

Zakti

Museums & Exhibitions

Selected Works



موزيوس سلطان ابو بكر

MUZIUM SULTAN ABU BAKAR

Muzium Sultan Abu Bakar

Muzium Sultan Abu Bakar is located in semi-rural Pekan, the Royal Town of Pahang, on the East Coast of Malaysia.

The museum's conception began with the restoration of an abandoned colonial-style building, overseen by the team as we added new buildings to house an auditorium, workshop space, café, and various galleries. Over three years, it was transformed into one of the most beautiful museums in Malaysia.



Muzium Sultan Abu Bakar went on to win the Gold Award and Grand Award Finalist in the prestigious Design for Asia Awards in Hong Kong, *Malaysia's first Gold in the competition's 12-year run.*



The Award recognises the museum's effort in celebrating the local Pekan identity and giving back to the community even as it maintains outstanding design excellence. Through beautiful gallery spaces and art, Muzium Sultan Abu Bakar becomes a quality attraction as well as an education and resource centre that preserves the culture of Pekan and Pahang. Likewise, the tranquil landscape of the museum also transforms the place into an ideal spot for community bonding.

INTEGRATED BRANDING
LOGOS & VISUAL IDENTITY
EXHIBITION DESIGN
ENVIRONMENTAL GRAPHICS
INFORMATION DESIGN
WAYFINDING & SIGNAGE
PUBLICATIONS



A shallow infinity pool and water play fountain for children replaced the hot tarmac of a large car park lot.



MUSEUM IDENTITY

The museum's logos carry the appropriate cultural, historical and geographical relevance.

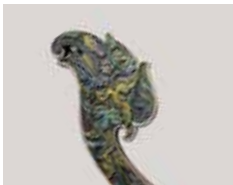


KEDAI MUZIUM

The elephant plays a prominent role in the history of Pahang royalty. The State Crest features two ivory tusks which symbolise power. The elephant's expediency as a royal carriage was also well-recorded in Malay history.



MUZIUM موزيوم سلطان ابو بكر
 SULTAN ABU BAKAR
 MALAYSIA • PEKAN • PAHANG



The logo is firmly rooted in the East Coast and incorporates three things that the region is best associated with: the South China Sea, the *perahu* (fishermen's boat) and Malay woodcarving.



KAFE
belibis



KAFE
belibis



The *burung belibis* or lesser whistling duck with its distinctive 2-note wheezy call is a favourite of the town. The logo is sometimes set against a background of green patterns, inspired by the grid pattern of the rice fields and the Tenun Pahang Diraja (Royal Cloth of Pahang), the state's renowned woven silk fabric.



Woodcarving is one of the most important Malay arts of the East Coast. Wood became the unifying element between the interior spaces of the museum and outdoors.

On the grounds of the museum is a variety of wood sculptures depicting local animals and birds: the horse (Pekan hosts the Royal Pahang Classic polo championship), crane, deer and the elephant.

INTEGRATED IDENTITY



MUZIUM *موزيوم سلطان ابو بكر*
SULTAN ABU BAKAR
MALAYSIA • PEKAN • PAHANG



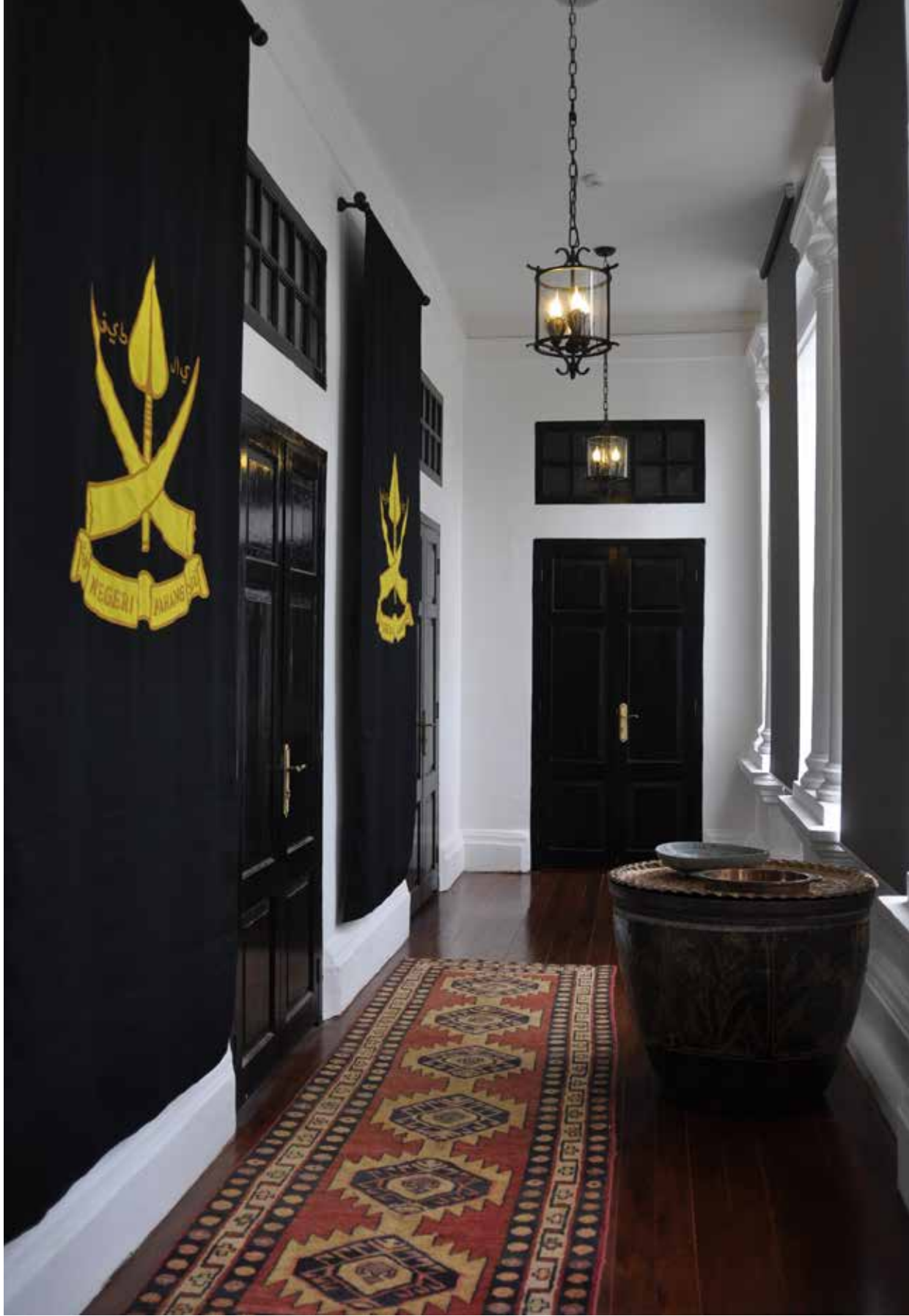














WAYFINDING & SIGNAGE



We designed a set of pictographs (icons) to better reflect the museum’s aspiration to embrace modernity and tradition.



The museum’s signage system is both effective and reflective of the local Pekan culture, as well as its aspirations to become a knowledge centre.

The checked pattern of the Tenun Pahang woven silk cloth appears as simplified grid lines, either engraved or silkscreened in gloss on the matte white surface of the sign panels.

ITC Berkeley Oldstyle, designed in 1938 for the University of California Press in Berkeley, was selected as the primary typeface because of its academic heritage. Its classic elegance complements DIN, a contemporary typeface which is synonymous with German design and efficiency.





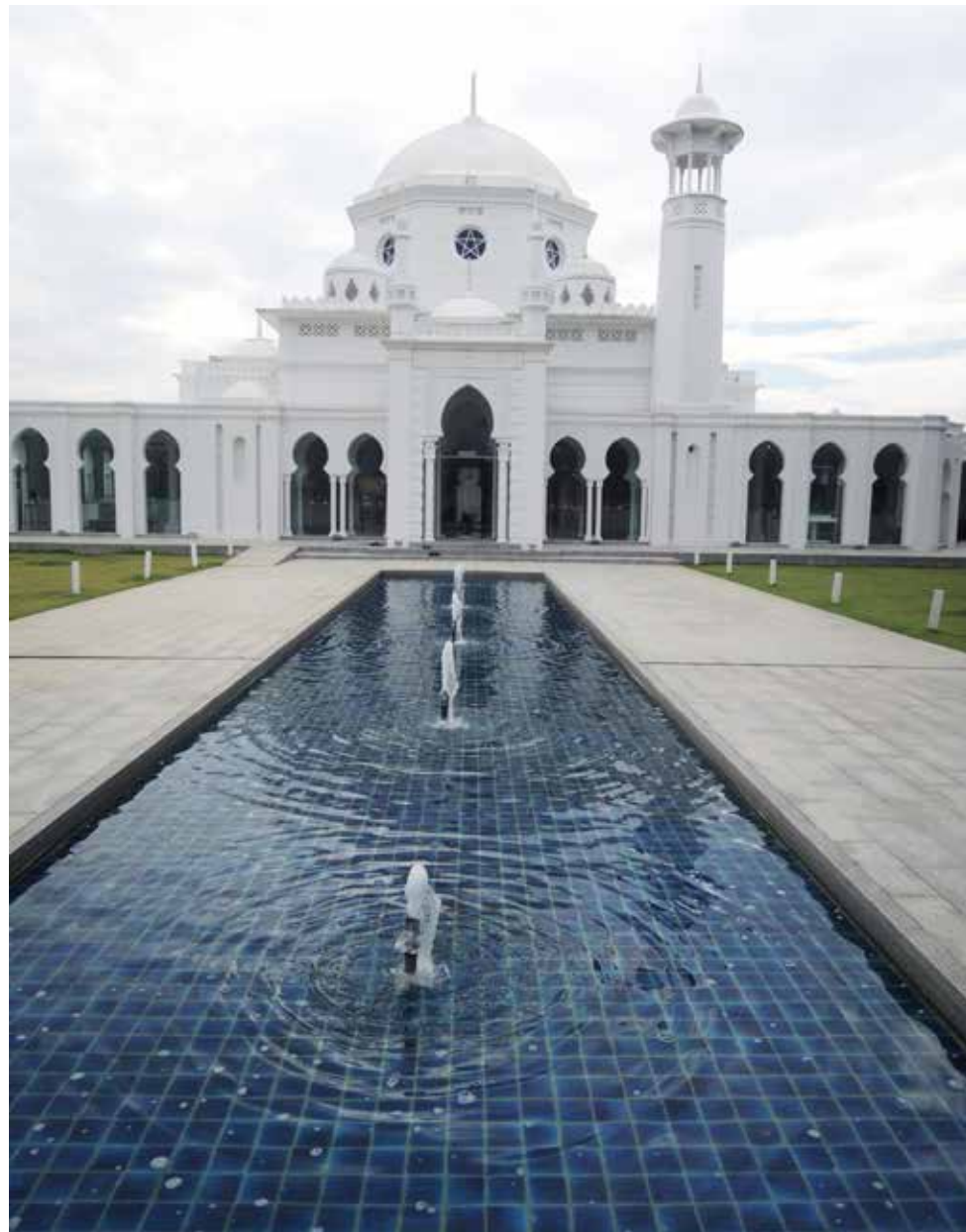
M U Z I U M M A S J I D S U L T A N A B D U L L A H





Masjid Abdullah, a small mosque in Pekan adjacent to Muzium Sultan Abu Bakar, was built in the 1930s and had been beautifully restored for its new role as an Islamic art museum.

“A designer ought to leave beautiful spaces alone.
Such was the case for this museum.”





G.K. Chesterton, in his 1920 travelogue, described the mesmerising effect of Arabic script painted on the tiles of walls as being “repeated again and again like ornamental stars or flowers... like the chorus of a song... Indeed, one is driven to repeating oneself about the repetition, so overpowering is the impression.”

“The museum’s interior, filled with columns, is magnified by its repeated geometry. We designed wall panels to mirror the negative space of the colonnades, *adding to the museum’s overall symmetry and repetition.*”

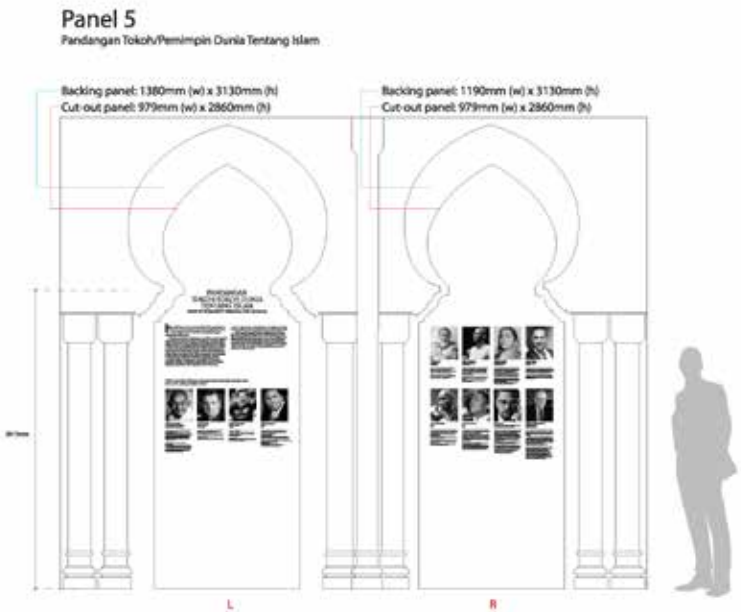


The white interior of the museum serves as a blank canvas for the interplay of multi-chromatic light cast by the stained glass windows, warm natural sunlight ranging in intensity from strong to weak, reflections, and moving shadows on tinted translucent walls.

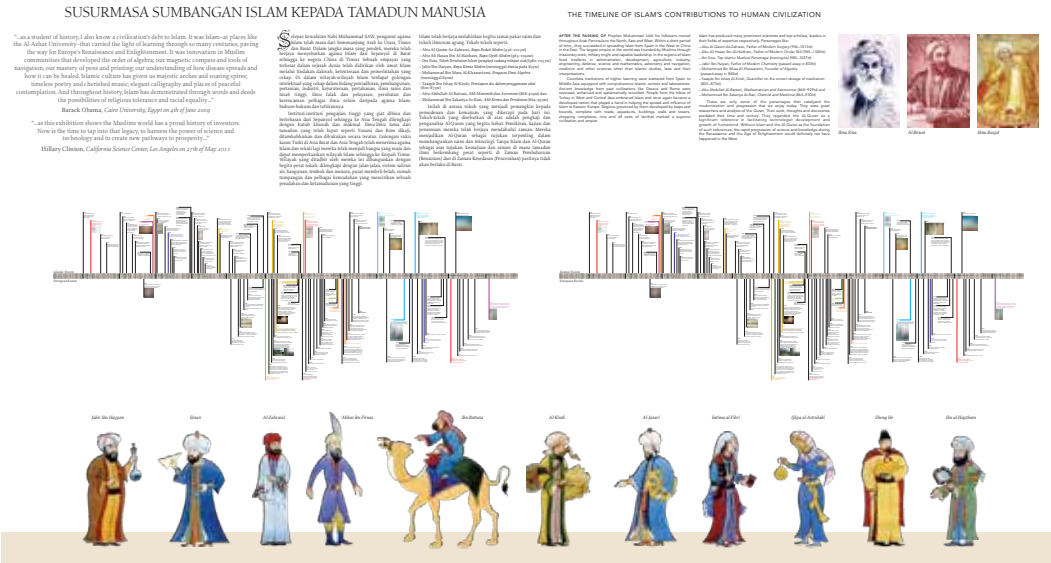


A new geometric Islamic pattern was created and applied to the ventilation openings of the building, decorative screens indoors and outdoors, as well as the museum’s publications, giving the museum a unified identity.





Information panels followed the shape of the arches, enhancing the quiet visual spectacle of repetition and symmetry.

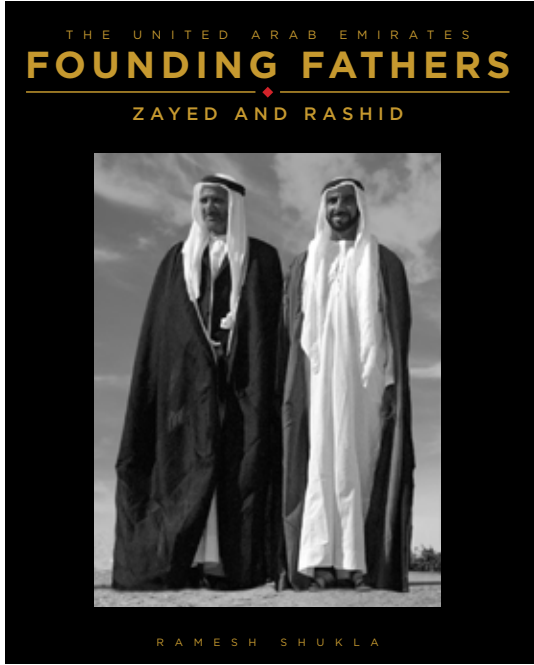


We integrated the graphics with the architecture and interior. For example, the timeline incorporated an image of the coloured tiles on the floor of the museum. Mounted ipads and table-top interactive touchscreens present videos and games to help the visitor explore more in-depth information in a fun way.



EXHIBITION DESIGN





Book Design: Motivate (Dubai)
Exhibition Content Development, Video
& Project Management: Motivate
Exhibition Design & Interactive Technology: Zakti

Held in conjunction with the launch of the book *Founding Fathers*, the exhibition showcased the special relationship between Sheikh Zayed, the late first President of UAE, and Sheikh Rashid, the late first Vice-President.

To sustain visitor interest in an exhibition based on still photographs taken solely from the book, we decided to craft a journey uncovering images of the Sheikhs as seen through the lens of the photographer, Ramesh Shukla. His life—from humble beginnings to de facto royal photographer—became intertwined with the rise of the nation and its rulers.



Images from the book

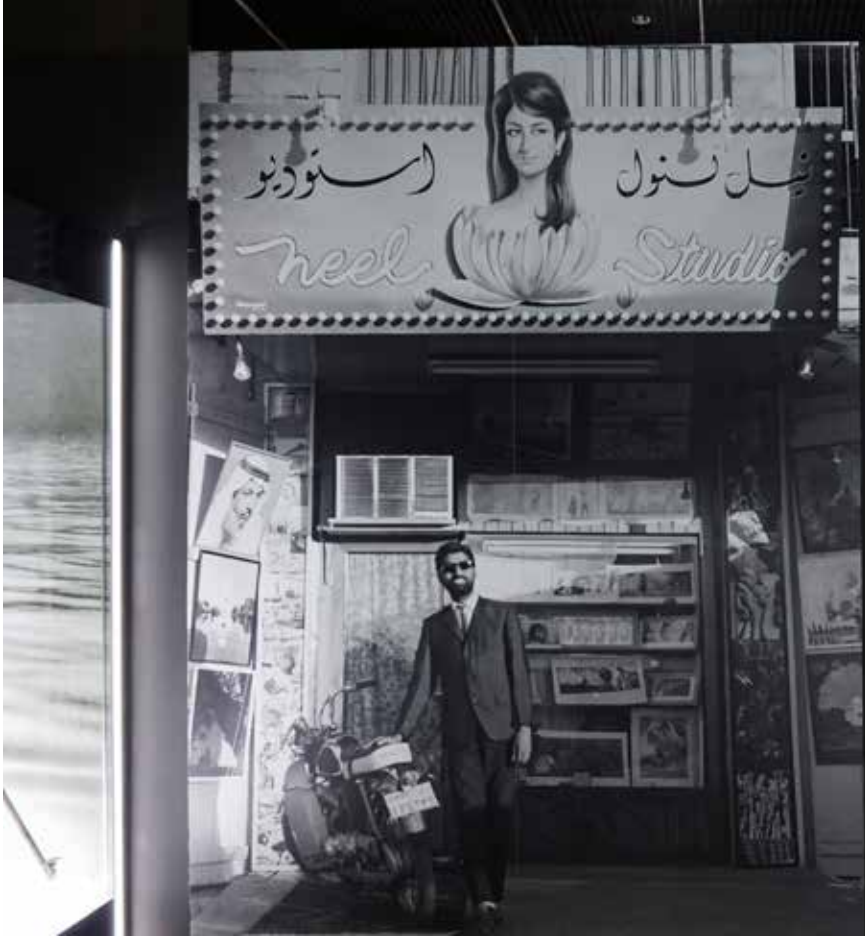
The exhibition opened with towering images of the two Sheikhs on translucent banners “among which a visitor can walk with UAE’s first visionary leaders”.

A timeline wall recounts significant historical moments of UAE and Ramesh’s extraordinary journey.

The exhibition had a second storyline—the story of traditional film-based photography, displaying Ramesh’s cameras and photo equipment from the 1960s.

Of interest were his numerous light meters which young photographers may not recognise.

We hope the exhibition will generate interest among the new generation in the fine art and craft of photography



A video (with images in red) at the entrance to the mock-up darkroom explains the darkroom process.



A recreation of the photographer's darkroom in his one-room house in Al Nasr Square, UAE, circa 1965 (TOP RIGHT). BELOW A montage of Ramesh's most significant photographs of the Sheikhs and poetic images of life in the early years of the nation.



A real-time encounter with a negative image of oneself

Interactive Technology

Inspired by the tools of the day and the film stock negatives of the rulers, the exhibition space was designed to be a play of negative and positive, black and white, dark and light, veiled and revealed.



We developed a real-time interactive display that highlighted this theme.

Sensor-based and driven by optics, a surprise awaited visitors as they were leaving the gallery. They encountered an interactive wall where they see their negative self-image in real-time as they walked by.

Designed to surprise and delight, it was a fitting recap to the storyline between the photographer and the Founding Fathers.



Ramesh's son, Neel Shukla presenting the book to His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Emir of Dubai, Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates.

The exhibition opened at the Etihad Museum in Dubai on 7 March 2019. Originally a one-month exhibition, it was extended to February 2020 due to popular response.

BRANDED ENVIRONMENT



Photo: E&O Berhad

STRAITS QUAY VISITOR CENTRE INTEGRATED DESIGN

E&O BERHAD // 2017-2018



Installation: Garden by the Sea by Louise Low
Wall murals: Tang Yeok Khang

The E&O Visitor Centre charts the evolution of the Eastern & Oriental (E&O) Group in the context of Penang's transformation through the centuries. Visitors get a glimpse into the vibrant past of the iconic E&O Hotel, established in 1885, and how this cherished landmark defines the Group's ethos and leading position today as a premier lifestyle property developer.

Wall illustrations and installations by an artist, a sculptor and a team of pewter craftsmen contributed to a more engaging experience for visitors.



Photo: E&O Berhad



LOGO & VISUAL IDENTITY
EXHIBITION DESIGN
STORY-TELLING

SIGNAGE & ART
INFORMATION DESIGN
INTERACTIVE TECHNOLOGY



From a flourishing port city
to a modern metropolis—
the story of Penang told in pewter.



TYPOGRAPHY



Typography can add emotion, drama and personality to the printed matter. Headline type, carefully selected and finely-tuned, capture the changing times and fortunes of Penang and the client's historic E&O Hotel.



TECHNOLOGY



The technology that powers the interactives at the E&O Gallery presented a few challenges in fulfilling the client's brief—something that we took on with vigour.

Given specific guidelines that detail the visibility of the technology and distinct

user experience, we had to create a new set of electronics and applications to power the interactivity.

The E&O Gallery, housed in a building by the sea, welcomes visitors with the sound of the ocean as they enter the building. Thermal sensors hidden away will pick up the heat signature of the visitor and trigger the soundscape of the sea.

As the visitor moves through the various areas of the gallery, these sensors determine the visitor's location and automatically trigger relevant multimedia videos or audios that fade off as the visitor steps away from the exhibit.

Our R&D team designed the customised miniature electronics and sensors, as well as developed the control applications. The technology is hidden, yet its effects are felt and will elevate the visitor experience.

Ultimately, we delivered what the client wanted by producing the technology needed to make the experience work.



KELLIE'S CASTLE RESEARCH & STORY-TELLING WAYFINDING & SIGNAGE

TOURISM MALAYSIA & JKR (PUBLIC WORKS DEPT) KINTA // 2013



The Gallery at Kellie's Castle. We mounted the information panels using a cable-rod system to minimise the impact on the building's original material and structure.

Kellie's Castle was a mansion built by a Scottish planter in Malaya, William Kellie-Smith. Work on the building began in 1915 and was abandoned when Kellie died in Lisbon in 1926.

With input from many sources, from the National Archives to interviews with Ipoh residents passionate about the history of their town, we pieced together a fascinating story of a man and his dream.

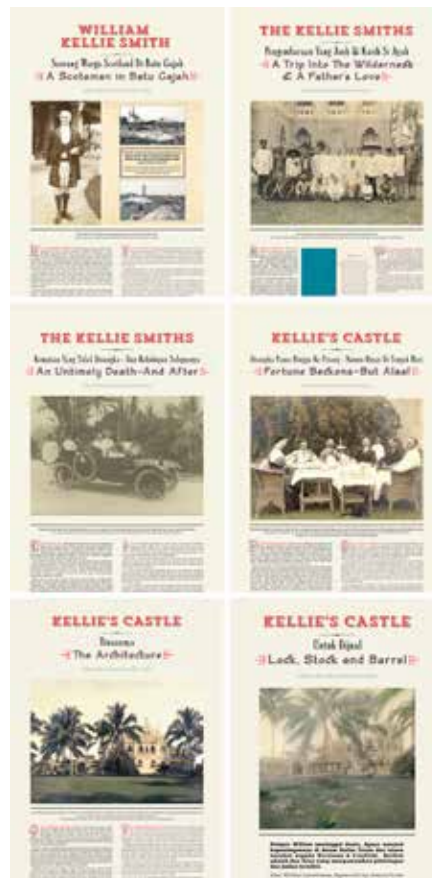
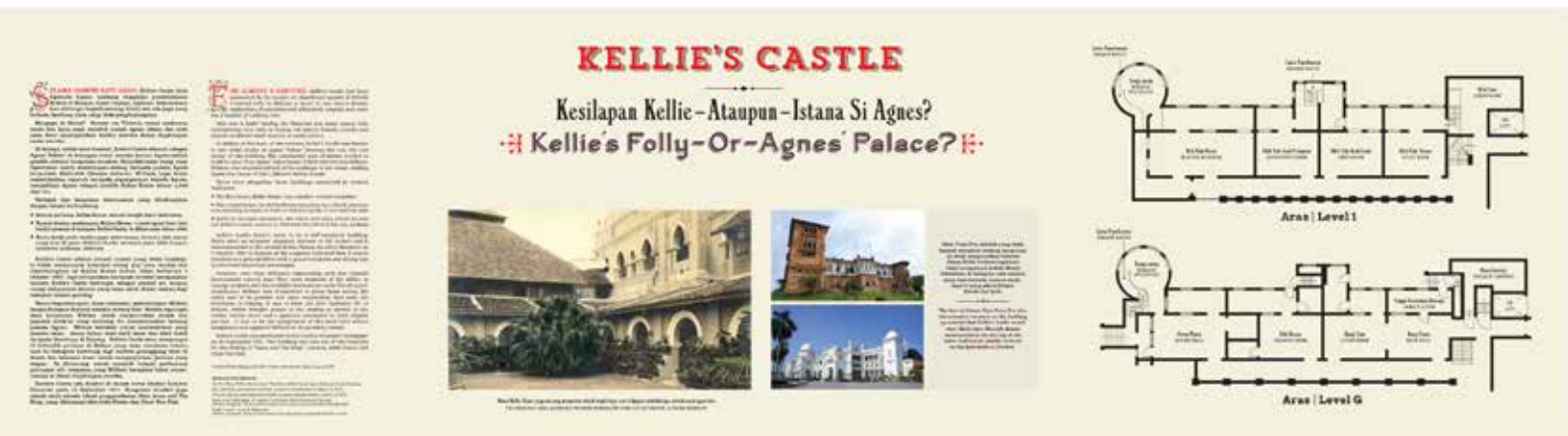


THE KELLAS HOUSE

Gabungan Pelbagai Stail
❖ An Eclectic Mix of Styles ❖



Cucu perempua William Kellie Smith, Frances Boston-Smith, telah melawat Istana Kellie dan telah menyediakan gambar-gambar yang dapat anda lihat di galeri ini.
WILLIAM KELLIE SMITH'S GRANDDAUGHTER, FRANCES BOSTON SMITH, VISITED KELLIE'S CASTLE AND PROVIDED THE OLD PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE KELLAS HOUSE YOU SEE IN THIS GALLERY.



KELLIE'S CASTLE

Diselubungi Misteri ❖ Shrouded in Mystery ❖



William berdiri bersama dewa-dewa lain di bumbung kuil Hindu, melihat estetisnya dan anak cucu pekerja yang berkhidmat kepadanya.
A STATUETTE OF WILLIAM STANDS ALONGSIDE THE DEITIES ON THE ROOF OF THE HINDU TEMPLE, WATCHING OVER HIS ESTATE AND THE DESCENDANTS OF THOSE WHO HAVE WORKED FOR HIM.

PADA JUN 2003, ketika kerja-kerja melebarkan jalan Gopeng-Batu Gajah berdekatan dengan istana ini sedang dilaksanakan, para pekerja secara tidak sengaja telah mengorek sebahagian daripada terowong setinggi 1.5m dan 1m lebar, iaitu ketika jentera pengorek sedang memecahkan struktur kayu. Terowong ini mungkin menghubungkan istana dengan sebuah kuil Hindu, dipercayai salah satu daripada empat laluan keselamatan yang dibina oleh William Kellie Smith.

Satu terowong lagi menghala ke pintu masuk garaj di sebelah selatan, dan terowong yang ketiga, menghala ke jalan utama di sebelah timur. Di mana letaknya terowong yang keempat tidak diketahui. Beberapa orang saksi mengatakan bahawa mereka pernah ternampak sebuah kereta berwarna hitam dalam salah sebuah terowong tersebut pada 1960-an.

Penduduk tempatan percaya bahawa istana ini berhantu kerana ramai matanya telah mati sejak pembinaan. Tindakan ini khazanah aslinya

IN JUNE 2003, when the Gopeng-Batu Gajah road was widened near the castle, workers inadvertently unearthed a section of a tunnel. A passageway 1.5 metres high and 1 metre wide was discovered when the excavator broke through the timber structure. This tunnel may have connected the castle to the Hindu temple. It is believed to be one of four safety exits built by William Kellie Smith.

Another tunnel led to the south garage gate, and a third, east to the main road. The whereabouts of the fourth tunnel is unknown. Several eyewitnesses claimed to have seen a black car in one of the tunnels in the 1960s.

Locals believe the castle is haunted since many workers died during its construction. There were also rumours of the Japanese executing people in the castle during World War II. Others claimed to have seen a ghostly figure of William Kellie Smith pacing the corridors. Although he had died in Portugal, it is believed that his spirit is restless because his dream to build a



Balkoni Serambi Berhantu
Ghostly Cloister Balcony

William Kellie Smith telah meninggal akibat pneumonia di Lisbon, Portugal dan telah dikuburkan di tanah perkuburan British. Namun, rehnya dikatakan berlegar pada waktu malam, terutamanya sepanjang koridor, bagi menjaga rumah agamanya ini.

William Kellie Smith died of pneumonia in Lisbon, Portugal and was buried in the British Cemetery. Nevertheless, it is said that his spirit roams at night, especially along the corridors, guarding his great mansion.



Our signage programme covers directional, destination, cautionary, regulatory as well as interpretive—tales of the mysterious castle, its enigmatic ensemble of characters and the sightings of ghostly apparitions along the corridors in the dead of night. We had to differentiate factual information from hearsay in the signs.



An astonishing variety of typefaces were in use during Colonial Malaya. Many of these typefaces are not available today. We have taken some liberties and tried to emulate the period's look in our information panels with the resources that were available to us.

Karyaneka is the retail arm of Kraftangan, the Malaysian Handicraft Development Corporation. The exhibition was executed in 10+ days—from initial brief to design and installation, in time for the opening of Malaysia’s National Craft Day on 26 February.

This temporary exhibition served as a preview of Karyaneka’s re-branding and revamp / renovation of its flagship retail shop, where the exhibition was held.

The new Karyaneka brand comprises four categories: **Adiguru**, showcasing the works of Malaysia’s Master Craftspersons; **Karya** (works of art), curated premium range of Malaysian artisanal creations; **Reka** (invent), innovative and contemporary designs by homegrown brands; and **Aneka** (variety), tastefully selected range of Malaysian lifestyle craft products for everyday use—functional and affordable.

The exhibition also marked Kraftangan’s entry on the Google Arts & Culture online platform, and showcased Kraftangan’s ‘Tikar Pavilion’ in Hong Kong.

THE TEAM

RETAIL DESIGN, ARTISANAL BRAND CURATION & DISPLAY // Imaya Wong
COPYWRITING // Kraftangan, Karyaneka & Syed Iskandar
PRODUCTION // Visual Earth

KARYANEKA RETAIL EXHIBITION DESIGN

KRAFTANGAN, KOMPLEKS KRAF, KL // 2020



Karyaneka Re-branding CREATIVE CONCEPT & ART DIRECTION
Suryani Senja Alias & Imaya Wong



TOP Google Arts & Culture Project—a ‘portal’ composed with 100 images from Kraftangan’s craft collection that were published online for a global audience.

BELOW Introducing 12 of Malaysia’s finest Adigurus (Master Craftspersons), showcasing the nation’s strong craft heritage.





TOP Presenting the 'Tikar Pavilion', the Malaysian submission for the 2019 Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture in Hong Kong.

A Woven Matness, by architect Shin Tseng with Kraftangan Malaysia, is an interactive installation celebrating the Tikar Mengkuang (woven screw pine mat). QR codes were woven into the mats for audiences to scan to establish an authentic relationship with the craft, the people and the place it comes from.

The project brings traditional art 'to life' with Augmented Reality, marrying Digital Craft with Traditional Craft, bridging the past with the future.

Photo by Wendy Teo

LEFT The team had less than two weeks to dismantle the cluttered interior of the retail shop, identify and source new craft products from craft makers around the country, curate, design and install the exhibition in time for National Craft Day.