

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**FORMALISTIC AND CONTEXTUAL  
ANALYSIS IN MALAYSIA  
NEW MEDIA ART: 1990 -2013**

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## ABSTRACT

'New' is always new within its timing frame. The remarkable 'new' is fast developing and has obviously left traces on the uses of media. Nowadays, the media is always changing in order to achieve perfection thus giving implications to the living cultures. Our lives today have become more complex that eventually have caused confusion in the rise of new media. Hence, in Malaysia, this has also caused new media art in art scenario exist with less acceptance and understanding especially in the art scene. Malaysia Contemporary art rose in the late of 70's and new media art began in the late of 80's. During these time artists started to use data from computer technology to create a form of artwork. As time moves on, these form of artwork started to become complicated and confusing while the elements appeared complex and diverse especially since the 90's, and the beginning of multimedia era. Hence, established understanding of the concept, the formalist and its contexts are the objectives of making new media becomes refined and clear. Thus, historical observations and critics on new media artworks help to raise new appreciation, new understanding and new perspective in this new visual art form. This study has traced a few types of new media in Malaysia which concentrates in five dominant types that are consistently explored and experimented by Malaysian artists for instance Video Animation Installation, Website, Interactive Sound Installation, Digital Video Installation and Multimedia Performance Installation. Ultimately, Malaysia new media has raised double identities while technology (connected to common or conventional art) and non-technology (connected to data information) collaborated as one. Moreover, the use of medium among artists is progressing well as a form from static to beyond while soul and local wisdom are never left behind. Hitherto, visual language was extended from common visual art to diversity visual art whilst the heart of new media art is called *Database*. However, research in new media art in different disciplines such as technology and sciences need to be further explored due to it offering high promise of dynamic feature in art cultures in the future. Finally, Malaysian art is heading to hybrid art form towards 21<sup>st</sup> century in a diverse visual art form.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of study

The art terms, history, theories, and form of new media are what were driven to formulate this thesis. The terms in this research title discuss the meanings of new, media and new media. This research is also elaborating the historical aspects as well as defining the development of new media in Malaysia as a contextual observation toward the types and forms of new media existence and development. After all, the theory of new media has become a platform in defining the body of new media. Therefore, the focus is with the mode of three-dimensional through technology that diverse with variety of disciplines that direct to the form of new media concept, formalistic and contextual.

The terminology of art has developed through media exploration, for instance, previously artist whom had used watercolor painting with the technique of wet on wet, or oil painting with impasto and others. However, when the wave of technology came, the artist started to explore technology medium in order to stylize their form of art into technology and expanding an art thought. Thus, new influence such as new media has been adapted into art discipline and the terms started to change according to a new perception of thought. Since the artist has started to explore new media, introductions to the term have provided some hints for the spectators to understand what new media means. Hence, this research tries to elaborate the relation or connection of new media towards the world of art and the world of technology. However, history background in international history development becomes a general overview and Malaysia history background becomes a specific discussion to generate two contextual perspectives. Yet, art style has also developed through historical background for instance.

Globally, art is popular with various styles such as pop art, abstract expressionist and many more however in Malaysia, art has been introduced by Penang Art style. Hence, history overview has highlighted the emergence of new style when the form and technique have changed. Plus, in historical overview, it is easy to trace or to define the artworks or artifact for analysing. It can also give some recognition and introducing pioneers to the public and sketching out their existence. On top of