International Art Moves Exhibition: Brunei Calling in Berlin, Germany

International Art Moves (IAM) Exhibition: Brunei Calling was the first international art exhibition to be organized jointly by Culture.net, an international network of art schools and academies, and Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Universiti Brunei Darussalam. This international art exhibition was professionally curated and displayed in the famous Kunstquartier Bethanien (Bethanien Art Centre) in Berlin, Germany, from 14 to 22 February 2015, and offered visitors the opportunity to leisurely enjoy a kaleidoscope of innovative and visually striking artworks created in Brunei Darussalam.

The 9-day exhibition at Bethanien Art Centre in Berlin, led by Dr. Martie Geiger-Ho and Prof. Kong Ho was installed by five selected ACT majoring students who served as the set-up team. The same five students were later invited by the Embassy of Brunei Darussalam in Germany to present some of their artworks at the Brunei Darussalam National Day Lunch in Berlin on 23 February 2015.
Universiti Brunei Darussalam & Universiti Malaysia Terengganu dialogue

As part of the continuous efforts in promoting regional collaborative research on the Malay Language, as well as to stimulate its usage as Bahasa Melayu Tinggi in higher learning institutions, Universiti Brunei Darussalam through its Malay Language, Literature and Arts Programme, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, in collaboration with Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) held a dialogue entitled Dialog Bahasa Melayu Nusantara: Integrasi Teknologi dan Bahasa at the university’s Senate Room in the Chancellor’s Hall last March.

Officiated by the Minister of Home Affairs, Yang Berhormat Pehin Udana Khatib Dato Paduka Seri Setia Ustaz Hj Awg Badaruddin bin Pengarah Dato Paduka Hj Awg Othman, this dialogue showcased renowned scholars of the region such as the prolific Yang Berbahagia Tan Sri Dato’ Seri Utama Dr Rais bin Yatim, Advisor of the Malaysian Government for Social and Cultural Affairs, who is also currently the Patron for Pusat Majlis Bahasa Melayu IPT Nusantara as the plenary speaker; Professor Emeritus Dato’ Dr Ibrahim Komoo (Vice Chancellor of UMT), and Dr Yabit Alas (Director for Continuing Education Centre UBD) as co-speakers.

Attended by some 200 participants from local and regional institutions, including students and language enthusiasts, this dialogue highlighted the dynamism of both language and technology, their integration and impacts on various aspects of teaching and learning, cutting-edge research, as well as networking strategies, among others.
Brilliant drama performance by FASS theatre students

11th April 2015 witnessed yet another dramatic performance by the students of Drama & Theatre with the production Love.Fabric.Life. under the supervision of FASS lecturer Mr Low Kok Wai. It was the 11th production of the FASS Drama & Theatre Studies programme held at the Institute of Health Sciences (IHS) open concourse. About two hundred and forty audiences, were enlightened and entertained by an exhibition that showcased five different fabrics from around the world that surrounded the ambience and portrayal of the plays.

The theme Love.Fabric.Life was chosen to envision cultural aesthetics and values as well as to highlight some elements of tradition and heritage derived from the lives and narratives of different cultural fabrics. Five plays with five different storylines were put up on show, unveiling passion, love, life, intercultural distinctiveness and attractiveness. It also showed the fragility and complexity of mankind towards its inherited values and tradition. Fabrics from Indian Saree, Brunei Malay traditional handwoven cloth Jong Sarat, French Lace to Denim and Leather as well as the Chinese Silk became the central motifs and pivotal points of these plays, dubbed Dove in Red, Eternal Endeavour, One Last Shot, Blue Black and Silk Apart, respectively.

This production saw involvement from people from different countries. Two China exchange students were in one of the plays. Among the attendees were local Bruneians and those from nations such as Kyrgyzstan, United Kingdom, Korea, Singapore, Gaza, Pakistan, Vietnam, Ghana, Nepal, Myanmar, China, Japan, Australia and Malaysia.

Reviews:

“It has been a refreshing experience for me to see young talents creating their arts by connecting the local history and identities. It was so powerful. Well done!”
- Dr Siti Norkhalbi Haji Wahsalfelah, Dean, FASS

“I always look forward to the drama productions staged by our FASS students. Each time they never cease to amaze me with their sheer talent and boundless creativity. This production is no exception. The stories of love lost and love (re) gained interwoven amidst a rich tapestry of cultures and traditions were indeed fascinating. In a sense, I feel that this fact reflected the diversity that is an inherent nature of our faculty.”
- Dr Sharifah Nurul Huda Alkaff, Deputy Dean, FASS
Major publication in preparation: “The Use and State of Language in Brunei Darussalam - A Kingdom of Unexpected Linguistic Diversity”

A book on the current state of language usage in Brunei Darussalam co-edited by AP Dr Noor Azam OKMB Hajj-Othman, Dr James McLellan and Prof David Deterding, all of FASS, will be published by the prestigious European publishing house Springer in 2016.

The timing is significant, as this marks 20 years since the publication of the first edited monograph on language in Brunei, ‘Language Use & Language Change in Brunei Darussalam’ (published in 1996 by Ohio University in their Monographs in International Studies Southeast Asian series) – an essential reference for researchers and students of language in Brunei.

STUDENT NEWS

FASS PhD student wins award

Linguistics student from FASS, Shufang Xu, has been awarded the Student Prize for her paper on the vowels of Brunei Chinese held at the 18th International Congress of Phonetic Sciences which will convene in Glasgow from 10th to 14th August 2015.

Paper accepted for publication in the Journal of English as a Lingua Franca

The paper entitled 'The Role of Noun Phrases in Misunderstandings in Brunei English in ELF settings' by PhD student Dyg Ishamina Athirah and Prof David Deterding of FASS has been accepted for publication in the Journal of English as a Lingua Franca.

Innovative usage of noun phrases is among the most widely reported features of new varieties of English throughout the world and also in discourse in ELF settings, but its effect on intelligibility has not been extensively investigated and our PhD students attempts to remedy this in her research.
Muhammad Azim bin Mohd Alidin, a student from FASS, spent his discovery year at the University of Arizona in the United States of America. He admitted that one of the reasons why he chose Arizona at first, among other universities in the states, was because of its nice, dry and basically mild weather – nothing like the extreme weathers of New York! Muhammad Azim enjoyed being part of the big university with a student population of over 41 thousand. The campus is always crowded but he felt it had a very conducive learning environment. The students were friendly there – both local and foreign, and everyone seemed to help and learn from each other. Muhammad Azim also recalls how resourceful and knowledgeable the academic staff were and their warm and open attitude made it easy for him to approach them. The university itself boasts big-sized lecture theatres, equipped with high-tech equipment. A gadget that every student had to have was a ResponseCard NXT clicker (pictured here), a device used to record student’s participation, for performance analysis and assessment in class. The device has the capability to respond to multiple choice questions, numeric responses, short answers and even essay-type questions.

During his 10 months there, Muhammad Azim was involved in a lot of activities. He was part of the University of Arizona’s International Student Association befriend students from over 28 countries including France, Poland, Cuba, Russia, Turkey and Germany. He was also a member of the university’s Muslim Student Association and was involved in the Islamic Awareness week, endorsed by the university and aimed to inform the community about Islam. Activities were held on-campus and at Tucson’s community-owned mosque and the Islamic Center of Tucson which included inviting the public inside the mosque and having talks about Islam.

Muhammad Azim took environment-related courses from various departments including Hydrology and Water Resources, Atmospheric Sciences, Earth Sciences and Astronomy. He explained that the modules he took at UBD equipped him with the prerequisites to take interesting courses like ‘Application of GIS’ and ‘Introduction to Oceanography’ at Arizona. Muhammad Azim shared a comfortable four-bedroom house with another Brunelian, also from UBD and two other students (two Japanese students in his first semester there and later two Americans during his second). Halal food is not difficult to find – there are two halal restaurants within walking distance from the University and you can go by bus to get to the local halal butcher.

In sum, his DY experience was, in his own words, a life-changing one for Muhammad Azim and he would highly recommend the University of Arizona to his fellow UBD friends.
A paper co-written by Prof David Deterding and Dyg Ishamina Athirah called "Brunei Malay" will soon be published in the Journal of the IPA. This study reexamines the phonemic inventory of Brunei Malay by looking at the pronunciation of a young Brunei Malay speaker. A younger speaker was chosen in their study to emphasise that Brunei Malay is a vibrant language widely used by young people in Brunei. Although the pronunciation that the informant uses does not include all the features of traditional Brunei Malay, it reflects the way that the language is currently used by young people. The study therefore provides an in-depth study of one speaker by eliciting data using the translated Malay version of the popular ‘North Wind and the Sun’ text.

Dr Grace V. S. Chin (English Literature, FASS) has been invited as an affiliated fellow to KITLV at the University of Leiden in the Netherlands from 28 May till 21 June 2015. This invitation is based on the UBD-funded collaborative research on gender and nation in postcolonial Southeast Asian literature, which is also led by Dr Chin. She is interested in the writings of Indonesia’s national mother or “Ibu” Raden Adjeng Kartini, and the changing representations of Indonesian women in literature since Kartini’s time. Part of her research on this topic will therefore be conducted in KITLV’s archives on Kartini and the Dutch occupation.
Similar or a world apart? : A comparative study of ‘hard news’ texts in the Malay and English print media in Brunei Darussalam and Malaysia.

In this UBD-funded research project, Dr Sharifah Nurulhuda Alkaff, Dr James McLellan and Dr Hajah Fattimah Haji Awang Chuchu, assisted by Dyg Nurkhalisah Mustapa and Awg Najib Noorashid are attempting to break new ground by making a four-way comparison of print media hard news reports using the following matrix design:

![Matrix diagram](image)

Dr James McLellan & Dr Sharifah Nurulhuda Alkaff at the Borneo Bulletin’s office

They have collected four corpora of news reports from the Borneo Bulletin and Media Permata in Brunei, and from the New Straits Times and Berita Harian in Malaysia. Thus the comparison is both between nations and between languages.

The initial findings were presented at the first Malaysia-Brunei Forum held at Universiti Malaya in 2014; they are currently drafting a chapter on the Brunei side of the project for inclusion in the “The Use and State of Language in Brunei Darussalam” monograph, scheduled for publication in 2016.

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