

# Palai Penang

Palai Penang is the third edition of Palai, an itinerant exhibition organised by Paris based Galerie Balice Hertling to present international contemporary artworks in heritage homes. The first two editions of Palai were held in a historic palazzo in the center of Lecce, Italy. Blank Canvas, a non-profit art space in Penang, Malaysia, is delighted to collaborate with Galerie Balice Hertling to present Palai Penang in Malaysia, the first edition of Palai in Asia.

The word “palai” means “palace” in the Apulian dialect of the Griko people, an ethnic Greek community in southern Italy. Its etymological origin lies in the Latin palātum or palate, which refers to the origin of taste and judgment. And it is not surprising that the word “palace” usually conjures up an immediate image of a grand space of imposing architectural features and housing precious and tasteful objects. Yet, and perhaps less immediately intuitive, a “palace” is also a residence, or a home, which then evokes the more intimate feelings of ease and relaxation as one is welcomed into the home of another.

Palai avows therefore to both awe the viewer as well as to extend a warm hand of hospitality. Palai Penang promises to build on the legacy of the earlier editions.

Palai Penang presents in one of Penang’s largest and most elegant colonial mansions – Homestead. Built in 1919 and designed by architect James Stark, Homestead was acquired by the Penang businessman and philanthropist Yeap Chor Ee during the 1940s. Mr Yeap’s grandson and the trustees of his estate donated Homestead to the WOU (Wawasan Open University) in 2006. Although Homestead may be a continent away from the Italian palazzo of the earlier editions of Palai, they share in common the ability to awe and impress visitors as well as, perhaps surprisingly, echoes of an Italian architectural lineage. It is both fate and serendipity that the grand neo-classical details of Homestead’s architecture appear to be inspired by a sixteenth century Italian villa designed by Andrea Palladio.

Palai Penang gathers a selected group of international art galleries from East and Central Asia, the Americas and Europe into a single venue, offering access to international artists and artistic practices to local visitors in Malaysia.

At Palai Penang, the participating galleries present a diverse range of contemporary artistic practices within the environs of a classical building. These include video works, installations, collages, paintings and sculpture. Some works are ephemeral. While others, especially those of Penang-based artists Okui Lala, Chan Kok Hooi and Hoo Fan Chon, are inspired directly by, and respond poignantly to, the architecture and history of the exhibition venue.

As with the previous editions, Palai Penang seeks to inspire various conversations – between the contemporary art works presented by the participating international galleries and the historical architecture and ambiance of its venue, among the artworks themselves, between the international artists and the local artists featured and, of course, among the visitors.

Co-Organiser:

**BALICE  
HERTLING**  
GALERIE

**BLANK  
CANVAS**

Exclusive Venue  
Sponsor:

**WOU**® **WAWASAN**  
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Sezione Puglia



# Palai Penang

**Homestead, Penang, Malaysia**  
**22 March - 14 April 2024**

**Collectively Presented By:**

Balice Hertling - France  
Blank Canvas - Malaysia  
Delgosha - Iran  
Ermes Ermes - Italy

Isla Flotante - Argentina  
LC Queisser - Georgia  
Loy Gallery - Singapore  
PHD Group - Hong Kong S.A.R. China

**Participating Artists:**

Alex Ayed  
Chan Kok Hooi  
Dana DeGiulio  
Enzo Cucchi  
Evian Wenyi Zhang  
Hoo Fan Chon  
Jieun Lim  
Julie Beaufls  
Julio Linares  
Ketuta Alexi-Meskhishvili  
Mariela Scafati  
Michele Chu  
Mostafa Sarabi  
Nick Bastis

Okui Lala  
Sasaoka Yuriko  
Shabahang Tayyari  
Shi Liu  
Sitara Abuzar Ghaznawi  
Thea Gvetadze  
Tsherin Sherpa  
Wang Haining  
Wang Xiaolin  
Wang Yuyu  
Will Benedict  
Willem de Rooij  
Won Cha  
Zhi Wei