

Iconic 'Utan' sculpture unveiled at Sandakan Harbour Square

By Winnie Kasmir

SANDAKAN: The 'Utan' sculpture set up in Sandakan Harbour Square was unveiled yesterday in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of Sabah's Independence celebration.

The sculpture was commissioned following a nationwide design competition last year and is set to be Sandakan's iconic tourism landmark for Malaysians and tourists alike.

Michael Kwa Wei Choon's winning design entitled Utan won him first prize from a total of 61 entries received for the Sandakan Sculpture Competition 2012.

"My sculpture symbolises the nation's pride towards Sandakan as a famous eco-tourism destination in South East Asia. The abstract geometric form personifies an 'orang utan' on all fours, with the recessed curve representing the primate's face," Michael explained.

Michael, 28, an art lecturer from an international school in Kuala Lumpur won the RM18,000 cash reward followed by Daniel Tiong Wei Wen, who took RM5,000 for the second prize with his 'Mountain in Coils' design while third prize winner, Husna Adlyna binti Sidek won herself RM3,000 with her design



(From right) Kwa, Wong, Wong's wife and Lai standing in front of the new iconic sculpture.

entitled 'The Tree'.

Michael joined the president of Sandakan Municipal Council (SMC), Datuk James Wong and managing director of ICSD Ventures Sdn Bhd, Lai Voon Hon, as they unveiled the larger-than-life sculpture in Sandakan Harbour Square.

According to Lai, the judges liked the cutting edge design as it denotes Sandakan's fast progression to becoming a vibrant Nature's City. The contemporary interpretation of 'Orang Utan' is also very unique and most importantly, it takes into consideration factors such as relevance and practicality.



The winning sculpture design entitled 'Utan'.