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**KUALA LUMPUR CITY HALL LAUNCH
ART IN THE PARK FESTIVAL – TO CONNECT PEOPLE
TO THE ARTS AND THE NATURE**

KUALA LUMPUR, 4 June 2014: The Mayor of Kuala Lumpur, YBhg Datuk Seri Ahmad Phesal b. Talib today announced Art in the Park festival which will be held from 16 – 30th October 2014. The soft launch event was held in the 126 years old Perdana Botanical Garden, which will be the home of KL Art in the Park festival.

Datuk Seri Ahmad Phesal in his speech mentioned, *“In this heritage park, we have two greatest assets; the “nature” and the “arts”. We have nature parks such as Botanical Garden, Orchard Garden, Bird & Butterfly Park and the arts such as the Islamic Arts Museum, the Tugu Negara, Laman Asean, Police Museum, Tun Abdul Razak Gallery and slightly further; the Bank Negara Museum & Memorial Tunku Abdul Rahman. So far, I have not encountered any other parks around the world having this unique feature of - almost everything in one park.*

And I begin to realize the potential of this park in developing its social role to reach out to the urban communities and the tourists, by organizing activities that is able to merge these two greatest assets – nature and art, into a new hallmark festival for Kuala Lumpur at the Perdana Botanical Garden. And I believe the Perdana Botanical Garden have the ability to communicate effectively, educate and raise public awareness about the importance of connecting people to the arts and the nature”, added the Mayor.

“The Art in the Park festival is scheduled to be held for 2 weeks, from 16- 30th October 2014. It will be an outdoor Art festival, for a change. This unique concept will take artwork and the enjoyment of artwork out of galleries and museums into the parks during the festival, so that the public can enjoy art, in a natural outdoor setting”, Ahmad Phesal said, noting that cities such as London, New York and Paris have all utilized their parks to showcase art. For example, the Frieze Art Fair, one of the world’s leading contemporary art fairs, is held in Regent’s Park in London every year.

Art in the Park will be KL latest annual festival where the Perdana Botanical Garden will be transformed into an art village, for visitors to wander round and enjoy all the fine exhibits and be captured by the art and nature experiences. To provide a wider spread of art and nature experience to the tourists, the Mayor strongly encourage all other arts and nature institutions such as Islamic Art Museum, Masjid Negara, Police Museum, Bird & Butterfly Park, Bank Negara Museum and others will put on their own art exhibitions during the 2 weeks festival.

The two-week AITP festival will have 3 features:

1. An outdoor display of sculptures and installations made of found objects as the main feature
2. The Mayor Award for Sculpture Competition
3. Art and cultural program where there will be a series of talks, workshops and art activities specially designed to liven up the festival

The Art in the Park main feature is, commissioning of new sculptures and other new forms of installation art by Malaysian and foreign artists. In addition,

partners of Art in the Park will contribute outdoor artworks and installations. Art in the Park will also introduce a new, exciting platform to the artists to create innovative artworks inspired by natural surroundings. This component will be turned into a competition, where KL Mayor Sculpture Awards will be introduced, beginning this year; with the objective of supporting and encouraging Malaysian creative talent, as well as attract international creative talent into KL. A panel of local and international art experts and sculptors will judge the entries for the competition.

The theme for the Art in the Park exhibition is “Found in KL”. Artists will rely on found objects, waste and discarded materials around the city as well as objects found in the park that can be reconstructed or recycled as artworks.

Among the local artists who have already been commissioned to participate in this exhibition are Multhalib Musa, Umibaizurah Ismail, Carolyn Lau, Lisa Foo, Sharmiza Abu Hassan, Sabri Idrus, Liew Kungyu, Ng Sek San and Farah Azizan. Other artists who will be participating are from artist collectives Lost Generation and Rumah Air Panas.

Art in the Park festival partners will also be invited to contribute outdoor artworks during the festival. MAP@Publika will present sculptures on found objects by Marvin Chan for display and will submit sculptures for the Mayor Award Sculpture Competition. AirAsia Foundation will present Rags2Riches, an award-winning social enterprise for its work in empowering artisans in the Philippines. To spread their eco-ethical fashion message on upcycling, Rags2Riches artisans will be creating an art installation at the Perdana Botanical Gardens using scrap and organic materials. They will share their methods through a participatory workshop anchored by a talk by Founder-CEO Therese Fernandez-Ruiz.

At the launch event, the Mayor also announced on a confirmation received by DBKL has last week whereby a distinguished French artist - Marie Hugo, will participate in this festival. She will bring her art installation of ‘Pantun Forest’ from France. This sculptural work is inspired by the Malay poems made fashionable as “pantoums” in 19th century Europe by Marie Hugo’s illustrious ancestor Victor Hugo. She fabricates pillars of light as tree trunks with leaves

made of paper written with pantun script in Malay, Jawi, French and English. Marie-Hugo was admitted at the early age of sixteen into the Ecole Nationale des-Beaux Arts in Montpellier, France where she studied engraving and lithography. Marie-Hugo has traveled extensively and lived in Asia before returning to settle in Europe. She has exhibited in London, Paris and Tokyo. “Pantun Forest” was initially shown at Galerie Huit in France during the 2013 Marseille-Provence European Capital of Culture festivities.

“I am sure Marie-Hugo work, together with the local artists, will be the main crowd puller to the Art in the Park festival”, said the Mayor. “These programs throughout the festival will create wonderful opportunities for the visitors to spend more time in the park. We hope that Art in the Park will attract more visitors especially art lovers tourists to KL,” added the Mayor as he noted that cities such as New York, Singapore and Shanghai, which are among the top 10 cities cited in the World Cities Culture Report 2013, attract tourists through their art and cultural activities.

Creating a world class event that will eventually command world class artists and attract thousands of visitors, can be financially challenging. And his speech the Mayor welcome sponsors and partners to work with Kuala Lumpur City Hall in holding Art in the Park festival. The Mayor launched the Art in the Park by planting a special plant to eventually cover a sculpture that will be displayed in the park during the festival.

For more information on Art in the Park press release, contact Noraza Yusof, Head of Tourism, Kuala Lumpur City Hall at 013-3399915 or email: norazayusof@gmail.com