

GTF 2019 Press Conference - Speech of Mr Jack Wong

(VIP Salutations)

Members of media,

Ladies & Gentlemen,

Good morning to all of you who are present here, and thank you for coming.

It is with much honour from Penang State Government and GTWHI to appoint us as the organiser of George Town Festival 2019 and 2020. George Town Festival is a well-known and one of Penang's must-visit event since years ago. Its success has since established a strong tie between George Town with global cities that celebrate arts, cultures and heritage. Hence, all credits and contributions must certainly go to Penang State Government, GTWHI and the former festival director, Mr Joe Sidek and his team as well as the sponsors and supporters for the past few years.

This year, George Town Festival will embark on a similar fresh trait with slight refinement. Outsetting from 13th to 28th of July, the theme "A Festival For Everyone" aims to embrace the idea of making arts accessible to all, in hope of everyone to find a piece of work which is relatable to themselves. The theme, with more local engagement in mind, intends to promote Penang's arts community and enrich George Town cultural environment. George Town Festival 2019 features 16 days of festival highlights, in which our visitors can expect to experience more outdoor events and free performance shows.

Now in its tenth edition, there will be three major events and other smaller-scale pocket events happening through the fortnight. The first weekend of the Festival will be with a miraculous night - "When Night Falls Festival" which will bring together an eclectic array of illuminated artworks from across the globe where areas around Esplanade will be transformed into a glowing playground. With the second weekend themed "Art in the City", visitors can expect an art hunting occasion in which they can shuttle through the diversity and transition of various art aspects in the heritage site. Remains entirely free, visitors are

benefited with the perks where they are able to visit multiple interesting events in the same day all in just walking distance. The grand finale of George Town Festival with the theme “The Extravaganza” will bring the elites in performing arts for them to showcase their bizarre talents in years.

At George Town Festival, the local arts communities will have the opportunity to interact with artists from all over the world who possess creative and innovative ideas through some interactive and sharing sessions which could in fact boost their chances for collaboration. Through the Festival, we hope to bolster the local arts communities by providing an international art platform for their marvellous works to get worldwide attention.

In addition, we will have artistic advisory panels to provide us with their valuable advices and opinions throughout our process of curating the programmes to be showcased at George Town Festival 2019. We are confident that their involvement will assist us in presenting the visitors with world-class spectacular artistic performances for all to feast their senses.

Lastly, I would like to announce the call for proposals online to uncover and meet local and international artists in support of arts, cultures and heritage in Penang. Local artists, either locally-based or internationally-based who possess ideas which embrace the theme are much welcomed to submit your proposals to showcase your outstanding works at the Festival.

For more information, visit www.georgetownfestival.com or follow George Town Festival on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for the latest updates. We will keep all of you informed with more details of our programme line-up at the next press conference.

Thank you very much.