



# Establishment of Retrospective Art on the Campus

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## Abstract

The goal of this project is to use UiTM in outdoor settings to improve the area around them. Thus, we hope to disseminate information about how we managed to turn our study of art practises into a public art exhibit at the UiTM campus. To paradigmatically form a new kind of design work, the procedures involved reflection and review of relevant literature and artwork. The work shows how the concept of the UiTM retrospective's foundation was incorporated into the wall through the chosen colour scheme. The idea behind and the mapping of the environment's functionality as a tourist destination inspired this project.

Keywords: Mural Art, Public Art, Iron Rod Sculpture, Community

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21834/aje-bs.v7i21.406>

## **1.0 Introduction**

This project discovered how mural art was become an attraction to the public and responded via observation mode. At various points throughout the context of campus art, this project formed via the work that was painted on the walls. The sense of emulated the establishment and development of UiTM was made with the purpose of fostering success, togetherness, and determination. The idea's main integrations were developed through visual research, which cooperated with the archival department and gathered selected images for idea development within the pictorial inquiry. Visited the location where the retaining wall that chooses and locked as the wall of mural art. The work that is designed has purposely enhanced the direction of the idea and matched the function of public art. This project, which was from 2019 until 2021, followed various stages. On the other hand, the method of visual work through work serves as documentation and reference for the development of more constructive progress in the future. The new scene or environment on the Shah Alam campus is going to be changed thanks to this project. The purpose of the execution of public art is to generate ongoing experiences that have an effect on the community. This will be accomplished by cultivating a sense of place and articulating the aesthetic principles of public art in order to create a location that is desirable for living in, working in, and playing in. And the community that is engaged in this activity is the environment of the UiTM Shah Alam campus. Through the use of murals, the purpose of this public art execution is to both create and commemorate the retroactive establishment of the UiTM. This piece of public art is linked contextually between the importance of arts, engineering, science, and technology because it is displayed in the front building of the engineering faculties, which is the location where this project is being presented.

## **2.0 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Public Art**

Anusha (2016) defined "public art" as "art that is organized and shown in a public location, typically outdoors, and accessible to the general public." Public art is the art that is shown to the general public. It refers to a mode of operation that emphasizes working together, participation from the local community, and site-specificity. The term "public art" refers to the artwork of any style or medium that has been exhibited in a public space for anyone to view and appreciate. It's also possible that it's a public space or a building that's open to the public. In public art, the relationship between the subject matter and the audience is brought into stark relief because the message conveyed by the artwork and the audience to which it is directed equal weight to the physical location in which the artwork is exhibited. According to Zakariya and Azhari (2017), the utilization of public art in the landscape has led to an increase in public awareness of the activities, values, functions, and roles that are involved. Over the course of the past three decades, landscape architects, municipal governments, and academics have paid a growing amount of attention to the influence that public art has on the social well-being of the general population. Public art, on the other

hand, helps establish a sense of community and civic identity, addresses community needs, combats social exclusion, promotes educational value, and promotes social change, as stated by Hall and Robertson (2001). As a consequence of this, the term "public art" refers to more than simply the display of artwork in a public space. Recent studies have shown that incorporating public art into public settings can enhance the user experience and make places feel more alive. In their article "Creating a Public Art Plan," Schneekloth and Shibley (1995) mentioned that the process of creating a public art plan includes forming a public art committee, which is the primary factor in shaping the overall plan, establishing the vision, mission, and goals, securing financing, selecting a location, and selecting an artist, in addition to researching pertinent rules and community benefit. By catering to the requirements of the local populace, public spaces, which are essential elements of cities, contribute to the development of livable communities. Free thought, as well as interaction on social, cultural, and economic levels, can be fostered in urban parks. Public art enhances communal dialogue. When it comes to space design, public art is what creates a "place identity" and a "place emotion." Public art not only draws attention to itself, but it also depicts the historical, cultural, political, and social happenings of a city, commemorates a variety of occasions, and improves the aesthetics of the city. It's possible that public art policies and practices aren't always the best they could be (Zare, 2019). Because of the increasing interconnectedness of the global economy, China's population is rapidly urbanizing, and the country as a whole is undergoing this change. It would appear that establishing a positive reputation for a city is of utmost importance. It demonstrates how the physical appearance of a town is a reflection of the spiritual beliefs of its inhabitants. When it comes to the growth of urbanization, the necessity of progressing in a positive direction is becoming increasingly important. The characteristics of a city and the lifestyles of its residents are revealed through a city's public art. The current appearance of cities has a significant impact on popular conceptions of what cities are like in general. This was clearly how public art is built in Nantong as a whole, and this paper looks at the relationship between building public art and shaping the image of the city, as well as how these two processes affect each other. This essay makes an attempt to assist in more effectively shaping the image of a city (Wu, 2016). Researchers examine art and city life by employing concepts such as the "creative class" and the "culture economy." The purpose of utilizing public art is to achieve economic and community identity goals. This study investigates the connection between participation in community activities and exposure to public works of art. A study of public art from 1970 to the present can begin in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, a mid-sized New England city with a mill heritage (Landi, 2012), or share the common practice of heritage and identity through artwork (Legino et al., 2016). Around the world, urban revitalization and social capital are being promoted with the help of public art. Improvements are made to municipal economies, urban environments, and pedestrian traffic from residents and tourists alike (Matthews & Gadaloff, 2022). They are deduced in the order presented by the reference examples and the practical situations, beginning with the ecological context of urban areas and winding up with the evolution model of public art. In addition to this, the specific setting of the event opens up a rare window of opportunity

for the rapid expansion of public art. The other factor to take into account is the political issues that are brought up when trying to preserve street art and graffiti. These efforts are focused on preserving artwork that is being recognized at a higher and higher level for its artistic value. The decision of whether or not to preserve and celebrate street and graffiti art rests with the local communities, property owners, and artists (Thomas, 2022). Murals are the most typical form of public art; other types of artwork that are considered public art include sculptures and decorative facades that aim to improve the way their surroundings look (Sakip et al., 2016). An inclusive educational experience for people interested in art can be had by participating in mural painting or mural art that places emphasis on concept creation, collaborative execution, and constructivist learning. Arbury (2012) emphasized that the mural design and process deal with wall preparation, layout plotting, painting execution, varnishing protection, and documentation. These are just a few of the steps involved in the mural painting process, which allows people with a variety of skills and capabilities to contribute. Documentation is also an important step in the mural painting process. Not only the finished product but also the one-of-a-kind mural, the process of art learning and production, and the experience that participants gained as a result of their participation contribute to the value and meaning of a successful mural. Students of art often participate in mural painting as a form of inclusive learning that places emphasis on the generation of ideas, collaborative execution, and constructivist learning. Murals were found to have the strongest determinants of attractiveness when compared to other forms of street art, according to Seyedelham et al. (2015).

## **2.2 Retrospective, History as a Source in Art Making**

Diego Rivera demonstrates the significant moments in the history of the modern nation-state, such as the Spanish Conquest, the fight for independence from Spain, the Mexican-American War, the Mexican Revolution, and a future in Mexico where a workers' revolution has won. Even though this mural cycle covers hundreds of years of Mexican history, Rivera focused on themes that show how Marxists see history as being driven by class conflict, as well as the struggle of the Mexican people against foreign invaders and the strength of Indigenous cultures (Folgarait, 1991). Further, Picot (2007) stated that Rivera and other artists thought that easel painting was "aristocratic" since this kind of art had been done by the wealthy for hundreds of years. Instead, they liked mural painting because it could show things on a big scale to a lot of people. This idea of talking to people directly in public buildings fit with the Communist politics of the muralists. In 1922, Rivera and other artists signed the Manifesto of the Syndicate of Technical Workers, Painters, and Sculptors. This document said that artists should put in "their best efforts" to make art that people value. Therefore, this notation reflected how Rivera's thought was extraordinary because he considered people while creating art. Murals are frequently placed close to people. They are not required to dress formally to support the gallery system. Only a pedestrian who appreciates public art is required. Retrospective relates to the element of history, and it must be a means of delivering information to the campus community so they can learn how the evolution and history of UiTM are depicted in a 330-foot mural on the retaining wall.

### **2.3 Art by Involving Campus Community**

Individuals may gain a sense of belonging to each other and to their community by using art as a relational practice. According to Stickley (2010), research indicates that community engagement through the arts may aid in the development of an individual's need for social belonging. "Such relationships may aid in the development of a positive sense of social identity for the individual" (Stickley, 2010, p. 31). Madyaningrum and Sonn (2011) investigate the meaning of participation in a community art project from the perspective of those who participate, as well as how participation can foster community.

By involving students, support staff, alumni, and lecturers, the synergy of belonging to a place such as UiTM campuses was assimilated. The documentation on the wall engages current campus dwellers and serves as a retrospective of the university's development.

### **3.0 Methodology**

This project was delivered through several stages, which dealt with proposing the idea to the client. It starts with visual research towards the establishment of UiTM retrospective images, design, development and structuring of various composition designs within the concept. The process of making involves structure drawing, layering, and the based colour, then will paint with the real design of colour. The design style is form and structure, sharing the form and space of the work with the public. The surface of wall paintings and wall sculptures that are built from an iron rod with figural characters introduces the success of UiTM graduates. The challenge of the outdoor project with the tropical climate of Malaysia is always related to the lifetime of the artwork. For this project, the right high-quality paint and procedure contributed to the long-term colour, even against the rain and strong wind. This is because the team has chosen high-quality paints with a maximum durability of up to 7 years. Even after they abolished the dirt and mould on the walls, they ensured 2-3 layers of undercoat paint. The artwork evidently can survive through time as it defines the UiTM's identity by looking at its past and present and integrating new aesthetic aspects into the presentation of local culture in public spaces. Compared to other types of art, the mural has a limited lifespan, is exposed to the elements, and is at risk of fading into obscurity, a fact the team recognizes. The appeal of mural art is its impermanence and capacity to express social messages and images of local life in a given period. The actual mural consists of the UiTM's retrospective theme and uses images of selected elements such as notable buildings, development and achievement. The work can be seen from the second gate (Seksyen 7) of the UiTM. This area depicts the images of the Dewan Latihan RIDA, important pioneer figures of the earliest UiTM in a long Kodak film. Next, the film shows the painted images of a graduate holding a scroll and iron rod

sculptures. The long mural then continues with the images of the sprocket, lab equipment, sports, and others spotted on the wall. It has the potential to remind Malaysians, especially UiTM graduates, about the importance of higher education, their involvement in the STEAM industry in creating a better nation and also the capability of uniting Malaysians through understanding and tolerance. As mentioned by Ahmad et al. (2020) will broaden the context of mural art to promote unity in the diversified education and culture of Malaysia.

#### **4.0 Results and Discussion**

According to the information presented in the previous section, the different parties participating in the public art execution can make progress by working through the various phases and processes (see Fig. 1 to 4). The process consisted of four basic phases: 1) the stage of planning and designing, 2) the stage of designing, and 3) the stage of executing and implementing. Each of these stages had to follow a predetermined process, and the timeline that had been defined at the preliminary planning stage had to be adhered to. Also, throughout each phase, collaborations with stakeholder groups such as UiTM's separate departments, the artist, and the general public took place. Every person has their own individual set of responsibilities that they are responsible for managing or delegating. Their tasks were adapted specifically to the fields in which they had prior experience in order to guarantee that the actions they carried out were in line with the initial plan and timetable for the project. On the other hand, the unanticipated difficulties, such as the design, cannot be fully transferred to the wall since they require first-hand observation of the ongoing reconstruction at the site. This is a result of the challenges presented by the state of the wall as well as the displayed area, which collided with the pedestrian roof. As a direct consequence of this, modifications are required in order to carry out the project in a timely manner. It is imperative that the issue be resolved as quickly as possible; failing to do so would result in a rise in overall project costs. But in some strange manner, these difficulties are turning out to be a gift in disguise because the team has been able to cut down on the price of the equipment by using the pedestrian's roof as a staging area and ladder. As a result, the calculation and investigation of the materials that surround it can help save money. Due to the fact that this is an outdoor project, checking the weather prediction is another obstacle that must be accomplished. Every time it starts to rain, the entire project has to be put on hold, which contributes to the limited amount of time available. Because it took so much time to finish this piece of public art, the connections and bonds that exist among the staff members have become stronger.



Figure 2: In order to speed up the process of painting the mural, we call on former students to compensate for the inexperience of the current students.

(Source: Farid Raihan Ahmad 2021)



Figure 3: The decoration of the wall with wire sculptures, which was executed in the sculpture studio.

(Source: Farid Raihan Ahmad 2021)



Figure 7: The wire sculpture successfully install according to the original plan.

(Source: Farid Raihan Ahmad 2021)



Figure 8: The Rida logo is embedded in images of film rolls that are juxtaposed with the staff roster.

(Source: Farid Raihan Ahmad 2021)



Figure 9 : ITM logo composes in the film rolls images.  
(Source: Farid Raihan Ahmad 2021)



Figure 10: The UiTM current logo placed at the the middle part of the murals, compose with the flat design of sprockets, human brains and trajectory arrow.  
(Source: Farid Raihan Ahmad 2021)

#### 4.1 Iron Rod Sculpture As Additional Aesthetics

Sculptures and memorials are among the most visible landmarks in any city. In addition to our mural aesthetics, we included an iron rod sculpture as one of the essential elements in the mural design, specifically as the elements of visual attraction that capture people's attention at the top of the layers on that mural. City squares are typically adorned with sculptures and statues, such as statues of heroes and leaders. In many cities, there are great sculptures created in memory of great people or artworks presented by mural painting. In general, aesthetic sculptures typically represent an idea or glorify a local event. Distinctive landmarks, such as the use of a retaining wall as the surface of our mural, give the area of the Engineering School campus its distinct character; manipulated the group of graduate students iron rod sculptures to depict aesthetic achievements without functional purposes. Such landmarks are built in streets and public squares to reflect the context, specific story, history, and civilization of the location.

Almost without exception, the works of art bear some sort of relevance to society, history, or ideology. We are able to recognize some meanings related to a story that is depicted in the mural through the artworks and landmarks that are located there, and we can do this by beginning at the very end of the right side of the retaining wall. Everything started with an image of a photograph taken at the



Dewan Latihan Rida school. In the picture, both the teachers and the students gathered together for a group photo. It is different from the previous iteration of RIDA's logo. These pictures, which can be seen in the film photos that were taken inside the shape of a box, are intended to function as a metaphor for an old story that needs to be told. Then, as we moved a little closer to the middle part, we were able to see the evolution of the logo that had previously been known as ITM. The primary image of the logo now featured the design of a sprocket, and the logo had previously been known as ITM. If the audience keeps moving, they will eventually reach the current logo of UiTM, which is located in the centre of the space. The images of the machine component are incorporated into the design, and the intelligent contours of the human forms depict the essential component on the same level as the technology. The final section of the mural featured a depiction of technology, a healthier lifestyle that was incorporated with contemporary gadgets, and the best gadgets being consumed by the people, particularly students, in order for them to keep up with the latest trends in today's society.

As a result of this, the artworks and landmarks cover everything significant around the area, as well as the relationship between the various elements that have an impact on how things are perceived visually. As a consequence of this, it ought to be the primary focus of the attention and interest of the pedestrians as a consequence of their recognition of the significance that the artworks and landmarks represent.

## **5.0 Conclusion**

In conclusion, the goals that have been articulated by the younger artists and students at UiTM regarding the investigation of regional identities through visual representations ought to be supported and encouraged. The respect and values of identity, the expression of positive values, the injection of critical and constructive meaning, and the concrete support provided by Malaysia's public art all helped to infuse the local identity with new vitality. More importantly, the artists' understanding of the significance of the bilateral contact between the audience and the artist was not only motivated by their creative satisfaction or character but also championed the worth of public art. This is an extremely important point to consider, and it has been demonstrated that the practise of creating murals in this century is still important for those who work in the art world. As a result of the aforementioned chain of positive events, we are able to observe that public art has been integrated into commercial and institutional galleries. The initiatives taken by UiTM to promote public art deserve praise because they were instrumental in

bringing it on par with other types of visual art and should be applauded for this achievement. As a result, it is of the utmost importance to persuade Malaysians to accept and react positively towards works of public art such as murals. In point of fact, it is to dispel the notion that only wealthy people can appreciate art. Because art belongs to everyone rather than just one specific demographic, increasing the number of times that it is exhibited and presented in public spaces increases the number of opportunities we have to educate our community about the significance of art. The students' participation in the learning art practice led to an increase in the level of activity and involvement they displayed throughout the working process. As a result, engaging in conversation with one another and working together fosters engagement between students and teachers, as well as cooperation between students and teachers and active learning. This group mural project was about more than just having the skills and knowledge necessary to design and paint a mural; it was also about exchanging ideas and perspectives, discovering individual potential, and learning what other people think and have experienced.

### **Acknowledgement**

This research is supported by the FRGS Grant No: 600-RMC/DANA 5/3/BESTARI (TD) (008/2020). The author wish to thank ReNeU UiTM and ILD UiTM for facilitating the writing and publication workshop.

### **Article Contribution to Related Field of Study**

State how this article has contributed to the related field of study in art and environment.

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