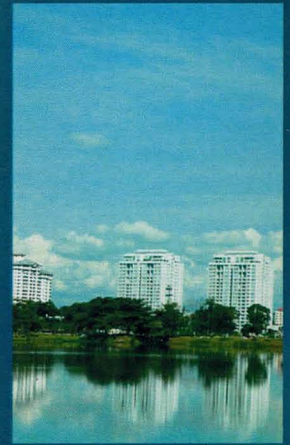
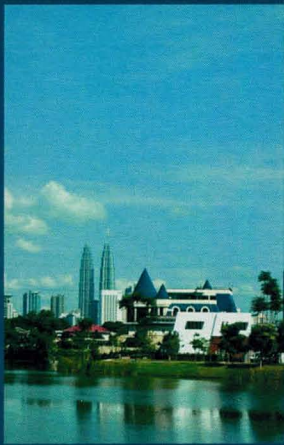


Visioning Malaysian Landscape



**Mazlina Mansor
Ismawi Hj. Zen
Jamilah Othman
Nor Zalina Harun**



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INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

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BUSKING AND THE LANDSCAPE OF URBAN PLAZA

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ABSTRACT

Busking is the art of performing on the street, either for economical purposes or as part of a public art display. Busking performances can be just about anything that people find entertaining. Buskers may involve: acrobatics, animal tricks, balloon modeling, card tricks, clowning, comedy, contortions and escapes, dance, fire eating, fortune-telling, juggling, magic, living statue, musical performance, puppeteering, snake charming, storytelling or recite poetry or prose as a bard, street art (sketching and painting), street theatre, sword swallowing, or even present a flea circus. As part of the urban landscape, busking can be a part of identity of the city, such as in Long Beach, California or Barcelona.

Keyword: busking, street art, public art

INTRODUCTION

In Renaissance to the early 1900s, busking was called minstrelsy in Europe and other English-speaking places. Minstrelsy is a travelling singer which is popular during the Middle-Ages. However, the term busking was first noted in the English around 1860s. Busking is a British word used in many areas referring to the activity of performing in public places for tips and gratitude. According to Asmah Haji Omar (2002), busking is “entertain people in a public place” (p.228). However, according to Mayhew (as cited in Smith, 1993), in 19th century in England, a ‘busker’ is a person who entertained indoor in taverns and tap houses while a street musician is referred to a person who play outdoor on the street. Even though the term is a little bit colliding, it is still overlapping in describing the same phenomena which is the performance art. However, busking is actually implies actions rather than a sense of location. According to Smith (1993), the verb ‘busk’ itself means, to “make, to get ready; to set in order, fit out” (p.5).

Busking is also known as public art or street performing art. Even though public art portrays more on monuments, memorials and civic statuaries, it is not only restricted to physical object. Other activities such as dance, procession, street theater, poetry can also been considered as public art. Busking performances can be just about anything that people find entertaining. Buskers may involve: acrobatics, animal tricks, balloon modeling, card tricks, clowning, comedy, contortions and escapes, dance, fire eating, fortune-telling, juggling,