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Portraying Theatre Locations in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Transportation Accessibility for the Public

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ABSTRACT

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The city centre of Malaysia is a key location for theatre and performing arts, drawing in a large audience. Venues like Istana Budaya, which hosts the National Musical of Malaysia, feature modern technology and unique performance styles. They are venues with diverse audience members from various economic groups. Marketing for performances in Istana Budaya is easier compared to other venue with the status of Malaysia's National Theatre in addition to the its strategic location that has efficient public transport access; walkable nearby train station. Some other venues has limited public transport options. As an alternative, the audience members attending shows using taxis or e-hailing services. The research is analysing on public transportation accessibility focusing on train locations. Previous research on performing arts impact and its relationship with public transportation location - considering characteristic of the audience members, sustainability, and space specification in order for mapping the performing arts space in Klang Valley.

1. Introduction

Malaysia aims to be a leader in Southeast Asia. Therefore, significant urban development initiatives are being executed to foster economic growth, with the arts sector playing a crucial role that warrants focused attention. The Ministry of Tourism, Arts, and Culture recognizes performing arts as a fundamental aspect of national policy through the Dasar Kebudayaan Negara 2021, which highlights the arts as an essential element of Malaysian culture and envisions them as a promising sector for development [9].

Public transportation is fundamental to people's daily lives in many advanced nations, such as the United Kingdom, the United States, and Germany. Malaysia aims to increase public transportation ridership even though the demand is insignificant in some areas. Many Malaysians prefer cars due to the location of the public transportation stops that are usually further from the location that they

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want to go. The quality of public transportation is needed to cater to more people [15]. Enhanced accessibility to public transit stimulates economic activities and facilitates people's movement cost-effectively and efficiently, thus fostering businesses and cultural engagements. The arts have the unique ability to unite communities by offering shared spaces for cultural participation. Various higher education institutions, including Universiti Teknologi MARA and Akademi Seni Budaya dan Warisan Kebangsaan (ASWARA), provide programs in the performing arts.

Additionally, five Sekolah Seni Malaysia (SSEM) operate under the Ministry of Education as part of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 [10]. The government's commitment to the arts signifies a proactive approach to enhancing the performing arts landscape in Malaysia. Another thing to be considered is the discussion on Kuala Lumpur as a creative city. Most dramas and theatres after Malaysia's independence years have been influenced by Western theatres [2]. Most of the works discuss Malay identity and its relationship with the community, such as land ownership, economic development, and education.

Today, the intention has been shifted to be more local and community-oriented, and this has led to the suggestion of Kuala Lumpur as a creative hub. Based on the Experimental Model Yokohama that makes Yokohama a creative hub, Kuala Lumpur has the potential to be a similar city using performing arts. This is possible since the city has related government bodies such as DBKL, MATIC, and JKKP, with the existence of public higher institutions such as Universiti Malaya and ASWARA assisting Kuala Lumpur to get creative bodies' engagement, boosting economic growth and enriching local communities' life with arts [13]. In the 1960s, modern Malaysian drama emerged and was influenced by Western playwrights. Writers explored nation-building and cultural identity themes, reflecting government policies on education and urban migration. Usman Awang's *Tamu di Bukit Kenny* illustrates societal integration struggles, highlighting the evolving Malay identity amidst significant social and economic changes.

Historically, access to arts venues has posed challenges; however, significant advancements in public transportation since the 1990s, notably after 2015, have notably improved this landscape. The development of additional theatre facilities has been instrumental in meeting the public's demand for live performances, and enhanced public transport accessibility is essential in promoting the arts nationwide. Notable venues such as Istana Budaya, which is Malaysia's National Theatre is located at Jalan Tun Razak, alongside other important theatres like Panggung Bandaraya, Auditorium DBKL, PJPAC, DPAC, and KLPAC, exemplify this growth.

This research aims to achieve the following objectives:

- i. To analyse the types of shows hosted at each theatre space and their relationship with public transport mobilities.
- ii. To investigate the accessibility of public transport to selected performing arts venues in Malaysia.

Understanding how accessible public transport can influence audience attendance is vital for promoting cultural events. Improved public transportation access is a cornerstone of national development, as effective transit systems significantly contribute to economic growth, industrial progress, and enhancements in quality of life [3]. A well-organized public transport network allows for swift movement between locations, enabling efficient travel and cost-effective options [7]. For example, travelling from Shah Alam to Kuala Lumpur via public transport can take approximately one hour and 30 minutes, while driving might reduce that time to only 30 minutes under ideal traffic

conditions. Such disparities underscore the importance of public transport in facilitating access to performing arts venues.

In planning public transport, user satisfaction should be prioritised over traditional metrics that focus solely on population density [11]. Research indicates that while public transport can be a preferred option in less populated areas, safety concerns remain significant, particularly in high-crime zones. Thus, improving public transportation services is crucial since it impacts the Malaysian arts.

Discussion on public transport accessibility for performing arts and culture is rarely discussed. Various modes of transport must be integrated to develop better public transport experiences for the Malaysian public [1]. Contrary to the United Kingdom, the integration of public transport and its development was done earlier, before the 20th century. This has left Malaysia years behind in planning for better urban development. Kelleher says the Royal National Theatre in London is very strategic because of its accessibility to various types of public transport nearby [8]. Some might be slightly further. However, the walking experience to the performing art venue is interesting since there are many attractions nearby. Thai audiences believe that public transport's accessible location is not essential for viewing a show that only covers 7.2% of the total, whereas the interesting show covers 18.8% of the informers [17]. Thamkulangkool finds that Thailand has better planning for public transportation accessibility. Art houses are well-planned and have attractions nearby. They are walkable, and this situation is different from that in Malaysia. This situation should be considered since Thailand is a Malaysian neighbour, but they have a better solution.

This study is crucial for understanding town planning awareness for performing arts public transportation locations and the types of shows in the studied spaces. The dynamic may assist researchers in identifying opportunities to increase the accessibility of public transportation since the arts are always neglected when designing maps for public transportation in Malaysia.

2. Methodology

This qualitative study examines the accessibility of public transportation to a few performing arts venues in Malaysia. Its two primary goals are to determine how accessible public transportation is to these venues and to analyse the kinds of performances that are held there and how they relate to public transportation.

The study starts by thoroughly analysing the data on accessibility to public transportation and its relation to performing arts venues. The project intends to develop a thorough contextual understanding of viewers' mobility issues while attempting to attend cultural locations by compiling qualitative data from these texts.

To accomplish the first goal, the study will use thematic analysis to find and combine recurrent themes about the kinds of performances held at each location and how they relate to public transportation mobilities. It will also examine the types of performances and venue capacity and show patterns to analyse the connection between performance categories and transport alternatives to the performance venues.

For the second goal, the study will compile important results from earlier studies that point out particular obstacles to theatregoers' access to public transportation. It will examine topics including journey times, route convenience, and the suitability of amenities at public transportation stops with respect to the venues that were chosen. This evaluation will assist in identifying any patterns showing how the kinds of shows being performed affect transportation accessibility.

One of the expected results is a thorough qualitative understanding of the accessibility issues theatregoers encounter when choosing the kinds of shows they want to see. Based on insights

compiled from the literature, the study seeks to pinpoint potential for enhancing public transportation services and offer suggestions that meet the needs of the audience.

While this research acknowledges certain limitations—such as relying exclusively on existing literature, which may include outdated information or lack firsthand experiences—it aspires to provide a data-driven understanding of the relationship between public transport accessibility and attendance at performing arts venues. Ultimately, the insights generated from this study will contribute significantly to discussions about transportation and cultural accessibility within Malaysia’s arts sector, informing future policy decisions to foster greater community engagement with the performing arts. Table 1 shows the framework for Analysing Malaysian Performing Arts Venues.

Table 1
 Framework for Analysing Malaysian Performing Arts Venues

Research Component	Objective 1: Analyse the types of shows hosted at each theatre space and their relationship with public transport mobilities.	Objective 2: Assess the accessibility of public transport to selected performing arts venues in Malaysia.
Research Questions	What types of shows are hosted at selected performing arts venues, and how do they relate to public transport mobilities?	What are the barriers and challenges regarding public transport access for theatre-goers?
Research Methodology	Qualitative study involving literature review and thematic analysis.	Qualitative study involving literature review and thematic analysis.
Data Sources	Academic articles, relevant case studies, previous research findings related to public transport and the arts.	Academic articles, relevant case studies, previous research findings related to public transport and the arts.
Data Collection Methods	Comprehensive literature review to collate qualitative data.	Comprehensive literature review to collate qualitative data.
Analysis Technique	Thematic analysis to identify themes related to show types and transport mobility.	Thematic analysis to identify barriers and challenges in public transport access.
Expected Outcomes	Detailed qualitative understanding of the relationship between performance types and transport mobilities.	Insight into the accessibility challenges faced by theatre-goers.
Limitations	Reliance on existing literature which may include outdated information.	Lack of firsthand experiences from theatre-goers.
Contributions to the Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides a framework for understanding the relationship between cultural programming and transport accessibility. - Offers insights for policymakers and theatre managers to optimize public transport routes based on show types and audience demographics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identifies pressing accessibility issues that inform transportation policies and infrastructure developments. - Enhances understanding of public transport's role in promoting cultural participation and its socio-economic impacts.

3. Performing Arts in Malaysia: Venue Characteristics and Audience Engagement

Each performing arts space has its audience members and suitable performance styles tailored to the unique characteristics of the space. The quality of design and size of the venue can greatly impact the type of theatre productions it can host. For instance, a prominent theatre space equipped with cutting-edge technology may be conducive for larger audiences and grand-scale productions. Conversely, producing a large-scale performance in an intimate space presents significant challenges.

Istana Budaya stands as Malaysia's National Theatre, holding considerable status as it represents the Malaysian performing arts to the world. The architecture of Istana Budaya reflects Malay culture, such as the Malay house and palace, and the design was inspired by betel leaves (which is a significant plant for Malay in their everyday life) in 'Sireh Junjung' [14]. The lavish theatre Panggung Sari has a proscenium stage with 1,408 seats spread across three stories. The big space has made Istana Budaya one of the most expensive spaces to rent. Thus, bigger productions such as *Siti di Alam Fantasi* (2000 - 2020) and *Puteri Gunung Ledang The Musical* (2006 - 2009) are needed to accommodate the size and cost. More theatre professionals involved in Istana Budaya performances means more possibilities to get better products; involvement of renowned artistes such as Malaysian local film actors such as Amy Mastura and Puan Sri Tiara Jacquelina are other factors to be considered when selling the 1,408 seats. Most shows in Panggung Sari Istana Budaya have higher budgets, and in order to accommodate the space, variety types of shows are performed in the venue; they are musicals, children's theatre, national laureates plays, traditional theatres, and international touring productions. Another methodology used by local production is by using historical or political figures as the main theme of the performance. They are usually well-known in Malaysia and aim to promote theatre to a wider audience.

Notably, Istana Budaya has also hosted Muzikal Perdana performances that relate to Malaysian Prime Ministers, including *Muzikal Putra* (2007), *Muzikal Tun Abdul Razak* (2009), and *Muzikal Tun Mahathir* (2010) [18]. Istana Budaya also has a smaller performance space for smaller theatre groups - Lambang Sari. Lambang Sari is a semi-arena theatre that has 281 seats. In contrast to Panggung Sari, Lambang Sari is made for press conferences, rehearsals, and small-scale productions such as *Ram* (2007) by Universiti Teknologi MARA and *Sudirmania* (2014) by Revolution Stage. Since Istana Budaya is a National Theatre, it also promotes local traditional theatre such as Makyong. Norzizi says both performance spaces in Istana Budaya have been used to be the stage for *Mak Yong Raja Tangkai Hati* (2003), *Mak Yong Raja Besar Maha Gading* (2019) in the Panggung Sari and *Mak Yong Dewa Indera Indera Dewa* (2006) and *Mak Yong Raja Besar Senyanya* (2008) in Lambang Sari [20]. This is an important remark for the Istana Budaya's characteristic since Makyong was performed for villagers in Kelantan, and Istana Budaya has brought it to Istana Budaya for more viewers in Malaysia. Norzizi's Makyong work is one of the earliest traditional theatre shows in Istana Budaya. The theatre entitled *Anak Raja Gondang* was performed in 2002 when she was still a student in ASK (today it is called ASWARA), and the show is radically different from the original form since it has to use all the theatre technological advancements in Istana Budaya [4]. Most traditional shows are adapted to be a shortened version but maintain the original structure since the function is to cater to more audience members' spectatorship [5].

Panggung Bandaraya is another important theatre venue in Malaysia. Located in the heart of Kuala Lumpur, Panggung Bandaraya offers a proscenium space with 200 seats. Even though it is smaller than Panggung Sari Istana Budaya, the historical and heritage building of Panggung Bandaraya has its own quality and vibe since it was built during the colonial period. Another important feature that must be considered is the location of the space near Merdeka Square and the

historical Old City Hall of Kuala Lumpur. Variety types of performances have been done in Panggung Bandaraya, such as MUD: The Story of Kuala Lumpur (2014 - 2017), which can be considered the longest-running show in Malaysia; the theatre is also the venue for the Semarak Bangsawan series (2007-2016) - an event to promote Bangsawan traditional theatre. Even though Panggung Bandaraya is not a national theatre; the stage is also important in promoting traditional arts.

Hence, it attracts more different demographics of the audience. Istana Budaya is typically associated with social status. When crowds are required to wear formal attire, Istana Budaya is typically associated with social status, making it less appealing to people less interested in attending elite shows. Istana Budaya may be proud of its technological specifications and social status. Even though Panggung Bandaraya has limited specifications compared to Istana Budaya, it suits the space size with a complete theatrical space with ample depth and wings. The proscenium space is the most common theatre space for the public since it incorporates wings that are open for more audience members, with considerable distance between actors and audience members [12]. It is now an alternative for productions that do not have a big budget to spend.

The Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre (KLPAC) is a privately owned theatre space. KLPAC has several performing spaces, such as Pentas 1, a proscenium with 504 seats, and Pentas 2, a black box with 210 seats. Some performances in the space are *Kebaya Jazz* (2019) and the annual Short + Sweet theatre event that has developed emerging theatre makers. The space is located in Sentul. Similarly, to Panggung Bandaraya, KLPAC is a historical building. However, it was built in the old National Railway (KTM) warehouse buildings. Performances are mostly in English, and because it is a private theatre space, it has more freedom to express its ideas, making it attractive to higher-income liberal and educated Malaysian audiences. Typical types of performances in the space are contemporary theme theatres with progressive narratives.

Another private venue is the Damansara Performing Arts Centre (DPAC). It has a proscenium theatre space (DPAC Theatre) with 200 seats and a black box that accommodates 120 audience attendance. Interesting features include the building in the Empire shopping mall. The mall is also attached to an apartment complex - making it a part of the lifestyle for the residents. DPAC attracts members of the audience who have interests similar to those of KLPAC. The venue hosts workshops, dances, public awareness campaigns, contemporary theatres, traditional theatres, and talks. DPAC has a lower rental rate than KLPAC, making it more accessible for more productions, including student projects. Some productions that have performed at DPAC are *And Then Came Spring* (2022), *Karya Lengkap Shakespeare: Abridged* (2014), *Teater 14 Februari* (2022), *Neo Romantik* (2014), and *Teater Kompilasi Namron Vol 2* (2014).

Each space has its own identity. They have different audience members and cater to different types of performances. The space's unique features are influenced by their history and the original function of the space before being transformed into a theatre. KLPAC is one of them, and it was a KTM train warehouse in the past. Some are originally made for theatre, such as Istana Budaya. Mainstream audience members prefer watching performances at government-owned theatrical spaces such as Istana Budaya and Panggung Bandaraya. The said venues are also promoting local traditional theatres on stage. Alternatively, public theatres embrace more progressive and contemporary performances. The audience members are promoting new ideas and are open to more discussions. This variety of theatre making and audiences in Malaysia are interesting to discuss. Table 2 shows the key attributes of theatre spaces. Table 3 illustrates the comparison of performing arts venues in Malaysia.

Table 2
 Key Attributes of Theatre Spaces

Theatre Space	Core Features	Target Audience
Istana Budaya	Advanced technology, large capacity, and high production value	Elite demographic, mainstream audiences
Panggung Bandaraya	Historical venue, flexible nature for various performances	General audience, culturally diverse
KLPAC	Multiple performance spaces, focus on contemporary themes	Higher-income audiences, progressive narratives
DPAC	Located in a shopping mall, versatile theatre spaces	Contemporary audience, engaged in social issues

Table 3
 Comparison of Performing Arts Venues in Malaysia

Venue	Capacity	Type of Space	Production Type	Show Examples
Panggung Sari Istana Budaya	1408	Proscenium	Grand Musicals, High-Cost Productions	Puteri Gunung Ledang The Musical (2006 - 2009), Siti di Alam Fantasi (2020)
Lambang Sari Istana Budaya	281	Semi-arena	Experimental, Local Productions	Ram (2007), Sudirman (2014)
Panggung Bandaraya	>200	Proscenium	Traditional Theatre, Musicals	MUD: The Story of Kuala Lumpur (2014-2017), Semarak Bangsawan (2007-2016)
KLPAC	Pentas 1 (504-seat) Pentas 2 (210-seat)	Proscenium/Black Box	Contemporary, Experimental, International	Kebaya Jazz" (2019), Short + Sweet" (Annual)
DPAC	Theatre (200) Blackbox (120)	Proscenium/Black Box	Contemporary, Public Awareness, Dance	And Then Came Spring (2022), Karya Lengkap Shakespeare (Abridged) (2014), Teater 14 Februari (2022), Neo Romantik (2014), Teater Kompilasi Namron Vol 2 (2014)

4. Location and Public Transportation Accessibility

Performing arts are important in shaping the city and its identity and promoting culture. Thus, discussing prominent performing arts theatre spaces in Klang Valley and public transportation sites will assist in designing the town planning process. Better accessibility may encourage cultural, arts, and heritage participation and appreciation. Mapping the space and public transportation areas may boost local economies. Public intention and development discussions are based on product-based methods or changing the institution [6]. In the research, however, approaches are related to public transportation accessibility in order to appreciate and develop more audience members who enjoy a theatre. Developed countries are better at making profits from arts and tourism. Bangkok is one of the best cities for building arts spaces with public transportation. Below is a table that showcases some performing arts theatre buildings in Klang Valley with transportation accessibility and notable features. Table 4 shows the transportation accessibility.

Table 4

Transportation Accessibility

Venue	Location	Transportation Accessibility	Notable Features
Istana Budaya	Jalan Tun Razak	Near bus stop and MRT station (2-minute walk)	Central cultural hub
Panggung Bandaraya	In the heart of Kuala Lumpur	Multiple bus stops; 5-minute walk from Masjid Jamek LRT	Surrounded by historical landmarks
Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre (KLPAC)	Sentul	Significant distance from nearest train stations	Vital for cultivating artistic talent
Damansara Performing Arts Centre (DPAC)	Empire Damansara Mall	Bus stop at the mall; nearest MRT station ~2 km away	Bustling environment with arts and retail experiences
Petaling Jaya Performing Arts Centre (PJPAC)	One Utama Shopping Mall	Close proximity to MRT Bandar Utama station	Expected to enhance accessibility despite higher rentals

Istana Budaya is Malaysia's most important theatre space since it plays the role of the Malaysian National Theatre. Located on Jalan Tun Razak, the theatre building is close to a bus stop and The Klang Valley Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) train station. It is a two-minute walk from the building. This accessibility factor may enhance the audience's attendance at the space. Istana Budaya was struggling with public transportation issues due to the lack of train links in the area (see Figure 1). The Tun Razak Road is also one of the most congested roads in Kuala Lumpur, making it less appealing for people to drive to the place. However, recent public transportation developments have made it better - more people can visit the space. This has added more significance to Istana Budaya as a hub to promote Malaysian culture to the world and provide great international works for locals by bringing overseas renowned touring theatres to Istana Budaya.

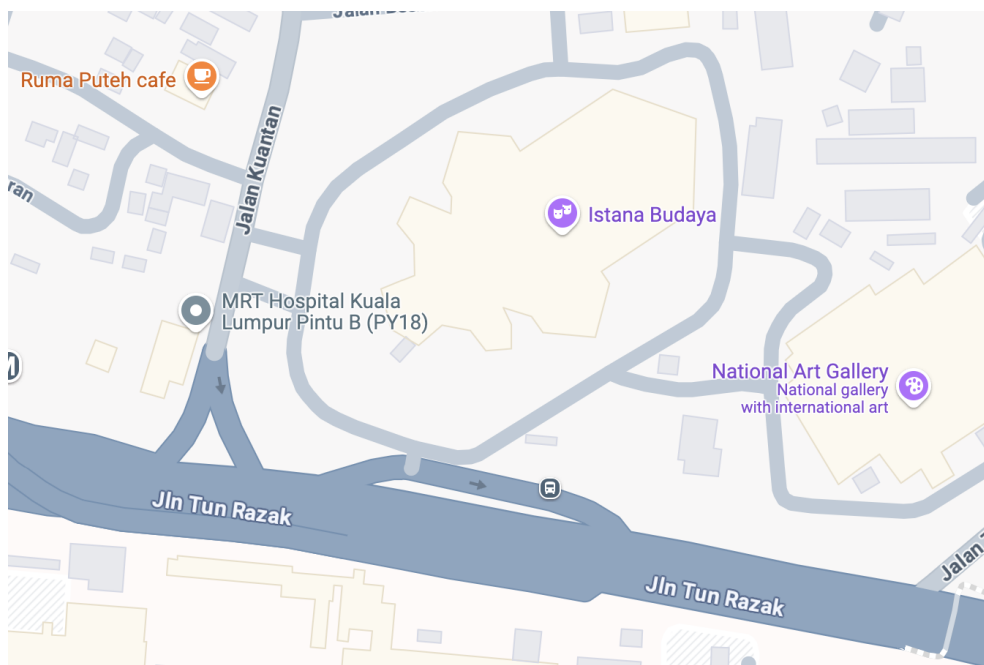


Fig. 1. Istana Budaya and MRT HKL

Panggung Bandaraya is surrounded by historical buildings nearby, such as the Sultan Abdul Samad Building and Dataran Merdeka (see Figure 2). Located at the heart of Kuala Lumpur, it is one of the most well-planned areas since the space was built in the colonial era. There are bus stops in the areas within a five-minute walking distance from Masjid Jamek Light Rail (LRT) station. This situation has

made visiting Panggung Bandaraya an experience of enjoying local cultures in a city. Panggung Bandaraya hosts traditional theatres and modern shows for most theatre viewers and practitioners in Malaysia and promotes arts and culture.

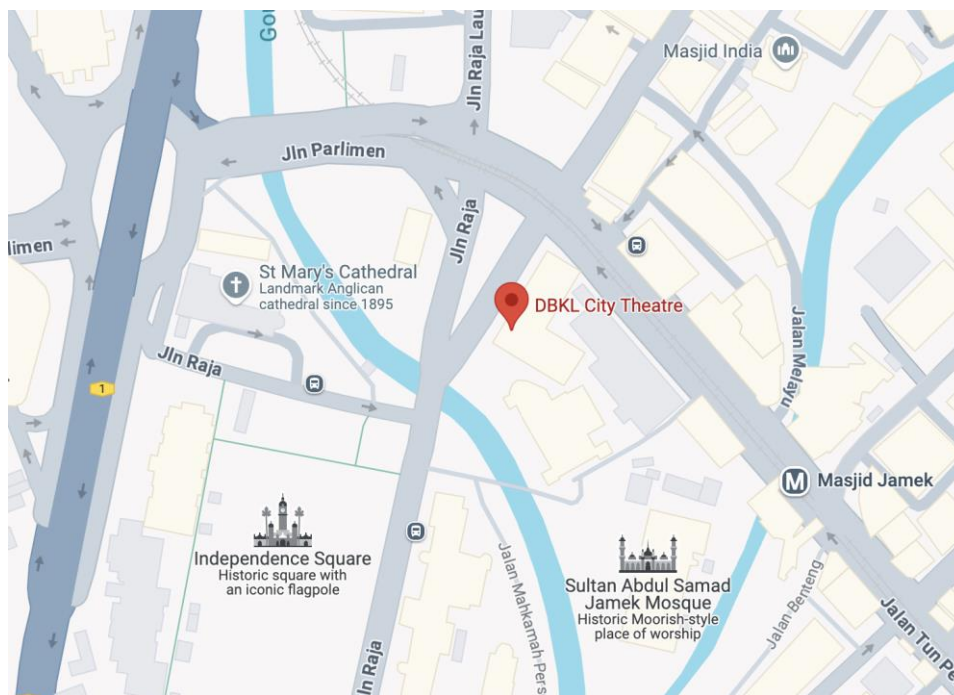


Fig. 2. Panggung Bandaraya is surrounded by iconic historical buildings. Close to LRT Masjid Jamek

Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre (KLPAC) faces some accessibility challenges since it is located in Sentul (see Figure 3). The distance to the train station is far, and you must walk longer, making it difficult to comprehend. However, the experience of walking from the nearest train station to the theatre building is surrounded by nature. Halfway through the journey, an exhibition space called Sentul Depoh provides sightseeing for people. It might not be as great as the train station to Panggung Bandaraya, but the theatre company has made an effort to make the KLPAC compound more interesting for walking. Due to these factors, most viewers prefer to use taxis, e-hailing, and own cars to the place. Nonetheless, KLPAC has and continues to nurture emerging and experienced local theatre makers through its programmes. Most of the workshops are done by professionals, making it an added value to the theatre. Visiting KLPAC will not be a big issue for their audience members, who are mostly higher-income educated liberals. They are open to new ideas and will always support arts even though public transportation for the place is not readily available nearby. KLPAC has loyal audience members who assist it in sustaining its place today, even with challenges in the past, including the COVID-19 pandemic.

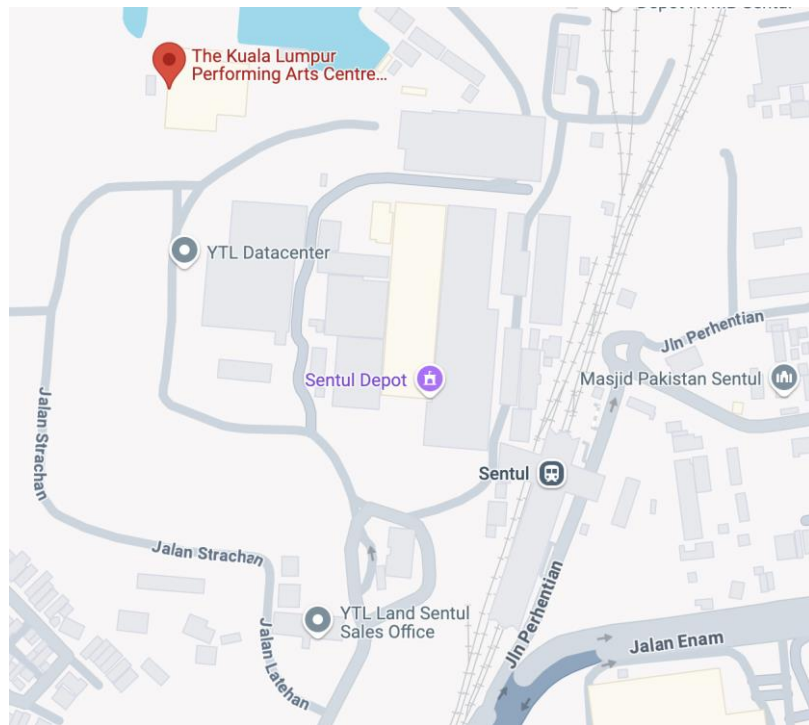


Fig. 3. KLPAC is further from Sentul LRT

The Damansara Performing Arts Centre (DPAC) is another private performing arts space (see Figure 4). It is located in Empire Damansara Mall, a residential apartment complex. The train stations are further away from the building, so audience members must consider walking about two kilometres from the station to the DPAC. Most DPAC audience members prefer to use personal transportation rather than public transportation. However, the environment is good, as it is part of a big mall with a very decorative design, making it captivating for the public.



Fig. 4. The closest train station is Mutiara Damansara

The recent opening of Petaling Jaya Performing Arts Centre (PJPAC) in One Utama Shopping Mall proves Malaysia is looking forward to promoting arts in the future (see Figure 5). PJPAC has more to offer than DPAC, which is not really far from each other. It is close to an MRT station and in a bigger mall that has been iconic since the 90s - One Utama. However, the rental rate is higher than that of nearby theatrical buildings. Still, improvements in accessibility at KLPAC have made it better than its counterparts. Even though the space is still new, the closure of Istana Budaya for two years for the renovation process has made PJPAC one of the main theatre spaces for Malaysia, with more people coming to the space with more diverse backgrounds. The Bandar Utama MRT station is strategically located and has access to amenities and attractions. More people are deciding to live in nearby residencies [16]. This factor contributes to PJPAC being one of the most promising and easy to access in Klang Valley.

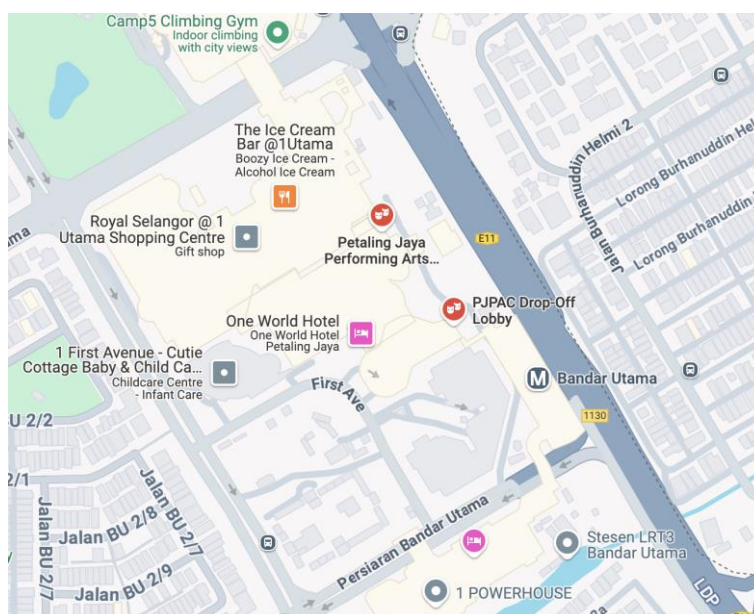


Fig. 5. PJPAC is built in the iconic One Utama Mall. Close to MRT Bandar Utama

More new space means more public transportation is needed nearby. PJPAC has made significant progress because building nearby public transportation may increase the number of audience members. Some new shows in DPAC are hardly getting audiences compared to before the opening of PJPAC. Most of them prefer watching performances in PJPAC because of the location of the public transportation. This may also enhance other businesses nearby and boost the economy. Table 5 shows the impact versus Outcome.

Table 5
 Impact versus Outcome

Impact of Accessibility	Potential Outcomes
Better public transportation options	Increasing audience attendance
Improved information about venue accessibility	Broader demographic reach
Proximity to other cultural and commercial sites	Synergistic economic benefits

Performing arts have been developed more in Klang Valley with the emergence of theatre spaces and the Malaysian mission to improve public transport. This is because people choose not to attend

an event if it is higher for those within 40 km with more goods [19]. Some venues have great public transportation links with short and easy walking routes. Other places have issues for people because they are further away from the stations. Improving accessibility may also enhance cultural, arts, and heritage appreciation and increase audiences, improving the incomes of people involved in performing arts.

Klang Valley has the potential to revitalize the cultural landscape by improving public transportation infrastructure and line connections. Collaborations from various parties, especially governmental bodies and private sectors, may enhance the Klang Valley as a capital for the Malaysian art scene. Strategic planning and investments are crucial to unlocking this potential, and if done properly, it may challenge other capitals in Southeast Asia.

5. Conclusions

Performing art spaces in Klang Valley offer diverse shows for different audiences. They all have their own followers based on performance trends at the spaces. Some may align their shows to be more commercials, and some may produce shows for alternative viewers. Malaysia's government, with its National Culture Policy (DAKEN) 2021 and Malaysia Creative Industry Policy (DIKN) 2010, focuses on promoting local arts that do not trigger race, religion, and royal sensitivity since Malaysia is a multiracial country. Hence, the core values in public commission spaces are fostering national pride and unity.

In contrast, private spaces such as KLPAC and DPAC offer alternatives regarding show types, audience members, and business models. Productions choosing private spaces to perform their shows value more creative freedom. Thus, most mainstream viewers are not keen to watch performances in these spaces. Even though the companies work with their own funding, the Malaysian government offers grants and financial support for all performers as long as the proposal meets all the criteria for the funds.

Most private spaces were also built from repurposing abandoned buildings, such as KLPAC, an old railway station. Recent spaces such as PJPAC and DPAC were built to support the lifestyles of the main buildings of the malls, One Utama and Empire Damansara. In addition to this factor, the spaces are also close to public transport compared to KLPAC, which was not built in a mall.

The Greater Kuala Lumpur MRT project has benefited the iconic Istana Budaya. In the past, the Istana Budaya was isolated from public transportation. This situation has made the place more accessible and may generate more new viewers with broader economic, social, and demographic. More research needs to be conducted based on the space relationship between public transportation stations and spectatorship topics in order to study it in a broader context and field of studies. The dynamic and engagement may produce different answers and are crucial to making the Klang Valley a better place to stay since it offers lifestyles from better-performing arts space accessibilities.

Understanding these complexities will enrich the discourse on performing arts in Malaysia and contribute to global conversations regarding cultural space utilization and its socio-economic implications. As the public transport network continues to expand, the potential for performing arts to attract diverse audiences and serve as a catalyst for economic growth will become increasingly pronounced, reinforcing the pivotal role of accessibility in fostering cultural engagement.

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