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# CITI-ZEN

Living Life Large



**Revolutionising  
Urban  
Transportation  
in Malaysia**

Noor Rizwan Kasmuri - Ramlan Zainol Abidin



**Ireka Development Management Sdn Bhd**

Level 18, Wisma Mont' Kiara  
No. 1, Jalan Kiara, Mont' Kiara  
50480 Kuala Lumpur  
T +603.6411.6388  
F +603.6411.6383  
W www.ireka.com.my  
E enquiry@i-zen.com.my

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## Greetings to all CiTi-ZEN readers!

There is no corner of the world that has not been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and thankfully with the global vaccination programme roll-out, focus is shifting from emergency measures to economic recovery. There is no denying this will be a slow process but it feels like green shoots are a real possibility again.

I am honoured and proud in this issue to feature a revolution in urban transportation in Malaysia, brought in by Mobilus (a joint venture company between Ireka and CRRC, the world's largest manufacturer of rolling stock and rail related products and systems). The Automated Rapid Transit (ART) system is a hybrid between an electric bus and a trackless tram which can travel up to 70KM an hour and that operates on clean energy sources such as electricity or hydrogen.

The multi-carriages are equipped with sensors that read the virtual tracks on the road, enabling it to automatically navigate its own route, without the need for expensive physical rail tracks. Introducing the ART system into Malaysia is a great breakthrough and milestone for Mobilus; and it is also the first trial of the ART in South East Asia. We are also delighted to feature the key individuals behind the ART in Malaysia and I will let them tell you more about it inside.

In this issue, we also feature some interesting individuals with their own creative stories to tell whether it is being passionate about calligraphy or working outside their comfort zone or even being artistic with leftover food. Don't knock it, because it can win you USD10,000! I know you will enjoy reading their stories and until next time, continue to keep safe and Live Life Large!

**Datuk Lai Voon Hon**  
Group Managing Director  
Ireka Corporation Berhad

# Mobilus Brings In the Automated Rapid Transit (ART) System to Revolutionize Urban Transportation in Malaysia



It's tempting to describe the Automated Rapid Transit (ART) system as a bus or a train, or sometimes to cover all bases, people refer to it as a tram. Unlike any existing public transportation vehicle, the ART, with its distinctive feature is a hybrid between an electric bus and a trackless tram. It was developed and launched in 2017 by CRRC, the world's largest manufacturer of rolling stock and rail related products and systems. The ART system is a multi-carriage, electric powered urban transport system equipped with sensors that can read the dimensions of a road and does not have to follow conventional rail tracks.

This transport revolution arrived onto Malaysian soil in January 2021 and was launched in Iskandar, Johor on April 8th, 2021 officiated



by Johor Chief Minister, YAB Datuk Dr Hasni Mohammad. Mobilus Sdn Bhd, a joint venture company set up by Ireka Corporation Berhad with CRRC Urban Traffic Co. Ltd to pursue urban transportation business opportunities in Malaysia and South East Asia, brought the ART system into Malaysia to transform the country's public transportation system.

Two key individuals, **Ramlan bin Zainol Abidin** and **Noor Rizwan bin Kasmuri**, both with a reputation for good work in the transport sector, were brought in by Mobilus to spearhead the ART project. Before saying more about the ART system, here's a short introduction to them both and what led them to their journey (no pun intended) into the world of public transportation.



## Ramlan bin Zainol Abidin

Ramlan was born in Alor Star, Malaysia, to a single mum who brought up 4 children and worked hard to put them through university. After completing his studies, Ramlan worked in the banking sector from 2004 to 2007, before switching to the automotive industry which he absolutely loves.

"The transportation industry is exciting because the technology, systems, science and engineering are constantly evolving. Cars have evolved from diesel to hydrogen to fuel cells. Electric cars are now passé and talk of flying cars does not raise any eyebrows these days!" Ramlan spent 14 years with the Scomi Group Berhad, a global service provider involved in oil & gas, transport engineering and marine transportation.

Ramlan's major clients during his time at Scomi included the State Government of Melaka working on their Panorama Melaka Bus Expansion project in 2012; communications giant, Maxis where he handled over 300 of their fleet cars; Prasarana; Rapid KL and Rapid Penang; the MRT Feeder Bus; Volvo Bus, Mercedes Benz and also internationally

with ADL Bus UK and the Double Decker for Hong Kong. This large and wide ranging business portfolio was where Ramlan acquired valuable knowledge on working with government and statutory bodies; and most important of all, customer satisfaction. It is therefore not surprising that Ramlan was brought into Mobilus 2 years ago as Business Development Director to lead this start-up company with big ambitions.

## Noor Rizwan bin Kasmuri

Born in Perak, Malaysia, Rizwan grew up with his family living in many of the country's oil palm plantations where his father was a senior manager. His early schooling was done in the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur, and later he attended boarding school in Langkawi, thereafter studying Mechanical Engineering at the University of Minnesota, USA.

After his studies in 2007, Rizwan returned to Malaysia to work as a trainee manager in a palm oil mill, before receiving an offer to join Scomi Group Berhad where he remained for 10 years, starting off on rolling stock design and later leading on monorail project management in cities like Mumbai and Kuala Lumpur.



Rizwan then moved to work for Honeywell in transportation business development, focusing this time on designing modern station systems. His technical engineering background, commercial and business development expertise provided the perfect ingredients to become Head of Technical in Mobilus where he has been for the last 18 months.



## **So what can the ART technology do?**

Peter Newman, Professor of Sustainability at Australia's Curtin University, who speaks and writes academic papers on green urban transportation, including the ART, is convinced of its "transformative transit technology". His discussion paper prepared for the Intergovernmental 13th Regional Environmentally Sustainable Transport (EST) Forum in Asia, November 2020 describes the ART as, "superior technology for urban transit systems and it stands to be the public transport catalyst that many city planners have been waiting for since the dominance of automobile dependence." So, it was not surprising that the ART made a powerful impact at the green urban transportation launch on April 8th, organised by the Iskandar Regional Development Authority, Johor, amid much public interest, both on the day itself and on social media afterwards.

The ART system is intended to move the focus towards promoting green technology for public transportation in urban environments. ART uses leading edge technology developed by the CRRC Group and it allows for higher passenger capacity. The standard ART system is three carriages that can carry 300 people, but it can also take five carriages and 500 people

if needed, at a lower cost of implementation, compared to traditional light-rail systems; and it operates on clean sources of energy such as electricity or hydrogen. The multi-carriages are equipped with sensors that read the virtual tracks on the road, enabling it to automatically navigate its own route, without the need for expensive physical rail tracks or the need to dig up roads to lay rail tracks which is always disruptive for local economies. The ART travels up to 70 kilometres per hour on rubber tyres that run on normal streets thus providing a comfortable ride that has the quality of light rail, without the noise or fuel emission.

Manoeuvrability is the ART's most important feature - it is designed to take sharper turns and as the vehicles are not tied to tracks, they can move around corners and roundabouts smoothly. According to Professor Newman, "It can slide into the station with millimetre accuracy and enable smooth disability access. It passed the ride quality test when I saw kids running up and down while it was going at 70kph – you never see this on a bus due to the sway." He goes on to say, "In three years of trials no impact on road surfaces has been found."

## ***The ART is Up and Running***

The ART system was first tested in 2017, and started regular services in 2019, in the South Chinese cities of Zhuzhou and Yibin. The latter city in Sichuan Province has a population of around 4.5 million people. The first of seven lines for Yibin city was officially launched in December 2019 and runs for 17.7 km through the central business district and also connects to Yibin's high-speed railway terminus. It is reported that more than 25,000 daily commuters are using the line in its first year of implementation, and traffic congestion in the city has reduced by 20% since the opening of the ART T1 Line.



The ART system has also been tested for functionality under harsh weather conditions in the cold city of Harbin in north China and in the high heat of Qatar. The Qatari Government is also hoping to use the ART system to transport fans and visitors during the FIFA World Cup 2022 to provide smooth mobility to stadiums, residences and tourist attractions.

## **Pilot Test in Iskandar Malaysia, Johor**

The 3-month pilot testing programme begins now, hosted by the Iskandar Regional Development Authority (IRDA) and aims to showcase green technology vehicles such as the ART system to the public. The ART will be rigorously tested during this period, especially its virtual-tracking capability; integration of passenger information systems at stations with real-time position of the ART vehicle to ensure reliability of the service; as well as trialing the Rivex Rikeguard, a revolutionary antimicrobial protective film that neutralises bacteria and viruses upon contact, ensuring that surfaces are safe to touch. Mobilus' partnership with Jasa Sarjana Sdn Bhd to equip high-touch points within the ART with the antimicrobial protective film in the carriages is an important measure to keep passengers safe, and to play their part in curbing the spread of COVID-19.

This pilot will be evaluated by the Malaysia Institute of Transport (MITRANS), an institute of Universiti Teknologi MARA. The independent and technical study will result in a feasibility report to assess its roadworthiness in Malaysia so that Government approval can be sought to fully run the system in the country. Incidentally, for those wishing to experience a ride on the ART, they can register themselves at the IMBRT Information Booth at Anjung Nusajaya in Iskandar Malaysia during the pilot testing period.



## **Benefits of the ART System**

- With a maximum speed of 70 kilometers per hour, the ART urban transport system is more agile, cheap, flexible and potentially cheaper to implement compared to conventional rail systems.
- It will help ease traffic congestion in Malaysian cities.
- ART will run alongside normal traffic on the roads and will be able to go into the deeper pockets of city centres and the suburbs as the last mile connectivity in order to meet the gaps in these areas.
- Because it runs on battery power, the ART is environmentally friendly and does not emit fumes.
- It will be able to attract land development potential around the ART stations and routes, thus unlocking urban regeneration. (Transit Oriented Development)

## **Next Steps**

The introduction of ART is part of Mobilus' long-term strategy of focusing on solutions to improve mobility of people in cities and the suburban areas, where connectivity is often hampered by the urban sprawl. Owing to its cost efficiency and adaptability, the ART system is particularly effective as a back-bone urban transit solution for cities with a population approximating 1 to 5 million people. In larger cities, ART also works well as a secondary urban transit system supporting light-rail or mass transit systems, providing first and last mile connectivity in suburban areas or busy city centres. Thus, the ART is poised to transform the public transportation landscape in Malaysia, when successfully implemented. In other words, it is helping the public to reach to all vital areas easily, safely and reliably. Aside from the ART, Mobilus is also focusing on introducing electric buses

solutions, hydrogen fuel-cell powered ART and green-energy logistics solutions to various stakeholders in Malaysia and South East Asia.

Malaysian cities need public transportation that is low cost, cleaner and greener. The ART system is the transformative change required and complements the current public transportation system. Aside from the current pilot programme, current talks are taking place with other States and we hope to see the ART system running in other States in Malaysia in the near future. There is no doubt that Mobilus is a company with big ambitions so we look forward to the next step on this transport adventure.

## **ART Fact Check**

### **1. Exterior**

It is made up of three carriages (extendable to 5 carriages). It is 32m (L) x 2.65m (W) x 3.6m (H).

### **2. Interior**

The interior is comfortable, air conditioned and has the capacity to hold 300 passengers. There are priority seats and spaces for passengers with disabilities. There is also internal video security for peace of mind.



### **3. Speed**

It can travel at 70 km an hour. It is powered by electricity with a vehicle energy storage device with charging at main stations and at the depot. It provides a range of 25km with only 10 minutes of quick charging and 70km with two hours of full charging.

### **4. Lane departure warning system**

This system aids in guiding the ART to keep running on its track and also gives a warning if it drifts away from its lane.

### **5. Electronic rear view mirrors**

These electronic screens give a clear view of the rear and are equipped with auto dimming technology to reduce any glare.

### **6. Collision warning system**

This system helps the driver keep a safe distance from other vehicles on the road and if, at any point, the proximity reduces, a warning sign is given.

### **7. Route change authorisation**

This navigation facility analyses the route on which this ART system is travelling and re-directs for a different route to avoid traffic congestion.

ramlan.abidin@ireka.com.my

rizwan.kasmuri@ireka.com.my



# The Timeless Art of Calligraphy

Calligraphy is said to be the art of beautiful handwriting and according to the Encyclopedia Britannica, the word is a union of two Greek words – “Kallos” which means beauty and “graphein” which means to write. Beautiful characters, lettering and symbols are formed by hand and there is no doubt that calligraphers are specialist artists. The development of calligraphy as an art form is prevalent in Islamic, Chinese, Japanese and European cultures. Before the age of typewriters and computers, the artistic skills of a calligrapher would be heavily relied on to draft formal papers or contracts, or any meaningful texts like books or poems. We are honoured in this issue to feature two award-winning Malaysian artists who use calligraphy as forms of expression and are passionate about this ancient art – **Raja Azhar Idris** and **Tee Ying Jie**.



## Raja Azhar Idris

Award-winning artist, Raja builds Arabic calligraphy into his works, much of it subtle but he also has created beautiful sculptures taking letters from the Koran, as they are written. Well regarded for his Arabic calligraphy, the Malaysian Islamic Economic Development Foundation (YAPIEM) have commissioned him to design the name “Allah” in 99 different script forms, to appear on the corresponding number of gold pieces. These inevitable collectors' items will be available soon which Raja describes as perfect timing because he regards 2021 as a hopeful year, after a pandemic ravaged 2020!

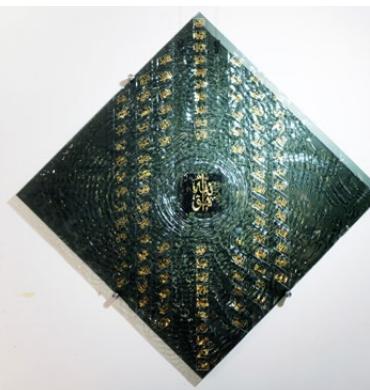
Raja sees endless creativity and versatility in calligraphy work, producing beautiful sculptures and ornamental forms; as well as having Islamic inscriptions in his artwork of the Ka'bah (the sacred shrine located in the centre of the Great Mosque in Mecca), for instance, inspired from his pilgrimages to Mecca

To describe Raja as multi-talented does not do him justice and having spent an afternoon among the eclectic artwork in his home and studio, I got to appreciate just how accomplished he is. The walls and ceilings of Raja's home are surrounded with his sculptures, wood carvings, glass art and oil paintings; finished off with beautiful self-designed mosaic tile work on the floors. There definitely seemed to be harmony between the inspiration space (i.e. studio) and the living space; best of all it was wonderful to get a behind the scene peek at how Raja organizes his creative

space and to catch a glimpse of unfinished work. He shares that most of his art is created at night and the daytime is spent setting up the studio because, “I don't want to waste my inspiration and ideas.” Raja describes his art as “impressionism with movement”.

Born in Beruas, Perak into a mid-sized family of 5, Raja has art in his DNA. His dad was a wood carver (whom he started helping at aged 8) and his mum made ornate table cloths for sale. Raja's younger brother is a shoe designer and sister is a film producer. Incidentally, he has an acting role in her next production due out this year. Raja himself had his own film production company, Silver Screen, and produced 13 episodes of *Masjid Nak Roboh* for Radio Television Malaysia (RTM). Raja was actually expected to take over his father's successful Kichap (soy sauce) factory, which he worked in for a year but just could not settle in this role.





Art is his first and last love – starting off with drawing landscapes on pieces of wood selling for RM3 each and then creating wood bark pendants which sold for 80 cents. Then in 1972, Raja decided to bring his art to Kuala Lumpur, helped by the truck driver of their soy sauce business who looked out for him. Raja thrived on hard work, selling his art every night for 3 years at the central KL roadsides and eventually he leased a small shop near the Coloseum Theatre on Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman, KL. The work involved long hours which Raja never minded because he says that his hobby was also his job.

Everything Raja turns his hand to is about pushing the envelope. He declares, "I like to step out of my comfort zone because it enables me to be more creative. The alternative is to stagnate. In any case, I trust and believe in myself and I never think of failure!" This was said with the utmost sincerity, so whether it is producing a TV programme, turning his hand to glass art (one of the first Malaysian artists to do so) or producing calligraphic sculptures, success was sure to follow. Incidentally, Raja can also add oil, wood and metal as his mediums of art.

The talent was already evident and Raja was making a good living from his art, but he wanted to hold a professional art degree which led him to the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA) in Melbourne where he graduated with a degree in Fine Art. He lived in Melbourne for almost 20 years. Whilst there, he achieved several awards for his art - the Melbourne Lord Mayor's Prize, and was voted the Artist of the Year by the Victorian Artists Society in 1981; the Miniature Gippland Prize in 1982

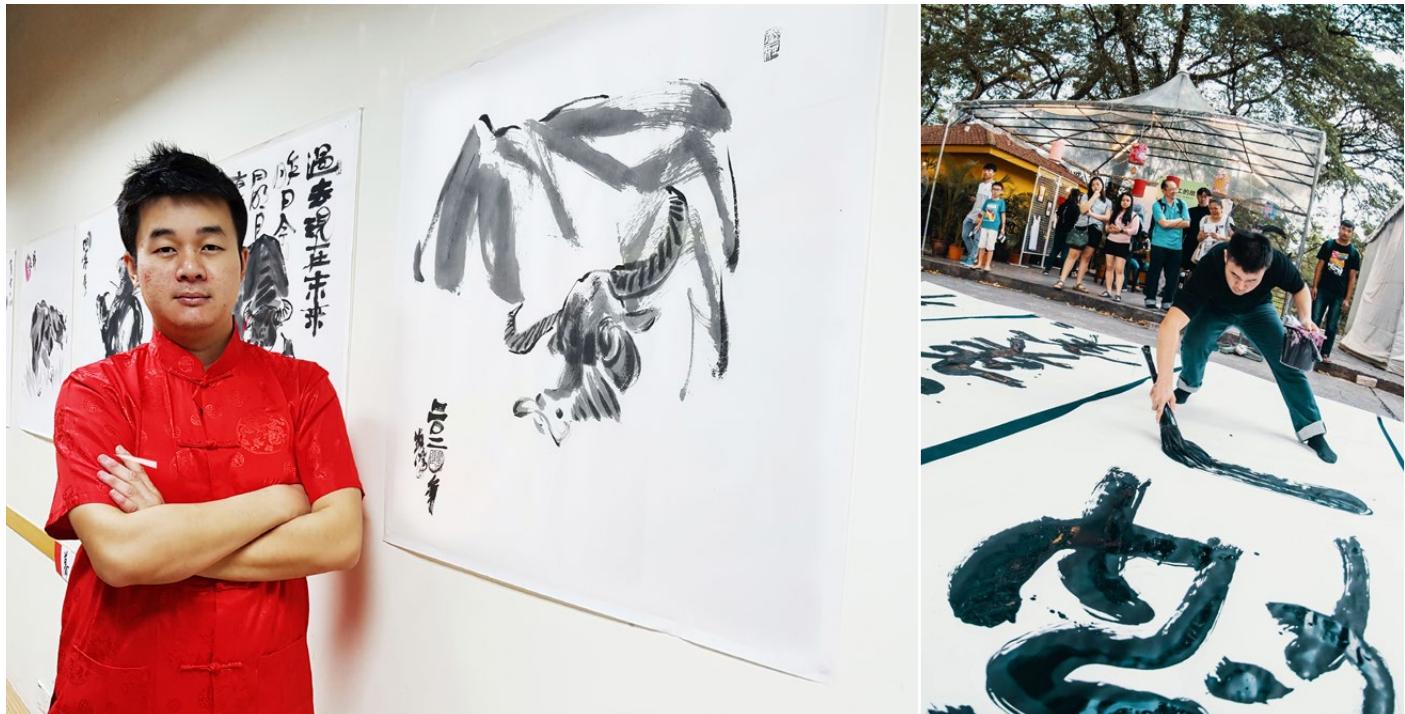
and the Rotary Club of St Kilda Art Prize in 1983; and the VCA's Elizabeth Murdoch travelling fellowship in 1985. In 1989, he was awarded the Greyhound Art Prize. Raja should also add ballet to his artistic repertoire because he danced with the Australian Contemporary Dance Theatre for 5 years, alongside the award-winning Malaysian choreographer and classical ballet dancer, Datuk Ramli Bin Ibrahim.

In 2012 and again in 2014, Raja did the Umrah (Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca). This is where his interest and love for Islamic art began to flourish, painting the beauty around him and everything that he observed from the prayer rituals to fellow pilgrims on their spiritual journey. Here, Raja began incorporating Arabic calligraphy into his art, taking the lettering and turning it into an art form.

Raja enjoys the artistic value of this language because he sees beauty in the calligraphic patterns, an ancient script which was once the domain of Arabic scholars dating back to the first century with the reveal of Islam.

Arabic calligraphy will undoubtedly feature in Raja's future artistic adventures but for this year, he would also like to revisit paintings he stopped doing some 40 years ago. The current pandemic has reminded him "how beautiful the world is" and the many lockdowns over the last year forced him to remain still to appreciate the beauty of his surroundings, so he will be resurrecting his landscapes in a new series of artwork. I foresee another success story and look forward to receiving my invitation to the exhibition!





## Tee Ying Jie

Born in Klang, Malaysia some 32 years ago, Ying Jie is currently an Art & Design lecturer at Inti International College, Subang as well as a part-time Chinese calligraphy teacher. As an only child to hardworking parents, Ying Jie's mother was concerned that he would end up a loner without siblings to spend time with. So, since the age of 3, Ying Jie attended drawing classes which developed his interest in this art. After only a month, he took part in his first local Colouring Contest and won second prize. This win was the start of an artistic creative life that piqued into a passion for Chinese calligraphy, which according to London's Victoria & Albert Museum, is the highest form of art in China that "supported, recorded and glorified 5,000 years of Chinese civilization."

## The Art of Chinese Calligraphy

Ying Jie says that the simplest way to introduce Chinese calligraphy is to describe it as "a way to write characters expressed through how to perfectly arrange the dots and strokes through how one holds and uses the brush. To undertake this art, calligraphers



are required to have their own unique temperament and spirit." Perhaps this is what Confucian scholar Yang Xiong (53BC – 18 AD) meant when he wrote that calligraphy "is a means of self-expression, revealing a person's nature or character." In ancient China, scholars and court officials were schooled in the arts of poetry, calligraphy and painting, referred to as the Three Perfections.

Poetry was the way to perform deep thought and self-expression; calligraphy was the channel of delivering the poem; and the painting represented by the

perfect calligraphic brush strokes. Contemporary scholars say that in the middle of the eighth century when the Chinese poet, painter and calligrapher Zheng Qian presented a gift of his work to the emperor, the latter was delighted and inscribed Zheng Qian sanjie on it, meaning 'Zheng Qian's three perfections'.

## A Lifelong Journey

It is believed that practicing Chinese calligraphy offers long life, but for Ying Jie, his own journey into calligraphy was driven by its sheer beauty. He practises Chinese calligraphy as part of his daily routine in order to perfect the art.

Getting into Chinese calligraphy Ying Jie describes was an "accidental destiny". He was lucky enough to win a 3-month calligraphy course at a local art competition when he was 8 years old.

By the time he was 17, Ying Jie was an assistant Chinese calligraphy teacher at a Buddhist centre. He is too modest to describe how his calligraphic work differs from others because he feels that he is still on a journey of learning but admits that he enjoys combining elements of Western art into his

郑英杰 ✶ Tee Ying Jie



马来西亚 ✶ MALAYSIA



蛇 ✶ SNAKE



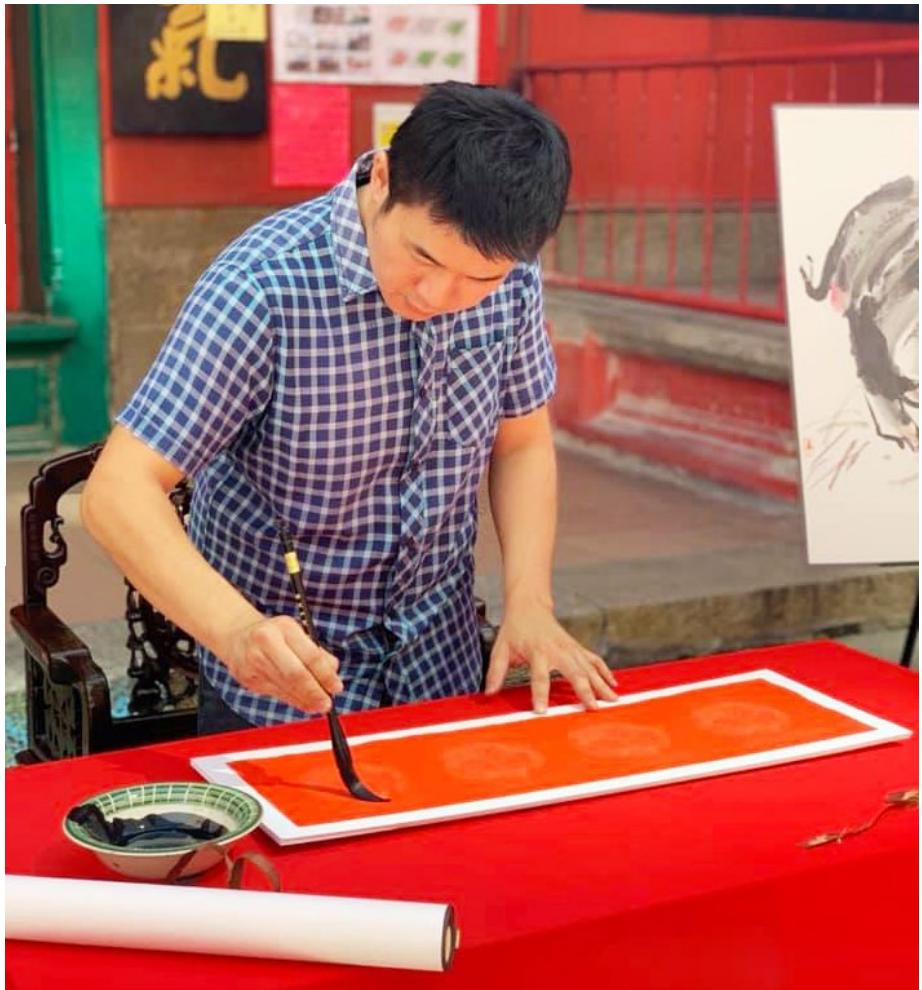
Chinese calligraphy which is not a typical style. Ying Jie loves the fact that Chinese calligraphy is still an important art form that continues to have currency and he doesn't think it will ever diminish in importance, whether it is decorations adorning walls, or inscriptions on packaging or on cards.

Ying Jie appreciates Chinese calligraphy wherever it might appear and enjoys teaching it too, with students ranging from 6 years to 90 years. This is why Ying Jie is no stranger to awards which have included winning first prize at the Yang Zhen Qin National Cup Calligraphy Competition in 2018. More recently, Ying Jie received 4 awards from an online competition organised by Superior Culture, Hong Kong (professional competition organisers for artistic cross-cultural development) in 4 categories, First for the Single-Character Huaichun category; Gold award for the "Fu" Chinese Huaichun category and a congratulatory message for both the Huaichun and Spring Couplet categories.

牛 ✶ COW



龙 ✶ DRAGON

### What's next?

Ying Jie hosts twice yearly exhibitions, the next one to be held in May, 2021 (also held to celebrate his birthday). This year's exhibition titled, "Exploration of the Brushes" will combine both the Chinese character and English alphabet, showing highly original and creative work with simple, elegant brush strokes revealing layers of meaning and perception. Ying Jie describes this as experimentation artwork. I for one am looking forward to it.

# Taking The Road Less Travelled

The phrase “road less travelled” has taken on a metaphorical meaning which is about daring to think and do things differently, i.e. carving your own path.

**Stephanie (Steph) Durant** - medical doctor, professional dive instructor and English language teacher - has done exactly that because her sense of adventure means that the road less travelled offers more opportunity for learning and growth. This metaphorical road has not ended for Steph yet because there are more powerful and meaningful experiences ahead. More of that later but let's rewind the story that has led to this path!

Born in Kuala Lumpur (KL) to a Liverpudlian father and mother from Sarawak (in East Malaysia), Steph describes herself as Malaysian to the core. Following secondary school, she studied Medicine at Nottingham University, England. After completing her Senior House Officer-ship in psychiatric medicine, Steph undertook a few locum roles in England but felt that more awaited her beyond the world of medicine so she decided to retrain, achieving a Diploma in Marine Biology for a future role in conservation work. That was the intention!

The universe had other plans for Steph. Her maternal grandmother fell seriously ill in 2016, which was the turning point in Steph's life. She returned to Miri, Sarawak to care for her grandmother and describes it as, “the best decision I ever made”. Steph learnt to speak Iban so that they could communicate in those precious few months together and during her stay in Miri, she also furthered her scuba diving abilities achieving professional scuba instructor qualifications.

Diving could not be further from the world of medicine. Steph regarded the weightlessness and calmness of being several meters under water as “the most natural thing in the world to do” because everything feels effortless, although scuba diving is far from straight forward. It is actually classified as an extreme sport for a host of reasons, not least because hypothermia, getting lost, low visibility, air loss and decompression illness are just some of the most common



threats to divers, not to mention the piranhas, sharks or jelly fish around the diver! You can tell this is written by a paranoid, never likely to be, non-diver!

Steph admits that her role as a dive instructor was getting her nearer to the source of what she wanted to do. “I had no idea that I would enjoy teaching.” Thereafter, it was a brief spell in a

remote part of the South Island of New Zealand, as Senior Assistant at an eco-lodge. The job included tour guiding which Steph enjoyed most because it involved sharing knowledge and watching people benefit from this. After a short stint in Hanoi teaching English, it was back to Malaysia as a dive instructor, latterly at the Bigfin Dive Resort in Sabah, a small private resort, until the COVID-19



pandemic hit the world which meant returning to KL in May 2020.

To keep occupied during this time, Steph signed up onto an English teaching platform which she enjoys because she has met people from all over the world whom she finds it a privilege to teach. By the way, Steph also speaks and teaches fluent Bahasa Malaysia to expats.

Once students learnt of her medical background, she quickly began to develop a niche group of students from the healthcare profession from all over the globe who wanted to improve their English to communicate with their patients and also helping many of them prepare for their medical exams. This is because, more than anyone, Steph understands that good communication is the key domain of medical practice whether it is history taking, handling conflict, dealing with complaints, writing discharge summaries or breaking bad news.

Having first hand practice in all these areas and being a citizen of both the eastern and western cultures, gives Steph the edge to helping students whose first language is not English.

"Medical schools can teach medicine, language schools can teach English, but very few can do both! I am convinced that the right communication support for healthcare professionals will help them meet patient expectations and ultimately improve health outcomes. I want to channel my medical experience in this field."

Learning English for specific purposes is a growing trend and it is no different for medics who need to use the language for their future professional use. I say English because worldwide, it is accepted this is the basic language of communication and using her medical background, Steph has the context, content and vocabulary to base her teaching on, thus preparing students for active use of English after graduating. In other words, she can base her teaching on specific real situations on how to use the language, like taking patient history or delivering difficult news, because she has first-hand experience of this already.



I know we will be hearing more from Steph on this as she carves a path to sharing her knowledge, skills and expertise. Leaving the last word to Steph, "I had tremendous clarity that I wanted something different, but I didn't know what it was until the opportunity to teach allowed me to continue on my own path which I plan to be the architect of. I just know taking the risk not to practice medicine but using my medical knowledge to help others, in a different way, is the right step for me."

[steph.durant@gmail.com](mailto:steph.durant@gmail.com)

# Upgrading Leftovers on Netflix's Best Leftovers Ever!

Ever thought of what to do with leftovers besides reheating and re-serving? There are actually people who make an art form of leftover food. It is therefore a privilege to feature, in this issue, American cooking show, Best Leftovers Ever which, in a nutshell is when chefs are challenged to work with whatever leftovers they are given to create fancy, well-presented dishes. Just to explain that the privilege is not featuring the show per se, which is aired on Netflix, but the fact that Malaysian born **Santhi Muniandy-Deisch**, winner of the third episode, bagging the USD 10,000 prize money agreed to be featured in CiTi-ZEN. Malaysia Boleh!

Firstly, congratulations Santhi! Born in Penang and now based in Minnesota, USA, Santhi describes herself as being like an only child because of the age difference between her and the two other siblings. Santhi's stay-at-home mum was her playmate who spent most of her time in the kitchen so this was really Santhi's playground. Santhi's earliest memory was helping her mum in the kitchen and cooking rice at the age of 4. This was where Santhi learnt to be an "instinctual cook", never needing to measure anything, where a dash of this and a pinch of that served her perfectly! When Santhi started her love for cooking, there were no cookery shows or YouTube videos to learn from. The amazing aromas and flavours of SE Asian cooking Santhi was surrounded with growing up was also a way to communicate with her maternal grandmother who spoke only Tamil. Santhi helped her grandmother make the Malaysian snacks she sold and this precious time was a way for them to communicate with each other, albeit through cooking.

Studying abroad was another opportunity to turn her hand to cooking. Feeling homesick for Malaysian food and



armed with all the memories of home cooking, Santhi began experimenting and improvising with the available ingredients in Minnesota and even introduced her college friends to Malaysian food. By the way, the desire to experience winter was Santhi's drive to achieve both her degrees in Minnesota! She would not have been disappointed because

some say that the Minnesota winters are interminable! This is still home for Santhi and her family.

As with her mum, Santhi also uses cooking as the medium of communication and sharing about their Malaysian heritage with her two boys aged 12 and 14. Her older boy seems interested in cooking but takes a more scientist approach to the process, measuring everything precisely. Baking is his speciality.



## Competitive Cooking

So how did Santhi end up on Best Leftovers Ever?

Competitive cooking had always appealed to her and Santhi also tried for Masterchef where passionate cooks compete against each other in culinary challenges to showcase their cooking skills and win the title of the best chef. This experience and journey was definitely for Santhi, so when Best Leftovers Ever came along, she thought, "Let's do it! What's the worst



that can happen?" After a lot of paperwork, phone calls, video presentations and practice runs, Santhi was flown to Los Angeles to appear on the show. Why leftovers? Santhi likes the concept of leftovers because she doesn't like wasting food and also because she enjoys recreating leftovers into something totally different to not get bored of eating the same food!

"I really like styling food and my creativity comes through in the food. Food is my art."

The Best Leftovers Ever programme looks for personality and energy as well as what contestants can create with leftovers. Santhi ticks all the boxes. Santhi remembers that her first challenge before appearing in front of a camera was doing something with leftover chicken and corn on the cob – chicken corn fritters was the result.

Once the call came to appear on the show, it was 5-7 months before anything would happen, which left plenty of time to practice and conduct research on food styling, plating and presentation.

Appearing in front of the cameras was nerve wrecking enough without having to perform as well, in this case, produce a winning cooking creation. Santhi remembers feeling nervous, her hands shaking, the clock and judges staring at you every chop, pour and stir. The show is all about three cooks turning leftovers into fancy dishes. It really is not as easy as it sounds because you are dealing with food that has already had much of its flavor already determined, already has sauces on them and you definitely don't want to dry out with re-cooking. It's not about turning leftovers into decent dishes (many of us can do this), it's the creativity and cooking know-how in those dishes that gives these home cooks like Santhi the edge.

Santhi praises her fellow contestants and the judges for the enjoyable experience and said that she would do the whole thing again in a heartbeat! Santhi credits her win to all the cooking knowledge she accumulated

from her mum and grandmother. Her winning challenge was to enhance left over beef moussaka and Greek salad which she turned into Nepali momos and Korean bibimbap which one of the judges praised as being, "quite frankly delicious". The USD 10,000 prize money was well deserved. Santhi says that the sense of accomplishment was priceless and she is determined to show her children that no goal is too big and that anything is possible. So, what's next? In the longer term Santhi would like to create a cook book that doesn't just share recipes but also captures old school cooking techniques which will inevitably get lost with new technology running our lives. Santhi also hosts SE Asian cooking classes on Zoom, sharing her knowledge with interested individuals. She adds, "COVID-19 has forced local restaurants to remain closed so this is a great opportunity to try different foods and sometimes wine is involved!" (Santhi dedicates this interview to her beloved Mum and Dad)

# Buying British..... in Malaysia!



Imagine my delight at discovering **MY. Local British Shop**, a new retail venture selling a wide range of imported British products. There is no need to wait weeks for delivery because all the products for sale are ready stocked here in Malaysia.

Having lived in Malaysia since 2011, **Christian Wood** is well aware of what British expats crave and want, so whether it's Murray Mints, Hula Hoops, Robinsons sugar-free cordials or Fray Bentos Pies, MY. Local British Shop stocks many favourites that can be bought from the store or ordered online. They have already delivered to customers from Penang to Sarawak. For orders less than 5kg, it's only a RM5 delivery charge – can't say fairer than that!



Christian is clear that you don't have to be a British expat to enjoy their products because he sells to many who aren't, but who enjoy buying British. The store promises a secure supply chain (goods to be brought in monthly) so no need to stockpile anymore! They will order direct from the manufacturers, with the longest life span possible, and all at great prices.

So, whether it's a taste of home that you want or if you enjoy British food and products, MY. Local British Shop is the answer.

"Our objectives are simple - get the things you miss, without waiting and without breaking the bank balance. We have the stock, we have the variety, we have the prices - you just need to shop."

I know exactly where my go-to spot is for that next jar of Branston pickle!

#### Address

A-G-8 Galeria Hartamas,  
Jln 26/70A, Desa Sri Hartamas,  
50480, Kuala Lumpur.

#### Email

[sayhello@mylocalbritishshop.com](mailto:sayhello@mylocalbritishshop.com)

Tel: 014.646.9488

# Project Progress Update



## Dwi@Rimbun Kasia

This is a joint-venture initiative with Japan's Hankyu Hanshin Properties Corp. Dwi@Rimbun Kasia is a green-living concept development comprising 382 units (53% of which are dual-key homes) aimed at the mid-market segment.

Reinforced concrete works in Block B (East Wing) have now reached Level 8 where 20 out of 26 units are completed; Level 7 was completed in December 2020. For Block A (West Wing), reinforced concrete works are completed at Level 6, with 17 out of 19 units completed at Level 7. Similarly, brick works are completed up to Level 5 for Block B and up to Level 4 for Block A.



## KaMi Mont' Kiara

This proposed 19-storey tower block comprises of 168 serviced residences with sizes ranging from 840sq ft to 1,604 sq ft is set within a private, Japanese-designed landscaped grounds. There will also be a Japanese Onsen Spa for the enjoyment of the residents. The whole development is pet friendly.

Reinforced concrete works is now complete on Levels 18 and 19 (Roof & Lift Motor Room). Architectural works (e.g. water proofing, brickworks, etc.) and M&E works (e.g. fire system, plumbing, electrics, etc.) are progressing well, including the lift shafts being handed over to the lift contractor for installation works.



## ASTA Enterprise Park

ASTA Enterprise Park is a 31 acre industrial park located in the mature industrial area of Bukit Angkat, Kajang, Selangor. The freehold land has been sub-divided into 46 individual titles.

Phase 1 of the development contains 18 three storey semi-detached factory units (Type A). The built up areas range from 8,594sf to 10,672sf. Phase 1 is sold out and scheduled for handover in mid-April 2021. Phase 3 (vacant plots) is also scheduled for handover in mid-April 2021.

Phase 2A of the development consists of 8, three storey semi-detached factory units with a lower ground floor (Type B). The built up area ranges from 12,375sf to 12,565sf. Piling works is currently underway and this project is targeted to be completed by November 2022.

Phase 2B of the development consists of 10 three storey semi-detached factory units with a lower ground floor (Type B). The built up area ranges from 12,375sf to 12,565sf. Earthworks is currently being done and the development is targeted to be completed in July 2023.

# Hidangan Tradisi at ATAS

## Malaysian Modern Eatery

**16 April – 9 May 2021**



## THE RUMA

HOTEL AND RESIDENCES

To celebrate the sacred fasting month, **ATAS Modern Malaysian Eatery** brings back its popular **Hidangan Tradisi** buffet and invites guests on an epic journey through the peninsula to rediscover classic and nostalgic flavours.

This year's menu includes a barbecue station serving *Percik Marinated Leg of Lamb with Coconut Sauce*, to go along with an enticing selection of traditional recipes including *Udang Sambal with Petai*, *Siakap Asam Gerang* and *Daging Gulai Kawah*. There is also a generous selection of side dishes including a *Lemang* selection, *Kerabu* and *Ulam*, as well as an assortment of sambals from across the country.

For dessert, guests can indulge in classic favourites such as *Dodol Gula Melaka*, *Bubur Cha Cha* and *Bubur Pulut Hitam*, or enjoy a contemporary selection, including a *Liquid Nitrogen Durian Ice Cream* station.

Hidangan Tradisi ATAS will be available from **16 April to 9 May 2021** and is priced at **RM180 nett per person**. Guests can enjoy **early bird savings of 30% if they make a reservation before 31 March 2021, or 25% if they make a reservation before 15 April 2021**.

For further inquiries and bookings, please call **+603 2778 0753** or email [\*\*atas@theruma.com\*\*](mailto:atas@theruma.com).



MEZZANINE FLOOR, THE RUMA HOTEL AND RESIDENCES  
7 JALAN KIA PENG, 50450, KUALA LUMPUR  
+603 2778 0888 | ATAS@THERUMA.COM | WWW.THERUMA.COM

**ATAS**  
MODERN MALAYSIAN EATERY



## HIDANGAN TRADISI ATAS

16 APRIL TO 9 MAY 2021

ATAS Modern Malaysian Eatery brings back its popular Hidangan Tradisi dinner and invites guests on an epic journey through the peninsula to rediscover classic and nostalgic flavours.

**RM180 NETT PER PERSON**

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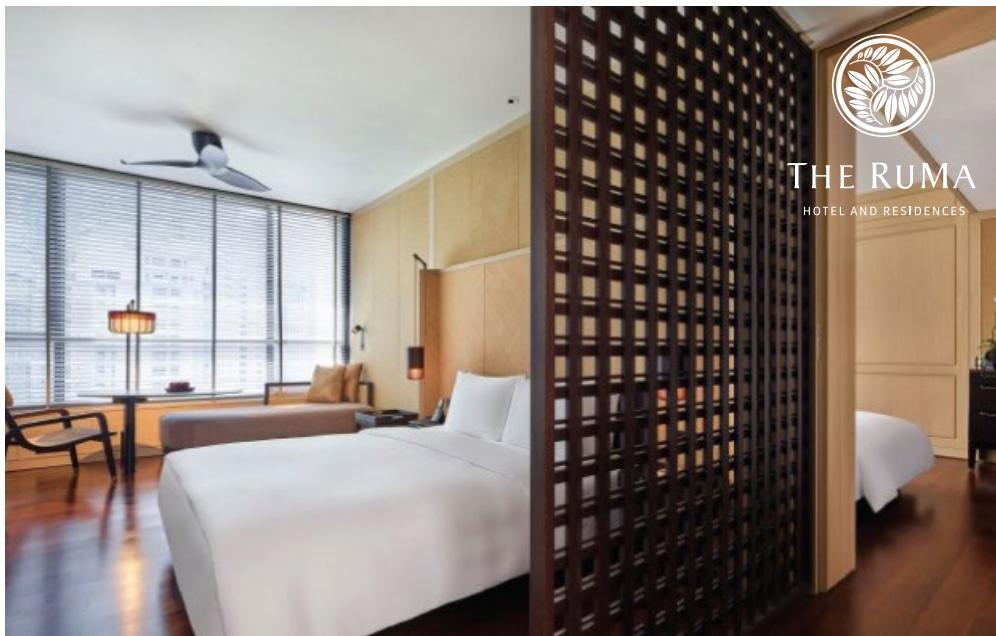
Early bird purchases are non-refundable and dates can be amendable.  
Terms and conditions apply.

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**ATAS**  
MODERN MALAYSIAN EATERY

# Festive Stay and Dine

## 16 April – 9 May 2021



Take a break during this festive season. **Book a Stay and Dine** experience at The RuMa and enjoy the following Hostmanship™ benefits including:

- Daily In-Room breakfast or sahur for 2 persons
- Hidangan Tradisi dinner at ATAS Modern Malaysian Eatery for 2 persons
- 25% off F&B (excluding alcoholic beverages) and UR SPA treatments
- 24-hour check-in and check-out (subject to prior notice of arrival and departure details at time of booking)
- Complimentary fully stocked minibar with daily replenishment
- Best in class Wi-Fi throughout the hotel
- Rates at MYR670 on weekdays and MYR770 on weekends for Deluxe Room starting from April 16, 2021 until May 9, 2021. Higher room categories are available at exclusive rates.

Full prepayment and 24-hour notice is required to guarantee this booking. Not valid for stays on Monday. All bookings are non-cancellable, non-refundable and not valid in conjunction with prepaid vouchers and other promotions and discounts.

For enquiries, please call **+60 3 2778 0888** or email [reservations@theruma.com](mailto:reservations@theruma.com).

*Terms and conditions apply.*

# i is for Ireka

Founded in 1967, Ireka Corporation Berhad's current focus is mainly on four core businesses: Construction, Real Estate, Technologies and Urban Transportation.

Its distinguished construction portfolio developed over a 53-year track record includes the construction of the Kuala Lumpur International Airport runway, sections of the Kuala Lumpur Middle-Ring Road II and North-South Expressway, Putrajaya Government Administrative Offices, OCBC Head Office, Wisma ALG, DiGi Head Office (D'House), Technology Park Malaysia, The Westin Kuala Lumpur and Aloft KL Sentral. The Group also previously developed and managed The Westin Kuala Lumpur and Aloft KL Sentral, both are the winners of multiple regional and international awards.

**Ireka also created the much celebrated i-ZEN brand of luxury properties, continuing**

**to raise the bar for contemporary high end designs in our developments, striving to meet the needs of our customers at all times so that they can live in homes they desire. The essence of i-ZEN is embodied in the 6S philosophies of Style, Service, Security, Sophistication, Soul, and Sustainability. These are demonstrated in its portfolio of properties.**

In Malaysia, i-ZEN's portfolio includes Sandakan Harbour Mall and the recently opened The RuMa Hotel and Residences in Kuala Lumpur City Centre.

Ireka's current projects under construction include Dwi @ Rimbun Kasia, KaMi Mont' Kiara and ASTA Enterprise Park in Kajang. Some of the completed projects undertaken include award-winning SENI Mont' Kiara, Kiaraville and Tiffani by i-ZEN, 1 Mont' Kiara, i-ZEN @ Villa Aseana, I i-ZEN @ Kiara I, i-ZEN @ Kiara II, Luyang Perdana and

Sandakan Harbour Square (Phase 1 & 2).

In 2003, Ireka's Technologies arm, i-Tech Network Solutions Sdn Bhd ('i-Tech') was set up as a systems integration and networking company, offering customized IT infrastructure solutions and outsource services. From there, i-Tech expanded to provide co-location services, disaster recovery services, hyper-converged infrastructure, and managed services in Malaysia and Vietnam.

In late 2016, iTech, with its extensive knowledge in IT consultancy services, moved into the Cloud Service as a Cloud Service Provider.

In July 2019, Ireka and CRRC UT established a joint-venture company, Mobilus Sdn Bhd to spearhead its urban transportation business in Malaysia and Southeast Asia (ASEAN).



An IREKA concept

*The i-ZEN brand is founded on and driven by six basic principles that ensure customers' highest expectations are met.*

The collage consists of 12 vertical panels, each representing one of the 6S principles:

- STYLE:** A close-up of a person's blue suit jacket.
- SERVICE:** A person's hand holding a white glove.
- SECURITY:** A person's hand holding a steering wheel.
- SOPHISTICATION:** A person's hand holding a smartphone.
- SOUL:** A person's legs in green shorts and yellow socks dancing on a red floor.
- SUSTAINABILITY:** A close-up of a hand holding a small plant.
- STYLE:** A person's hand holding a red ball.
- SERVICE:** A person's hand holding a small statue.
- SECURITY:** A person's hand holding a small statue.
- SOPHISTICATION:** A close-up of a hand holding a small statue.
- SOUL:** A close-up of a hand holding a small statue.
- SUSTAINABILITY:** A close-up of a hand holding a small statue.

+603 6411 6388 [www.ireka.com.my](http://www.ireka.com.my)

i-ZEN@KIARA I | i-ZEN@KIARA II | VILLA ASEANA | KIARAVILLE  
TIFFANI BY i-ZEN | MONT' KIARA | SENI MONT' KIARA