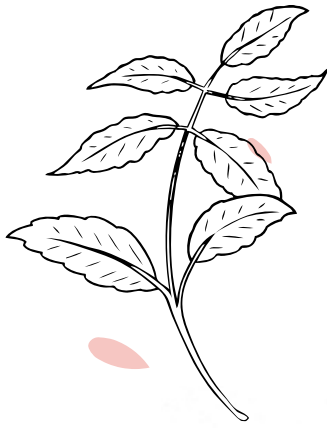


# Melaka Shophouse

**FADHILLAH MOHD NASIR**

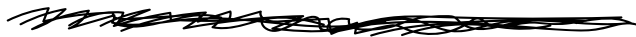


# Melaka Shophouse



Sketch by: Raja Intan Roslyana Binti Raja Rosely

FADHILLAH MOHD NASIR



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Writer

Fadhillah Mohd Nasir

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# Preface



This book is dedicated to present the architecture of Melaka Shophouses, each of which has its own distinct character. The subject of Measured Drawing includes an extensive study on shophouses. Shophouses are one typology identified within the scope of heritage building. With the use of photographs and sketches, the information is presented in a casual but educational manner. Even though shophouse architecture is similar across Malaysia, such as in Pulau Pinang, however Melaka shophouses have distinct styles that enhance the character and personalise its urbanscape. This e-book may help essential understanding with this typology.

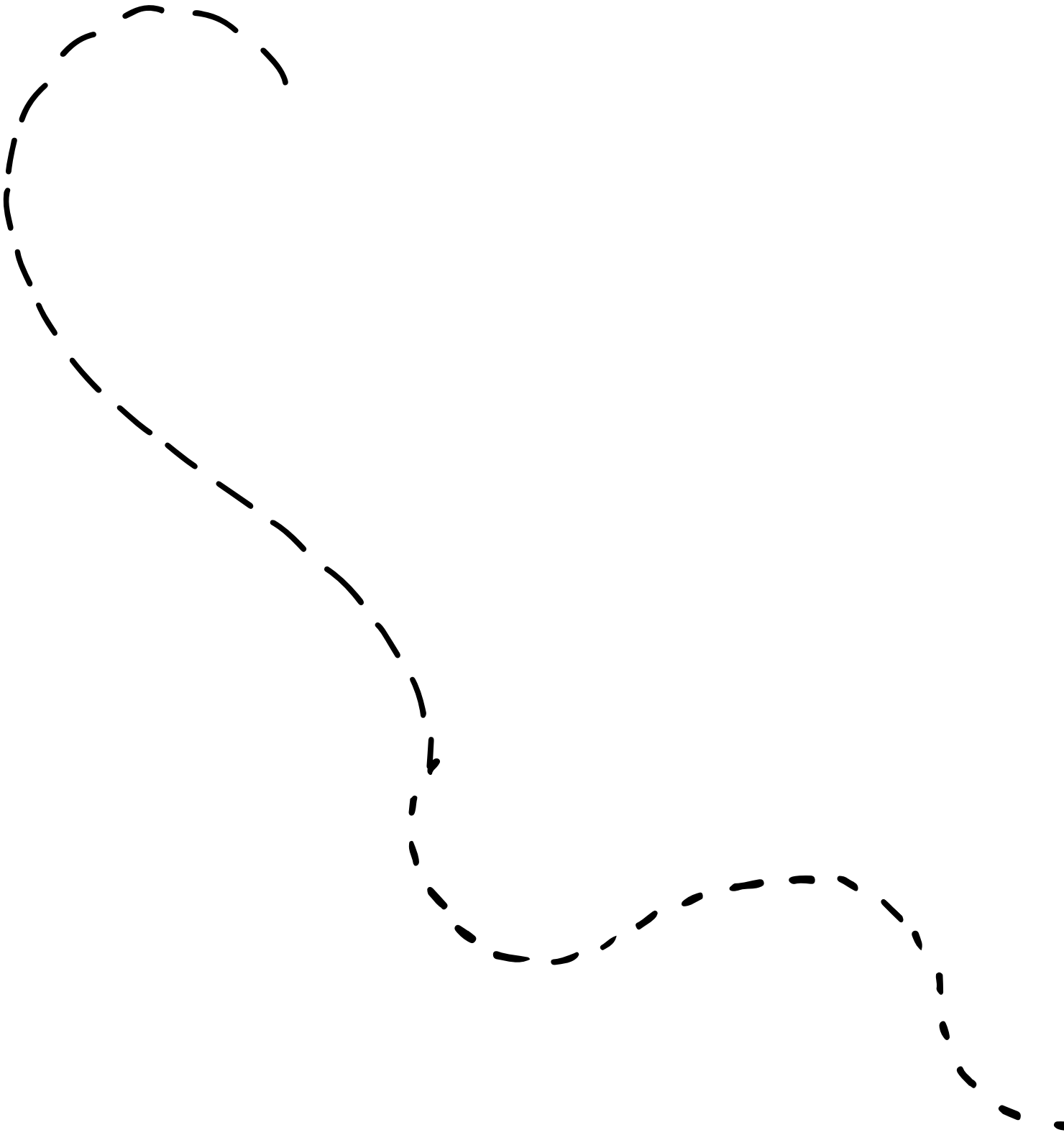


Sketch by: Muhammad Solihin Bin Ali

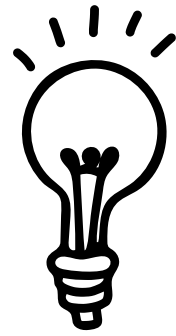
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# Early History



Many settlements arose as ports and service centres at strategic coastal and riverine locations. Ports that were strategically located and had the power to command local trade grew into regional and inter-regional trading markets, such as Melaka.

Melaka was a bustling meeting place for traders from China, India, Arab and European countries during the 16th century. Melaka has become one of the region's largest international trading ports, particularly in Southeast Asia and the world in general, due to its geostrategic location on an important maritime route from Europe, Africa, South Asia, and the Middle East to East Asia.



Old illustration; port of Melaka in 18th century.

Source: <https://images.app.goo.gl/9dsoMJ6jPoVMPEC39>



French navigator Cyrille Pierre Théodore Laplace  
visiting Melaka between 1833 and 1839

Source: [http://www.lindahall.org/events\\_exhib/exhibit/exhibits/voyages/laplace3.shtml](http://www.lindahall.org/events_exhib/exhibit/exhibits/voyages/laplace3.shtml)

The port of Melaka held a privileged position in the East-West trading system. Aside from the favourable economic conditions, this is a location with many cultural imprints, serving as a crossroads for Eastern and Western civilizations. From the past to the present, multicultural influences can be seen in the state of culture, architecture, lifestyle and religion.

The colonisation of the Dutch, Portuguese, and English has left their own architectural legacy. Melaka's history includes Arabs, Chinese and Indian traders who came to trade and left respective cultural legacies behind.



The heritage building, which depicts life in Melaka during its heyday can inspire a vision of what architecture should be created to restore the atmosphere of humanity and culture within current urbanscape.

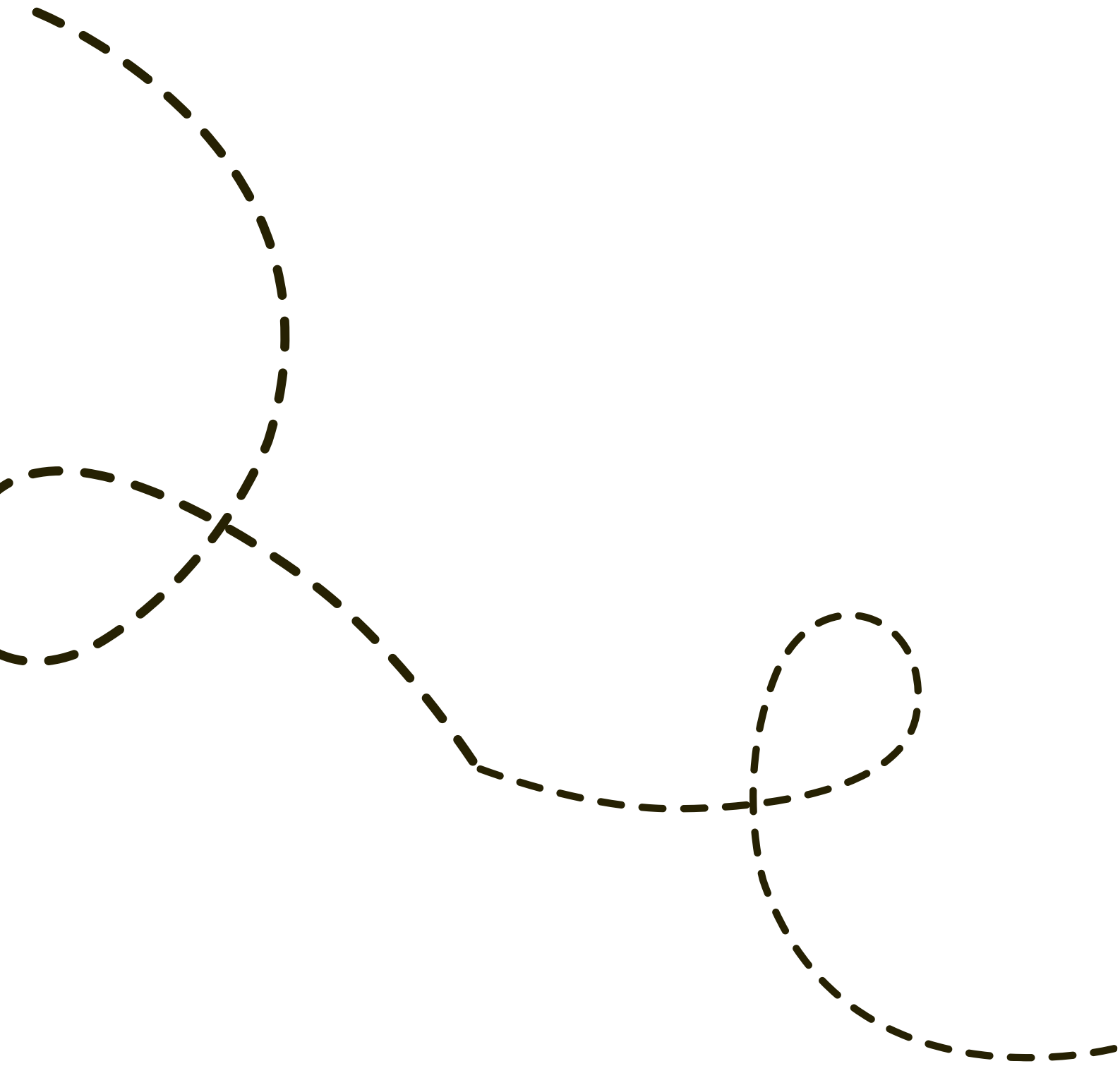
Culture of community at that time is reflected in the architecture as a result of what is happening around at that particular time. The significance of this building has shaped the image and identity of a region or location and particularly in this case, Melaka itself.

Architecture evolves in lockstep with the Portuguese, Dutch, and English eras, which began in the 15th century. Traders did contribute to architectural ideas like the architecture of the shophouse, as seen today.

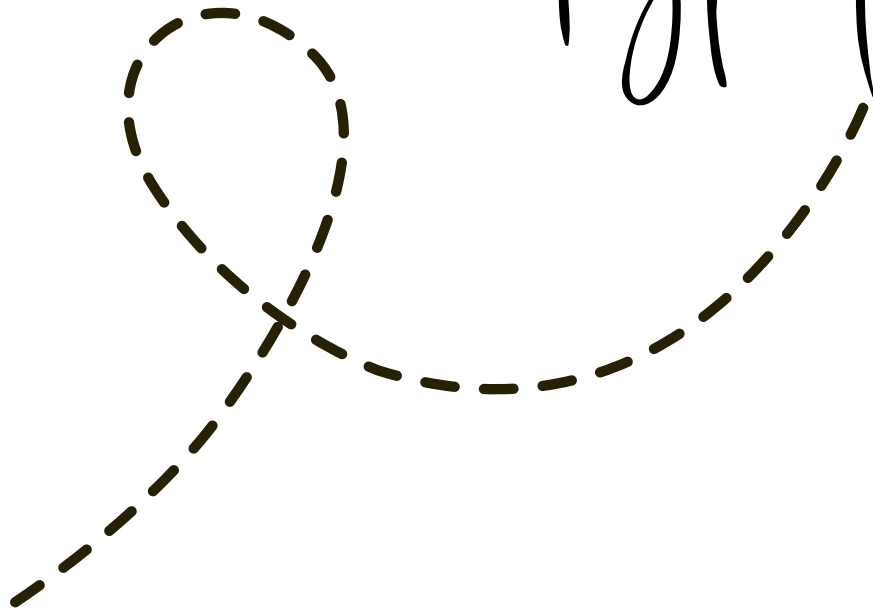
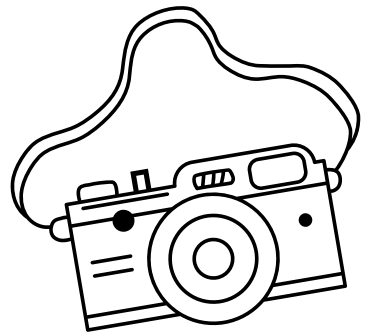
Vernacular shophouses (Malay: rumah kedai) are a type of architecture found in South East Asia, particularly in Malaysia and Singapore, and were built between the 17th and early 20th centuries. Local influences and colonial modifications in an effort to adapt to tropical climates resulted in the distinctive Chinese form of the shophouses.

Vernacular shophouses attempt to follow Chinese architectural rules of thumb: symmetrical, narrow layout, and air-well in-between spaces. A vernacular shophouse is a single, double, or triple-storey building with a width of 6 to 7 metres and a depth of 30 metres that can extend up to 60 metres, according to the modern definition.

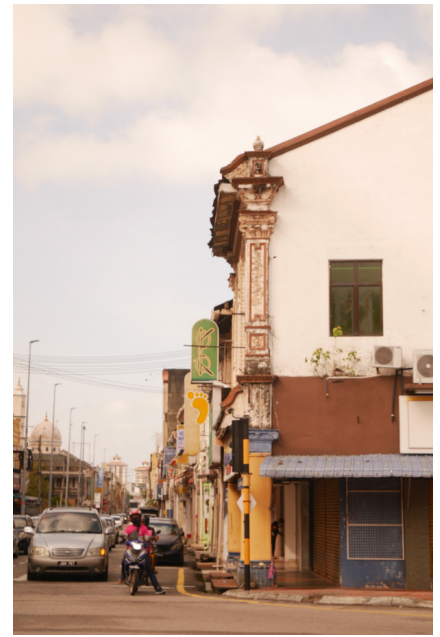




# The Typography

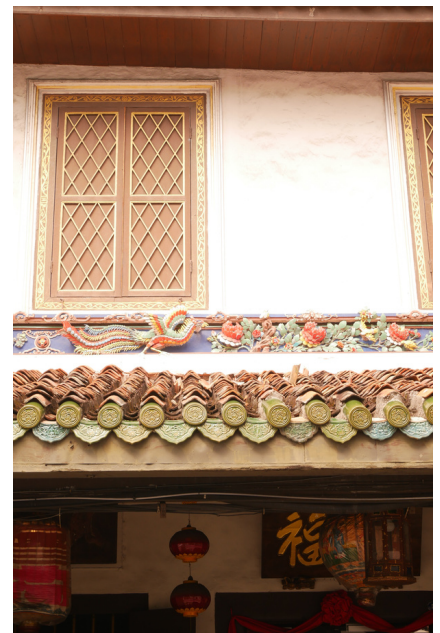






Melaka shophouses exhibit variety of characteristics and influences. Depending on the façade design and architectural features that complement the overall form, these shophouses can be classified into several styles. The styles are as follows:

- Dutch Style
- Early Straits Eclectic Style
- Late Straits Eclectic Style
- Art-Deco Style
- Early Modern Style





# Dutch Style

(Early 1870s to 1880s)



 **Lorong Bukit Cina**  
Melaka Tengah

# Character



- The earliest type primarily found in Melaka, on Jalan Heeren, Banda Hilir, Melaka.
- The Dutch first created these types of shophouses and townhouses in the 17th century
- The walls were made of Dutch-brick and lime plastered, and the roof was made of wood.
- Lower than other types of shophouses.
- One or two storeys in height with a simple façade design with limited openings on the upper floor.
- Simple façade design with minimal openings on the upper floor.
- Chinese clay curved for roof finishing.
- Sidewalk was not connected to the adjacent buildings thus this type of shophouse have private entrance porch.
- Walls were constructed using of Dutch-brick and lime plastered while roof structure were made of timber.



 **Jalan Heeren**  
Melaka Tengah



*Can you highlight the character?*



 **Lorong Bukit Cina**  
Melaka Tengah

*Simple façade design*



*Limited openings*



*Unconnected sidewalk*

# Early Straits Electric Style

(Early 1900s to 1940s)



**Jalan Tun Tan Cheng Lock**  
Melaka Tengah

# Character



- Constructed during the transitional period and built higher than the Dutch Style.
- Have the appearance of a native built-up art form from southern China, especially at the main entrance and adjacent windows on the ground floor.
- Buildings of the early Strait Eclectic Style are characterised by little decoration on their facades.
- Although the use of small plates of glass on shutters became more common later, the majority of doors and windows are still timber framed and shuttered.
- Transoms were arched or semicircular glass-filled transoms.
- Vents in squares or diamonds shapes were utilised between windows with an elegance architectural composition.
- Chinese clay curved for roof finishing.
- Symmetrical double entrance, a pair of windows, and bat shape vents are located on the lower floor wall.



- Many aspects of the classical style including pediments, pilasters, keystones, and arches, have been reinterpreted and changed to suit the vernacular vibes.
- Reinforced concrete was first used in the 1910s, allowing for larger roof overhangs and more complex cantilevered concrete decoration (consoles).
- A bipartite elevation with two windows was almost often observed.
- The structures were structurally complex with reinforced concrete lintels and beams, timber upper floor and tiled roofs.



 **Jalan Bunga Raya Pantai**  
Melaka Tengah



 **Lorong Bunga Cina**  
Melaka Tengah

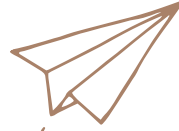
 **Jalan Haji Md Yasin**  
Jasin





## Jalan Haji Md Yasin

Jasin



*Can you differentiate between these architectural features ~ pediments, pilasters, keystones, and arches?*



## Jalan Masjid Tanah - Sungai Udang

Masjid Tanah





1919

Arched or semicircular transoms

Classical style

Chinese clay curved roof tiles

和興

Symmetrical entrance, a pair of windows



**Jalan Tun Tan Cheng Lock**  
Melaka Tengah

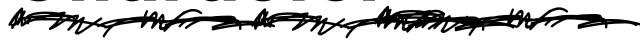
# Late Straits Electric Style

(1920-1940)



**Jalan Tun Tan Cheng Lock**  
Melaka Tengah

# Character



- The most ostentatious style, especially in terms of adornment.
- The three-part window on the façade reduces actual wall space while increasing natural ventilation.
- In a later version, wall surface was replaced with columns or pilasters that frame the windows.
- The constrained façade design inspired from a variety of ethnic customs.
- Malay timber fretworks wrapped the roof's eave and were typically coupled with Chinese panel frescoes.
- The brightly coloured ceramic tiles and plaster softly carved into bouquets, festoons, plaques and other intricate embellishments demonstrate the shophouse builders' inventiveness.
- The introduction of reinforced concrete in the 1910s allowed for large spans and ornate cantilevered ornamentation. This type of structure has a lot of brickwork, as well as wooden fenestration on the first floor and a tiled roof.

 **Jalan Hang Jebat**  
Melaka Tengah



*Can you recognise  
features such as  
festoons and frescoes?*



 **Jalan Tun Tan Cheng Lock**  
Melaka Tengah



Flamboyant  
parapet

Pilaster

Three-part  
window

Festoons

Chinese panel  
frescoes

MALAJA HOUSE  
museum sdn. bhd



# Art Deco Style

(1930s-1960s)

 **Jalan Hang Kasturi**  
Melaka Tengah



# Character

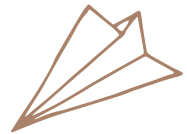



- Art Deco was a prominent decorative style from the 1930s until the 1960s.
- Straight lines are utilised in combination with other geometric elements thus emphasis the building's strong vertical or horizontal elements.
- A granulated render based on Shanghai Plaster was introduced at this period and quickly became popular.
- The preceding style's lavish classical adornment was significantly reduced, and in some cases completely removed.
- The windows were clustered in groups rather than the traditional three bays as seen in earlier shop house styles (casement shutters).
- Metal frame windows and a clearly marked construction date on the building's exterior are indeed typical of this design period.
- Reinforced concrete masonry or Shanghai plaster were used as finishing in this shophouse design.
- Incorporate towering pediment or staggered parapet walls with flagpole.

 **Jalan Masjid Tanah -  
Sungai Udang**  
Masjid Tanah



*Can you spot the different  
character of Art Deco  
style?*



 **Jalan Datuk Naning**  
Alor Gajah





**Jalan Masjid Tanah -  
Sungai Udang**  
Masjid Tanah

*Flagpole*

*Towering pediment or  
staggered parapet walls*

*Construction date*

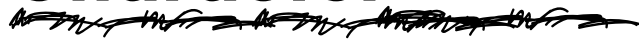
*Clear vertical  
and  
horizontal  
elements*

# Early Modern Style

(1950s-1990s)



# Character



- It encompasses a wide range of movements, ideologies, and attitudes whose modernism is anchored in a shared drive to reject past building and it follows the growth of western art and architecture from the late 1800s through the 1920s and 1930s.
- A simpler approach to architectural design that was built on reasoning, form by character and aesthetic quality derived from the form of simplicity.
- The abstract combination between solid surfaces and wide, clear carved holes, rather than applied adornment or embellishment
- Local elements were not overlooked in the shift away from quaint but were used to create a distinct modern style.
- Structures in this style uses reinforced concrete, curvy elements are introduced as the building material is able to have that kind of form.

 **Jalan Hang Jebat**  
Melaka Tengah



*Can you witness the simplified character of Early Modern Style?*



 **Jalan Bunga Raya Pantai**  
Melaka Tengah



*Reinforced concrete,  
curvy elements*

*Simpler approach of  
architectural design*

*Solid surfaces, less  
embellishment*

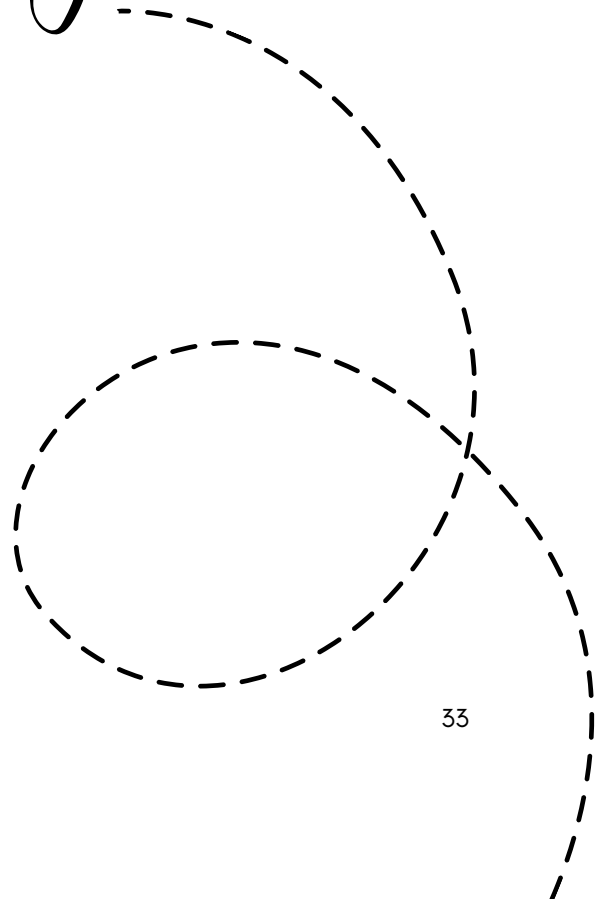
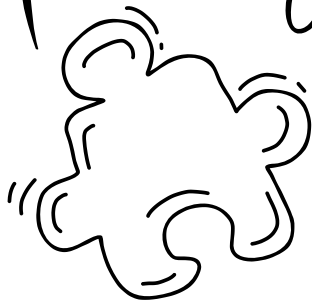
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Around Melaka ~  
Afor Gajah





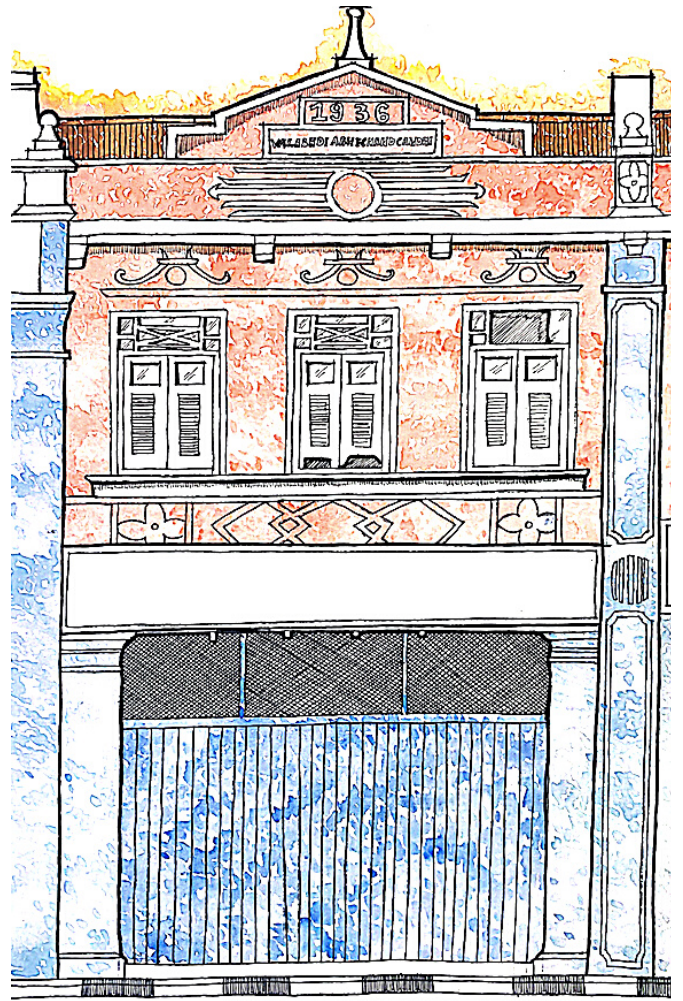
Before falling into the hands of Melaka, Alor Gajah was part of the Tampin district in Negeri Sembilan between 1832 until 1937. The name 'Alor Gajah' is thought to arise from folklore where the habits of herd of elephants led by a white elephant. Elephants in the herd have been said to like wandering along a the river creek. Consequently, villagers began to refer the area as Alor Gajah (Elephant's Creek) and that name remains until today.

**Lot 2735**  
Jalan Dato' Naning



Sketch by: Noor Akmal Danish bin Noor Azli

**Lot 2842**  
Jalan Dato' Naning

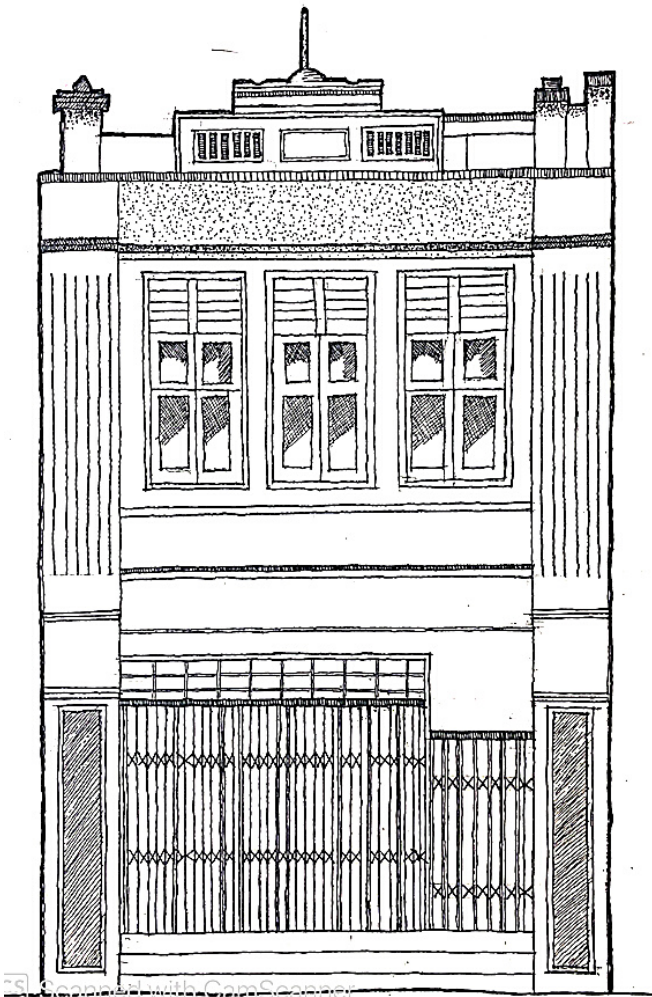


Sketch by: Izza Syahora binti Abdul Rauf

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*Spot them right  
Can you figure out which style it belongs to?*

**Lot 65**  
Jalan Kolam Air



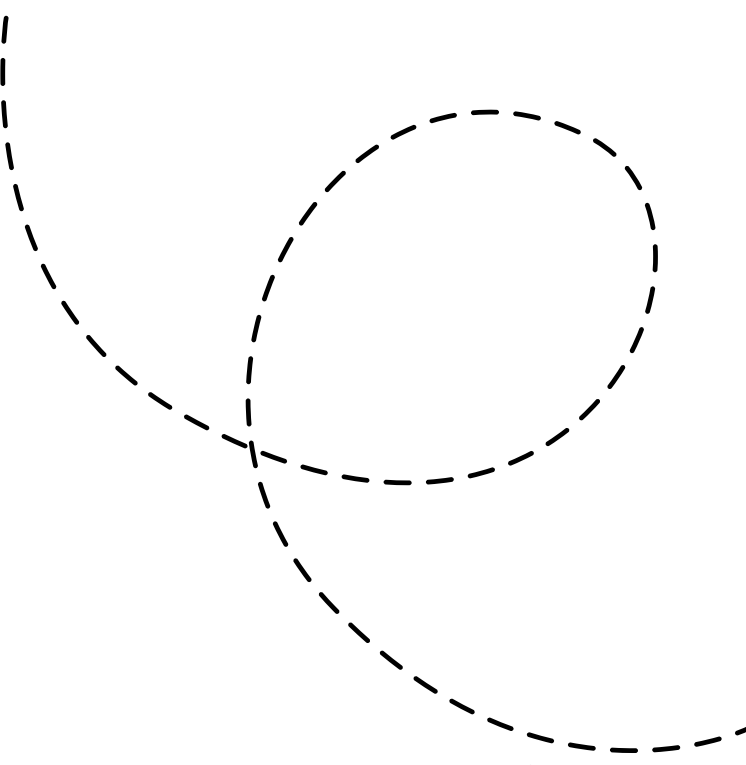
Sketch by: Farhana Nadirah binti Munawer

**Lot 74**  
Jalan Kolam Air



Sketch by: Abdul Latiff bin Abdul Razak





Around Melaka ~   
Masjid Tanah

Masjid Tanah is named for a mosque in the heart of town that was erected on riverbank. A Sheikh from Gujerat constructed the mosque in the 1800s. Initially, construction of the mosque was using compacted earth (*tanah*). As a result, the mosque is known as Masjid Tanah. The oldtown of Masjid Tanah used to be a hub-trade for goods being transported from Melaka to the northern districts such as Alor Gajah.

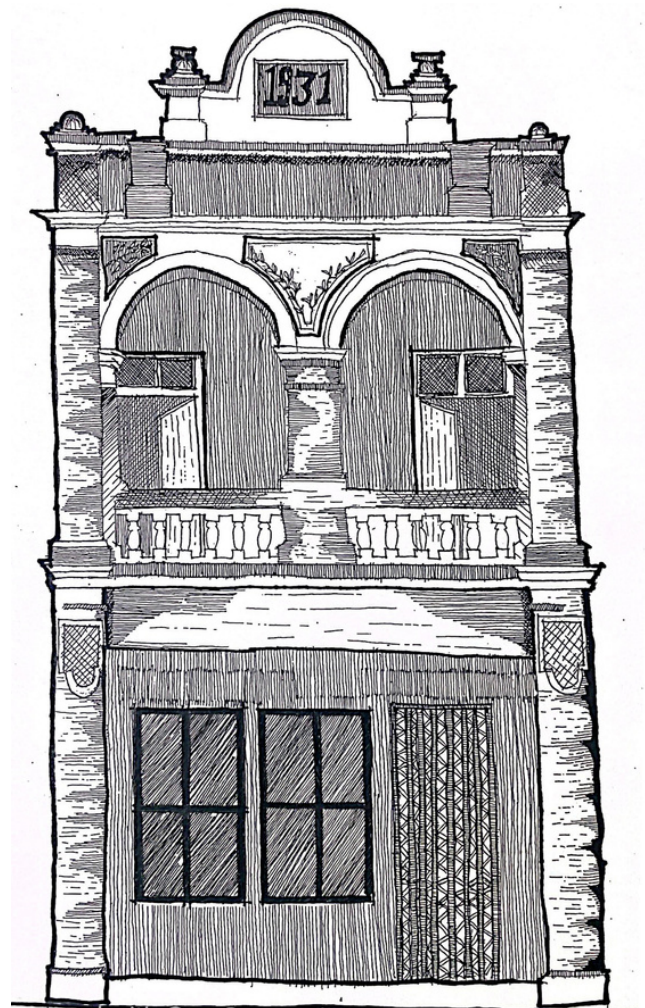


**Lot AG2552**  
Jalan Masjid Tanah



Sketch by: Aisyah Zulliyana binti Muhammad Lutpi

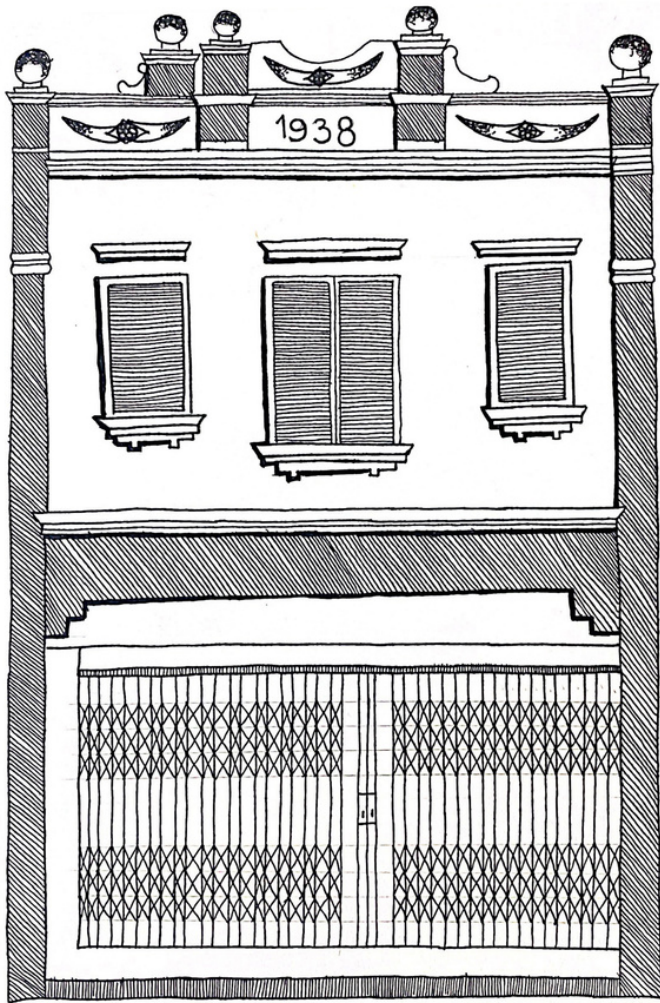
**Lot AG2663**  
Jalan Masjid Tanah



Sketch by: Muhammad Fauzi bin Abd Aziz

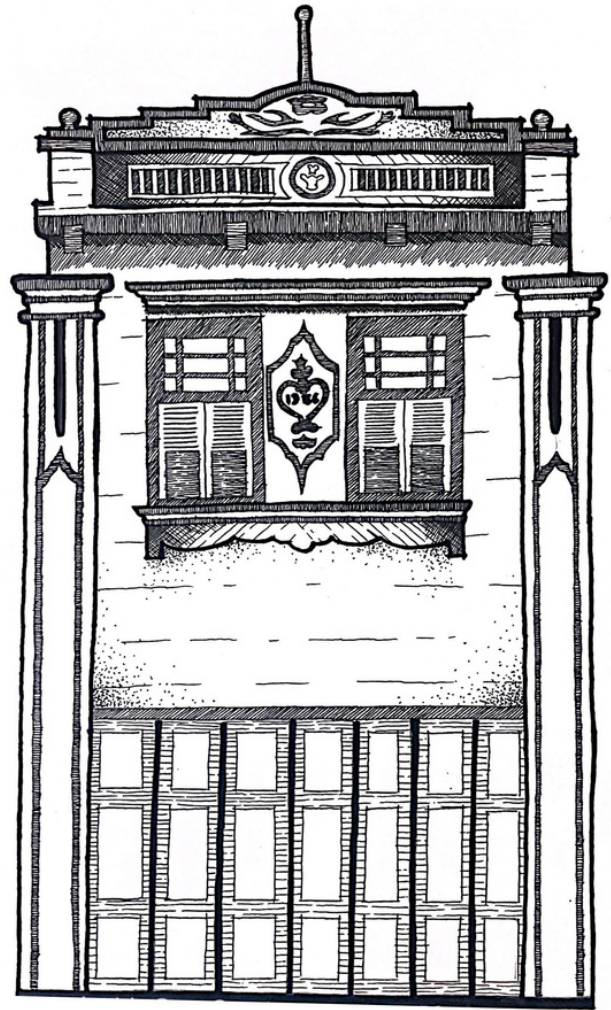


**Lot AG2945**  
Jalan Masjid Tanah



Sketch by: Siti Aishah binti Hassan

**Lot AG2945**  
Jalan Masjid Tanah

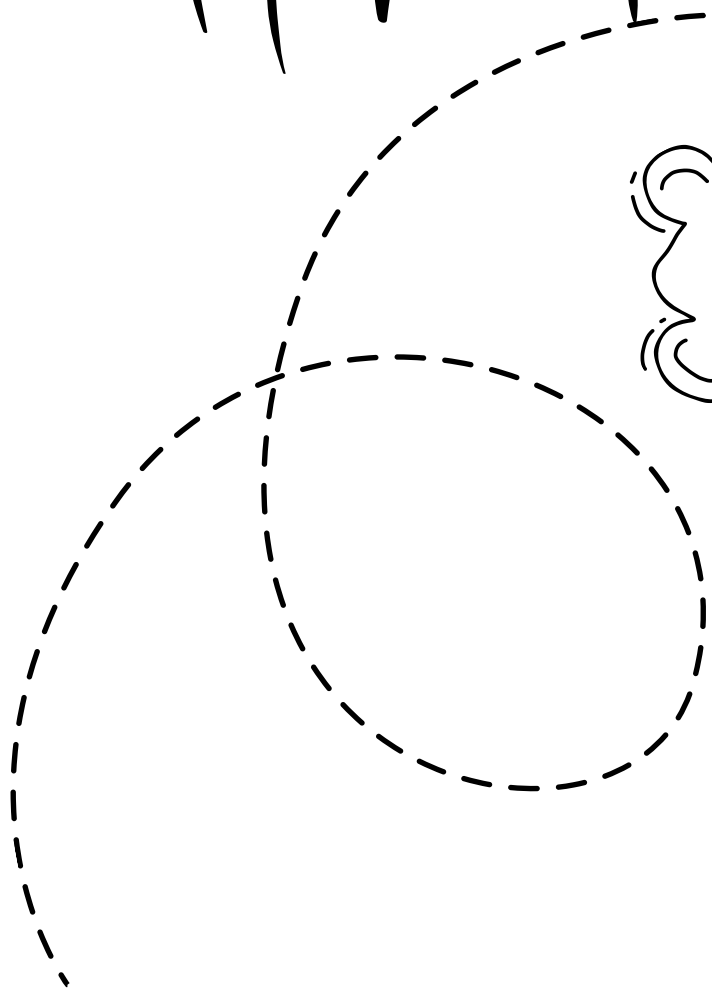
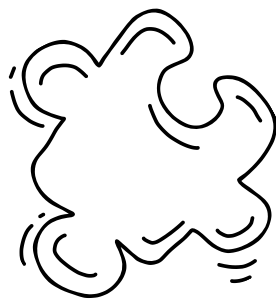


Sketch by: Muhammad Syafiq bin Md Hamim

-----  
*Spot them right  
Can you name certain architectural features?*



Around Melaka ~  
Melaka Tengah





Banda Hilir is located in Melaka Tengah. This is where one could see the diversity of architectural styles of shophouse. The construction that existed to this day portrays evident that this area was once a bustling trading hub by looking at the numbers of shophouses around Banda Hilir alone. This area held most of the Melaka shophouse typology. Among other districts in the state of Melaka, the earliest shophouses established in the 1870s might only be found in here at Banda Hilir, Melaka Tengah.

## Lot 39

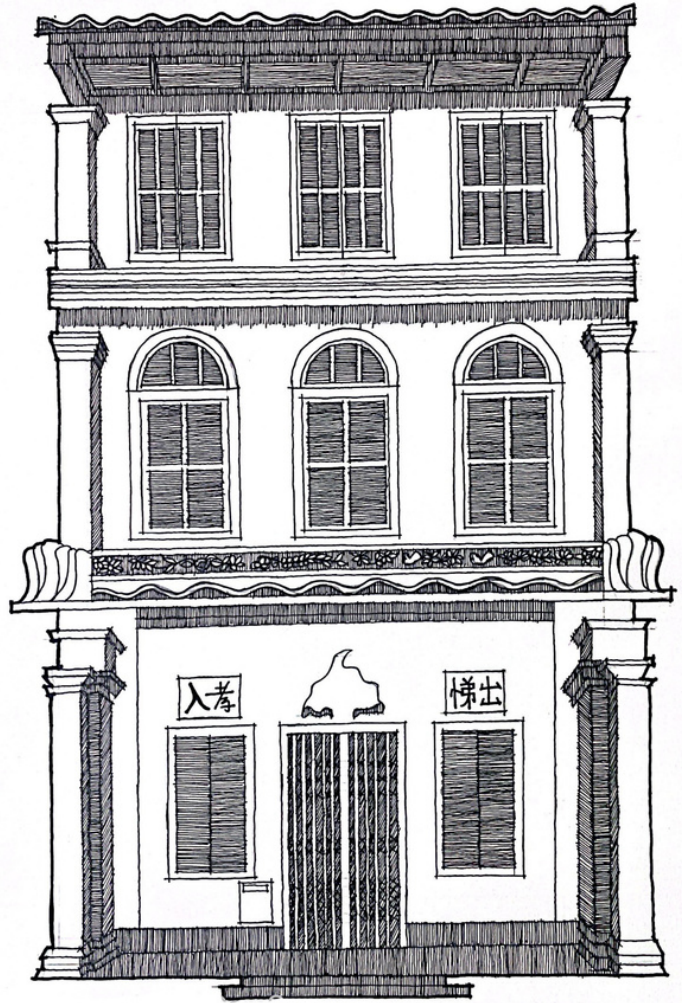
Jalan Hang Jebat



Sketch by: Ibni Nisha Hanna binti Azhar

## Lot 156

Jalan Tun Tan Cheng Lock

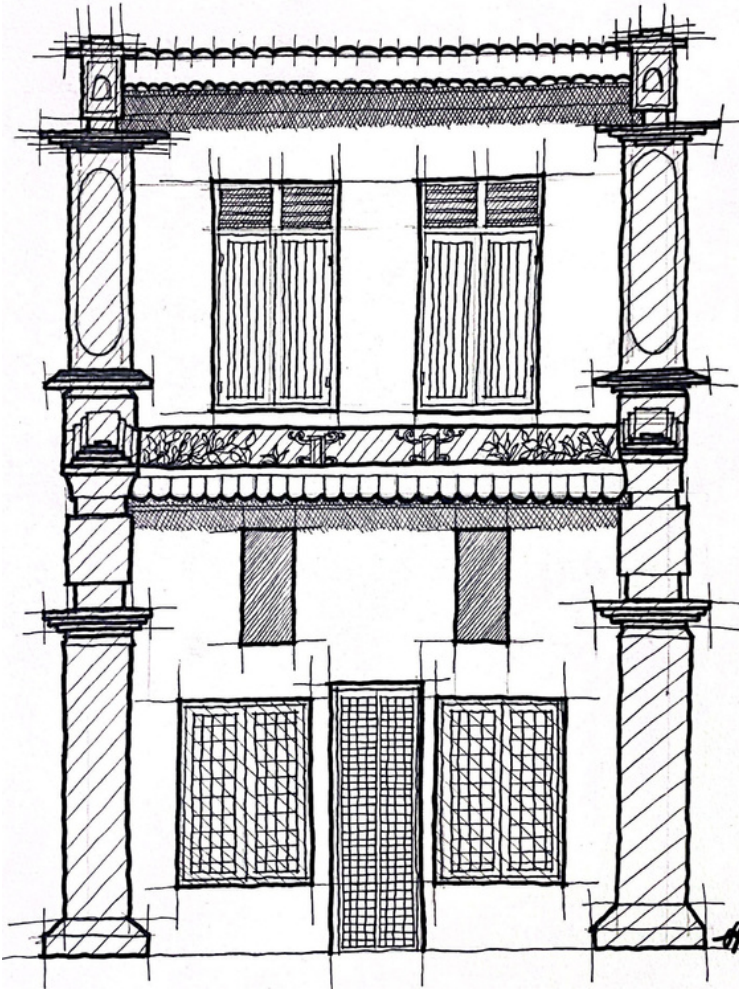


Sketch by: Nurul Syahizatul Jannah binti Wahab

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*Spot them right  
Can you distinguish between each styles?*

## Lot 167

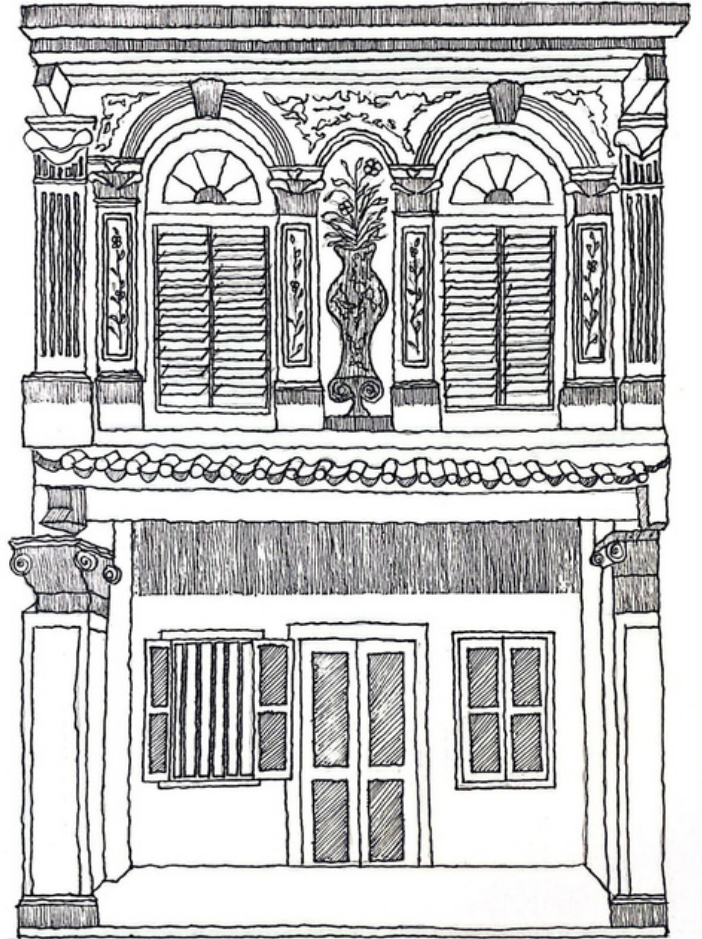
Jalan Tukang Emas



Sketch by: Mohamad Syukri bin Ahmad Rapi

## Lot 186

Jalan Tukang Emas

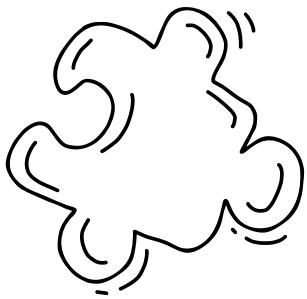


Sketch by: Siti Nor Izzati binti Mohd Ya



Around Melaka ~

Jasin

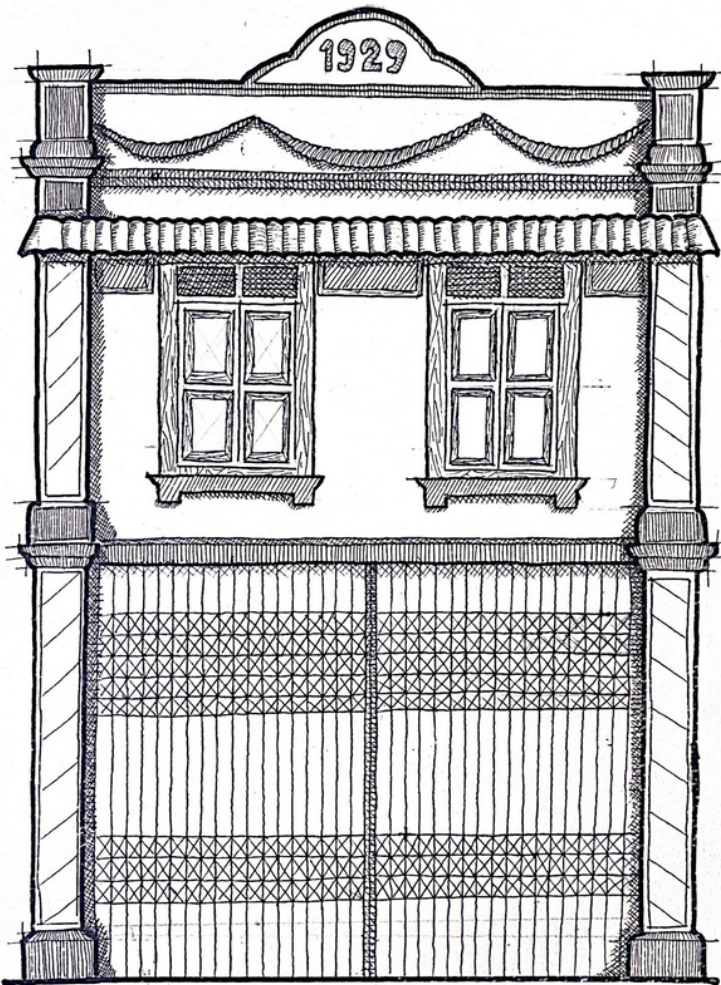


Jasin, located at the southern part of Melaka was formally known as a small agricultural community. Jasin grew as a result of an influx of immigrants engaged in the profitable trades the community offered. Many Chinese and Indian-Muslim immigrants decided to live in this area because they were able to find work as rubber tappers and tin miners. Rich Chinese and Indian-Muslim tycoons who controlled these tin mines and estates began building shop houses around the Jalan Haji Md Yasin and Jalan Demang Haji Abu intersection in the 1920s.



## Lot 12

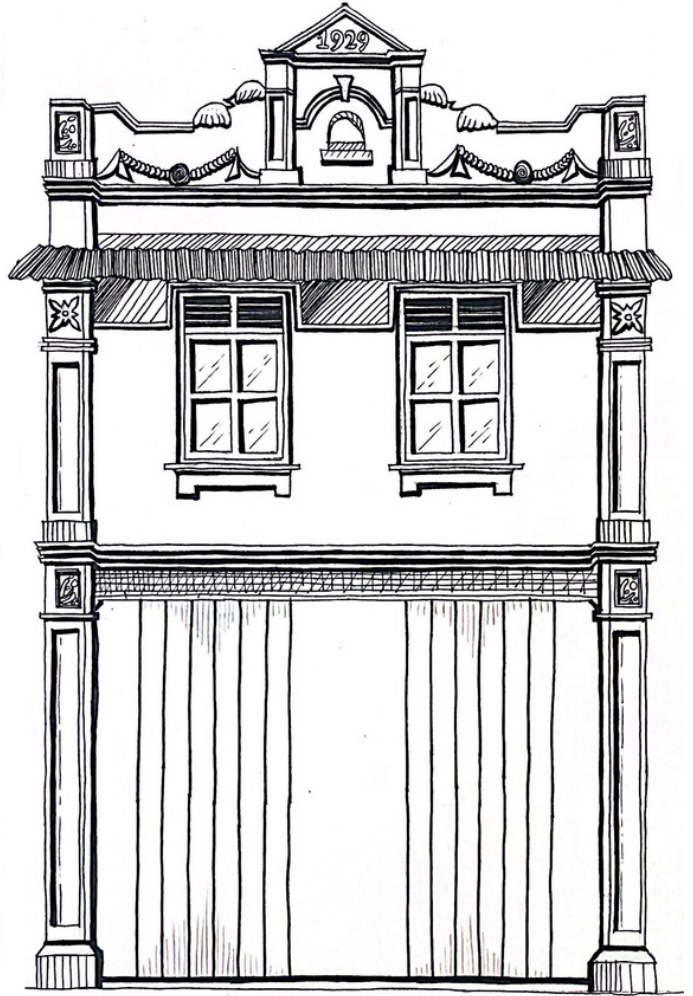
Jalan Haji Md Yassin



Sketch by: Mohammad Ridhwan bin Rasman

## Lot 13

Jalan Haji Md Yassin

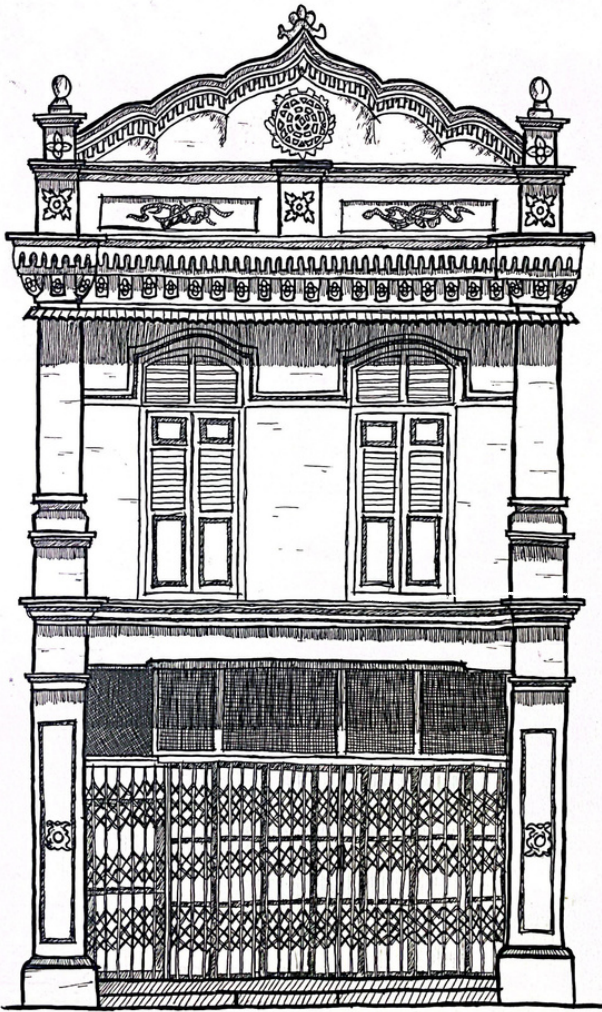


Sketch by: Amirah Nazurah binti Zamili



## Lot 23

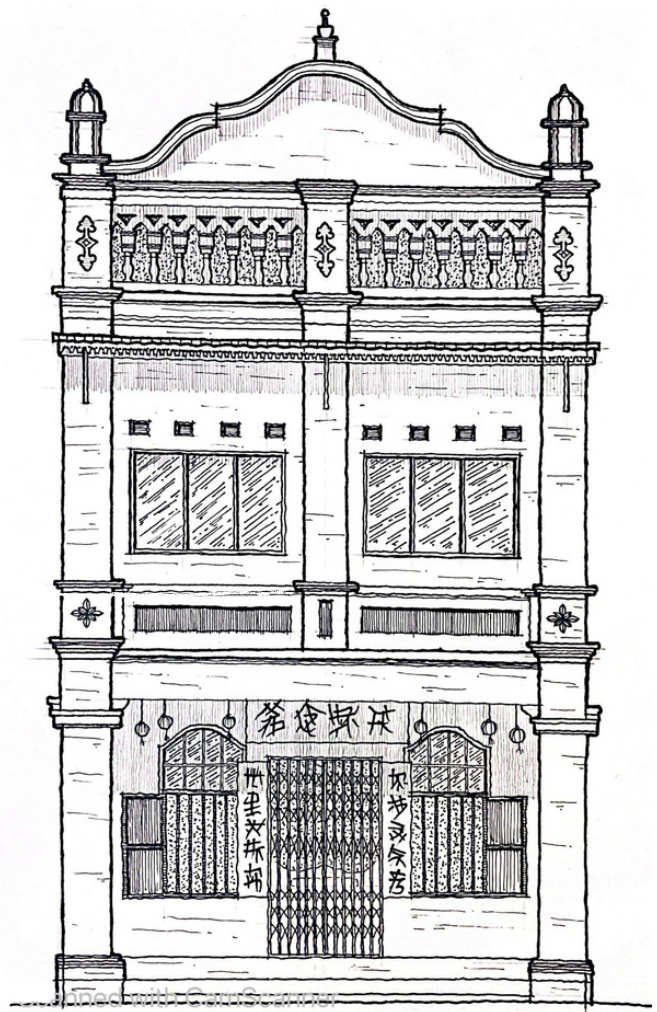
Jalan Demang Haji Abu



Sketch by: Nur Elisya Nazwa Khan binti Nazir Khan

## Lot 31

Jalan Demang Haji Abu



Sketch by: Nur Atika binti Atta

-----

*Spot them right  
Can you highlight the prominent  
architectural features in each styles?*





## Conclusion ●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●

The diversity of shophouses across Melaka demonstrates the construction trend at a particular time. The development pattern around the old town of Alor Gajah, Masjid Tanah and Jasin is a little later than Banda Hilir district which was once a bustling hub of trading centre. The range of characteristics present in Melaka shophouses demonstrates the assimilation of local architecture and foreign influence. Thus, make this Melaka shophouse unique in its place.



Sketch by: Muhammad Asheraff Bin Mazlin

heritage tells even when others keep their silence  
- fadhillah

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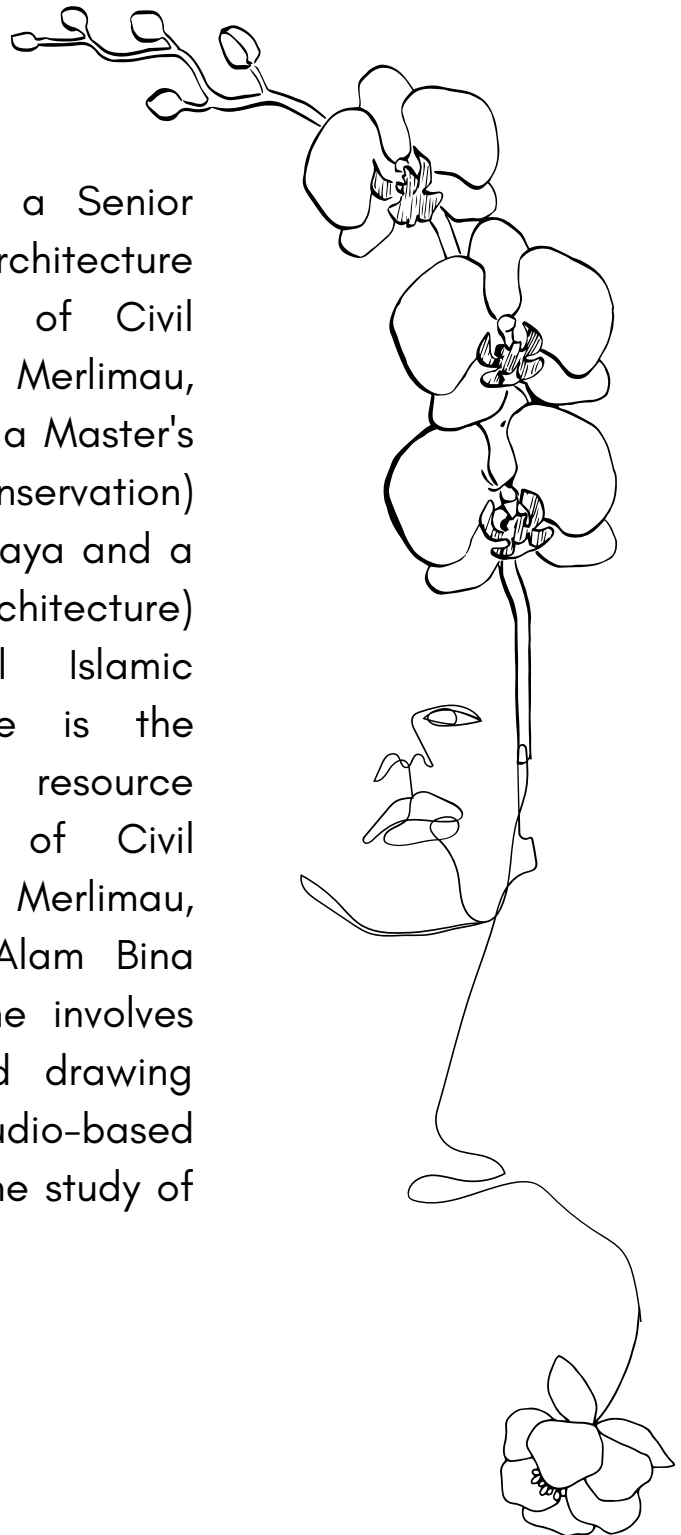
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