

# SPECIAL FEATURES

Relevant SDGs



# Education



Ohio University Prof. John Sabraw conducting the art workshop with aspiring artists and participants to impart knowledge on his method of using pigments derived from toxic waste in his series of artwork.

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## Ohio-Razak Lecture Series

### Turning Poison to Art: Professor John Sabraw at the 10<sup>th</sup> Distinguished Tun Abdul Razak Lecture



Ohio University’s Professor of Art John Sabraw knows a thing or two about the adage “one man’s poison is another man’s treasure.”

He has been working closely with his colleague, Ohio University Professor of Civil Engineering Dr. Guy Riefler for years to extract and convert chemicals from Ohio’s polluted streams into paint pigment.

Sabraw’s current art work uses this pigment to raise awareness on environmental issues that pose a threat to wildlife and communities.

“I make paintings that express the sublimity of nature but also the fragility of our relationship with it. All of my paintings use these toxic pigments in combination with standard artist colours,” he said.

Sabraw elaborated on his efforts to use art to highlight the ways in which our lives are intertwined with a fragile ecosystem at the 10<sup>th</sup> Distinguished Tun Abdul Razak Lecture titled “Synergy of Curiosity: From Acid to Art.”

In collaboration with Ohio University, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Universiti Putra

Malaysia (UPM), the Ministry of Education and supported by Yayasan Sime Darby, the 10<sup>th</sup> Distinguished Tun Abdul Razak Lecture was held on 3 December 2018 at the Sime Darby Convention Centre.

The significance of Professor Sabraw’s work hinges on the history of Ohio. The state is a hotbed for abandoned mines. A relic of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century mining boom, these abandoned coal mines leach toxic acid mine drainage (AMD) into Ohio’s river basin.



Data from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources show that an estimated 1,300 miles of Ohio's streams are polluted by heavy chemicals from abandoned coal mines.

Sabraw and Riefler are currently working on producing the pigment on a commercial scale. They hope to channel revenue from the sale of the pigment back into the remediation process of the streams.

Sabraw's paintings, drawings, and collaborative installations are produced in an eco-conscious manner, and he continually works toward a fully sustainable practice. In his line of work, he continuously seeks alternative materials to produce art and explores visionary ideas and schemes crossing disciplines and even cultures.

Therefore, his keynote presentation is crucial as Malaysia faces a diverse range of environmental issues, such as hazardous and toxic waste problems, as well as air and water pollution.

The lecture provided Malaysian environmental professionals with new ideas and possibilities to tackle local environmental issues in a sustainable manner.

Prior to delivering his presentation at the 10<sup>th</sup>

Distinguished Tun Abdul Razak Lecture, Professor Sabraw conducted an art workshop with 30 Malaysian artists and art students on 30 November 2018 to impart knowledge on his method of using pigments derived from toxic waste in his artwork. All proceeds from the sale of the artworks were channelled towards the National Autism Society of Malaysia.

The Distinguished Tun Abdul Razak Lecture is part of the Tun Abdul Razak Chair Programme, a decade-long collaboration between Ohio University and Malaysia.

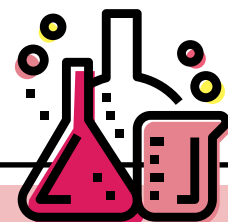
Established in 1979 and named in the honour of the second Prime Minister of Malaysia, the Tun Abdul Razak Chair Programme

at Ohio University has brought unique opportunities to advance greater knowledge and awareness of Malaysian history, culture, economic, social and political life in the United States of America. It works tirelessly to promote knowledge exchange between people in both countries, bringing innovation to the fore.

The Chair brings a senior Malaysian scholar to Ohio University for a two-year appointment to teach, do research and contribute to outreach and networking activities focusing on Malaysia and Southeast Asia. The first Razak Professor came to Ohio University in 1981. Since then, 15 professors from Malaysia have worked at Ohio University.



*Ohio University's Professor of Art John Sabraw presenting his work on the conversion of acid mine drainage pollution to art.*



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# Environment



*Orangutans seen in trees planted by YSD a decade ago.*

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## Northern Ulu Segama Closure

*Bringing Life to Bukit Piton:* The reforestation and rehabilitation of orangutan habitats in the Bukit Piton Forest Reserve

In a quiet groove in the Bukit Piton Forest Reserve, Sabah Forestry Department (SFD) officers are preparing for one last round of maintenance work on trees planted in the area under reforestation efforts supported by YSD and Sime Darby Plantation Berhad.

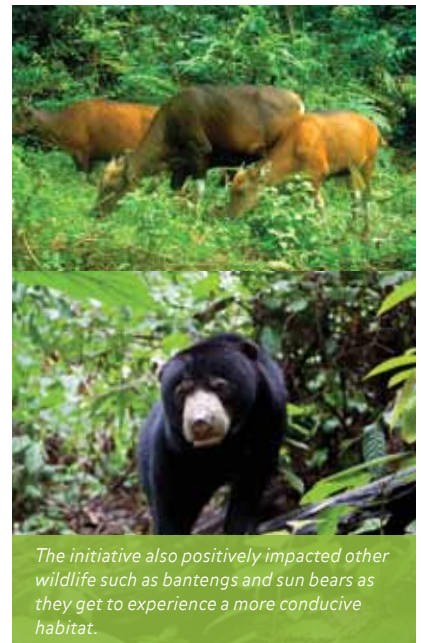
The maintenance work, carried out in November 2018, was the last to be carried out before YSD officially handed over the project to the SFD in December last year following its conclusion of the ten-year project.

YSD's support for the reforestation project had assisted SFD to successfully advocate for the reclassification of the

Northern Ulu Segama Forest Reserve to a Class 1 Protection Forest Reserve or Totally Protected Area status in 2012, from its original status as Class 2 Commercial Forest Reserve.

Under the law, this reclassification protects the area from future encroachment or development activities, as it is not allowed to be used or converted for other land use purposes.

Sabah Forestry District Officer (Ulu Segama-Malua) Robert Martin Mijol said the project has been a major success for the department, and will serve as a pioneer project for future reforestation projects to come in Sabah.



*The initiative also positively impacted other wildlife such as bantengs and sun bears as they get to experience a more conducive habitat.*

"We wish to use this project as a model for other areas. Not only in the Ulu Segama area, but in other districts as well," he said.

YSD began supporting the reforestation and rehabilitation of orangutan habitats in the Bukit Piton Forest Reserve in 2008 with a commitment of RM25 million. Since then, a total of 295,159 trees have been planted in an area covering 5,400ha.

Mijol said since the project's implementation, orangutan nests have been increasingly sighted by project and NGO workers.

"WWF (World Wildlife Fund) did some studies in 2014 on orangutan nests and found that after the project began, the nests are well distributed now. The canopy is recovering," he said.

"It shows that rehabilitation projects can have a huge pay-off. This project brought the orangutans back to the area, and brought the forest back to its natural state," he added.

A habitat once ravaged by forest fires and acute timber harvesting practices, the Bukit Piton Forest Reserve is now slowly recovering, with wildlife returning to its once barren land.

The project has also supported the communities living along Sungai Segama who have been engaged and provided job opportunities related to reforestation works.

Ene Petrus, 36, is one member of the Segama community who

was employed under the project. Prior to his work under the project, he worked at his uncle's oil palm plantation.

Since working for the reforestation project, he has learnt to appreciate the fragile ecosystem he calls home.

"When I was working at the oil palm plantation, it was just work. It's just one crop," he said.

"But working in the forest, you see different wildlife. You also learn about the different trees in the forest.

"I have learnt to care about the forest. I have seen deers, hornbills, elephants, orangutan, *musang*," he added.

For the contractors working on the project like Segama Frontier, the past few years have been rewarding in more ways than one.

Segama Frontier Manager Hatta Tahir, 41, said this was his first time working on a reforestation project.

"Previously, we do oil palm planting. For oil palm planting, we plant the crops on cleared terraces. With this project, the area is in its natural state," he said.

"After we started working on this project, we have a stronger passion for the environment because we see the effects of what we are doing.

"Previously, this area was an open area. We had to do intense replanting. Now, every time the workers go into the reforested areas, they see orangutans," he added.



Sabah Forestry District Officer (Ulu Segama - Malua) Robert Martin Mijol said the reforestation and rehabilitation of Bukit Piton Forest Reserve is a pioneer project for future reforestation projects in the state.



Sabah Forestry Assistant District Officer Jevani Sahak said the project would not have been successful without commitment and passion towards reforestation efforts.

Sabah Forestry Assistant District Officer Jevani Sahak, 47, said the positive change in the area is palpable.

"Before the project started, it used to be very hot. Now, you can see that the area is green, the air is fresh. That's why if you want to live longer, stay in Bukit Piton," he said with a laugh.

"We can also see changes in the small river nearby. Now, the river is full of fish so the *orang kampung* can also get income (from fishing). As there is an increase in wildlife, the Sabah Wildlife Department has set up a patrol team who patrols the area every day," he added.

Jevani said the project would not have been successful without commitment and passion towards reforestation efforts.

"Only by having a heart that cares for the environment, wildlife, and air; will you see success," he added.

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# Community & Health



(left and middle) Sime Darby Plantation Berhad Deputy to Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer, Upstream (now SDLP Group Managing Director) Mohamad Helmy Othman Basha and YSD CEO Dr. Hj. Yatela Zainal Abidin offers assistance to a victim of the Lombok earthquake.

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## Lombok and Sulawesi Relief Efforts

### Silver Linings: Assistance for Lombok and Sulawesi earthquake victims

Between September and November 2018, Indonesia was devastated by multiple powerful earthquakes and tsunamis that left thousands on the islands of Lombok and Palu, Sulawesi homeless, jobless and hungry.

The catastrophe changed the lives of many, including Saiyah Arshad's, 48, also known as Mbak Iyam. The earthquake took her mother, sister-in-law and most of her employees, who were also her close friends. Determined to recover from her losses, she decided to rebuild her business.

With only RM300 capital and limited cooking utensils, her journey, however, was tough. On top of that, she was also taking care of her ill husband.

Mbak Iyam is no stranger to overcoming adversity. As a child, she supported her family of six. Through sheer hard work, she kick-started a small business venture selling condiments, such as dried tuna, chicken floss and fried onions.

The business has proven to be successful not only in providing



Buildings ravaged by the earthquake.



Saiyah Arshad, also known as Mbak Iyam, used her capital of RM300 to jumpstart her business after the earthquake.

her family with a stable income, but also job opportunities for 30 other mothers in Palu. She received the One Village One Product (OVOP) award from Indonesia's Ministry of Industry, representing the Province of Abon. This thriving business unfortunately, was wiped out by the earthquake.

Mbak Iyam's family is among the 278 affected by the Palu earthquake and tsunami who received aid from YSD, in partnership with MERCY Malaysia and their Indonesian counterpart Pos Keadilan Peduli Ummat (PKPU). YSD committed RM400,000 towards relief efforts for the community, which included 262 units of transit shelters, 47 units of 3-in-1 toilets, 14 water piping systems, 2 units of tube wells and household items, such as fans and mats.

"I am grateful to Yayasan Sime Darby and MERCY Malaysia for providing us with transit shelters. This shelter is where I live and sleep, a place for me to cook and sell my products. I see a tough life ahead but I will not show my sadness to others and I will not give up," she said.

Mbak Iyam's eldest daughter Vitri Rezkiani who is working as a nurse in Palu has been her indispensable sidekick as she stays up late every night to prepare cooking ingredients while taking care of her father and her siblings.

"I pray to Allah that my business will go well so that I can provide job opportunities to single mothers here," Mbak Iyam said, adding that she is thankful to community leaders for giving the support she needed.

For others like Udiani, 60, getting back on track is more difficult than it seemed. As a vegetable farmer, he had limited resources to fall back on following the disaster.

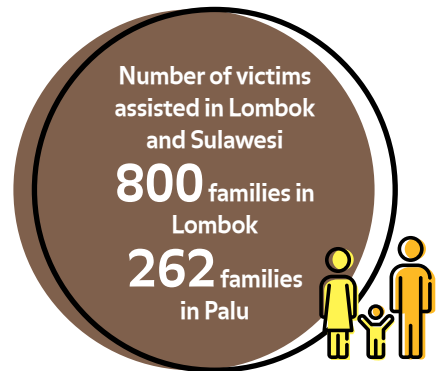
"Ninety per cent of the population here in Lombok are farmers. We used to supply to a wholesaler and sell our produce at local markets. It has been a traumatic experience to have lost everything and we have not had the time to even think about getting back to work. Our main concern now is to get a new home," he shared.

Udiani and his family of 14 now live in a transit shelter, provided by YSD and MERCY Malaysia.

"Most of us farmers are scared of going back to farming because we fear something will happen at home while we are gone," he said.

YSD, together with MERCY Malaysia and PKPU, provided 290 transit shelters, food and hygiene kits to 800 families affected by the earthquake in Lombok.

The earthquake affected both the elderly and the youth. Gito, 35, was 4 months pregnant



with her first child when the earthquake hit the island. She lamented that aftershocks would be frequent and consistent – especially on Mondays.

"All the children would get scared every time Monday approaches as they expect another earthquake or aftershock to happen," she said.

They are currently relying on donations from the public to sustain themselves.

"We spend mornings outside the transit shelter as it can get very hot inside and then return back in at night when it gets cooler. We can only hope and pray that the authorities will continue to help us as we slowly get our lives back together," she said.

At the time of the interview: November – December 2018

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# Sports



Participants of the YSD Chairman's Trophy in action.

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## Chairman's Trophy

*Smells Like Team Spirit: YSD Chairman's Trophy*



Rain and thunder did not deter youths from trying their best to clinch coveted challenger trophies and cash prizes during the inaugural YSD Chairman's Trophy 2018.

The Indonesian team Pagustas U-12 was crowned champion of the Under 12 (U-12) category at the tournament.

Pagustas qualified for the final after beating Kombat Fighters in the semi-final and Subadron Football Academy in the Quarter Final. The team, which hails from Jakarta, Indonesia, walked away with a RM1,000 cash prize, medals and the U-12 challenger

trophy. A total of 24 teams competed in the U12 category.

Teams Young Guns U-10 and Sime Darby Football Club (FC) U-8 were crowned champions of the Under 10 (U-10) and Under 8 (U-8) categories respectively. Young Guns U-10 won a RM1,000 cash prize, medals and a challenger trophy while Sime Darby FC U-8 was awarded medals.

The tournament, held on 10 and 11 November 2018, was organised by Sime Darby Football Club and supported by YSD, with sponsors Nestle Malaysia and Fraser & Neave

providing Milo and 100 Plus isotonic drinks for parched youth football enthusiasts.

The tournament was held in conjunction with the launch of the Sime Darby Football Development Programme, which took place on 10 November 2018. YSD has committed RM1.2 million towards the two-year programme until December 2019.

Parents and football enthusiasts showed up on the weekend to support the competing teams at the tournament despite the unfavourable weather, including Malaysian football legend Zainal Abidin Hassan.

Sime Darby FC Honorary Secretary Zainal Amat said the tournament involved the participation of a total of 54 teams, comprising 24 teams in the U-12 category, 20 teams in the U-10 category and 10 teams in the U-8 category.

“We had 3 teams from Indonesia participating in the tournament. All 54 teams gave their all,” he said.

“The tournament was also a good yardstick for the Sime Darby FC U-8, U-10 and U-12, with the Sime Darby FC U-8 team winning the top prize in the U-8 category, the U-10 team made it to the semi-final round while the U-12 team won in the U-12 Plate Category. We are considered new kids on the block and we managed to chart some success,” he added.

The Sime Darby FC U-12 team is part of the Sime Darby Football Development Programme.

YSD Chief Executive Officer Dr. Hjh. Yatela Zainal Abidin said YSD’s support to the football development programme was aimed at honing the technical skills of junior footballing talents and their soft skills.

“It is much easier to inculcate soft skills such as being a team player with a high level of discipline in young children. It takes more effort and resources to do so when they are adolescents,” she said.



She said the Foundation hopes that more girls’ teams would participate in future instalments of the YSD Chairman’s Trophy tournament.

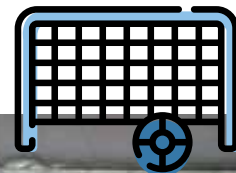
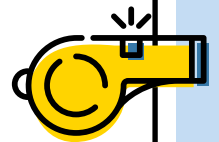
The YSD Chairman’s Trophy 2018 tournament featured one all-girls team - Subang Jaya Sports Community (SJSC) Supergirls U-12.

She also said the project hopes to recruit more girls into the programme, as it is crucial to develop female talent in sports.

As of 26 April 2019, there are only six girls registered in the Sime Darby Football Development Programme.

“I understand that the SJSC Supergirls had beaten Indonesian team Pagustas U-12 yesterday and Pagustas U-12 won the finals of the U-12 category today,” she said.

“This goes to show that girls have so much potential in playing football. We hope to have even more girls being part of the programme in the future to harness their hidden potential,” she added.



(From centre, L-R) Sime Darby Football Club Honorary Secretary Tn. Hj. Zainal Amat, Sime Darby Football Club President Y. A. M. Tengku Datuk Seri Ahmad Shah Ibn Almarhum Sultan Abdul Aziz and YSD CEO Dr. Hjh. Yatela Zainal Abidin with the Under 12 winning team.



# Arts & Culture



A street performance during a community-based project by Arts-ED Penang.

## Championing Arts Education and Development

Janet Pillai, 64, is a prominent member of Five Arts Centre (FAC) – a collective of Malaysian artistes and producers dedicated to generating alternative art forms in the contemporary arts landscape.

Since 2014, YSD had been supporting FAC with a total sponsorship amount of RM855,000, to achieve various objectives, such as encouraging emerging work in Malaysian performing arts, issuing arts publications, and developing and maintaining online archives.

Janet has been involved in various programmes under YSD's support all these years – she was heavily involved in archiving work through the Arts Education Archive Malaysia (AEAM), which the

foundation had a hand in piloting. In this current sponsorship term, together with Charlene Rajendran, she is leading the Critical Conversations Project; a series of panel discussions focusing on capacity building and arts development. Janet believes that arts education must be championed alongside other fields of study and hopes to instigate changes for arts education to thrive further in Malaysia.

“Presently, not much has been done for arts education and

oftentimes, it is seen as inferior compared to other subject matters. This is evident in the insufficient funding allocated for this purpose. The arts scene in Malaysia especially on the education front should be empowered to be at par with focus areas such as science and technology. We must reaffirm the importance of a well-rounded education and that means a stronger emphasis on arts education.

Arts education is fundamental for any society. In Malaysia, we have both formal and non-formal arts.

We incorporate formal arts into academic curriculum that comprises two disciplines: Music Education and Visual Arts. For me, the syllabus is good as they learn quite a lot about Malaysian music and visual arts. However, due to some defaults, other art forms have never been introduced.

I would say starting a programme without a baseline or thorough research is a major problem. No evidence-based work is being done. For example, a lot of millennials are good at researching and doing things on their own, but they usually have no fundamental training. So, one can be an artiste or have an arts degree, but they are not interested in pedagogy. Despite many arts galleries available, community arts programmes are few and far between due to lack of funds.

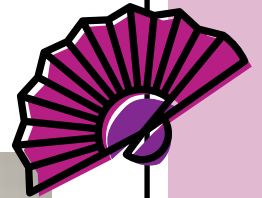
Arts education is a completely different track overseas and we are still lagging behind. In countries like Japan, Singapore,

Hong Kong, and Thailand, they have already put arts education on an equal standing with other critical areas. These countries are looking at the social impacts of the arts. So, they are looking more at the art process and creation, and how these two can benefit various sections of communities such as those with special needs. Japan, for example, has opened three major arts centres to cater to people with autism.

Perhaps we can facilitate a dialogue or forum as a first step towards the development of a roadmap and have representatives from relevant sectors to analyse strengths and weaknesses, discuss ways to strategise and come up with a collective vision to achieve our ultimate agenda.

We need to fine-tune the blueprint or national policies for arts education to flourish in this country. The realisation of this agenda would require adequate

planning, a fundamental shift in strategy, at all levels. The future of arts education depends on what people would like to make out of it. I believe in citizen movements and collective efforts. If there is no desire, then there is no future."



**"The arts scene in Malaysia especially on the education front should be empowered to be at par with focus areas such as science and technology."**

JANET PILLAI, 64



Children participating in silver crafting workshop by Arts-ED Penang.