

# SHALINI GANENDRA FINE ART

@ Gallery Residence

presents

## PavilionNOW 2015

from Impulse an Urban Folly

September 17, 2015 – May 1, 2016



## PavilionNOW: Our Vision

The idea behind SGFA's PavilionNOW project is not only to creatively explore concept, space, materiality, contemporary and vernacular, but also, for these first three years, to recognise the quality of local architecture and design talent. The Project, thought up in 2014, saw us invite Q. Jade Saw Architect (the 'Architects'), selected on the basis of their empathetic and tacit design practise, to create a distinctive installation that would extend the notion of 'pavilion', and realise that vision through its build at SGFA's award winning Gallery Residence (designed by Ken Yeang). This inaugural pavilion, *from Impulse an Urban Folly*, elegantly credits the original and open brief, winding into a life-like form of open shelter, made of locally harvested, treated and crafted bamboo.

The SGFA PavilionNOW brief is simple. Design and build, in six months, a 'pavilion' in the residential space of SGFA's Gallery Residence, preferably using locally made, grown or re-use materials. The design itself must be distinctive, original and relevant.

This year's Project process has been documented in detail from inception to completion with the hope that this reference material will edify and inspire far beyond the here and now. The 2015 Project saw collaboration between Gallery and artisans, architects, academia and audience. The pavilion will find a permanent place of show after May 2016, at which time we make way for the next segment of the PavilionNOW at SGFA.

Apart from being great fun and immensely interesting to engage with the wondrous skills of Malaysia's indigenous groups, the materiality of bamboo and the generous public response, for this inaugural project, the process has been personally gratifying because it reflects the Gallery's commitment to meaningful multidisciplinary and cultural encounters.

SGFA started as, after all, and continues to be, an independent art space committed to the ethos of 'living with art', which to us fundamentally means bringing beauty, in a thoughtful and distinctive way, to our valuable audiences.

Enjoy!

Shalini Ganendra  
Director, SGFA

from IMPULSE an URBAN FOLLY







## 2015 PavilionNOW - from IMPULSE an URBAN FOLLY

This year's Pavilion has been constructed, with the expert skill of Orang Asli craftsmen, from locally sourced bamboo. The Architect's winning design is in full accordance with the PavilionNOW objective, showing, inter alia, a sustainable build, materiality, innovation and economy. Of importance also is its appearance in a residential environment.

*'The 2015 PavilionNOW Project at Shalini Ganendra Fine Art has been conceived as an urban insertion constructed in the versatile and natural material of bamboo. As a design folly, it will respond in a contemporary manner and attempt to find fit at the highly acclaimed environment of SGFA.*

*The realisation of this installation represents a collective opportunity to explore and understand the relevance of a vernacular building concept and materiality predominantly appreciated by the indigenous peoples. Perhaps in the foreseeable future Malaysians will have healthier choices for environmentally low impact and sustainable building strategies.'* Q. Jade Saw Architect

## Q. JADE SAW ARCHITECT

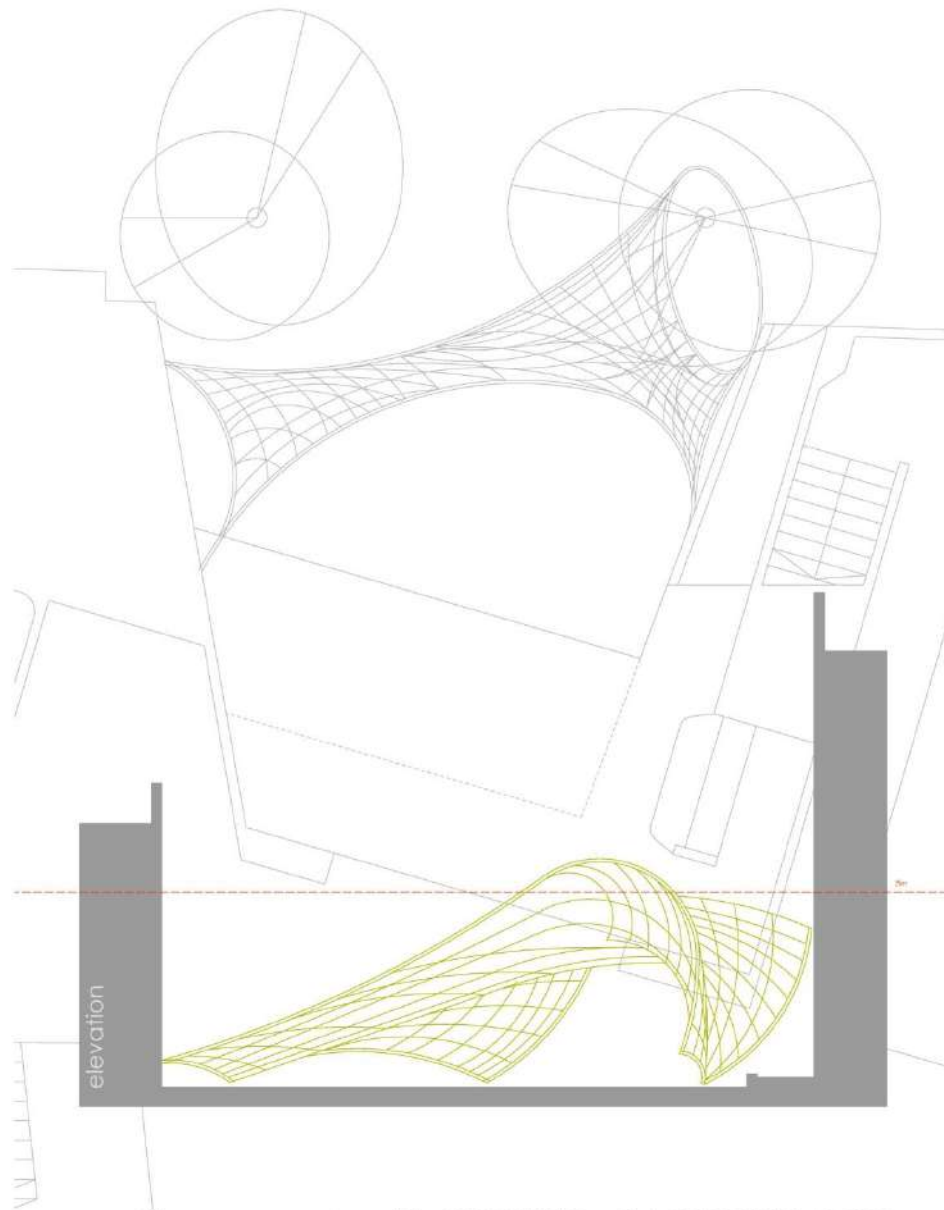
### Architecture Vision for PavilionNOW 2015:

The creation of public or private open spaces in urban shaping, whether green or otherwise can provide a beneficial relief for community activity and interaction. Our creative process is committing emotional and mental energy in space and time, while taking into consideration non-tangible and other mundane parameters, then allowing the locale to speak for itself. Our hope is that bamboo work will become a viable, healthier choice as a mainstream building material. However, choice of material is only an aspect of fit. Qualitative fit in an urban landscape is about sensibility to scale, proportion, spatial experience, relationship to surrounds, respecting historical and cultural memories if any.

As humans with senses it is often the world of form around us that we relate to naturally. Yet out of built matter, we can come to understand the nature of space with its absolute potentiality. The SGFA courtyard is a protected void between the two angled wings of gallery building. So when a creative urge is applied over time, an *I . M . P U L S E* happens in this space and an urban folly is physicalised.

An IMPULSE can only come about when human thought and the uncreated become connected. Then there needs to arise a motivating force, an urge, to realize this into the physical world. This is our process.

# Architect's Drawings



*from impulse*

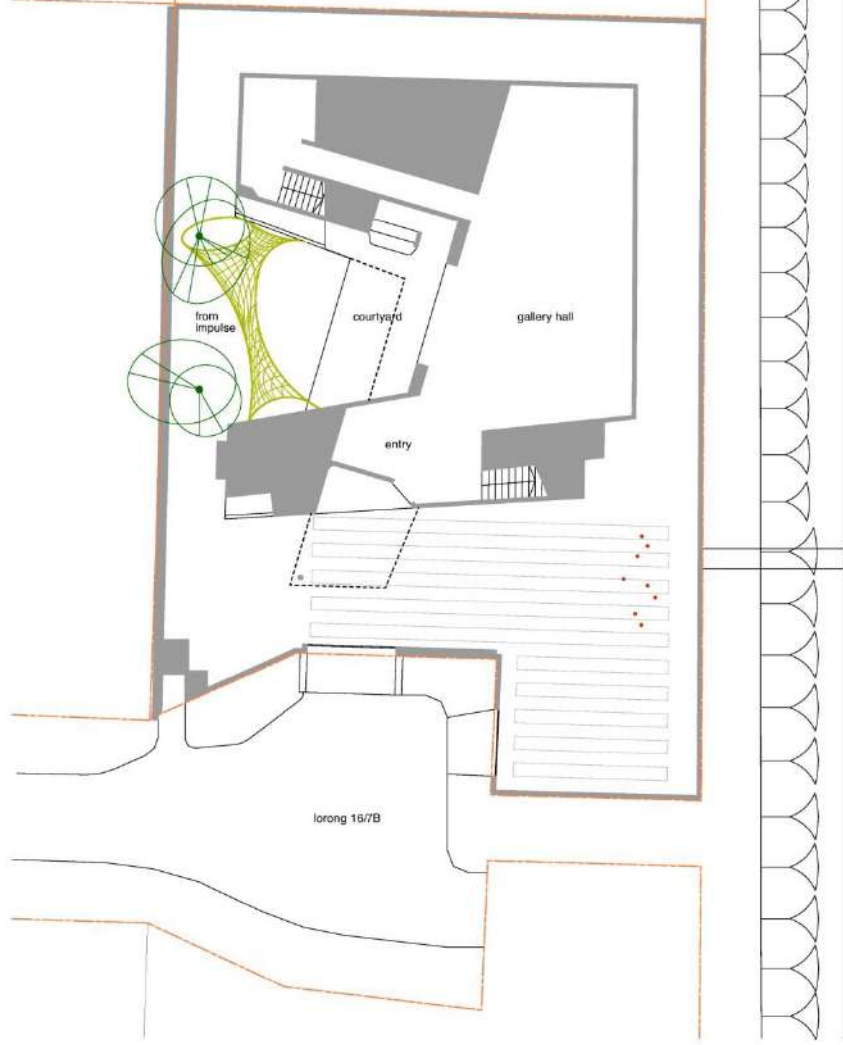
No.8, Lorong 16/7B, Section 16, 40350 PJ, Selangor  
for Shalini Ganendra Fine Art Gallery  
© Uday Sany Architect  
architect - utay sany - vector - shalini - chinnappa - vishwathy  
88 Jalan Melaka Sentral, 40130 Melaka, Johor  
1.600-2627131 P.503-2627133  
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**PAVILION ONE**





ground floor plan



*from impulse*

No.8, Lorong 16/7B, Section 18, 46350 PJ, Selangor  
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 architect - urban design - interior - landscape - conservation - opportunity  
 16, Jalan Melang Sari, 11010, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. 03-2081113  
 1100, 20021101, P.000.0001103  
 SK01 - 15557 - 27 march 2015 - scale 1:50A3

PAVILION ONE

## Bamboo, Sustainability & PavilionNOW

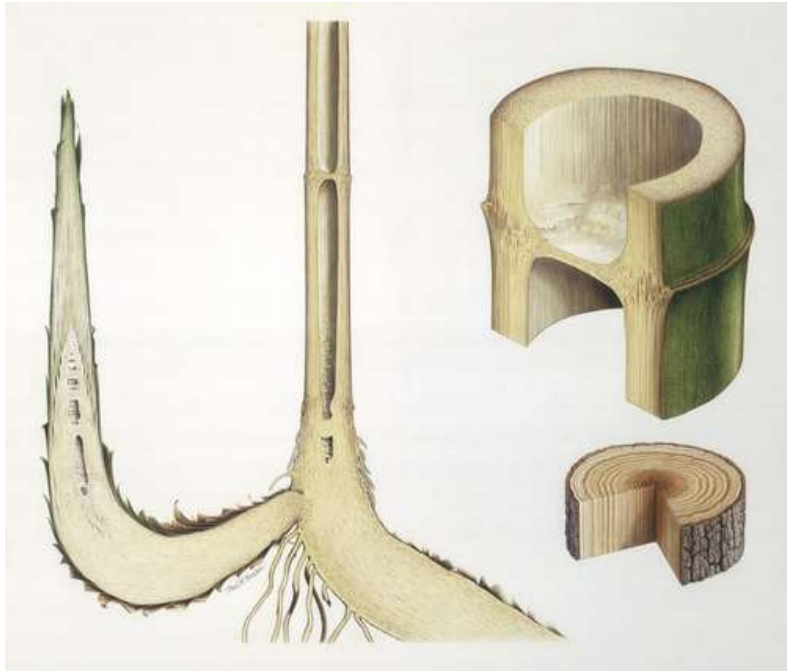
Bamboo is one of the fastest-growing plants in the world, capable of growing up to 250cm in twenty four hours. This extraordinary growth rate makes it perfect for sustainable farming. The canes can be harvested without killing the plant, and it takes just three years to go from seed to harvest. An extra benefit is that thanks to its large root system, replanting is unnecessary and the bamboo regenerates itself.

The plant is native to the areas surrounding Kuala Lumpur, resulting in low fuel and import costs over the course of PavilionNOW: all of the bamboo used for the Pavilion was sourced from a grove in the Klang Valley. Thanks to its exceptional speed of growth, bamboo consumes four times more carbon dioxide than an ordinary tree, and produces 35% more oxygen. This combination has resulted in a very small carbon footprint for the project.



## Bamboo as a Construction Material

Bamboo, unlike wood, has no rays or knots, giving it a higher tensile strength than many alloys of steel, while its sectional anatomy enhances its structural integrity, resulting in a compressive strength which exceeds that of concrete. On a molecular level, its high silica content prevents its digestion by termites, and its chemical extractives make it more suitable for gluing than a hardwood. Its structure and make-up results in an impressive strength-to-weight ratio.



## Bamboo Drying Process



**Select the bamboo:** More mature bamboo culms are preferable for harvest – ideally a 3 to 5 year old bamboo culm (for hardness and strength). These also shrink and crack less when dried, and have a lower starch and sugar content so attract fewer pests.

**Wash the bamboo:** Hose down with water – lay lifted horizontally and turn for thorough washing coverage.

**Drill:** After poles have been cleaned by a power washer, they must be penetrated lengthways through their diaphragms. This is done by attaching a drill to a long steel pole, and each node pushes through the length of the bamboo culm. This leaves space for the preservation solution to fill up inside the hollow bamboo, allowing the salt solution to soak into the interior wall.

**Soak:** The environmentally friendly sodium borate treatment protects from insects and fungus. Horizontally immerse the bamboo culms in a 5% solution for 5-6 days. By immersing them horizontally, the anatomy of the bamboo culm aids the process by pulling the solution upwards. This helps the culm to be fully saturated and therefore fully protected from fungal or insect attacks.

**Bleach:** Then, the bamboo is left in the sun for up to a week, being occasionally rotated. The sun not only begins to dry the bamboo, but bleaches the chlorophyll to a lovely golden/yellow colour.

**Dry:** The bamboo must now begin its longest drying process, while stored in a dry, dark place. (Sometime these spaces are injected with hot air to speed up this process and decrease the humidity surrounding the culms.)

**Sort:** Once the poles are dried to 12-18% humidity, they can be sorted, cut to length and colour coded as required. The selection of each pole depends on the project they are being used for. Those that have cracked may still be used for other purposes such as furniture or cladding.

## The Orang Asli

For all stages of the project, the team relied upon the expertise of the Orang Asli bamboo craftsmen. Orang Asli is a Malaysian term used to reference the people indigenous to Peninsular Malaysia.

The Orang Asli remained separated from outside influences until traders from India arrived in the first millennium AD. Living in the centre of peninsular Malaysia, they bartered inland products like resins, incense woods and feathers for salt, cloth and iron tools, until the rise of the Malay sultanates, and their trade of Orang Asli slaves, forced the group to retreat further inland. The arrival of British colonists brought further inroads in the lives of Orang Asli. They were the target of Christian missionaries and subjects of anthropological research.

In 2000, the Orang Asli made up 0.5% of the total population in Malaysia: their population is approximately 148,000. There are 18 different tribes within the Orang Asli and these are spread across three main groups, the Senois, the Proto-Malays, and the Semang. The current poverty rate among Orang Asli is 76.9% and their literacy rate is around 40% lower than the national rate of 86%.



*Weaving techniques in Gombak*

## Orang Asli & Designing with Bamboo

Early Orang Asli on the Malaysian Peninsula used a versatile tool kit to obtain and prepare foods, construct shelters, make backcloth, and discourage large predators. This tool kit consisted of bamboo, rattan, wood, bark, resins, bivalve shells, and rocks, and well displays the amazing resourcefulness of the Orang Asli with the natural materials available to them.

Some of the items produced by early Orang Asli are still well-known today, bamboo blowpipes, quivers, stompers, and water vessels numbering but a few. Though modernisation has brought numerous changes to the ways of living and culture in the Orang Asli, many continue to use traditional methods of building with bamboo, learning this invaluable skill from the generation that preceded them, and in turn, passing it on.



*Examples of woven bamboo goods for sale at the Orang Asli Museum, Gombak*

Contemporary Malaysian architecture has ignored bamboo. The 2015 PavilionNOW seeks to reinvigorate sustainable architectural design by giving new focus to extensive application of this readily available resource.

Working with the Orang Asli of Gombak has allowed PavilionNow to use only sustainable, locally grown bamboo. The result is a contemporary aesthetic that is grounded in tradition.

## The Journey

In April 2015, the Architect created an undulating bamboo Pavilion design, in the hope that his decision to use natural construction techniques would inspire more eco-friendly architectural designs within Kuala Lumpur and more broadly, within South East Asia.

The feasibility of bamboo as a construction material and the properties and challenges it offered had to be considered from the outset of the process. The Architect also needed to find experts capable of teaching participating Taylor's University students basic bamboo construction techniques: these experts appeared in the form of Encik Raman and Sami, Orang Asli bamboo experts and Southeast Asia's leading bamboo practitioners. Encik and Sami were invited to lead bamboo harvesting and construction, and from May to September we met with them on a bi-weekly basis to follow the different stages of the Pavilion's construction.

Documentation was an important part of the project, and we recorded all site visits to the Orang Asli village with photographs, videos and interviews.



*Architects Jade and Kim Saw testing the strength of bamboo lidis*

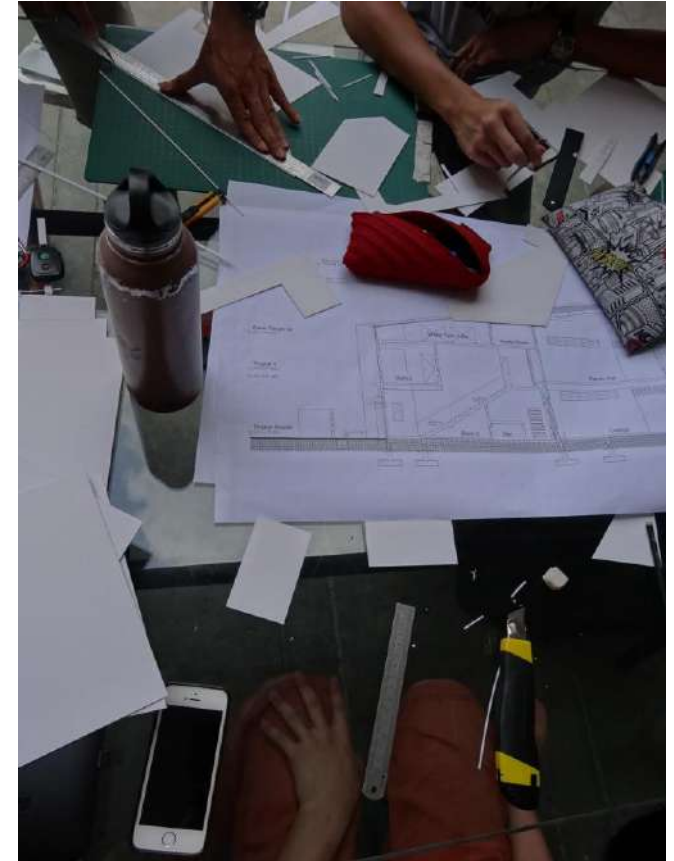
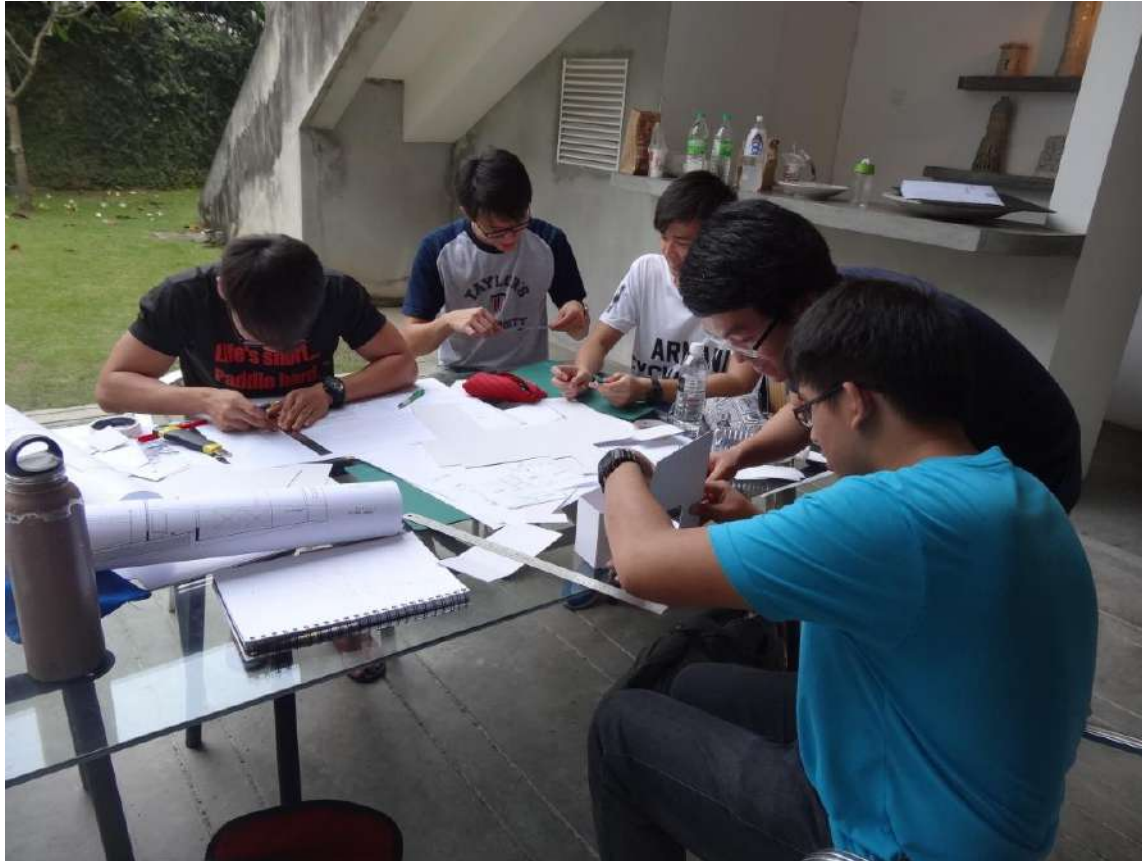


*Bamboo artisan/builder, Encik Raman, with Kim Saw*





## Taylor's University Model Build - 07/05/2015



*Taylor's University students constructing a scale model of the SGFA Gallery Residence for the architect and bamboo experts reference*

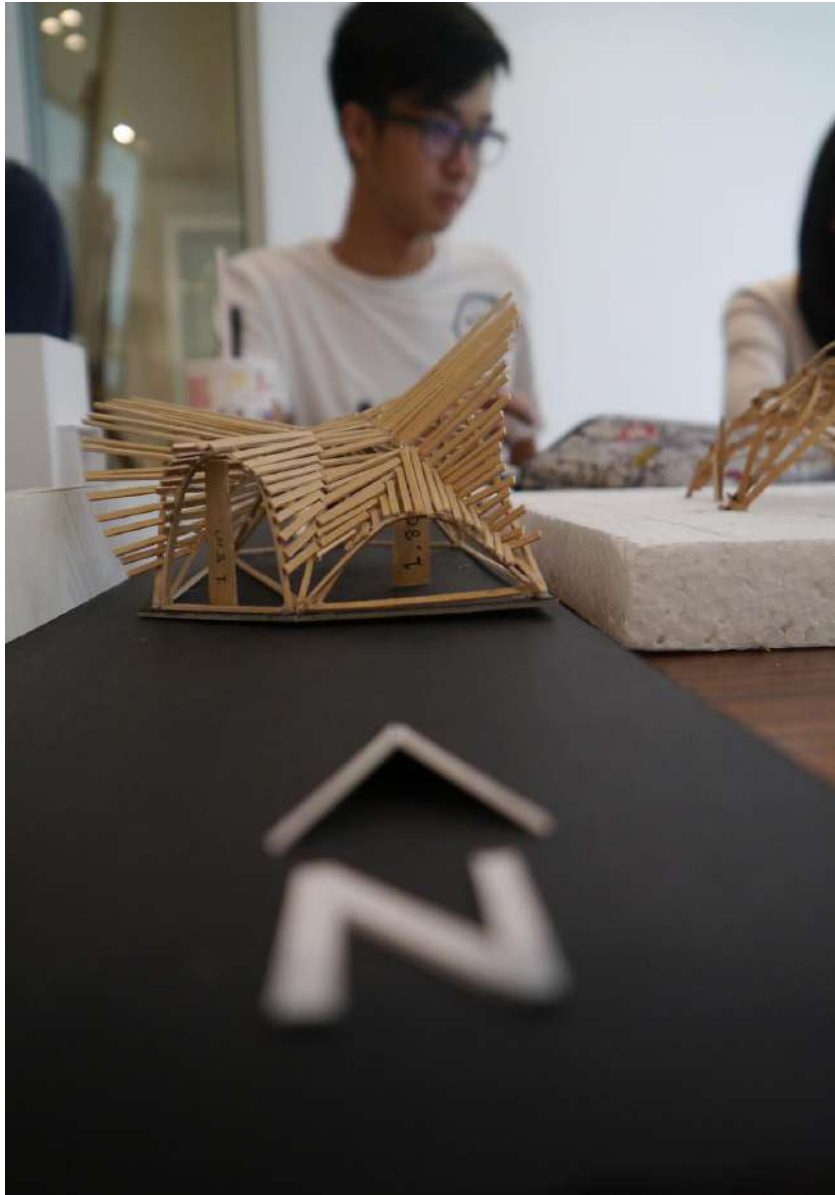
## Visit to Q. Jade Saw Architect - 23/05/2015



The Taylor's students were asked to construct their own scale models of the Pavilion structure after having only seen Jade and Kim's initial drawings.

Students were also asked to draw out how they would tackle the joints of the Pavilion structure. These visits gave Taylor's students a fully immersive experience of the day-to-day life of an architect.

The Architect's conclusions, drawn from the students work, was that more attention needed to be paid to how visitors and Gallery Residents experience the Pavilion. Students needed to be more sensitive and aware of how the Pavilion interacts with its space, the viewpoints that it will generate from different angles, and the requirements of the client (SGFA).



#1: Initial visit to Orang Asli bamboo harvesting site - 06/05/2015



*Sample bamboo stems ('lidi'), cut, wrapped and ready for shaping*

Second visit to Orang Asli village - 16/05/2015. Weekly visits would take place for the next three months to obtain a total of 300 bamboo lidi, 12 ft in length each, for the pavilion.



*Our bamboo resident in Gombak, Mr Raman, shows how a bamboo culm is split into segments and then prepared in a bundle to form the Pavilion's structure.*



*Kim Saw demonstrates the flexibility of 10 bound and cut bamboo sections to Taylor's University students.*



*Raw sections of a bamboo culm after it has been split into segments.*

## Visit to Orang Asli village - 06/06/2015



The students gathered to start harvesting the bamboo required for the PavilionNOW build. In the images above, students can be seen refining their whittling techniques to create smooth, rounded lidis. Whittling continued throughout the end of May to create 12 foot long lidis.



*Orang Asli site for harvesting and prepping bamboo materials*



*After Mr Raman cut the 5 meter-long bamboo culm into 12 segments, groups of students were asked to round the culms with their craft knives.*



*After the culms have been rounded, the students tied the culms together to test their strength as a bundle.*



*A Taylor's student in the process of rounding down the raw bamboo sections' edges.*





*The strength and flexibility of the students' finished 10m bamboo bundle is tested against Raman's 5m bundle. It was decided that the bamboo sections in the students' 10m bundle were cut too thin and that next time, they should be made thicker to make the bundle stronger.*

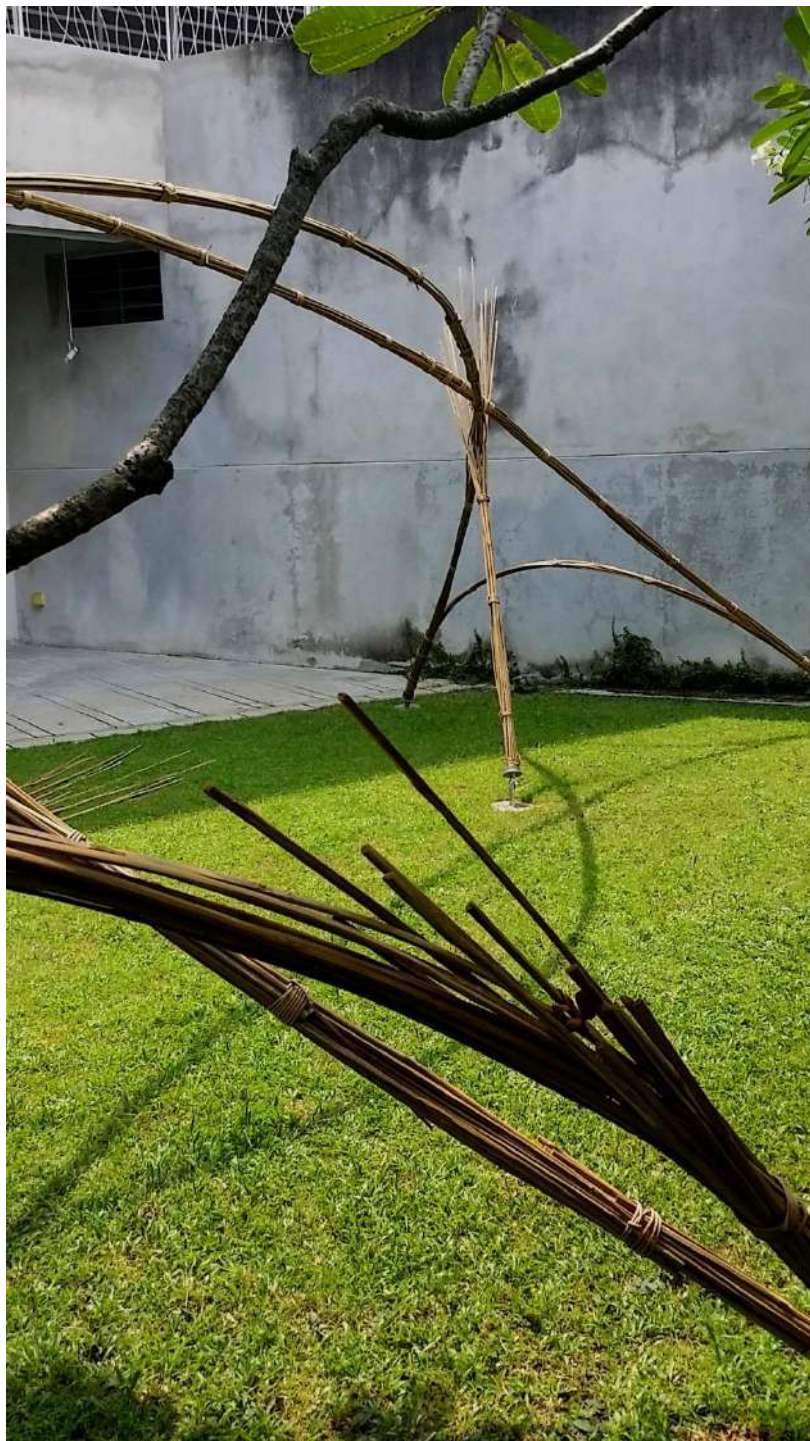
The pavilion build was completed in two days by a team of twenty, after slight variation to the original design. The Pavilion was secured using specially commissioned steel works.











# PAUL TIMINGS



During the five month exhibition period, the PavilionNOW project will incorporate a selection of sound art work by acclaimed NZ artist, Paul Timings. Timings was Artist in Residence at SGFA for three months under an award from the Asia New Zealand Foundation.

As a singer and songwriter, Timings is known for a distinctive style of music which incorporates different genres including: folk, folk rock, country, blues, ambient and minimalism. Combination and inclusion come naturally to him. During his time in Malaysia, he travelled the Peninsular to draw inspiration from a broad variety of cultural encounters and locations. *Pools* and the other sound art compositions that developed during this time embody these experiences.

*“Pools”* embraces a drifting sense of rhythm maintained by a processed field recording of a small pool of water being affected by the tide on the Wellington waterfront, New Zealand. This rhythm is accompanied by a generative synthesis which behaves in its own independent rhythmic cycles, incorporating Malaysian sounds. In combining these elements, Timings seeks to encourage an interplay between digital patterns and patterns in the field.



# *Continuing Engagment*

## BAMBOO<sup>2</sup>

April 19 – May 30, 2016



# Project Background

An experimental audiovisual project, Bamboo<sup>2</sup> forms a bridge between the organic and the digital worlds, between craftsmanship, lighting, and sound design. This intervention is a beautiful continuation of the already existing structure of the bamboo pavilion that was designed and built in 2015 by Q Jade Saw architects, Orang Asli craftsmen and students from Taylor's University Architecture Department, as the inaugural SGFA PavilionNOW project.

Sebastien Jurkowski and Lawrence Loh from Contrast Studios collaborate with Christchurch-based sound artist Paul Timings to create a light and sound installation based on the bamboo installation of PavilionNOW. After extensive review, the artists selected a suitable light source, empathetic with the bamboo ludi strands, in the form of electroluminescent wires. To enhance the experience of pulsating luminosity that spans a surface of 30 sqm, a stereoscopic soundscape was synchronised with the pulse.

This collaboration results in an ethereal sensory experience, best enjoyed after sunset.

## THE CONTRAST STUDIOS TEAM:



**Sebastien Jurkowski** is involved in designing multimedia light structures for the entertainment and hospitality industry over more than a decade. He is the head of design of Contrast Studio which creates a wide variety of interactive light installations.



**Lawrence Loh** works as creative engineer for Contrast Studio and has been involved in designing and specifying luminaries to implement in lighting projects. He is also a hands-on lighting programmer who's well-versed with major lighting controllers.



*Opening night of the Bamboo<sup>2</sup> launch experience.*



*The light installation synchronized with specially commissioned soundscape by Paul Timings – to create an ethereal 3 minute experience*

*See video of installation on YouTube: [SGFAGalleryResidence - Projects](#)*

## Acknowledgements:

### **Shalini Ganendra Fine Art**

Shalini Ganendra, Katherine Vann, Ellie Powell, Ahmad Fikri Zainal and Paul Timings

### **Q. Jade Saw Architect**

Saw Quee Jade Ar

Saw Quee Kim

Lim Wee Lin

### **Artisans**

Rahman Bah Tuin

Bah Sami

### **Taylors University**

Supervisor Dr Veronica Ng Foong Peng

Supervisor Cheah Kai Kid

Students: Andrew Mah Koon Ya , Khor Yen Min, Nge Jia Chen, Chia Sue Hwa, Ng Ke Ning, Soo Xiao Wen, Bridget Tan Su Ting, Roy Yiek Chin Hieng, Leong Yu Shi, Philia Chua Yi Sian, Lim Joe Onn, Woo Shir Ley, Fong Tze Ying, Foo Shi-Ko, Foong Lih Wey, Tristan Yu, Anna Neo, Benjamin Cheng Jia Yeow, Lim Jian Jun, Loo Mei Chuen, Too Mun Fai, Pua Kee Hui, Amos Tan Chi Yi, Lee Qin Ni

### **Artists**

Sebastien Jurkowski

Lawrence Loh

Paul Timings

## About SHALINI GANENDRA FINE ART

Shalini Ganendra Fine Art's (SGFA) holistic approach to art representation and expertise in the contemporary art of emerging Asian regions has confirmed the organization's distinctive presence as an advisor, exhibitor and cultural educator. The gallery works with established artists from/connected to South East/South Asia, but our exhibitions and residencies also reflect a spectrum of international artistic and curatorial talent.

SGFA presents an eclectic range of art and design for contemporary collecting, including artwork, furnishing, bespoke ceramic installation, jewelry and textile. Advisory services include collection management, valuation, exhibition coordination and sourcing.

SGFA's educational and research programs, including the gallery's notable Vision Culture Program endorsed and published by UNESCO Observatory, the Artist Residency program, and the Exploring East Residency for university graduates, are important facilitators of engagement and cross cultural development within and with the region.



# SHALINI GANENDRA FINE ART

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