

Publication: Asiaone Online

Date: 28 September 2020

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Granted, nobody in their right mind would want to play Super Mario Bros on a handheld gaming console that actively hurts the user with sharp thorns.

But a Game Boy made out of durian had been what people wanted — for science and for the content, of course.

Cedrick Tan, the Singaporean YouTuber who famously built a handheld console out of an empty watermelon, returned with a new fruit-based project that some people would love but others would hate. Much like a durian itself.

By popular demand, the 24-year-old Singapore Management University (SMU) student took a durian (a Mao Shan Wang, to be exact), emptied it out, and turned it into a spiky chassis for a Game Boy Advance emulator.

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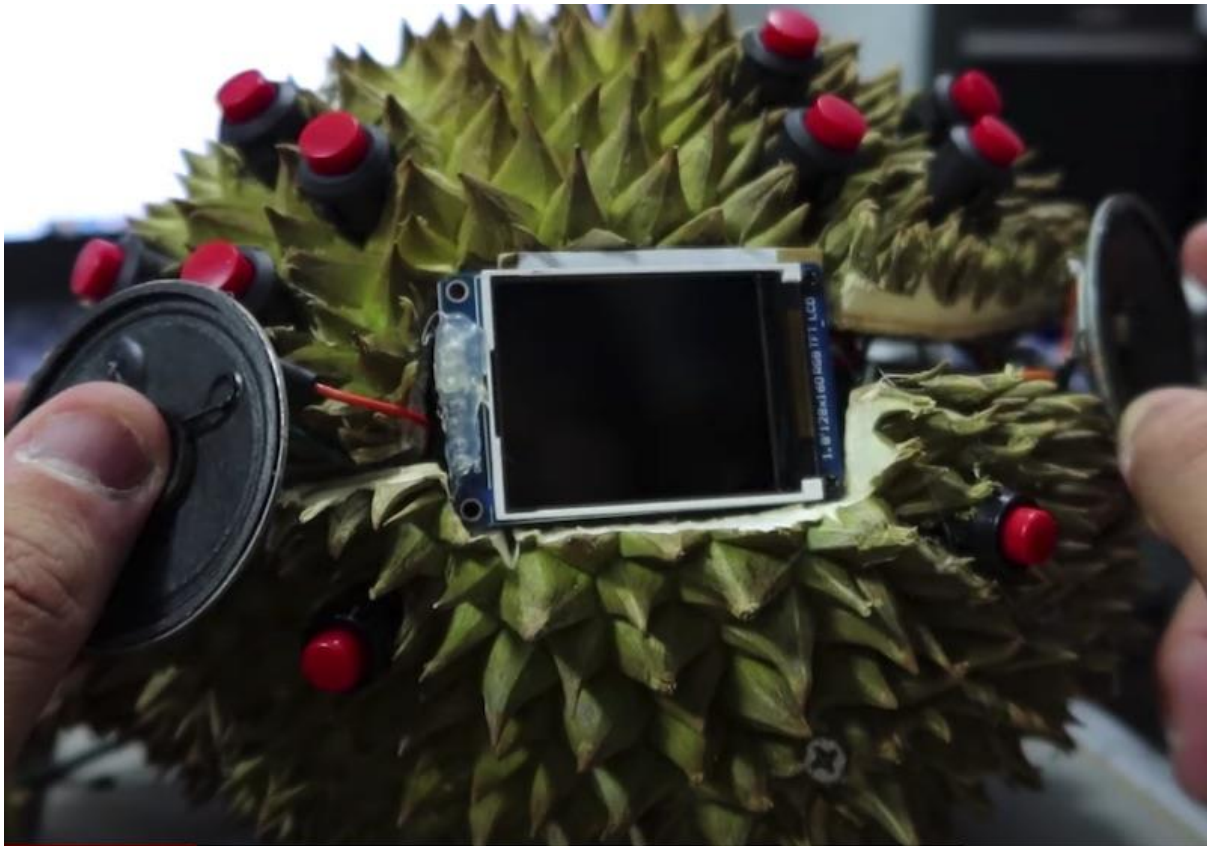
Taking roughly two weeks from start to finish, the project proved to be a much harder process than what it took to create Melon Boy. Speaking to AsiaOne, Tan noted that he had to downsize the components of the circuitry within the durian as it was much smaller than a watermelon.

“This meant downsizing everything which led to multiple technical issues. Resolving these technical issues took the bulk of time and I even had to remake the circuit from scratch at one point,” he laughed.

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In a YouTube video he uploaded on Saturday (Sept 26), Tan showcased the challenges of building the prickly contraption from scratch, including how he faced issues while soldering on the Raspberry Pi circuit board and getting nauseous off the solder fumes.

But in the end, the reactions he got from others made it worth it. Carting the durian Game Boy — appropriately dubbed the PokeBoy — around in a plastic bag, he went to acquire opinions from his classmates in SMU and random youngsters at Funan Mall. The game of choice this time around? Super Mario Bros 3.

Some of the more interesting interactions with passersby, however, didn't make the cut in the final video as Tan had been asked to delete some footage taken at certain premises.

"This included a gentleman from the UK who was intrigued by the concept and shared with me how he was unable to appreciate its taste no matter how he tried," recounted Tan.

"He did, however, attempted a durian KitKat bar which he proudly showed me a picture of. There were other foreigners who came up for conversations too!"

Tan told AsiaOne that more people had started to recognise him too from the last stunt he did with his watermelon Game Boy.

According to him, a group of secondary school students in the video had never played on a standard Game Boy before (Nintendo's last model in the Game Boy family was released in 2005) had really enjoyed their first gaming experience on his machine.

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Like the last endeavour with the watermelon, Tan learned that working with organic material to build gaming consoles has pretty icky downsides.

“For watermelons and durians, they rot ridiculously fast if I fail to leave them in the open air. Left in a bag overnight, they rot instantly, growing white fluffy fruit mould or having a grotesque interior,” he said.

Nonetheless, the YouTuber plans to carry on his fruity Game Boy series.

“The next fruit-based Game Boy will probably be a jackfruit! Imagine carrying such a huge console around! It will be a good laugh!”

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