

Ilham Gallery Gift Shop is set to open a pop-up booth at the event, presenting art-related books and exhibition catalogues.



KLABF will also see the launch of *Search Vol. 1*, a new addition to the South-East Asian graphic magazine scene.



A close-up view of design outfit shuuhuahua's *We Are Not Coming Back* zine.

# More than typefaces and textures

Inaugural KL Art Book Fair set to showcase the diversity of the printed medium community.

By **ROUWEN LIN**  
lifestyle@thestar.com.my

THE post-pandemic world is a perfect time to create new opportunities and to blur boundaries in the creative scene in Malaysia.

The inaugural Kuala Lumpur Art Book Fair (KLABF), which will be setting up shop at The Godown KL (11 Jalan Ampang, KL) from Dec 3-5, offers the masses a glimpse of how the art, design and literary scenes can unite.

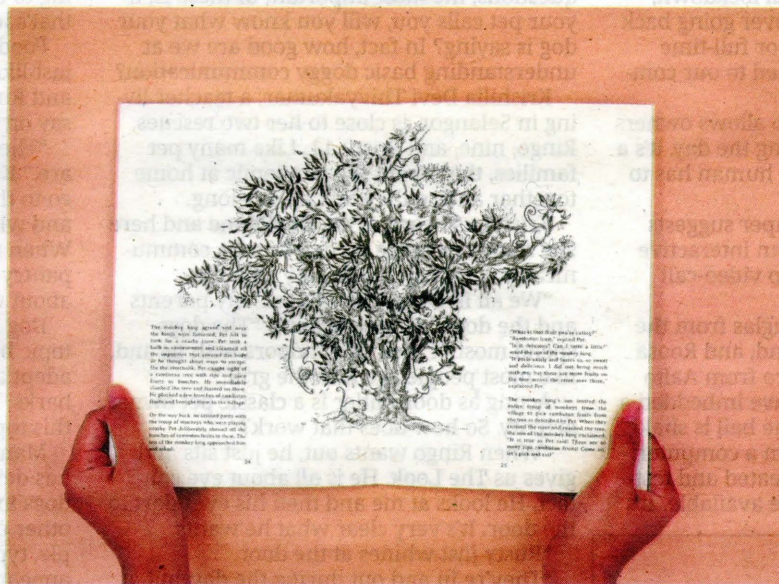
Hosted by KL-based independent graphic design studio Little Ideas Everyday (LIE) in partnership with The Godown KL, the fair showcases trends and developments in the printed medium industry, while also being a network for artists, illustrators, graphic designers, independent publishers, writers, photographers, institutions, and printmakers.

The three-day KLABF, inspired by artist-run culture and the international DIY/self-publishing scene, will host several homegrown and international artists and studios.

The goal for this event is to serve as a catalyst for creatives to meet under one roof to exhibit their latest works, discuss and exchange ideas about art making, publishing and other related topics.

In many ways, KL can now work towards building an audience and drawing the same print community interest as seen at art book fairs in Tokyo, Shanghai, Singapore and Bangkok.

For a general description, art books offer the merging of text and



Gerimis Art Project, which explores Orang Asli narratives, is one of the participants at Kuala Lumpur Art Book Fair's talk series on Dec 5. — Photos: Kuala Lumpur Art Book Fair

images. They tend to use specialty cover, paper, and packaging features because the book is a work of art in itself. That's just a small part of the story.

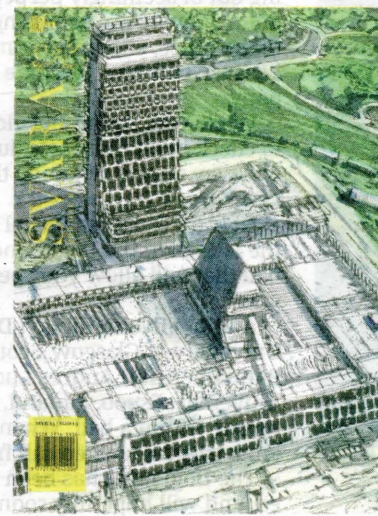
There are many definitions when it comes to art books, and KLABF serves as a window into this exciting scene.

"Having participated in art book fairs across the South-East and East Asia regions, we are hoping to recreate that same inspiring experience here with Malaysian audiences. The fair will provide a casual setting for creatives, printers, pub-

lishers and the general public to directly interact and learn from each other. Its purpose is quite simple, but it has a potential ripple effect on the larger community," says Sam Chia, co-director of KLABF.

"And we are already seeing the effects based on all the new publications that are being printed and prepared by our exhibitors for the fair. There is a lot of activity, a lot of newfound creative energy."

KLABF will feature close to 40 local exhibitors, including artists,



The story behind independent journal *Svara* is part of KL Art Book Fair's programme.

designers, printmakers, zinemakers, publishers and galleries that are reshaping the creative landscape.

The launch of the LIE-produced *Search* magazine, which dives into the world of designs, subcultures, and changemakers, is one of the fair's highlights.

Contemporary art institution Ilham Gallery is also opening up a pop-up booth, while the founders of Bahasa Malaysia journal *Svara*, silkscreen printing brand Bogus Merchandise and Gerimis Art Project, an art and archiving initiative that explores Orang Asli narratives, will conduct talks and workshops respectively.

KLABF offers a mix of retail space and industry insight programmes. For those looking for unique print-related gifts this festive season, the arrival of KLABF is timely.

At this event, art books include zines, graphic novels, magazines, chapbooks, monographs, photo-books, academic publications, limited editions, and many more. Not to forget badges, T-shirts, pins, tote-bags, posters, sculptural pieces, to book projects that border on performance art.

There will also be guest booth areas to showcase works by participating international artists and designers from the United States, Singapore, Thailand and Indonesia, among others.

"KLABF is great for anyone who wants to check out inspiring works by talents from creative fields such as graphic design, illustration, photography, creative writing and printmaking. There is a good mix of content covering a wide range of interests, from both experienced and upcoming creatives, so there will be something for everyone!" says Chia.

KLABF is a ticketed event. The event will be split into two sessions, on Friday (Dec 3) and three sessions on Saturday (Dec 4) and Sunday (Dec 5), for better crowd control. Opening hours: Noon to 7.30pm.

KLABF is open to fully vaccinated individuals and public health guidelines will be strictly observed.

More info: [klartbookfair.com](http://klartbookfair.com).