

Name Gambus Johor
(Gambus, Folk Lute of
Johor)

Country Malaysia

Date of registration:
23/05/2019



Source: *Kraf Malaysia*

Main characteristics/features

The 'gambus' is a traditional musical instrument with 12 or 13 strings attached to its body which can be plucked like a guitar. It is oval-shaped on the surface and is made of several strips of wood. It usually measures 13 inches to 15 inches in width and 26 inches in height. Many of the 'gambus' are made of soursop, shorea, laurel and macaranga wood. There are carvings on the sound holes using plywood and local wood.

Geographical area

Its location in the south of Peninsular Malaysia and its strategic position along the Straits of Melaka has made it possible for the extensive development of culture and arts in Johor. This has occurred as a result of the local culture encountering foreign cultures, such as those of India, China and Arabia.

Production/processing

To make a 'gambus', the wood is cut according to predetermined measurements, and planned to make the 'manik' or the side of the body. Then the midsection of the wood is hollowed out until it looks like a deep hole. This section is called the 'bakal'. The pegs that function to standardise and tighten the strings are fitted next. The strings are then attached by tying their ends to the head and pulling them to the tail-end of the 'gambus'. The strings used are always 78-gauge silk strings.

Link between product and territory

The various encounters of cultures and arts are proven by the fact that every district in Johor has its own cultural heritage. There are also elements of other art forms such as those from Arabia, that is, dances like 'Gambus Samrah', 'Zapin' or 'Zafe' accompanied by the music of the 'gambus'. These elements were adapted to be aligned with the culture of the local community.

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Competent authority Intellectual Property Corporation of Malaysia (MyIPO)

GI rights holder/GI association Malaysian Handicraft Corporation, Johor Branch

Contact information Tel.: +60 72350433
Fax: +60 72350432

Type of product Handicraft

Control body

File number GI2019-00005

Websites www.kraftangan.gov.my