

Minister Martin Hamilton-Smith

Minister for Investment and Trade

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South Australia and Malaysia collaborate on arts festivals

Artistic, cultural and business collaboration is at the heart of an agreement between the Adelaide Festival Centre's OzAsia Festival and Malaysia's Georgetown Festival.

The Memorandum of Understanding was signed last night, witnessed by Minister for Investment and Trade Martin Hamilton-Smith and the Chief Minister of Penang Lim Guan Eng as part of the State Government-led trade mission to South East Asia.

"The Georgetown Festival and OzAsia Festival have established themselves as internationally significant arts festivals in the ASEAN and Pacific regions, attracting attention from the international arts industry," Mr Hamilton-Smith said.

"The Georgetown Festival is an annual, month-long celebration of arts, culture, heritage and community, showcasing world-class performances, installations and collaborations from international and local artists alike.

"This Memorandum of Understanding represents a desire to provide mutual opportunities for each festival to collaborate, grow, share and exchange across artistic endeavours, government relations, business opportunities and audiences.

"Adelaide's OzAsia Festival is the only arts festival in Australia dedicated to showcasing the best dance, theatre, film, music, visual arts and cultural engagement from Asia."

Director of OzAsia Festival Joseph Mitchell said the partnership will foster collaborative programming initiatives, attract world leading artists and add an exciting new element to the Festival in Adelaide.

"It also allows us to help the Georgetown Festival while promoting our own Festival to the rest of Asia," Mr Mitchell said.

Adelaide Festival Centre CEO and Artistic Director Douglas Gautier said the Georgetown Festival is one of the pre-eminent Festivals in the Asian region and their desire to partner with OzAsia is recognition of the growing reputation of the OzAsia Festival in Asia.

"The partnership strengthens the Adelaide Festival Centre's program of Asian-Australian Culture engagement. It will improve the experience for our OzAsia audiences in Adelaide and it also allows us to grow exchanges, tourism and community engagement with Penang and Malaysia," Mr Gautier said.

Mr Hamilton-Smith said the Memorandum of Understanding builds on the existing sister city relationship between Adelaide and Georgetown which commenced back in 1973 and has been beneficial in promoting strong social, cultural and economic ties.

“The Malaysia leg of the trip was a key focus for the State Government in terms of investigating potential trade and investment opportunities,” Mr Hamilton-Smith said.

“Building on strong bilateral relationships, Australia and South Australia are well positioned to participate in Malaysia’s development through business and institutional involvement in areas such as infrastructure, food, healthcare, manufacturing, energy, agribusiness and the arts.

“This Memorandum of Understanding is exactly the sort of agreement we want to see struck as part of the State’s South East Asia engagement strategy.”