

# arts~ED

Community-based arts  
and culture education

## 2021 Year in Review

A partner of choice for  
community-based arts and creative education  
for cultural sustainability and placemaking

[www.arts-ed.my](http://www.arts-ed.my)  
[info@arts-ed.my](mailto:info@arts-ed.my)



# More resilient; New Connections

## COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, again?!

The second wave of the pandemic which brought on a 4-month lockdown in 2021 pushed us (again), to further equip ourselves with adaptive manoeuvres in response to pandemic-induced changes. We picked up new applications and skills for better facilitation and engagement online with the team and participants.

**This also opened up more connections with like-minded groups, especially groups in youth and community development, beyond the geographical boundaries.**

## Highlights for 2021

- **Most of the programmes had to be converted into fully online or hybrid modes.** With some of the basics we learnt in 2020, many of the project teams showed more initiative in picking up new applications to strengthen engagement with participants even when we had to be online.
- **Capacity Building to share our years of tested methodology with a new batch of practitioners.**
  - **Place-Based Learning (PBL) training and coaching with school teachers**, introducing this method in a school setting. A 3-year review on its impact and effectiveness was also conducted.
  - **Young artists/cultural workers working with our artist collaborators and mentors** in a new format of mentorship to bring arts to the young people in a community setting.
- After 7 years, we returned to **PPR Flat Jalan Sungai – with a brand new project – GEMPAK 100** . We are excited to continue working closely with the community, learning from and adding to previous experiences with them.
- **New partnerships and collaboration were established** with the Cultural Economy Development Agency (CENDANA), Goethe Institut (International Relief Fund), Balai Seni Lukis Negara and School of Arts, Universiti Sains Malaysia.
- **Connect and Reconnect** with both local and international groups (China, Singapore and Taiwan youth groups)
- **Introduction of Intergroup Dialogue (IGD)** and the effort in integrating it to our programmes has been a rewarding experience.

The pandemic did bring a lot of challenges, but we believe that with the many creative and committed people we have gathered on this platform, we can further push community-based and creative education work to the next level. We hope **to build a stronger pool of creative practitioners in the area of socially-engaged arts.**

Chen Yoke Pin  
Senior Manager

## Meet the Team



<p><b>Staff (involved in all projects)</b></p>	<p>Chen Yoke Pin, Radziah bt Othuman Sahib, Nurul Shahira bt Jamalluddin, Kong Yi Fen (till Oct 2021)</p>
<p><b>Arts &amp; Culture Education (ACE) Project Team</b></p>	<p><b>PBL Teachers Training:</b> Josephine Chan, Ooi Win Wen, Molly Lee, Tan Lay Cheng</p> <p><b>Borak Bansa &amp; Dialoguing Diversity:</b> Goh Choon Ean, Ooi Win Wen</p> <p><b>Community-Engaged Arts:</b> Wong Hoy Cheong, Aida Redza, Tan Lay Heong, Liu Yong Sean, Luvenia Kalia, Kausalyaa Sugumarin, Jason Ong Aik Lee, Low Zhi Kai, Ooi Mee Quin, Wan Atikah Wan Yusof &amp; Muhammad Nur Nazrien</p> <p><b>Bling Bling Tradition:</b> Kuah Li Feng, Wan Atikah Wan Yusof, Virajitha Chimalapati, Gene Lim Jing Yi, Tan Pek Leng, Stephanie Kee, Terry Neoh, Goh Choon Ean, Chong Ley-Lynn, Ong Khai Peng,</p> <p><b>Penang Arts Ecosystem Map:</b> Abel Benjamin, Koe Gaik Cheng</p>
<p><b>Committee (2020-2022)</b></p>	<p>Tan Pek Leng, Abel Benjamin Lim, Heng Zhi Yee, Tan Lay Cheng, Toh Lai Chee, Molly Lee, Charis Loke and Choo Poh Lean</p>
<p><b>Advisors / Resource person</b></p>	<p>Janet Pillai (Programme), Ang Ban Siang (HR), Chen Yok Ching (Finance)</p>
<p><b>Patron</b></p>	<p>Prof. Tan Sri Dato' Dzulkipli Bin Abdul Razak</p>



## Collaborators, Partner and Funders



and individual contributors who could not be named one by one here.

Thank you for being part of the change within our community by supporting our work in building cultural sustainability.

## KEY INITIATIVE

### | CREATIVE ARTS EDUCATION & CAPACITY BUILDING

# 1. Peace Building through Empathy and Solidarity: Intergroup Dialogue in Malaysia

Supported by [Davis Projects for Peace](#), [Cultural Economy Development Agency \(CENDANA\)](#) & [LUMA](#).

## A. Borak Bansas: Youth Arts Camp 2021



This project was an experiment in the integration of Engaged Arts Approach x Intergroup Dialogue.

From June to August 2021, Borak Bansas recruited 15 youths aged 17 to 23 to explore their own social identities and how social identities affect people's lived experiences by **researching their neighbourhood local wet markets**, using tabletop game design as the art form, and adopting a critical thinking element through intergroup dialogue with other participants involved.

Through experiencing and researching the sites, as well as dialoguing with participants from diverse backgrounds, participants reflected on how different social identities interact and affect people's daily lives and experiences in the local wet markets. Participants also went through an art-making process to communicate their findings, where they successfully designed **two digital prototypes of tabletop games on Tabletopia** (a virtual tabletop game platform) focusing on **inclusivity in local markets**.

The programme methods were shared with Architects of Diversity (AOD) while students shared and exchanged their learning process with students from [Tampines Meridian Junior College](#) (Singapore)



Click to read the [blogpost](#)



Click to listen to our [podcasts](#) on the processes



*"Inclusivity is something everyone talks about but doesn't actually really know. Through this program, I learned that inclusivity is not just about representation – like who is represented or representing everyone – but also in terms of accessibility and interactions between people."*

**Ong Khai Peng, Participant**



## B. Dialoguing Diversity



From August to October 2021, 11 active cultural workers and researchers based in George Town, engaged in 10 weekly dialogue sessions about **the effects of social identities on their practice and approaches to cultural work among the communities they work with**. The dialogue sessions revolved around topics such as gender, age, religion, language, social-economic class, and nationality.

A few of the participants have indicated interest to continue working with Arts-ED in their future cultural work projects. As such, Arts-ED is keen to further develop our current Place-Based Learning alongside IGD to strengthen critical thinking in future youth programmes. The use of methods conducting shorter dialogues with internal teams and like-minded organisations are recommended to reach deeper levels of discussion.

***“I have a better understanding of diversity and inclusion.  
The roles that I can play in this diverse society in making the  
nation a better place to live”***

***“Mindsets/thoughts/opinions  
can be challenged and changed through dialogue”***

## 2. Nurturing 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills through Place-Based Learning (PBL): From Classroom to Community

Supported by [Yayasan Hasanah](#) and [Penang Education Council](#).

### A. Training Programme for Local Teachers



This component enabled Arts-ED to build on its ongoing action research of the PBL methodology in order to provide better training for school teachers. **19 teachers from 3 schools, SMK Abdullah Munshi, SMK Berapit & Penang Chinese Girls Private High School** successfully developed their competency in incorporating Place-Based Learning (PBL) pedagogy into their curriculum and co-curriculum design. With intensive coaching from the trainers, the teachers then applied their acquired skills to plan and implement their own PBL projects that connect their student's learning with real-world context.

Below are the projects conducted by each school

- **SMK Berapit:** Paper Effigy: A Traditional Trade
- **Penang Chinese Girls Private High School:** The Rice on Plates
- **SMK Abdullah Munshi:** Kampung Dodol: Dah Kenal Makin Cinta (To Know is to LOVE)



Watch overview of PBL Capacity Building Programme for Teachers [here](#)

### B. Discussion Forum & Showcase



A **virtual inter-school forum** which provided an opportunity for 16 trained PBL teachers from 3 participating schools to present their PBL projects to approximately 116 educators from more than 50 schools/organisations and district/state/national education department officers. The event allowed the participants to constructively discuss the case studies and examine the strategies, challenges and impact of incorporating PBL into teaching practices in schools.



Watch the recording of our online forum [here](#).



Read PBL Project Case Studies [here](#).

## C. 3-Year Review and Recommendation for Way Forward



A working team was formed to collate and analyse the data from 2018 -2021 on impact and effectiveness of the Place-Based Learning (PBL) Capacity Building Programme for teachers.

This discussion was also organised to align the team's interpretation of the key principles and value of PBL's project framework and interrelated approaches of learning and implementation of 21st century learning skills. .

A series of focus group discussions was conducted with all the teachers who participated in the PBL project for the past 3 years to discuss and recommend a way forward for Arts-ED's strategy and approach in running PBL models for schools.



Read the full report [here](#) .



***“ When you look at the traditional way we teachers want to do something, we always feel if I don't know something, it's something very scary for me to start. But in Place-Based Learning (PBL), I came to know that, if we don't know something, this is where we engage the experts, this is where we can engage people from the community to come in, to teach. So PBL actually taught me that teaching is not a lonely journey.”***

***Cikgu Clarina Anne Anthony, Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Abdullah Munshi***

***“ Place-Based Learning (PBL) is more authentic compared to normal lessons. This is because it connects to the real world. PBL trained our students to find out the problem or situation by themselves, based on the data they collect. They don't just listen to others because they learn from their experiences. From the investigation process, they create awareness of the importance of PBL and improve their ability to take an analytical approach in their daily life.”***

***Cikgu Lim Chin Chin, Penang Chinese Girls' Private High School***



## KEY INITIATIVE

### / CREATIVE ARTS EDUCATION & CAPACITY BUILDING

## 3. Community-based Arts and Culture Education for Young Artists, Cultural Workers and Youths

Supported by *Cultural Economy Development Agency (CENDANA)* under the *Arts Organisation Resilience Funding Programme 2021, Balai Seni Lukis Negara and Penang Education Council.*

### A. Training and Mentorship for Young Artists and Cultural Workers



Arts-ED seeks to be the bridge between young artists/cultural workers and underserved segments of youths so that they can access the arts as a means of self-expression and to help highlight community issues. Therefore, a **mentorship programme** was initiated to **train young artists and cultural workers** on how to use **creative arts and developmental approaches to engage the community through a 1-year mentorship programme**. This mentorship programme successfully recruited a team of **ten diverse young cultural workers/artists**. They are then mentored by experienced artists and cultural workers – **Wong Hoy Cheong** (Photography), **Aida Redza** (Creative Movement), **Tan Lay Heong** (Contemporary Shadow Play) and **Chen Yoke Pin** (Community & Project Management) – to plan, design and implement community-based creative arts programmes for youths in selected communities using 3 art forms.

The mentors conducted a series of training workshops to share the principles, concepts and case studies of Community-based Arts and Culture Education, as well as hands-on skills to co-create with the community using artistic approaches and creative/arts community engagement. From the learning, the mentees and mentors co-developed and facilitated a series of creative arts workshops for young people in the selected community.

*“Let us do no harm instead of doing good. Can we say, I will work in the community, and I want to make sure my work will not do harm. It might shift our way of thinking and how we want to approach work.”*

**Wong Hoy Cheong,**  
Community Worker, Educator, and Artist-Curator



About project and ongoing updates



About project and stories highlight

## B. Field Community Programme using creative arts in a socially marginalised group (youths)



Mentors and Mentees in the training programme conducted site visits from February to April 2021 to several communities located in Penang. The team **shortlisted 2 communities** that would receive significant support from stakeholders and active young people. However, due to difficulties concerning the COVID-19 situation, the team had to work with only 1 site/community - a low cost flat – **PPR Jalan Sungai in George Town, Penang**. Eventually, this decision gave the team the opportunity to focus on the mentorship programme and the community engagement, especially with parents and adult residents.

With the prolonged Movement Control Order (MCO) from May to October 2021, the programme had to **postpone onsite visits**. Programmes resumed in Oct to understand the site, community members, stakeholders, the young people, and their cultural practices. This was done **through briefings, meetings, discussions, and cultural mapping** investigations with multiple local communities and stakeholders. Mapping topics were:

- Partnership and perception of arts education programme in community
- Social network of community
- Understand community conditions affected by COVID-19
- Social cultural backgrounds of children aged 8-17
- Areas of interest for youth
- Parents' and young people's perception towards arts/arts forms the programme offered
- Recruitment strategies

The team now continues to explore and engage with partners and collaborators to obtain support and scout resources for the programme.

**GEMPAK 100** - the project name created aiming to recruit 40 youths aged between 10 - 17 years old to interact with their surrounding environment through 3 creative arts workshops. **Photography, Creative Movement and Contemporary Shadow Play** workshops will be conducted in the coming 5 months through weekly engagement and will culminate in a final showcase presentation to the community.



About project and ongoing updates



About project and stories highlight

## 4. Learning from Living Heritage Sites: Sustainable Cultural Transmission through Youth Arts Camp

### Bling-Bling Tradition: The Gold Jewellery Industry: Its Heritage and Contemporary Prospects

Supported by the [International Relief Fund 2021](#) through [Goethe-Institut Malaysia](#) and organised in collaboration with [School of the Arts, Universiti Sains Malaysia](#)



Project [overview video](#)

**Bling Bling Tradition** focused on the arts as a tool to encourage cultural transmission between youths and the community. The project aimed to connect **91 second-year degree students from USM's Graphic Communication Department with the cultural heritage of gold jewellery through a hybrid mode of learning research and PBL methods** alongside their academic study in the field of graphic design and communication. Throughout the project, the students researched the uses and functions of gold in Penang as well as in their respective communities. They then presented their findings using a variety of media artforms.

#### Programme objectives



- Strengthen youths' appreciation of local cultural heritage, sense of place, and cultural identity;
- Enhance youths' critical, creative and aesthetic capacity, as well as their communication skills;
- Enable youths to explore their own identity while acquiring mutual respect for diverse communities, cultures, and arts.

The learning process involved **research and investigation of the history and heritage value** of the gold jewellery industry and trades. Interacting with local gold jewellers and cultural heritage experts helped to build the youths' understanding and knowledge of the cultural heritage of gold, thus strengthening their sense of place and cultural identity. The project was also planned to **encourage inter-group dialogue and exchange** among the participants to foster mutual understanding and respect for diversity.

Students in 17 groups are currently developing the visual campaigns to showcase the significance and cultural value of the gold jewellery cultural heritage – its past, present, and future to young people as a target audience. They will present their learning journey and interactive campaigns developed based on the different functions and uses of gold jewellery in a public forum and showcase in February 2022.

## KEY INITIATIVE

### | RESEARCH & INTERPRETATION

## 5. Penang Arts Ecosystem Map 2021

Funded by [Cultural Economy Development Agency \(CENDANA\)](#)



While Malaysia is rich in arts and culture, there is a lack of proper documentation of artists, arts collectives, and organisations as well as other relevant players in the whole arts and culture ecosystem, with no centralised platform that enables accessible and shareable information.

Arts-ED has been granted the opportunity to assist CENDANA in documenting key organisations, relevant institutions, academy/schools, spaces/hubs, and networks that contribute to the arts industry in Penang. This follows a pioneering project produced for Klang Valley.

The overall structure of the ecosystem mapping of Penang's performing arts and visual arts practitioners and their relationships was developed based on the existing Klang Valley ecosystem map produced by CENDANA. Fundamentally, the ecosystem mapping emphasised the uniqueness of Penang and its local context. The ecosystem map focused on producing a user-friendly and easily digestible guide which will be accessible on CENDANA's website.



## KEY INITIATIVE

### | NETWORKING & KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

The pandemic also opens up the possibility of connecting with more local, national and international groups in the area of using creative tools to engage with various communities especially children and youth.

#### Arts, Culture, Education, Youth and Community NPOs

- Inheritors
- Village Vision
- BOLD
- Projek Dialog
- Architects of Diversity
- Taiwan: HMT Youth Exchange Association, Buddy Back, Alisan Heritage Youth Ambassador
- China: 706 Youth Space

#### Education Institutions

- Taylors University (School of Education)
- China: Lanzhou University (Anthropology Department)
- Singapore: Tampines Meridian Junior College & Bhumi Collective

#### Government

- Ministry of Education. Unit Pembangunan Pendidikan Antarabangsa, Sektor Perancangan Makro Pendidikan, Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Dasar Pendidikan.
- Majlis Bandaraya Pulau Pinang
- Pejabat Ahli Parlimen Petaling Jaya bersama 'All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia on Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG)

## Media Highlights

### 林连玉纪念官 ( 通讯 ) **Memorial Lim Lian Geok Bulletin**

喬治市活文化的傳承: 以檳城藝術協會(Arts-ED)與傳承者為例

### **The Cultural Transmission of George Town: Case Studies of Arts-ED and Inheritors**



创新，很多时候来自组织内部的转折，及面对外在客观环境下，所必须做出的改变。但同时，创新的根源，也来自将人视为为主体的过程中，认真的对待人的多样性而来的思考。比如说，檳城社区艺术教育组织认真看待团队成员及合作对象的多样性，因此在每个计划中，都随之带有新的省思、活水与创新的元素。而作者，即使拥有大规模的团队支持，却不以此为满，以尊重之心和会馆成员、团队中跨越不同年龄世代个人，努力沟通及在日常生活中有深刻地陪伴。

这些经验，都在在显示着活文化的传承已然进入了下一个阶段。从过往大众习以为常的标准衡量活文化价值，如100年的老店，50年的技术等，已进入下一个阶段，也就是人才是活文化传承的主体。于是，创新并不是为了创新而创新，而是一系列省思对话的过程。

Click [here](#) for full bulletin.

### **Penang Monthly**

#### **Arts-ED: Getting People to Know Each Other**



*"Arts-ED is known to find creative ways to connect culturally-diverse young Malaysians. Besides making sure that the young learn art techniques, it seeks to have them understand themselves and society as well. This is done through participation in community-based art and heritage programmes curated through the years to reflect the tangible and intangible changes in Penang's physical environs"*

Click [here](#) to read the article.

### **GuangMing Daily**

#### **【我愛童玩-完】兒童可自制器材自訂規則 傳統遊戲訓練科學語言能力 Benefits of Traditional Games**



檳城社區文化藝術教育組織在過去逾20年來不遺餘力地舉辦活動和走入校園推動傳統兒童遊戲，除了因為傳統兒童遊戲是好玩的遊戲，同時還因為它有助加強兒童的科學、算數和語言能力，以及開發他們的創意思維，且是孩童與其他族群互相交流文化的媒介之一。

Click [here](#) to read the article

< END >