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KL hotel turns salvaged parts into sculptures

MALAYSIANS, visitors and tourists alike will find an unusual point of interest amid the ceaseless traffic in Kuala Lumpur city if they are on foot, on the monorail or driving along Jalan Sultan Ismail towards Bukit Bintang.

Specifically, EQ Plaza, the renovated, rebranded and remarkable structure that used to be Equatorial Hotel, now in its latest iteration.

At a spot sandwiched between the hotel's driveway entrance and the glass doors to EQ's vast and bright lobby is one of two new sculptures by renowned artist Nizam Abdullah.

Nizam is the force behind NizamSculpture Studio, which has produced Instagram-worthy sculptures dotting public spaces, from figurines in Platinum Park, KLCC, birds in Eco World in Jalan Kuching, to seahorses at Queensbay in Penang.

The modernised EQ is already a conversation piece not just for its anticipated official launch next month — a celebration that promises guests the full experience of the 51st floor rooftop dining experience — but also for the collection of art within.

These latest sculptures at EQ's curving driveway that were unveiled recently add to the expe-



Langerwey (left) with one of the latest sculptures from Nizam (right) that is gracing the porte cochère of Equatorial Plaza. — RAJA FAISAL HISHAN/The Star

rience that is EQ, with regulars having waited seven years during the extensive renovation for the return of restaurants such as Nipah and Kampachi and the former nightclub, Blue Moon.

General manager Robert Lagerwey said the hotel's commissioning of pieces from Nizam was part of the celebration of its transformation while recognising the hotel's family-

founders' and management's vision.

The unveiling of the two sets of sculptures was marked with the screening of a video at the event, entitled "The Making of Magnificence" (which can also be viewed on YouTube).

"We salvaged some of the metal from the rubble of the old hotel and approached Nizam to use it," said EQ chief executive officer C L

Donald Lim.

Nizam, who took four months to create both sets of bronze sculptures, related how he wanted to immortalise the metal from the old hotel into the new building.

The pieces, one entitled *Sorok Sorok* depicting children playing hide and seek and the other entitled *Miza, Kika and Iwa* (an interpretation of 17th century Japanese folklore adage "see no evil, hear no

evil and speak no evil") were first conceptualised with sketches and fabricated with clay carvings before the incorporation of fibreglass and finally, bronze that had been treated to accelerate the effect of the greenish tinge, poured into a master mould.

This artistic collaboration between EQ and Nizam Abdullah, said Lagerwey, helps to represent the joy and unity of the multi-