, or give them open employment opportunities.

- Through the workshop, the special needs groups make pots, fridge magnets, decorative cork board hangers and pencil boxes.<sup>55</sup>

### **Young Adults Programme (YAP), Wings Melaka, 1999 – present**

Officially registered in 1999, Wings Melaka started in 1997 when a group of Christian parents of children with special needs met together in the hope to initiate some services for children and adults with learning disabilities.

- The Young adults programme, which was launched in 2012, aims to help young people, aged between 18 and 25, to gain skills that will enable them to get employment opportunities, improve their quality of life, move into independent/supported living. Art and Craft is one of the eight areas in the programme.<sup>56</sup>

“

**We have a broader objective of promoting public awareness and better understanding of special needs children as well as working towards their meaningful and purposeful inclusion and participation in community and society as a whole.**

**Chan Saw Si, Wings Melaka manager<sup>57</sup>**

<sup>53</sup> Kebajikan Sosial & Masyarakat. <https://www.melaka.gov.my/ms/rakyat/info-rakyat/kebakikan-sosial-masyarakat/kebakikan-sosial-masyarakat>

<sup>54</sup> Welfare Department's Financial Assistance. <https://www.thesundaily.my/local/over-24000-receive-financial-aid-from-melaka-welfare-dept-CG5585466>

<sup>55</sup> Joy Workshop. <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.798161283686096>

<sup>56</sup> Young Adult Programme. <http://www.wingsmelaka.org.my/index.php?choice=26>

<sup>57</sup> <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/community/2014/10/03/making-a-difference-centre-helps-special-needs-children-right-into-adulthood>

# Cultural Ecosystem and Infrastructure

The Melaka State has been thriving under a collaborative ecosystem, whether with support from the federal agencies or across international agencies such as UNESCO, Asian Development Bank and UN-Habitat.

Locally, the state has been collaborating with PEMANDU (Performance Management and Delivery Unit), Kementerian Tenaga Teknologi Hijau dan Air (Ministry of Energy, Green Technology and Water), MIGHT (Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology), MOE (Ministry of Education) and Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), to develop Melaka Green Technology City State.<sup>58</sup>

Likewise, Melaka-based independent groups and private heritage initiatives also receive funding from local and international organisations and foundations such as Yayasan Sime Darby, Japan Foundation, Goethe Institute Malaysia and the British Council.

Artists and artisans in Melaka are also eligible for The PENJANA Plan for the Creative Industries<sup>59</sup> – a set of recovery initiatives introduced to reinvigorate the sector after the Covid-19 pandemic. The grant has a strong Arts & Culture Industries focus, and is administered and managed by MyCreative Ventures and CENDANA, and supervised by Ministry of Communications & Multimedia (MOCM).

## Cultural Funding and Partnership

Melaka Historic City Council<sup>60</sup> remains an active partner with sister cities such as Lisbon, Portugal since 1984; Hoorn, Netherlands since 1989; Valparaíso, Chile since 1991, and through Friendship City with Sawahlunto, West Sumatra, Indonesia since 2004, Changsha, China since 2004; Padang Panjang, West Sumatra, Indonesia since 2006; Berat, Albania since 2013. The Council also frequently collaborates with Nanjing and Macau, China and Gwangju, Korea.

### Melaka Young Talent Awards (MYTA), 2016 – present

The Art Laboratory Research & Training in collaboration with Kumpulan Pelukis Negeri Melaka, Dasein Academy of Art, and the Melaka Museum Corporation, organised a new talent search session for painting in 2016. The first prize winner received a full scholarship worth RM30,000.00 to undertake an art course at any institution, while the other two winners took home a scholarship worth RM10,000.00 for 1 year to study art. All the students who participated in the talent search were given the opportunity to join art-based programmes as well as meet various artists/art activists.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>58</sup> <http://www.bigconnectivity.org/beta/sites/default/files/2017-02/SLIDE%20MELAKA%20GREENTECH%201.pdf>

<sup>59</sup> <http://www.mycreative.com.my/penjana>

<sup>60</sup> Understanding, friendship City, Cooperation and Twin Cities with MBMB. <http://www.mbmb.gov.my/en/mbmb-muo-twin-cities>

<sup>61</sup> Melaka Young Talent Awards (MYTA 2016) Lahirkan Artis Seni. <https://www.perzim.gov.my/ms/melaka-young-talent-awards-myta-2016-lahirkan-artis-seni>

### Kota Melaka Community Grant, 2020 – present

The Kota Melaka Community Grant, supported by the office of YB Khoo Poay Tiong, is a grants programme for groups who wish to contribute to the community. It focuses on projects aligned with the federal and state government policies. The priority areas revolve around tourism and cultural preservation, digital technology and smart city, socio-economic empowerment, good governance, human rights, and environment. While the average grant is about RM10,000 per project, a higher amount may be awarded when strongly justified.<sup>62</sup>

### Tourism Promotion Organisation for Asia Pacific Cities (TPO)

TPO is an inter-city network to develop the tourism industry and economies of Asian Pacific cities. Ten cities from Malaysia are member cities of TPO. Melaka is one of them.<sup>63</sup>

### Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI)

ICLEI is a global network of more than 1,750 local and regional governments that seeks to promote sustainable urban development, and is active in 100+ countries. Members exchange knowledge, form partnerships and build capacity to create systemic change for urban sustainability. Melaka State Government, Melaka Historic City Council, Hang Tuah Jaya Municipal Council and another municipal council in Melaka, Alor Gajah, are all members.<sup>64</sup>

### Organisation of World Heritage Cities (OWHC)

Founded in 1993, OWHC is a knowledge bank for issues related to the urban management of World Heritage properties, and connects more than 300 cities that have properties inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Both Penang and Melaka are members.<sup>65</sup>

### The Resilient Cities Network

The Resilient Cities Network consists of member cities and Chief Resilience Officers from the 100 Resilient Cities programme (100RC), committed to holistic urban resilience. 100RC was pioneered by The Rockefeller Foundation in 2013, as part of its Global Centennial Initiative. Melaka is one of the member cities.<sup>66</sup>

- Resilient Cities Asia-Pacific, 2016, organised in conjunction with the 16th International Convention on Melaka Twin Cities, was held in Melaka from 2 to 4 March 2016. Here, the Melaka Call for Action was adopted. The Call appealed to national governments to enhance their support for local and subnational governments and commit to ten action points.<sup>67</sup>

### Urban Sustainability Framework (USF)

The Global Platform for Sustainable Cities (GPSC), a partnership and knowledge platform, promotes integrated solutions and cutting-edge support for cities aiming to strengthen their urban sustainability. It established the Urban Sustainability Framework 4-Stage Approach and Indicator Measuring Framework to help cities comprehend their urban sustainability status, define their vision, and articulate and carry out an action plan.

- Melaka is the leading city to be involved in this project and is actively embracing the concept of 'Green City'. Its two-pronged objectives are firstly, to promote an integrated approach to urban planning and management that is guided by evidence-based, multidimensional, and broadly inclusive planning process that balance economic, social and environmental resource consideration; and secondly, to build awareness and institutional capacity, and encourage investment in climate risks mitigation technologies through demonstration projects.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Kota Melaka Community Grant. <https://kotamelaka.com/en/grant>

<sup>63</sup> Tourism Promotion Organization for Asia Pacific Cities. <http://aptpo.org/eng>

<sup>64</sup> Local Governments for Sustainability. <https://www.iclei.org/en/Home.html>

<sup>65</sup> Organization of World Heritage Cities. <https://www.ovpm.org>

<sup>66</sup> Resilient Melaka. <https://resilientcitiesnetwork.org/networks/melaka>

<sup>67</sup> Resilient Cities Asia-Pacific Congress. <http://southasia.iclei.org/newsdetails/article/resilient-cities-asia-pacific-2016-reinforces-development-as-peoples-process.html>, accessed in July 2021.

<sup>68</sup> Melaka. <https://www.thegpsc.org/city/melaka>

## 2nd Green Cities Conference, 1 – 3 October 2018

The Green Cities Conference was held in Melaka to bring together city leaders to collaborate on green growth strategies. It sought to continue supporting the Green Cities Network established under the IMT-GT and the Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East Asean Growth Area. Coinciding with the 25th anniversary of IMT-GT, the conference also provided a window for action following Melaka's success in transforming itself into a green city.<sup>69</sup>

## International Green Training Centre (IGTC), 2014

Established in October 2014, the International Green Training Centre is a public-private partnership company between the State Government of Melaka, Malaysia and Green Depot Technology Sdn. Bhd., under the auspices of the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT), and as part of its Green Cities Initiatives with 2-fold mandates. It aims to provide trainings, capacity building and facilitations for all IMT-GT stakeholders (32 states and provinces in the region; and to undertake research, development and innovation for sustainable cities including but not limited to framework, city-wide greenhouse gases inventory, climate action plan, indicators, monitoring, measurement reporting and verification.<sup>70</sup>

### River cruising on the Melaka River.

Photo © Tourism Malaysia



<sup>69</sup> 2nd Green Cities Conference. <https://imtgt.org/green-cities-conference-in-melaka-regional-collaboration-between-cities-is-the-exciting-way-forward>

<sup>70</sup> International Green Training Centre. <http://www.greentrainings.org/introduction>

## Heritage Assets and Activation

Since it received its UNESCO World Heritage Site status, heritage preservation has become a priority for the State's economy and the integrity of the City's identity.

The state has embarked on large scale, high-impact projects such as river rehabilitation and smart city upgrades to optimise heritage assets as a sustainable tourism offering.

The creative community that lives in and around heritage sites is also passionate about the sustainable development of its tangible and intangible heritage legacies. This enthusiasm has driven a wide variety of private projects to restore and develop creative and cultural products. This has made the city increasingly vibrant and exciting to a younger generation of visitors.

69

**The essence of its colonial past that has resulted in the polyglot and diverse nature of Malaccan culture has allowed for generations to bear testimony to a living multi-cultural heritage and tradition, where many religions and cultures met and coexisted. It is a city where very few in the world can claim such an eclectic heritage as many race and culture has left its mark. It offers a glimpse into the historical realities of the Malaysian past, in particular the intricate social interactions between its diverse communities through the agency of language, illuminating the various aspects of cultural formation that has now been largely ignored or forgotten.**

**Ee Soon Wei, Managing Director of The Royal Press<sup>71</sup>**

<sup>71</sup> Interview with Penang Institute.

## Melaka Historical City – World Heritage Site



Recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2013, the historic centre of Melaka celebrates an inseparable relationship between its people, sites, history and identity.

Detailed in the report Interdependency of Cultural Heritage Assets in the Old Quarter, Melaka Heritage City by the Faculty of Built Environment, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia.

792 units of cultural resources (tangible heritage assets) have been identified in the Old Quarter of Melaka, divided into two categories.

- Cultural heritage such as living history sites, historic corridors, shop buildings, residential

buildings and cemeteries.

- Natural heritage like the Melaka River.

Intangible Cultural Heritage Assets pertain to the non-physical assets of a community such as their history, traditions, stories, and legends which when combined, define and reveal a community's identity.

- Under stories, four main historical corridors exist, namely Heeren Street, Jonker Street, Temple/Goldsmith/Blacksmith Street, and Kampung Pantai Street.<sup>72</sup>

## UNESCO Titles

### World Heritage: Melaka and George Town, Historic Cities of the Straits of Malacca, 2008

Category: Cultural

Melaka and George Town, historic cities of the Straits of Malacca, have developed over 500 years of trading and cultural exchanges between East and West in the Straits of Malacca. The influences of Asia and Europe have endowed the towns with a specific multicultural heritage that is both tangible and intangible. With its government buildings, churches, squares and fortifications, Melaka demonstrates the early stages of this history originating in the 15th-century Malay

sultanate, and the Portuguese and Dutch periods beginning in the early 16th century. Featuring residential and commercial buildings, George Town represents the British era from the end of the 18th century. The two towns constitute a unique architectural and cultural townscape without parallel anywhere else in East and Southeast Asia.<sup>73</sup>

### UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Conservation Awards: Cheng Hoon Teng Temple, 2002

Located in Chinatown, Cheng Hoon Teng temple is the oldest Chinese temple in Malaysia. The restoration project on the temple won the Merit Award at the 2002 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Conservation Awards.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Interdependency of cultural heritage assets in the Old Quarter, Melaka Heritage City.P. 577 – 588.

<sup>73</sup> Melaka and George Town, Historic Cities of the Straits of Malacca. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1223>

<sup>74</sup> Ancient Malacca temple wins UNESCO Merit Award for restoration. <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2003/01/16/ancient-malacca-temple-wins-unesco-merit-award-for-restoration>



## Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

### Dondang Sayang, 2018

*Dondang Sayang* is a traditional Malay art still practised in Melaka by four communities: the Malay, Baba Nyonya, Chitty and Portuguese communities. The practice unites elements of music (violins, gongs and tambourines or the tambour), songs and chants, and features beautiful melodious strains of poetry.<sup>75</sup>

### Ong Chun/Wangchuan/Wangkang ceremony, rituals and related practices for maintaining the sustainable connection between man and the ocean, 2020

The *Ong Chun* ceremony and related practices are held to worship Ong Yah, a deity believed to protect people and their lands from disasters. They originated from the Minnan region in China between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, and are presently located in the coastal areas of Xiamen Bay and Quanzhou Bay, as well as in the Chinese communities in Melaka, Malaysia.<sup>76</sup>

## Heritage Activation Projects

### The Melaka Dutch Heritage Trail

The Melaka Dutch Heritage Trail was initiated by the Netherlands Embassy in Malaysia to enable visitors to learn about the Dutch portion of the joint history that Melaka shares with the Netherlands.

- One such illustration is the fact that Melaka was, during Dutch times, divided into two sections. The first one was enclosed by the fortress while the second one consisted of the town area across the river.
- The fortress was used to protect the essential part of the town, including its administration, against attacks, while the town was utilised as a place for trade and residence by various communities.<sup>77</sup>

### Cultural Mapping, Melaka in Fact

Launched in 2017, Melaka in Fact was established to collect, document, record and share materials like old maps, manuscripts, photographs, videos, narratives, and people's histories relating to Melaka to preserve them for future generations, researchers and educational projects.

- The team covers places outside the Melaka UNESCO Core Area and publicises research results on their website.<sup>78</sup>
- To date, it has conducted interviews with more than 2,000 households, documented festivals and communities' rituals, carried out cultural mapping, organised lectures, collaborated with institutions of higher learning, and performed public engagement through social media on Melaka's less widely known historical facts.<sup>79</sup>

### Gao Feng Lion and Dragon Dance Athletic Association, 1995

The Gao Feng Lion and Dragon Dance Athletic Association provides lion and dragon dancing services. It is also a cultural and sports association that provides training for youth.<sup>80</sup>

### The Royal Press, 2018 – present

One of the oldest surviving polygot letterpress printing houses in the world, The Royal Press has been in business since 1938. A Printing house and living museum, it is housed in a heritage building on Melaka's iconic Jalan Hang Jebat – recently reopened after undergoing restoration. Visitors can view its historic printing press, extensive letter-block library (including Chinese, Arabic and Tamil typefaces) and printed artefacts from its decades in the trade.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Dondang Sayang. <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/dondang-sayang-01410>

<sup>76</sup> Ong Chun/Wangchuan/Wangkang ceremony. <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/ong-chun-wangchuan-wangkang-ceremony-rituals-and-related-practices-for-maintaining-the-sustainable-connection-between-man-and-the-ocean-01608>

<sup>77</sup> Follow the Dutch heritage trail in Malacca. <https://www.thestar.com.my/lifestyle/travel/2016/07/19/follow-the-dutch-heritage-trail-in-malacca>

<sup>78</sup> Cultural Mapping. <https://melakainfact.com/main-page-2/digital-map>

<sup>79</sup> Melaka in Fact co-founder Datin Saidah Rastam on uncovering and preserving the state's historical facts. <https://www.optionstheedge.com/topic/people/melaka-fact-co-founder-datin-saidah-rastam-uncovering-and-preserving-states-historical>; Official Website: <https://melakainfact.com/main-page-2/about-us>

<sup>80</sup> Gao Feng Lion and Dragon Dance Athletic Association. <http://gaofeng.com.my>

<sup>81</sup> The Royal Press. <https://theroyalpress.my/about>



**Heritage legacy... provides context... The sum of all these moments is as a whole, the need to ensure that we do not lose our identity and our focus of what we represent in Malacca and Malaysia... From preservation of a restored building to a creation of a living museum, the [The Royal Press] project seeks to contextualise the social history of printing in Malacca, which reflects the unique social composition of this historic city, document the interaction between languages that shaped cultural formation in Malacca, revitalise the study and facility of forgotten scripts such as Tamil and Jawi (the Arabic script of the Malay language), and reflect the pluralist linguistic social milieu from which it emerged.**

**Ee Soon Wei, Managing Director of The Royal Press<sup>82</sup>**

---

<sup>82</sup> Interview with Penang Institute.



## Tangible Heritage Assets

### Chetti Community, 15th century

The ancestors of the Melaka Chetti community, also known as Melaka-born Hindus or Chitty Melaka, were Indian merchants from the Coromandel Coast region, the southeastern coast of the Indian subcontinent. These merchants settled down in many different locations in Melaka including Gajah Berang, Tranquerah, Bachang and Balai Panjang. A large number of them subsequently stayed in Kampung Tujuh and Gajah Berang to become farmers.<sup>83</sup>

- **The Chetti Village and the Chetti Museum**

The Chittys who are Hindu-Peranakans are thought to be the first ethnic Peranakans of Melaka.<sup>84</sup> Their origin can be traced back to the time when Indian traders from the subcontinent came to trade in the Malay Archipelago long before the reign of Parameswara. The traders decided to make Melaka their home, settled there and married the local Malays. The village and The Chetti Museum located in Kampung Berang, is their home. It is reported that this generation may be the last. The Chetti identify as Hindus, while also acknowledging facets of Malay culture and Chinese ancestral worship. In 2020, The Melaka Museum Trust (Perbadanan Muzium Melaka PERZIM) handed over Muzium Chetti back to Sri Poyatha Vinayagar Moorthy Temple (SPVMT) after a successful partial restoration effort.

- **Sri Poyyatha Vinayagar Moorthy Temple, 1781**

Sri Poyyatha Vinayagar Moorthy Temple, situated along Jalan Tukang Emas, is the oldest functioning Hindu temple in Malaysia. It was built in 1781 by Thaivanayagam Chitty on a piece of land conferred by the Dutch to the Melaka Chetti community.<sup>85</sup> The temple was built by Thavinayagar Chitty, the leader of the Chitty people, after the Dutch colonial government of Malacca gave him a plot of land. Dedicated to the elephant-headed Hindu deity Vinayagar (more commonly known as Ganesha), the temple is set near Masjid Kampung Kling (Kling Village Mosque) and Cheng Hoon Teng Temple. It is located along Jalan Tokong Emas (Harmony Street), an avenue known for its collection of religious shrines.

- **Sri Muthu Mariamman Temple, 1822**

The Sri Muthu Mariamman Temple, also known as '*Dato Chachar*', is found in the Melaka Chetti village at Gajah Berang. The main deity of the temple is Goddess Mariamman and devotees generally offer prayers to her to cure them from different skin diseases, including smallpox.<sup>86</sup>

- **Sri Kailasanathar Temple, 1887**

The temple is positioned near the entrance to the Kampung Chetti along Jalan Gajah Berang, Melaka. The main deity at the temple is the Supreme Lord Siva.<sup>87</sup>

### Hang Li Poh's Well, 1459

Situated in Bukit Cina (Chinese Hill), the Hang Li Poh's Well, also known as King's Well, is a historical water well and the oldest in Malaysia.<sup>88</sup>

### A'Famosa Fortress, 1512

A Famosa was a Portuguese fortress located in Melaka, Malaysia. It is among the oldest surviving European architectural remains in south east Asia. The Porta de Santiago, a small gate house, is the only part of the fortress which still remains today.<sup>89</sup>

### Saint Paul's Church, 1521

This historic building, which was built in 1521, is the oldest church in Malaysia and Southeast Asia. It is located at the summit of St. Paul's Hill and part of the Melaka Museum Complex, comprising the A Famosa ruins, the Stadthuys, and other historical buildings.<sup>90</sup>

### Jonker Street, 17th century

The Jonker Walk, located along Jonker Street (Malay: Jalan Hang Jebat), is considered as the Chinatown street of Melaka. It is a popular street bursting with historical houses dating back to the 17th century, and shops selling antiques, textiles, foods, handicrafts and souvenirs.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>83</sup> Melaka Chetti Community. <https://www.melakachetti.com/index.php/about-us>

<sup>84</sup> <https://my.asiatatler.com/dining/who-are-the-chettis-of-malacca-and-what-is-hindu-peranakan-cuisine>

<sup>85</sup> Sri Poyatha Vinayagar Moorthy. <https://www.melakachetti.com/index.php/gallery>

<sup>86</sup> Sri Muthu Mariamman. <https://www.melakachetti.com/index.php/gallery>

<sup>87</sup> Sri Kailasanathar Temple. <https://www.melakachetti.com/index.php/gallery>

<sup>88</sup> Hang Li Poh's Well. <https://tourismmelaka.com/places/hang-li-pohs-well>

<sup>89</sup> A Famosa. <https://tourismmelaka.com/places/a-famosa>

<sup>90</sup> St Paul's Church. <https://tourismmelaka.com/places/st-pauls-church>

<sup>91</sup> Jonker Walk. <https://tourismmelaka.com/places/jonker-walk>

### Cheng Hoon Teng Temple, 1645

The Cheng Hoon Teng temple is the oldest Chinese functioning temple in Malaysia and practices the Three Doctrinal Systems of Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism. It is situated close to Jalan Tukang Emas, also known as “Harmony Street”, due to its close proximity to the Kampung Kling Mosque and Sri Poyatha Moorthi Temple.<sup>92</sup>

### Saint Peter’s Church, 1710

St Peter’s Church in Melaka is the oldest functioning Roman Catholic church in Malaysia.<sup>93</sup>

### Menara Lama Surau Tengker, 1728

Menara Lama Surau Tengker is a minaret built in 1728. It is the oldest surviving Islamic building in Melaka and possibly in the whole of Malaysia.<sup>94</sup>

### Dutch Square, 1753

The Dutch Square was built after the Dutch took control of Melaka. Back then, it was bordered by three civic landmarks namely a town hall, a government office and a church, and served as a place for formal congregations and gatherings. During the British era, the square was directed towards recreational activities with the addition of raintrees and a fountain, named the Queen Victoria Fountain, in 1904. Today, it is a popular and open place frequented by locals and visitors.<sup>95</sup>

### Christ Church, 1753

Christ Church is an 18th-century Anglican church in the city of Melaka. It is the oldest functioning Protestant church in Malaysia.<sup>96</sup>

### Tranquerah Mosque, 1780

Tranquerah Mosque was built in 1780. It is 100 metres away from the oldest minaret in Melaka, Menara Lama Surau Tengker.<sup>97</sup>

### Melaka Public Library, 1881-present

Accessibility: Wheelchair friendly

The Melaka Public Library Corporation (Perbadanan Perpustakaan Awam Melaka), subsequently known as the Melaka Library, was set up in 1881. It was initially located in close proximity with the Stadthuys building in Bandar Hilir before moving to Hang Tuah Hall in 1966.<sup>98</sup>

### Morten Village, 1920

Morten Village was named after Frederick Joseph Morten, the British Land Commissioner who retired as Colonial Secretary of the Straits Settlement in 1938. The land where the village was based became occupied by people after the nearby Kampung Jawa was taken over by the British to make way for development. It is currently an urban Malay Village which continues to preserve its rustic charm.<sup>99</sup>

### Portuguese Settlement, Melaka, 1930s

Sitting on the coast of Ujong Pasir in historic Melaka, this 20-acre settlement was established by Jesuit missionaries in the 1930s. The settlement’s original houses which were constructed along roads named after well-known Portuguese figures like Sequiera, Albuquerque, Texiera and Day, are still standing to this day.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>92</sup> Cheng Hoon Teng Temple. <https://tourismmelaka.com/places/cheng-hoon-teng-temple>

<sup>93</sup> St Peter’s: Oldest church in Melaka still standing. <https://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/leisure/2019/01/15/st-peters-oldest-church-in-melaka-still-standing>

<sup>94</sup> Minaret of Melaka’s oldest mosque still standing. <https://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/top-lifestyle/2021/01/05/minaret-of-melakas-oldest-mosque-still-standing>

<sup>95</sup> Open Spaces in Urban Malaysia. P. 25

<sup>96</sup> Christ Church. <https://tourismmelaka.com/places/christ-church>

<sup>97</sup> Minaret of Melaka’s oldest mosque still standing. <https://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/top-lifestyle/2021/01/05/minaret-of-melakas-oldest-mosque-still-standing>

<sup>98</sup> Perbadanan Perpustakaan Awam Melaka. <https://www.facebook.com/Perpustam>

<sup>99</sup> Kampung Morten is where tourists to the historical city get a taste of local culture. <https://www.thestar.com.my/metro/focus/2018/07/09/melakas-showcase-malay-village-kampung-morten-is-where-tourists-to-the-historical-city-get-a-taste-o>

<sup>100</sup> The unique Portuguese Settlement in Malacca. <https://www.nst.com.my/news/2017/02/212918/unique-portuguese-settlement-malacca>

69

**[O]ne of the most interesting facets of the culture is the local Portuguese Creole language. Many Bahasa Malaysia words were borrowed from the local Portuguese Creole language.**

**Martin Theseira, Save the Portuguese Community action committee chairman<sup>101</sup>**

**Letterpress Workshop at  
The Royal Press**

Photo © The Royal Press



<sup>101</sup> <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2019/05/28/centre-to-capture-heritage-of-melaka-portuguese>

## Sample of ‘Movers and Shakers’ in the Cultural and Creative Sector of Melaka

As one of the oldest cities in Malaysia, Melaka has a long-history of community self-organisation. The UNESCO World Heritage Site award has catalysed a wave of heritage rejuvenation which in turn has attracted a new generation of creatives who have either relocated or returned to the city, or have made the city’s heritage a focal point of their work.

“

**Over its 600-year history, Malacca has attracted people of various cultures from around the world, who have stayed and prospered and learned to live together. Generations of people of Malacca grew to be accepting, friendly and warm. Families knew and connected with each other, shared meals at home and banter on the streets. Formal appointments were not required for friends to drop in on each other. There is an unspoken... understanding.**

Lim Eng Leong, Mark D'Oliveira, Chua Swee Yeng from  
Malacca Heritage Centre<sup>102</sup>

<sup>102</sup> <https://www.thestar.com.my/lifestyle/culture/2021/01/09/this-exhibition-aims-to-uncover-the-dutch-peranakan-roots-of-melaka>

**Table 1** Selected Melaka stakeholders<sup>103</sup>

Media/Film/Digital	Arts	Crossover – Culture/Arts/Lifestyle
Andrew Ching, CEO of E-Plus Global Sdn Bhd	Ahmad Saufie Jaffar, photographer	Bendang Studio, 2010
Andi Zephyr, singer and YouTuber	Charles Cham, founder of the Orangutan House	Bert Tan, head of cultural mapping of Melaka in Fact
Tan Ta Sen, historian and writer	Martin Wood, artist	Datin Saidah Rastam, project director of Melaka in Fact
	Sherman Ong, filmmaker	Martin Theseira, cultural activist and musician
	Tony Yap, founding creative director of Melaka Art & Performance Festival (MAP Fest)	Prof Emeritus Ahmat Adam, scholar
	Dondang Sayang community	Shyre May Wee, founder at Krate
	Leong Chee Hsiung, owner of Clay House	The Pines Melaka, 2015
		Ee Soon Wei, CEO of The Royal Press and Retail Curator
		Melissa Chan, author and former housekeeper of Baba & Nyonya Heritage Museum
		C. Santha Chitty and Sundram Palani Padiachee, Sri Poyatha Venayagar Moorthy Temple (SPVMT)
		Soon-Aik Chiew, digital strategist

## Media/Film/Digital

### Andrew Ching, CEO of E-Plus Global Sdn Bhd

Born in Melaka, Andrew Ching is the CEO of E-Plus Global Sdn Bhd, an event management company with a proven track record of events and concerts. He is also the producer of the Melaka Art & Performance Festival (MAP Fest).<sup>104</sup>

### Andi Zephyr, singer and youtuber

Andy Zephyr is a well-known singer, songwriter and Youtuber from Melaka.<sup>105</sup>

### Nasir Jani, film director

Nasir Jani has been in the film industry for more than 30 years. He began his career as a commercial and documentary director before progressing as a film director.<sup>106</sup>

### Tan Ta Sen, historian and writer

Tan Ta Sen is a distinguished historian of early modern Southeast Asian history. Over the years, he has produced and published important work in different languages, in particular English, and has become a prominent specialist in the history of Zheng He (Cheng Ho) voyages.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>103</sup> For the purpose of this report, cultural influencers are defined as the media or cultural sector go to people comprising key opinion leaders who are networked into the public, private and cultural scene. They or their organisations, where possible, have a substantial following (>50,000 followers) especially on social media and/or digital channels and are seen as credible experts in their field and can influence change, innovating culture and arts practices through their programmes. In order to provide a sampling of the movers and shakers, they have been categorised into 3 key sectors comprising media, film and digitals, the arts, and those within a crossover of culture, arts and lifestyle.

<sup>104</sup> Welcome message of MAP Fest. <https://melakafestival.com/welcome-message>

<sup>105</sup> Andi Zephyr. <https://www.facebook.com/ruaireruai/photos/a.302183423634357/654694775049885>; Official website: <https://www.youtube.com/user/andiportiazephyr/about>

<sup>106</sup> Nasir Jani. <https://www.budiey.com/nasir-jani>

<sup>107</sup> Tan Ta Sen. <https://bookshop.iseas.edu.sg/publication/371>

## Arts

### Ahmad Saufie Jaffar, photographer

This photographer from Melaka is a former student of graphic design. He is currently living in his 30's experiencing photography and 'future memories'.<sup>108</sup>

### Charles Cham, founder of the Orangutan House

Charles Cham's artworks are built on the eastern philosophy of the Yin and Yang as he believes that all things have two sides whether visible or not. His works depict two painted drawings in vivid colours and in opposite directions on one canvas. Charles also believes in the art of drawing and in the simplicity of forms.<sup>109</sup>

### Martin Wood, artist

Martin Wood is a full-time self-taught artist whose work has been focusing since the 1970s on historic sites and buildings, portraits, and still life, using Peranakan themes. He established his studio and art gallery in 2009.<sup>110</sup>

### Sherman Ong, filmmaker

Sherman Ong is a filmmaker, photographer and visual artist. He is a founding member of 13 Little Pictures, a film collective based in Singapore; a committee member of the Singapore International Photography Festival; and an educator at schools and universities. Previously he was an Associate Artist of the Substation.<sup>111</sup>

### Tony Yap, founding creative director of Melaka Art & Performance Festival (MAP Fest)

Tony Yap is a talented dancer, director, choreographer and visual artist. He was awarded the Asialink residential grants in 2005 and 2008; received a Dance fellowship from the Australia Council for the Arts; and was named the winner at the Green Room Award for Best Male Dancer. He is also regarded as one of the key leaders in inter-cultural discourses.<sup>112</sup>

### Dondang Sayang community

*Dondang Sayang* is a traditional Malay art still practiced in Melaka by four communities: the Malay, Baba Nyonya, Chitty and Portuguese. The practice combines elements of music (violins, gongs and tambourines or the tambour), songs and chants, and features beautiful melodious strains of poetry. Also known as love ballads, the songs are used by communities to convey feelings of love and give advice on special topics such as love and kindness. During the Melaka Sultanate era in the fifteenth century, *Dondang Sayang* was performed at Royal Palace ceremonies and events; subsequently, the performance became widespread among the communities concerned.<sup>113</sup>

- Rahim Jantan, Allan Wan, Adie Asraf Tan and Warisan Baloh Alai to name a few, are performers who have kept this intangible cultural heritage alive.

### Leong Chee Hsiung, owner of Clay House

Leong is the sculpture and ceramic artist who owns and runs Clay House.<sup>114</sup> He runs the shop with his wife Loh Kim Meng and is in charge of the gallery/studio/shop. Mainstay items on sale are perforated pottery tea-light holders, bowls and ornamented ceramic.

<sup>108</sup> Ahmad Saufie Jaffar. <https://exposureplus.wordpress.com/participants/ahmad-saufie-jaffar>

<sup>109</sup> Charles Cham. <https://www.absolutearts.com/portfolios/c/charlescham>

<sup>110</sup> Martin Wood Art Gallery & Studio. <https://www.facebook.com/martinwoodartstudio>

<sup>111</sup> Sherman Ong. <http://www.shermanong.com/biography>

<sup>112</sup> Tony Yap. <https://melakafestival.com/portfolio-view/tony-yap-2>

<sup>113</sup> <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/dondang-sayang-01410>

<sup>114</sup> <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/malaysia/melaka-city/shopping/clay-house/a/poi-sho/1547937/1324280>



## Crossover – Culture/Arts/Lifestyle

### Bendang Studio, 2010 – present

Bendang Studio is one of Malaysia's best-known names in ceramic arts. It began its operations as a makeshift studio in the backyard of its founder, Rozana Musa, then relocated into its main premises in Melaka in 2010. Its first retail pop-up was opened at The Zhongshan Building while its artisan concept store was established at The Linc KL in 2018.<sup>115</sup>

### Bert Tan, head of cultural mapping of Melaka in Fact

Bert Tan initiated a Facebook group named "Malaysian Heritage and History Club" (MHHC) in 2012 which is at present one of the most dynamic clubs debating history, heritage, and culture with its 20,000 members. Bert's work has been featured in local and international newspapers and websites and he is the head of the cultural mapping of Melaka in Fact.<sup>116</sup>

### Datin Saidah Rastam, project director of Melaka in Fact

Project director of 'Melaka in Fact', Datin Daidah Rastam is a lawyer-turned-musician who has created musical compositions for many different types of groups, ranging from martial artists, choral groups, Chinese opera singers, western orchestras and electronica. She has been the music director for key productions at the Singapore's Esplanade Theatre, Tokyo's Setagaya Theatre and Malaysia's Istana Budaya, and she has given lectures in music at the Malaysia's National Arts Academy (now called ASWARA), UiTM, CENFAD and Multimedia University.<sup>117</sup>

### Debbie Teoh, Nyonya Chef

Debbie Teoh is a Malaysian Nyonya chef, a cookbook author and a food stylist.<sup>118</sup>

### Martin Theseira, cultural activist and musician

Martin Theseira is a Melaka-based cultural activist and musician from the Kristang community (a community of mixed Portuguese/Malay ancestry) in Melaka who seeks to promote and preserve Kristang's culture and traditions.<sup>119</sup>

### Prof Emeritus Ahmat Adam, scholar

Prof Emeritus Ahmat Adam is an independent scholar. He was a council member of Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (MBRAS), the Dean of the Social Sciences and Humanities Faculty and History Department in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, a professor at University Malaysia Sabah and a Visiting Senior Research Fellow at Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies.<sup>120</sup>

### Shyre May Wee, founder of Krate

Shyre May Wee is a full-time performer and scriptwriter for original theatre plays and film content. She started Krate as a mixed-use space for coffee, theatre performance, events and after school activities. She has directed and acted in various plays and short films, and previously worked as a speech and drama teacher.<sup>121</sup>

### The Pines Melaka, 2015 – present

The Pines Melaka is the first hotel in Melaka to collaborate with artists from the Melaka Art Association by showcasing their works, such as paintings, sculptures and installations, photographs and other artworks in the hotel premises.<sup>122</sup>

<sup>115</sup> Bendang Studio. <https://www.facebook.com/bendangstudio>

<sup>116</sup> Melaka in Fact. <https://melakainfact.com/main-page-2/about-us>

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Debbie Teoh's World Of Nyonya. <https://www.facebook.com/Debbie-Teohs-World-Of-Nyonya-748221371905077>

<sup>119</sup> Melaka-based cultural activist gives Kristang language folk songs a global audience. <https://www.thestar.com.my/lifestyle/culture/2020/11/27/melaka-based-cultural-activist-gives-kristang-language-folk-songs-a-global-audience>

<sup>120</sup> Ahmat Adam. <https://www.facebook.com/ahmatadam.adam.16>

<sup>121</sup> <https://www.herdemag.com/2019/07/30/krate-melakas-space-for-creatives>

<sup>122</sup> The Pines Melaka. <https://www.thepines-melaka.com/artist>

### Community programme by creative collective The Bendahari

Photo © The Bendahari



### **Ee Soon Wei, CEO of The Royal Press and Retail Curator**

Soon Wei is the visionary behind APW in Bangsar (KL) and The Royal Press. This second-generation owner pivoted the two printing houses which began with The Royal Press. He oversaw the restoration of the building as well as the preservation of the machines including the letter types in Chinese, Malay, English and Jawi. Soon Wei is now a highly sought-after retail curator.<sup>123</sup>

### **Melissa Chan, author and former housekeeper of Baba & Nyonya Heritage Museum**

Melissa was until recently the housekeeper of the well-known Baba & Nyonya Heritage Museum in Melaka. She is the author of the 'Stories of One Malaccan Family', a coffee table memoir inspired by the family members who lived in the household before, during and after World War II and how their lives and culture changed because of the war. She co-wrote the book with her father. Melissa has also recently started up a new creative heritage hub in Melaka known as 'The Bendahari,' which bridges the gap between traditional trades and communities and a new generation of families and businesses. Under Bendahari Markets, she is now connecting micro food businesses which operate from homes to markets in Kuala Lumpur.<sup>124</sup>

### **C. Santha Chitty and Sundram Palani Padiachee, Sri Poyatha Venayagar Moorthy Temple (SPVMT)**

Mdm Santha Chitty is a Trustee of the Sri Poyatha Venayagar Moorthy Temple (SPVMT) and Mr Sundram is the Committee member in charge of Promotions, Preservation and Heritage. They are proactive in preserving and promoting the Melaka Chetti voice.<sup>125</sup>

### **Soon-Aik Chiew, digital strategist**

Soon Aik is a Malaysia-based digital and product strategist. He was the Chief Product Officer of Softinn, an award-winning travel technology hospitality startup based in Melaka, that empowers thousands of accommodation providers in Southeast Asia. With his extensive consulting experience, he actively contributes to nonprofits and startups through volunteerism and mentorship. As an assistant to the chairman of Melaka Smart City Advisory Council (SCAC), he assisted the Melaka state government to review policies and proposals that are related to digital economy development. He is also a community builder at Startup Melaka, working on tech and entrepreneurial community development for his hometown. He was recently selected as Global Policy Fellow by University College London, and YSEALI (Young Southeast Asia Leaders Initiative) Professional Fellow for economic empowerment, an initiative by the U.S. Department of State.

<sup>123</sup> <https://generationt.asia/leaders/apw-ee-soon-wei-on-reforming-his-family-business>

<sup>124</sup> <https://alumni.gardenschool.edu.my/gis-social/stories-one-malaccan-family-alumna-melissa-chan>

<sup>125</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/kampungchetti/posts/this-marked-a-joyous-occasion-for-the-melaka-chetti-community-when-perbadanan-mu/667461213952219>



## Events, Festivals and Creative Marketplaces (selected)

Before the Covid-19 pandemic struck, Melaka city was a hive of activity catering to the huge influx of Asian tourists and weekend visitors mainly from Singapore. This resulted in a growth of festivals and markets. In addition to these tourist-based events, the Melaka State has also been organising community-facing festivals to appeal to both the locals and domestic visitors from other parts of Malaysia.

### Festa San Pedro (Feast of Saint Peter)

Organiser: Portuguese Settlement

The 'Festa San Pedro' (Feast of Saint Peter or also known as the Feast of Fishermen), held in the Portuguese Settlement of Melaka, is celebrated on 29 June every year to honour St Peter, the patron saint of fishermen. Being a community traditionally composed of fishermen, this Catholic Feast Day has strongly resonated with the locals.<sup>126</sup>

### The Grand Cultural Festival Melaka River 2007 – present

Organiser: Melaka River & Coastal Development Corporation (PPSPM)

The Grand Cultural Festival Melaka River, organised by the Melaka State Government and PPSPM as secretariat, is a yearly festival that focuses on water-based sports as well as cultural and arts activities.<sup>127</sup>

### Melaka Art & Performance Festival (MAP Fest), 2010 – present

Organiser: Art & Performance Festival Melaka Sdn Bhd and E-Plus Global Sdn Bhd

The Melaka Art & Performance Festival aims to showcase and promote Melaka as a creative hub for innovative arts and celebrate Melaka's cultural past, present and future. It is also a place where artists can be creative and innovative, experiment, and perform through various artistic mediums as a way of promoting and encouraging arts in the country as well as in the world.<sup>128</sup>

“

**The 'MAP model' has been successful thus far, we have seen the festival replicated in a few countries like MAP Melbourne, MAP Delhi and a couple in Indonesia and possibly Japan and Thailand.**

**Tony Yap, MAPFest creative director<sup>129</sup>**

<sup>126</sup> Festa San Pedro - Melaka, Malaysia. <https://www.facebook.com/FestaSanPedroMelaka>

<sup>127</sup> The Grand Cultural Festival. <https://www.facebook.com/gcfmelaka>

<sup>128</sup> Melaka Art & Performance Festival. <https://melakafestival.com>

<sup>129</sup> <https://melakafestival.com/portfolio-view/tony-yap-2>

### Melaka Straits Arts Festival, 2019 – present

Organiser: Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia

The Melaka Straits Arts Festival (FFSM) in 2019 was organised by the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia (MOTAC) through The National Department For Culture And Arts (JKKN) Melaka and Melaka State Government, and involved 33 government agencies, 7 private agencies, 11 associations and non-governmental arts organisations and communities. The theme was ‘Straits of Melaka, Archipelago Heritage’ and the festival showcased numerous activities focusing on arts, culture, heritage, tourism, science, entrepreneurship, and lifestyle.<sup>130</sup>

### Melaka Classics

Melaka Classics is a classical music project that aims to explore the city; bringing international and local artists to perform, teach, inspire, and enrich. It is also the classical music festival in Melaka. The event explores the city’s history by playing in iconic buildings and aims to put Melaka on the ‘music map’. It also provides educational training with performances and masterclasses.<sup>131</sup>

### RA/KAN Arts Festival, 2019-present

Organiser: Kelab Peminat Buah Fikiran (Idea Fans Club)

The RA/KAN festival<sup>132</sup> in 2019 was organised by Kelab Peminat Buah Fikiran and featured several different programmes ranging from music, arts, poetry, fanzine culture and film screenings. RA/KAN is pronounced “*raikan*” in Bahasa Melayu or “celebrate it”. RA/KAN was also the host of the first Melaka Zine Festival in 2019 which featured 25 booths.



**RA/KAN is all about collaboration... Most of [our staff and volunteers] are actively involved in four regular (indie event) programmes, which are a part of the Melaka (fringe) scene, including #bawabawah, #seleksi, #mindrubdown and #melanggar – were all held separately in previous years, but for RA/KAN, each organiser/curator contributed immensely in shaping their part of the festival programme... In the long run, we want to create an awareness towards DIY communities and alternative (art) spaces, which have been growing steadily in the past few years.**

**Abdul Hafidz Adam, spokesperson of RA/KAN and curator of the music-related #mindrubdown<sup>133</sup>**

<sup>130</sup> Festival Seni Selat Melaka 2019 selama tiga hari bermula Jumaat ini. <https://melakakini.my/festival-seni-selat-melaka-2019-selama-tiga-hari-bermula-jumaat-ini>, accessed in July 2021.

<sup>131</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/melakaclassics>

<sup>132</sup> <https://kanfestival.org>

<sup>133</sup> <https://www.thestar.com.my/lifestyle/culture/2019/06/27/music-theatre-fanzine-collective-poetry-ra-kan-festival>

## Cultural Infrastructure, Creative Hubs and Assets (selected)

Federal and state funds in Melaka's cultural infrastructure are tourism-centric, including foundational infrastructure such as the libraries, museums, river boats and LED street lamps. Owners of heritage assets have also been quick to capitalise on the city's potential in heritage tourism and have increasingly expanded their investment in developing theme-based sites that appeals to the history or contemporary life of heritage buildings.

69

### Multiculturalism has existed in Melaka since time immemorial.

**Datuk Seri Mohd Redzuan Yusof, Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (Bersatu) Melaka Party Chief<sup>134</sup>**

Food is an important intangible heritage of Melaka and there is a large informal network of home cooks which sell a range of famous local delicacies from pineapple tarts to otak-otak (steamed fish parcels). There has also been a growth of urban farms around Melaka which has seeded new food and beverage brands. Some of these home foods are being sourced by creative hubs to enable them to reach markets beyond Melaka.

**Melaka Islamic Museum.**

Photo © Tourism Malaysia

<sup>134</sup> <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2019/06/29/melakas-history-bodes-well-for-multiracial-harmony-says-state-bersatu-chief>



“

The ways in which the diverse communities in Malacca have grown, adapted, and accepted one another with respect and tolerance is quite unique. Being a relatively small town, what sets us apart is the caring community, how we look out for one another, how we share our food no matter how modest, there is always enough for 1 more person. When we harvest the produce from our small gardens, we will pass it around to our neighbours. When someone is sick, we make time to visit or call. This community is special. It should be the new “Blue Zone” where there are many healthy people who live happily over 80 years and beyond! If our future depends upon the way we live our lives today, we could all learn something from its example.

Lim Eng Leong, Mark D'Oliveira, Chua Swee Yeng from  
Malacca Heritage Centre<sup>135</sup>

<sup>135</sup> <https://www.thestar.com.my/lifestyle/culture/2021/01/09/this-exhibition-aims-to-uncover-the-dutch-peranakan-roots-of-melaka>

**Melaka Art Gallery, 1958 – present**

Established in 1958, the Melaka Art Gallery has hosted many exhibitions, ranging from paintings, sculptures, calligraphy, and many more, by local and foreign artists such as Rafie Abd Rahman, Wan Hui-jyu, Rahmat Ramli, Rafie Abd Ghani and Jehan Chan, and Gerard Van Den Oetelaar from the Netherlands.<sup>136</sup>

**Democratic Government Museum, 1961 – present**

The Democratic Government Museum, located in the building that used to house the Melaka's State Legislative Assembly, showcases Malaysia's early history and democracy to give visitors a better understanding of the forms of government in Malaysia as well as state systems.<sup>137</sup>

**Stadthuys/Historical and Ethnography Museum, 1982 – present**

The Stadthuys (an old Dutch spelling, meaning city hall) is a historical building that was constructed by the Dutch in 1650 to serve as the office of the Dutch Governor and Deputy Governor. Located in the centre of Melaka, it is easily recognisable and well-known for its red exterior. It presently houses the History and Ethnography Museum, a museum where visitors can view different items depicting the history of Melaka such as traditional costumes and artifacts.<sup>138</sup>

**Museum of Literature, 1984 – present**

The Museum of Literature details the history of the Malaysian literature, from the early era of writing to the modern era of Malay literature. The museum also possesses folklores, original collections of hand-written manuscripts, and literary works of local writers.<sup>139</sup>

**Baba & Nyonya Heritage Museum, 1985 – present**

The Baba & Nyonya Heritage Museum, originally the home of the Chan family since 1861, opened its doors as a museum in March 1985 to give visitors the opportunity to learn more about Malaysia's Peranakan identity and culture. The name of the museum comes from the term Baba and Nyonya, a respectively honorific designation for a Straits-born gentleman and lady.<sup>140</sup>

**Mini Malaysia & ASEAN Cultural Park, 1986 – present**

Mini Malaysia & ASEAN Cultural Park is a cultural park in Ayer Keroh, Melaka that showcases traditional houses from every state in Malaysia and from every country in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).<sup>141</sup>

**Melaka Sultanate Palace Museum, 1986 – present**

The Melaka Sultanate Palace is a replica of a Sultan's palace during the era of the Melaka Sultanate.<sup>142</sup>

**Tham Siew Inn Artist Gallery, 1990 – present**

Renowned Malaysian artist Tham Siew Inn established this unique gallery to promote his art and increase its exposure. The museum exhibits artworks from different periods and serves as a place to interact with art lovers from Malaysia and overseas.<sup>143</sup>

**People's Museum, 1992 – present**

The People's Museum comprises three sections which focus on the different development works aimed for the communities, and achievements of Melaka in the development sector. It also houses a Community Gallery, Melaka Sports Gallery, and a section on UNESCO to share pertinent information with the public.<sup>144</sup>

<sup>136</sup> Melaka Art Gallery. <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Melaka-Art-Gallery/551350868300637>

<sup>137</sup> Democratic Government Museum. <http://www.perzlim.gov.my/en/portfolio/muzium-pemerintahan-demokrasi>

<sup>138</sup> Stadthuys. <https://tourismmelaka.com/places/stadthuys>

<sup>139</sup> Museum of Literature. <http://www.perzlim.gov.my/en/portfolio/museum-of-literature>

<sup>140</sup> A House Museum. <https://babanyonyamuseum.com/a-living-museum>

<sup>141</sup> Mini Malaysia & ASEAN Cultural Park. <https://www.facebook.com/MiniMalaysiaAseanCulturalPark>

<sup>142</sup> Melaka Sultanate Palace Museum. <http://www.perzlim.gov.my/en/portfolio/melaka-sultanate-palace-museum>

<sup>143</sup> Tham Siew Inn's World. <https://www.facebook.com/thamsiewinnworld>

<sup>144</sup> People's Museum. <http://www.perzlim.gov.my/en/portfolio/muzium-rakyat>

### **The Orangutan House, 1993 – present**

Established in 1993 as the studio-gallery of Charles Chan, the Orangutan House is presently one of the most notable buildings in Melaka.<sup>145</sup>

### **Muzium Samudera (Flor De La Mar), 1994 – present**

Opened to the public in 1994, the Melaka Maritime Museum is a replica of the Flor de la Mar, a Portuguese vessel believed to have been transporting stolen goods from Melaka when it sank off its coast of Melaka on its way back to Portugal, and offers visitors the opportunity to learn more about Melaka's past.<sup>146</sup>

### **Governor's Museum, 2002 – present**

Located in a building originally known as Seri Melaka, the Governor's Museum showcases the role and contribution of different Governors to the state of Melaka.<sup>147</sup>

### **Education Museum, 2003 – present**

The Melaka Education Museum details the historical development of the education system in Melaka from the Malay Sultanate era up to the current system, and the contributions of the teaching institution and Melaka State Education Department in pushing forward the education system in the state.<sup>148</sup>

### **Melaka International Trade Centre (MITC), 2003 – present**

The Melaka International Trade Centre hosts major conventions, trade shows, exhibitions and other special events. It plays a key role in generating commercial trade development and in contributing to the achievement of the Melaka Maju 2020.<sup>149</sup>

### **Malaysia Architectural Museum, 2004 – present**

Located in a Dutch colonial architectural heritage building from the 1700s, the Malaysian Architecture Museum aims to exhibit Malaysia's rich and distinctive architectural heritage, and handle information related to the country's architectural history and development.<sup>150</sup>

### **Cheng Ho Cultural Museum, 2005 – present**

The Cheng Ho Cultural Museum was built on the grounds of eight former shop houses. It aims to give visitors the definitive narrative of the life and times of Zheng He (Cheng Ho), the seafaring eunuch explorer of the Chinese Ming dynastic court, including his sojourns in Malaysia.<sup>151</sup>

### **Melaka Stamp Museum, 2007 – present**

The Melaka Stamp Museum, a collaboration between the Melaka State Government and Pos Malaysia Berhad, was established in the old building of the Melaka Museum to exhibit stamps from Malaysia and overseas.<sup>152</sup>

### **Submarine Museum, 2011 – present**

The FS Ouessant Agosta 70 Submarine, formerly belonging to the French Navy, was handed over to the Melaka State Government from the Ministry of Defense Malaysia to be immortalised as a museum at the Maritime Museum Complex. The museum showcases the submarine's history and development.<sup>153</sup>

### **Melaka Craft Complex, 2013 – present**

The Melaka Craft Complex sells locally-made craft products and organises craft exhibitions and workshops to show the art and process of craft making.<sup>154</sup>

<sup>145</sup> The Orangutan House. <https://www.facebook.com/theorangutanhouse>

<sup>146</sup> Muzium Samudera (Flor de La Mar). <http://www.perzim.gov.my/en/portfolio/muzium-samudera-flor-de-la-mar>

<sup>147</sup> The Yang Di-Pertua Negeri Melaka Museum. <http://www.perzim.gov.my/ms/portfolio/governors-museum>

<sup>148</sup> Education Museum. <http://www.perzim.gov.my/en/portfolio/education-museum>

<sup>149</sup> Melaka International Trade Centre. <https://mitc.org.my>

<sup>150</sup> Malaysia Architectural Museum. <http://www.jmm.gov.my/en/museum/malaysia-architectural-museum>

<sup>151</sup> Celebrating the Legacy of a Chinese Explorer. <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/19/world/asia/celebrating-the-legacy-of-a-chinese-explorer.html>

<sup>152</sup> Melaka Stamp Museum. <http://www.perzim.gov.my/ms/portfolio/melaka-stamps-museum>

<sup>153</sup> Submarine Museum. <http://www.perzim.gov.my/en/portfolio/muzium-kapal-selam>

<sup>154</sup> Kompleks Kraf Melaka. <https://www.facebook.com/KompleksKrafMelaka>



## Encore Melaka Theatre, 2018 – present

Accessibility: Wheelchair friendly

Encore Melaka Theatre's 360-degree rotating auditorium with multiple-stage enables the audience to feel as if they are part of the performance.<sup>155</sup>

“

**There are many youthful and exciting communities in Melaka, all of them working on cool projects and things. There are artists, poets, bands, DIY craft and merchandise brands, distros and small record labels... all they need is some exposure to push them forward.**

Abdul Hafidz Adam, spokesperson of RA/KAN and curator of the music-related #mindrubdown<sup>156</sup>

## Cultural and Creative Hubs (selected)

### The Tun Tan Cheng Lock Centre for Asian Architectural and Urban Heritage, 2004 – present

The Tun Tan Cheng Lock Centre for Asian Architectural and Urban Heritage in Melaka acts as a distinctive resource of the National University of Singapore (NUS) Department of Architecture that aims to further the area of excellence in the study of Asian historical architecture and urban environments.<sup>157</sup>

### CORM, 2012 – present

Located in Jasin, Melaka, the CORM arts space is a one stop indie store that sells clothes, t-shirts, books, music, food and beverage. It is mainly responsible for nurturing a non-mainstream community in Melaka.<sup>158</sup>

### Krate, 2016 – present

Krate is a creative space and a cafe which specialises in original theatre productions, creative skill-sharing workshops, themed events, and teambuilding & video production. It also seeks to encourage and support local talents by offering them a safe space for self-expression and creativity.<sup>159</sup>

<sup>155</sup> Encore Melaka. <https://encore-melaka.com>

<sup>156</sup> <https://www.thestar.com.my/lifestyle/culture/2019/06/27/music-theatre-fanzine-collective-poetry-ra-kan-festival>

<sup>157</sup> Tun Tan Cheng Lock Centre. <https://www.sde.nus.edu.sg/arch/research/tun-tan-cheng-lock-centre>

<sup>158</sup> CORM. <https://www.facebook.com/cormisme>

<sup>159</sup> Krate. <https://krate.com.my>

### **The Bendahari, 2019 – present**

Located in a group of restored shophouses, Bendari is a creative heritage hub that connects practitioners of old trades and heritage communities with newly created families and businesses to enable cottage industries earn sustainable livelihoods through crafts and cultural traditions.<sup>160</sup> The building currently comprises four pre-war shoplots and houses a cafe by The Daily Fix called Sharing Plates, a modern Nyonya cuisine restaurant, Bulldog, Lee's Dental Laboratories, Prime Cut, a hairdressing saloon, and Markets!, a cultural retail store.<sup>161</sup>

### **Ayer Keroh Square, n.d.**

Situated on the outskirts of Melaka, Ayer Keroh Square was established for civic purposes and showcases the town of Ayer Keroh as the new administrative centre for Melaka. The square, which is used for leisurely activities, cultural performances and gatherings, can fit a seated audience of up to 15,000.<sup>162</sup>

---

<sup>160</sup> The Bendahari. [https://creativehubs.my/creative\\_hub/the-bendahari](https://creativehubs.my/creative_hub/the-bendahari); Official website: <https://www.thebendahari.com>

<sup>161</sup> <https://www.thebendahari.com>

<sup>162</sup> Open Spaces in Urban Malaysia. P. 41





