

ANNEX 2

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

1896	Yong Mun Sen, birth name Yen Lang, is born in Kuching, Sarawak State, Malaya
1901 – 09	Yong moves to his ancestral village, Tai-Pu, China, and learns Chinese classics and calligraphy.
1910	He returns to Kuching, where he meets a Japanese artist painting in watercolour. This seminal encounter sparks his beginning to work with this particular medium.
1914	Yong visits China. His brother Yen Koon gathers caterpillars, butterflies and grasshoppers for him to sketch.
1916	While in China, he marries Lam Sek Foong. They have five children together, 3 sons and 2 daughters. They are Yong Bee Kiew (1917), Yong Cheong Wah (1924), Yong Liu Keow (1926), Yong Min Wah (1927) and Yong Chu Hwa (1938).
1917	Yong returns to Kuching for the second time to inherit the family's coconut estate. This results in a dispute with his uncles, who were previously managing the site. In the same year, Yong leaves Sarawak for Singapore to pursue a life of painting.
1918	He works two jobs, one as a retail assistant at a bookshop and the other as a cashier. The money he earns is insufficient to support his growing family. He paints and supplements his income by selling artwork at a relative's bookstore in Singapore called Rui Ting (瑞廷書局).
1920	Yong transfers to the Penang branch of Rui Ting located on Carnarvon Street. He paints in his free time and consigns his paintings for sale on commission at a frame-making shop. Art patron Ooi Hwa (黃花) financially supports him, and they set up a gallery together.
1922	Yong establishes his own art studio named Tai Koon (大觀). He develops a penchant for photography, exploring the tonal values of painting and also tries sculpting with Plaster-of-Paris.
1927	He relocates his studio to 164-166 Penang Road and calls it Mun Sen Studio (曼生美術館).
1929	Yong converts one of his existing studio lots to accommodate his photographic venture.
1930	Mun Sen Studio provides frame-making services with imported mirror frames from Italy and Shanghai. The business thrives and becomes a favourite meeting place for fellow artist-friends, namely Tay Hooi Keat, Kuo Ju Ping, Khaw Sia, Lee Cheng Yong, Abdullah Ariff, Chuah Thean Teng and Zhong Bai Mu. Yong learns about modern European artists and their paintings through books, specifically those of Vincent van Gogh and Gauguin.

<p>1931</p>	<p>A good friend of Yong, Mr Tan Chiu Cheng (陳樹青), owner of Nanyang Electrotpe Company, provides financial support and encouragement for Mun Sen to enter the photo studio business.</p> <p>Yong and his family move into a sea-facing old mansion at 58 Northam Road, which the last Kapitan of Penang, Chung Thye Phin, previously owned.</p>
<p>1932</p>	<p>He opens another studio on Leith Street called Shanghai Photo Studio.</p>
<p>1935</p>	<p>Mun Sen becomes the Founder and Vice-President of the Penang Chinese Art Club, otherwise known as the Penang Ying Ying Art Society. Besides Mun Sen, the collective consists of Lee Cheng Yong (President), Quah Kuan Sin (Secretary), Tay Hooi Keat (Treasurer), Kuo Ju Ping, Tan Seng Aun, Tan Ghek Khean (Mrs Tan Hooi Keat), Zhong Baimu and Wan Fee.</p> <p>On 17 November 1935, at the New Life Restaurant in the Great World Amusement Park, a meeting covers the official formation of the Society of Chinese Artists (SOCA), previously known as the Salon Art Society. Tchang Ju Chi, Chuang U-Chow, Zhang Bohe, Lu Heng, Nai Wen Chie, C.S. Kau, Chen Chong Swee, Lin Tian, Hsu Chunlin, and Li Kuishi attend this gathering.</p>
<p>1936</p>	<p>SOCA officially forms on 20 January. Mun Sen moots for the establishment of the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and is elected Vice-President of the Society. On 25 June, the collective organises its first large-scale annual exhibition.</p> <p>Penang Ying Ying Art Exhibition (嚶嚶藝術展覽會) takes place at Li Teik School 5th Branch (蓮花河麗澤第五分校) from 2-4 April. Yong contributes 20 oil paintings, 15 watercolours, 12 photographic artworks and 3 sculptures.</p> <p>In the same year, he invites Xu Beihong and Liu Haisu of China to give lectures to SOCA members.</p> <p>Mun Sen Studio wins second place in the 'Photography-Professional' category in the M.A.H.A. exhibition in Kuala Lumpur, which takes place in August.</p> <p><i>Nanyang Siang Pau</i> organises Mahua Art of Photography Exhibition (馬華攝影藝術展覽會) in October at the Great World Amusement Park. Shanghai Photo Studio wins first prize in the 'Professional Group' category for the work <i>Golden Age</i> (黃金時代) and second prize for <i>Charm</i> (媚). In painting, Yong wins first prize for the 'Amateur' category for <i>Vista</i> (極目地) and also three special mentions for his artworks <i>Obtaining</i> (得之), <i>In Good Order</i> (井然) and <i>White Clouds in Sight</i> (白雲在望).</p> <p>From 21-23 October, Penang Chinese Artist Club members debut at the annual Impressionists Art Society Exhibition at Malay Volunteers Headquarters. Yong shows twenty of his paintings. He displays seven oil paintings, <i>Small Talk</i>, <i>Working Together</i>, <i>Fulfilling Life</i>, <i>The Bride</i>,</p>

	<p><i>Mountains, Gambling, and Village</i>; seven watercolours, including <i>After Rain, Working in the Field, Contemplating, White Rock Mountain, Tanjung Landscape, Penang Hill, and Mountain Spring</i> and 6 photographs.</p>
1937	<p>From 1-5 July, Penang Chinese Artist Club members participate in the Malaya Chinese Cartoons Exhibition organised by the Nanyang Youth Lee Chee Association (年勵志社) in Singapore.</p> <p>Mun Sen exhibits his painting <i>Sketching from Life</i>.</p> <p>In August, members of the Society joined the Annual exhibition (常年美展) of the 女青年會. In the same month, Yong holds a solo show at a local bookstore (本嶼書館) and donates 40% of the proceeds to the Malaya Welfare Fund amounting to 250 dollars.</p> <p>Yong participates in the M.A.H.A. exhibition for the second time, winning first place in the 'Portraiture' category and second place for 'Miscellaneous' under the 'Professional' category.</p> <p>On 1 October, Penang Chinese Artist Club members join a fundraising exhibition for victims of the Sino-Japanese war that showcases Chinese calligraphy and painting at the Great World Amusement Park.</p> <p>The Penang Chinese Artist Club members organise a fundraising exhibition at the Great World Amusement Park on 4 December, featuring comics.</p>
1938	<p>From 5-7 July, Yong exhibits watercolour paintings at Ipoh Public Community Centre (怡保公共絡部), and donates to the Pizhou Tuberculosis Foundation (毗州癆基金會).</p>
1939	<p>Yong participates in the M.A.H.A. exhibition for the third time, winning all categories associated with watercolour paintings. He also wins first prize in the 'Land and Sea' category for oil painting. In photography, Mun Sen Studio achieves second place in the Amateur category for 'Composition'. Mun Sen Art Studio receives first place for the 'Miscellaneous' category, second place for 'Child Study', as well as 'Landscape and Seascape'. Meanwhile, Shanghai Studio achieves first place for the 'Composition' category.</p>
1941	<p>Yong's first wife, Lam Sek Foong, passes away on 24 January.</p> <p>Penang San Kiang Association organises a high tea reception for Xu Bei Hong, while Yong and other leading artists hosts a welcome dinner.</p> <p>From 11 November, Yong Mun Sen displays his oil painting <i>Fisherman's Homecoming</i> in the exhibition, Fight for Freedom, featuring artworks illustrating the cruelty of war at Victoria Memorial Hall.</p> <p>Mun Sen marries Yao Chew Mooi, daughter of Yao Swee Lum of Ipoh, a descendant of Kapitan China, Yap Ah Loy. They have 6 children, four sons and two daughters. Yong Cheng</p>

	<p>Wah (1942), Yong Sim Keow (1943), Yong Kheng Wah (1945), Yong Seng Wah (1947), Yong Ngean Keow (1948) and Yong Fook Wah (1949).</p>
1941 – 45	<p>Yong farms for survival during the war.</p>
1947	<p>An exhibition of his watercolour paintings takes place at the Victoria Memorial Hall from 14-17 July.</p> <p>On 11 October, <i>Nanyang Siang Pau</i> reports that Yong exhibits at a community centre along Tai Ping Oriental Street (太平東方街公共聯絡部氏聚館), displaying more than a hundred of his paintings.</p>
1948	<p>Department of Commerce and Industry of the Malayan Union commissions Mun Sen to produce eight paintings for the British Industries Fair London in May. Yong travels the peninsular, specifically rubber estates and tin mines, for inspiration.</p> <p>He holds an exhibition at Victoria Memorial Hall from 1-3 May, featuring 140 watercolours and 20 oil paintings.</p> <p>From 4-7 June, Yong exhibits about 100 paintings at the Chinese Assembly Hall in Kuala Lumpur. He donates 20% of his sales.</p>
1949	<p>The artist displays his paintings at the Victoria Memorial Hall, Singapore, from 13-19 June. 40% of the proceeds from the sale of the pictures go to the University of Malaya endowment fund. The artist features 102 watercolour paintings and 12 oil paintings.</p> <p>Mun Sen exhibits 60 watercolour artworks at the Meng Seng Charitable Association from 1-4 August, and donates 20% of the sales to the Malacca Anti-Tuberculosis Fund.</p>
1950	<p>He sends his artworks to the British Industrial Art Exhibition.</p> <p>Yong features his paintings in an exhibition to aid the Perak Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society at the Hang Kang Association on Brewster Road, Ipoh, between March 17-19.</p> <p>Yong sells 26 watercolour paintings for \$460 at an exhibition at Victoria Memorial Hall on 15 November and donates 20% of his proceeds to the Poppy Day Fund.</p> <p>He exhibits his artworks at the Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall in Kuala Lumpur from 6-8 December and donates 20% of his revenue to the Anti-Tuberculosis Fund.</p>
1951	<p>On 24 June, Yong's son Yong Min Wah represents Mun Sen and displays his paintings at the British Council Hall. Artworks on show include <i>Chinese Temple</i>, <i>Catching Prawns</i>, and <i>Chinese Junks</i>. Patrons Malcolm Macdonald, Admiral Boyd, Mr Aston, Resident Commissioner of Penang and Sir Edward Gent buy his paintings.</p> <p>Yong's exhibition at Robinsons, Singapore, takes place from 27 August to 8 September. Mrs Malcolm MacDonald buys his artwork, <i>Padi Field</i>, which depicts a study of padi farmers. The exhibition features Mun Sen's latest works, including paintings of fishing-nets drying in the sun.</p>

	<p>Besides his depictions of padi fields, he also exhibits other impressionist works. On 28 August, a newspaper reports "Mr Yong has the knack for putting magic into the every day and the commonplace, and if his message is to be put into a nutshell it is this: that if we use our eyes more, life in Malaya can be a wonderful thing—a thing of sunshine and bright colours".</p> <p>He participates in an exhibition opening at the Victoria Memorial Hall on 6 November in support of the Poppy Day Fund. A news article features the artist presenting a bouquet to Mrs V.C. Bath, the Chairman of the Singapore Poppy Day Committee.</p>
1952	<p>On 10 December, he exhibits his watercolour paintings of Malaya at the Ipoh Overseas Chinese Service Office (怡保僑众服務处).</p>
1953	<p>Yong features his watercolours at the John Little department store at Raffles Place from 5-12 January.</p> <p>The artist holds an art exhibition at the Kuala Lumpur Chinese Assembly Hall (吉隆坡中華大會堂) from 29 April to 1 May. He donates 20% of the sales to the United Kingdom Red Cross Fund.</p> <p>On 2 August, Mun Sen exhibits his paintings at a local Hakka Association (本嶼客属公會).</p> <p>He holds a watercolour exhibition at John Little department store at Raffles Place on 2-7 November.</p>
1954	<p>From 6-11 December, he features his paintings at Robinson's department store at Raffles Place.</p>
1955	<p>He exhibits his artworks with the support of the Poay Cheng Public School Building Fund.</p>
1956 – 62	<p>Yong suffers from a long period of illness due to a stroke during a trip to Malacca. He experiences financial hardship in the closing years of his life. He pawns his Leica camera for \$5.00.</p>
1962	<p>Yong passes away on 29 September in his home on Penang Road.</p>
1966	<p>A posthumous exhibition commemorates the late Lim Hak Tai, Tchang Ju Chi and Yong Mun Sen at the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Singapore from 24 - 28 October. Singapore artist Liu Kang acknowledges that masterpieces by these three late artists are aesthetically sublime and influential across Singapore and Malaysia.</p>
1972	<p>The National Art Gallery in Kuala Lumpur and Penang State Art Gallery commemorate Mun Sen with a memorial exhibition in March and September, respectively.</p>
1991	<p>Yong's artworks feature in a group exhibition the <i>Pioneers of Malaysian Art</i>.</p>
1998	<p>The Penang Art Gallery holds a solo exhibition for Mun Sen, titled <i>Father of Malaysian Paintings</i>.</p>
1999	<p>Penang State Art Gallery holds a solo exhibition titled <i>Yong Mun Sun Retrospective 1999</i></p>
2008 – 12	<p>His artworks feature in the <i>Exhibition of Paintings from 1930s to 1970s</i> (2008), <i>Collectors' Exhibition by 1st & 2nd Generation Artists</i> (2009), and <i>Past, Present, Future Timelines of Mutiara Artist</i> (2012) at Galeri Seni Mutiara, Penang.</p>

2016	From 9 to 12 June, Yong's painting is on view at <i>The Nanyang Show</i> at Visual Arts Centre, Singapore. There are 47 artworks by artists Chen Wen Hsi, Chia Yu Chian, Lee Cheng Yong, Kuo Ju Ping, Tan Choon Ghee, Khoo Sui Hoe, Ong Kim Seng, and Tsai Horng Chung, among others. These paintings depict landscapes of Southeast Asia.
2020	His painting, <i>Singapore River</i> (1954), exhibits in <i>Silhouettes: Collecting Singapore Modern Selections from the Collection of Su-Yen Wong and Fermin Diez</i> at the Private Museum, Singapore, from 27 March to 10 May. Other painters in the exhibition include Cheong Soo Pieng, Chua Mia Tee, Lim Cheng Hoe, Tong Chin Sye, Tan Choh Tee, Siew Hock Meng, Tay Bak Koi, Chen Wen Hsi, Thomas Yeo, Ang Ah Tee, Ong Kim Seng, Lim Tze Peng, Leng Joon Wong, Loy Chye Chuan, Gog Sing Hooi and Seah Kim Joo.
2021	The Malaysian Chamber of Commerce Hong Kong and Macau Limited (MAYCHAM) organises a solo retrospective, <i>Nature as Teacher and Model</i> , at the Penthouse of the Malaysia Building, Hong Kong, to commemorate the 125 th anniversary of Yong's birth.