

# Batik to the world

**THE** Institute of Ethnic Studies (KITA), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and the Canadian Society for Asian Arts (CSAA) Vancouver, Canada recently held a Malaysian batik exhibition entitled, "Batik: Expressions of Identities" at the Chinese Cultural Centre, Vancouver, Canada.

Headed by Datuk Associate Professor Salmah Abu Mansor, the exhibition was aimed at promoting Malaysian Batik to the world as a symbol of the country's identity. "This exhibition tells the story of the emergence of the batik process, production and its active promotion and transformation from a traditional art form into a Malaysian heritage," she said.

True to its main objective, the exhibition showcased the evolution of Malaysian batik from the traditional art forms in the 1960s, its development as a craft industry and its maturation as a cultural identity of Malaysia.

The exhibition also examined the development of the different batik techniques employed by various ethnicities, including batik from Malacca, Kelantan, Terengganu, Langkawi, Sarawak and Selangor. It also introduced a small selection of art works by fine artists.

Among the works highlighted were those of the Malaysian doyen of batik, Abdul Munir Yahya; upcoming indigenous Pua Kumbu batik designer, Jaludin Zaini; and a collection of Malaysian batik by Salmah. Traditional batik art form pieces were furnished by Adly Razali.

Keeping things fresh, there were also innovative batik works by contemporary artists Abdullah Jones, Munif Muhamad Nor and Mohd Asri Mat Yaman which offered a glimpse of modern batik art. Cedric Tan from the Baba



*A First Nations drummer welcoming visitors to exhibition.*  
PIX COURTESY OF KITA

*“The exhibition also catalogued the batik textiles for future education, and social, historical and cultural study.”*

Nyonya community provided exquisite specimens of beautiful batik sarongs and baju kebaya, jewellery and shoes.

Talks by Munir, Cedric and Munif together with a batik making demonstration by Jaludin capped the opening day of the exhibition officiated by the Consul-General of Malaysia to Canada, Mohd Adli Abdullah.

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