

The Wise and the Virtuous¹: The Art of Yuen Hungshue

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Family and Education

Yuen Hung-shue (1910-2012), courtesy name being Yunxuan and studio name Sanbiyitang², was a native of Dongguan in Guangdong province. His father, commonly addressed by the pseudonym Yuwen (given name being Congzhou, 1887-1948), was an acclaimed calligrapher (Plate 1), painter, poet and educator. As the eldest son in the family, Hung-shue attended Rongyin Schoolhouse as founded by his father and started practising Chinese calligraphy and painting under his guidance at the tender age of 6. When he was 14-15 years old, he already represented his father to write couplets for the ancestral hall. Joining various art research societies as led by teachers such as Hu Gentien etc. then, he committed himself to imitating exemplary calligraphy works by the others, writing poetry and painting, which paved the way for his future artistic achievements.

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Left page: Yuen Hung-shue, *The Thirteen Lines of LuoShen Fu* in small regular script, ink on paper, folding fan, 21x51cm, 1977



Plate 1
Calligraphy of Yuan Yuwen, 9th October 1946

In 1930-32, Yuen attended the Guangzhou Municipal Normal College to study art. During this period of time, he learnt about drawing from Chen Shijie, Subject Head of Painting, and practised oil painting and watercolour painting intensively, of which a solid foundation was built. While Lu Zhishu (1900-1978) and Li Yitao were his teachers in Chinese ink landscape painting, he followed Ye Dazhang to sketch flowers and birds at night. Having received from each master the most quintessential part of their expertise and excelled in both Chinese and Western paintings, Yuen grew up fast as an artist and flourished.

In 1939, after Yuen returned to his hometown to assist his father in founding Dongsheng School, he went to Hong Kong and became a teacher at Tao Ching Secondary School on Tin Hau Temple Road in Causeway Bay in September. He devoted his spare time to studying landscape and flower paintings in the company of Wen Qichiu (1862-1941), another renowned painter and calligrapher of the time. In 1946, while he was teaching at Dongguan Mingsheng Secondary School, Yuen formed Qingyu Calligraphy and Painting Association along with his arts-loving friends. He later met Rong Geng (1894-1938), from whom he had acquired a great deal of knowledge of the seal script writing.

Relationship with Hong Kong

After settling in Hong Kong in 1949, Yuen continued his teaching profession at Tak Ming Secondary School, where he befriended fellow Fine Arts teacher Ding Yanyong (1902-1978)³. Given the closeness of their relationship, Ding often advised Yuen on the matter of oil painting and Chinese painting. In 1973, a preview of Ding Yanyong's exhibition in Paris was held at Hong Kong City Hall. In order to celebrate the occasion, Yuen was in charge of editing *The selected works of Ding Yanyong from the University of Paris Exhibition* 丁衍鏞畫集：巴黎大學畫展作品選, a book which also features prefaces written by prominent scholars, Tang Junyi (1909-1978) and Xu Fuguan (1904-1982), as well as Chen Shihwen (1907-1984), Chairman of the Department of Fine Arts at the Chinese University of Hong Kong back then. Since moving to Hong Kong, Yuen had been close to Luo Shuzhong (1898-1968)⁴ and his in-law Lu Dinggong (1903-1979)⁵, with whom he delved into the fascinating world of Chinese painting and calligraphy. After retirement in 1974, Yuen founded the "China Art School" with Lu Dinggong and Kuang E (1919-2010) and taught the calligraphy classes there. Later, he was invited to be the advisor of Hong Kong Calligraphers' Association and Qianqiu Painting and Calligraphy Society, striving to enhance the development of local art and calligraphy.

Nurture of Young Talents

Having pursued a career in teaching for more than forty years, Yuen retired as a grant school principal in the 1970s. Since then, he had been hired as a Chinese painting and calligraphy instructor in various institutions and associations, for example, Sacred Heart Canossian College,

Kwun Tong Community Centre, Tsuen Wan Culture and Recreation Association, Fine Arts Society of the University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Polytechnic and Hong Kong True Light College etc. He also gave classes in his own studio Sanbuyitang, nurturing numerous students throughout the years. As a teacher, Yuen taught different students about different scripts based on their abilities and personalities. Nevertheless, he insisted that the ultimately standard form should always be the regular script. He once said, “The regular script resembles standing; running script walking; cursive script running. No babies can ever walk or run before they learn how to stand. Therefore, it is the regular script which provides the foundation for the art of calligraphy.”⁶

Apart from avidly engaging in arts education and creation, Yuen donated his whole collection of 160 pieces of calligraphic works, paintings and seals by Ding Yanyong, as well as 10 rare stone rubbings originally kept in Sanbiyitang, to the Art Museum, Institute of Chinese Studies, Chinese University of Hong Kong. With regard to the donation, two exhibitions namely “The Sanbuyi Tang Collection of Masterworks by Ting Yin-Yung” in 1998 (Plate 2) and “Aesthetic Images of Ding Yanyong’s Paintings” at the National Museum of History in 2003 were held. The generosity and virtuousness manifested in the act of giving away precious private possessions reflected the affinity between the two of them and it was well relished by fellow artists.

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Plate 2
Cover of “The Sanbuyi
Tang Collection of
Masterworks by Ting
Yin-Yung” exhibition
catalogue, 1998

Since the 1970s, Yuen had been actively participating in different arts-related activities and exhibition, including “Chinese Calligraphy Society Members’ Calligraphy Exhibition” (1973), “The First China Art School Teacher-Student Joint Exhibition” (1979), “Joint Exhibition of the Paintings and Calligraphy of Yuen Hung-shue and students” (1982) (Plate 3), “Yuen Hung-shue Teacher-Student Calligraphy Exhibition” (1987), “Joint Exhibition of the Printings and Calligraphy of Yuen Hung-shue and Students” (1989) (Plate 4), “Exhibition of the Paintings and Calligraphy by students of Yuen Hung-shue” (1991), “Bi Qing Mo Qu (the delights of brush and ink)” Exhibition (1992), “Joint Exhibition by Yuen Hung-shue, Zhou Shi-cong and Liu Qing-zhen” (2002), “Canghai Lianbo” Exhibition (2005) (Plate 5) and “Taoist Calligraphy and Painting Exhibition” (2010) etc. Currently, his works are held by the Guangzhou Museum of Art, Hong Kong Museum of Art, Art Museum, Institute of Chinese Studies, Chinese University of Hong Kong and the University Museum and Art Gallery etc. Part of his calligraphic works can also be seen at the Flagstaff House and Fung Sing Restaurant which he often visited (Plate 6). Back to his teaching days, Yuen had inscribed for a number of schools. Examples include the inscriptions in clerical script for The New Territories San Tin Chau Tau Village The Man’s Ting Sze School and Hong Kong True Light College (Plate 7).

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Plate 3: (left top)
Yuen Hung-shue at the “Joint Exhibition of the Paintings and Calligraphy of Yuen Hung-shue and Students” at Fong Shu Chuen Amenities Centre, the University of Hong Kong, 1982



Plate 4 (left bottom)
At the “Joint Exhibition of Chinese Paintings and Calligraphy of Yuen Hung-shue and Students”, Loke Yew Hall, the University of Hong Kong, 1989



Plate 5 (right)
Yuen Hung-shue, *Couplet in running script*, ink on paper, 260x68cm each, 2005. Exhibited at “Canghai Lianbo” Exhibition, 17-19 December, 2005, Hong Kong City Hall Exhibition Hall

Plate 6a (left top)
Yuen Hung-shue,
calligraphy work
gifted to Fung Shing
Restaurant (Mongkok),
1984

Plate 6b (right top)
Yuen Hung-shue,
calligraphy work
gifted to Fung Shing
Restaurant (North
Point), 2003

Plate 7 (bottom)
Yuen Hung-shue,
inscriptions of the name
board of Hong Kong
True Light College, 1999



The Exquisite Art of Painting

Having a keen interest in painting, Yuen was a master in both the Chinese and western styles. He was adept at employing meticulous brush work (*gongbi*), freehand brushwork (*xieyi*), light colour (*dancai*) and rich colour (*nongcai*) ingeniously in his Chinese paintings and creating distinctive traces of ink on paper. In the Year of Bingchen (1976 on western calendar), Yuen completed three landscape paintings. Drawing on the works by Shi Tao, *Landscape* (Plate 8) and *Landscape* (Plate 9) are extraordinary imitations of the original masterpieces. While *Landscape* (Plate 9) and *Landscape* (Plate 10) were inscribed by Lu Dinggong, the latter was later inscribed again by Lu's student, Zeng Chubai. On the basis of scholar-painting as learnt from Lu Zishu in the early years, both works were done with only black ink and involved essentially the same techniques as calligraphy. Like the landscape paintings by Shen Shitian (Shen Zhou, 1427-1509) and Shi Tao (1642-1718), they do not only depict a natural scene of the serene mountains and rivers, but a sense of deep tranquillity is also radiated from within. On the other hand, with fine lines, vibrant colours and elaborative details, the figure painting of *Arhat (Luohan)* showcases Yuen's remarkable skills both in describing the character's outward appearance and capturing his inner spirit. Furthermore, it shows that apart from paying tribute to the old calligraphy masters through his works, Yuen also attached a lot of importance to the drawing practice.

As for his bird-and-flowing paintings, in the early years, Yuen tended to follow in the footsteps of the "Old Man of the Divided Mountain" (Ju Lian, 1828-1904) and chase after Yun Nantian (Yun Shouping, 1633-1690), excelling in both meticulous and freehand brushwork. In 1981, in the fan painting titled *Goose Tianxiang (peony)* (Plate 11), bunches of colourful peonies are depicted in the "style of Ju Lian" and outlined with gold threads, presenting a kind of sumptuous and aesthetically



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Plate 8 (left)
Yuen Hung-shue,
Landscape, ink and
colour on paper, hanging
scroll, 137x69cm, 1976

Plate 9 (right)
Yuen Hung-shue,
Landscape, ink and
colour on paper,
hanging scroll,
137x69cm, 1976.
Collection of the Hong
Kong Museum of Art



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Plate 10 (top)
Yuen Hung-shue,
Landscape, ink on
paper, 96.8x53cm,
1976. Collection of the
Art Museum, Institute
of Chinese Studies,
Chinese University of
Hong Kong



Plate 11 (bottom)
Yuen Hung-shue,
*Guose Tianxiang 國色天
香 (peony)*, ink and colour
on paper, folding fan,
40x130cm, 1981



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Plate 12 (left)
Yuen Hung-shue, *Bird and Flower*, ink on paper, hanging scroll, 137x34.5cm, 1982

Plate 13 (right)
Yuen Hung-shue and Ding Yanyong (1902-1974), *Peony*, ink and colour on paper, hanging scroll, 70x34.5cm, 1970s

decorative beauty. Ding Yanyong, Yuen's teacher who was also a close friend of his, was an ardent disciple of Bada Shanran (Zhu Da, 1625-1705). In the vertical hanging scroll *Bird and Flower* (Plate 12) exhibited at the University of Hong Kong in 1982, the use of ink and empty spaces are balanced skilfully, which contribute to a highly expressive mood that resonates with Bada Shanran's exquisite bird-and-flower paintings. Collaborating with Ding, Yuen completed *Peony* (Plate 13) in which he was responsible for painting the peonies by the traditional "boneless technique" (*mogu*). The flowers, in light colours, are elegantly presented with a quality that seemingly transcends the secular world. On the other hand, the birds and stones, painted by Ding, feature the use of sharp lines as if they were drawn by one single brush stroke. Since the simple outlines and the ink tone fit each other perfectly, it is a huge pleasure to view the picture. In another collaborative painting *Cuiyu Mingdang (emerald feather and bright ornaments)*, the pomegranates and birds were painted by Yuen and Ding respectively while Wang Shizhao (1905-1984)⁷ wrote the

inscription. Embracing Xu Tianchi's (Xu Wei, 1521-1593) style and in the meantime, retaining its own idiosyncrasies, the painting possesses a refreshing spontaneity and sparkle. It is also noted that in *Shizhao Qinggong Tu* (celebrating the Lunar New Year) (Plate 14), a collaborative painting by Yuen and Xu Woyu, the female student of Qi Baishi (1864-1957), the fruit and flowers are painted in vivid colours, which symbolises good fortune in the liberating manner of Baishi Laoren. Last but not least, *Spring in the study* (Plate 15), a masterpiece by Yuen depicting the spectacular scenery in springtime, was inscribed by Shiwang Shanren (Sun Xingge, 1896-1996).

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Plate 14 (left)
Yuen Hung-shue
and Yu Woyu,
Shizhao Qinggong Tu
歲朝清供圖 (celebrating
the Lunar New Year),
ink and colour on paper,
34x90cm, 1987

Plate 15 (right)
Yuen Hung-shue, *Spring
in the study*, ink and
colour on paper, hanging
scroll, 137x69cm, 1991



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Plate 16a (left)
Yuen Hung-shue,
Vase of Flowers, oil
on canvas, 49x26cm,
1968. Collection of the
University Museum
and Art Gallery, the
University of Hong Kong

Plate 16b (right top)
Yuen Hung-shue, *Vase
of Flowers*, oil on canvas,
30.4x45.9cm, 1968.
Collection of the Art
Museum, Institute
of Chinese Studies,
Chinese University of
Hong Kong

Plate 17 (right bottom)
Yuen Hung-shue, *Fishes*,
oil on canvas, 40x51cm,
1972. Collection of the
University Museum
and Art Gallery, the
University of Hong
Kong

As for oil painting, most of Yuen's works were completed in late-1960s to 1970s. Learning the skills primarily from Ding Yanyong, Yuen faithfully followed the painting style of Henri Matisse (1869-1954). As the leader of the Fauvist movement, Matisse had established his unique painting style. His works are characterised by the dynamic compositions and the use of high-keyed colours and the subject matters usually have a high degree of simplification. This reveals the artist's desire to attain primitive innocence and purity in his works. Following basically the same path, Yuen's oil paintings feature the use of vibrant colours and distinctive lines as well. In 1968, he created two oil paintings titled *Vase of Flowers* (Plate 16), in which the strong contrast of colours echoes with the spontaneous brush strokes, creating arhythmic pattern of lines across the plane. Rejecting the traditional three-dimensional space, in *Fishes* (1972) (Plate 17), Yuen outlined the subject with minimal lines and bold, undisguised brush strokes, which effortlessly animated the entire painting.

Plate 18
 Yuen Hung-shue,
Qian Chibi Fu 前赤壁
 賦 (*Former Red Cliff
 Rhapsody*), ink on paper,
 32x236cm, 2003



Exemplary Calligraphic Works

It was in calligraphy that Yuen demonstrated the highest degree of excellence. While his earliest influences can be traced back to Zhong You (151-230) and Wang Xizhi (303-361), he was trained after eminent calligraphers in the Tang, Song, Yuen and Ming dynasties. Having a good grasp of the Eight Principles, he had acquired mastery of all the script forms in calligraphy. As an industrious student, he spent a lot of time practising exemplary works by reputed masters. He was most inspired by Wang Xizhi's *The Goddess of the Luo Thirteen Lines* and Su Dongpo's *Chibi Fu (Red Cliff Rhapsody)* (Plate 18). He had once written Wang's *Thirteen Lines* on a circular hand fan in small regular script and every stroke was gracefully executed with the right amount of energy. Having absorbed the finest art from Ouyang Xun, Yu Shinan, Yan Zhenqing and Liu Gongquan, Yuen had established a firm foundation in writing the regular script even in monumental size (Plate 5).

With regard to clerical script, Yuen was keen on copying the inscriptions on the gravestones of the Han and Southern and Northern Dynasties and he was well practiced at *Zhang Qian*, *Mount Hua*, *Ritual Vessels*, *Cao Quan* and *Tian Fa Shen Chen* in particular. After some time, various styles were seamlessly blended together and he was able to bring forth innovative ideas in his calligraphy. For instance, *Couplet in clerical script on gold paper* is an exuberant piece of work that is brimmed with feelings and vigour. The characters are written in a manner which is exclusive to clerical script and every stroke, while remaining aesthetically delicate, is bursting with paramount strength. Moreover, as influenced by Jin Nong's (1687-1764) lacquer calligraphy, each character is structured in formal balance. While the lines appear flat and square, they carry in themselves a sense of smoothness, which simultaneously retain the classical elegance of the scripts. Another couplet which was modelled on Chen Hongshou's clerical script, *Couplet in clerical script* (Plate 19), is representative of the orderly style of the clerical script. Although with an austere structure, the characters look



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Plate 19 (left)
Yuen Hung-shue, *Couplet in clerical script*, ink on paper, 137x34.5cm each, 1983. Collection of the Hong Kong Museum of Art

Plate 20 (right)
Yuen Hung-shue, *Couplet in the style of HaoDawangbei*, ink on paper, 137x34.5cm each, 2004

regulated and angular at the first glance, the flexible organisation of space and the underlying touch of seal script writing have introduced a curving wave in the straight lines, which renders the couplet alive and was considered a re-interpretation of traditional clerical script. In his later years, he enjoyed practising the gravestone inscription of King Gwanggaeto of Goguryeo and examining the seven-character couplets written by Wu Zifu (1899-1979). Conveying a grandiose style of stability and beauty, *Couplet in the style of HaoDawangbei* (Plate 20) has achieved the standard set by the calligraphers of the Jun dynasty.

The time spent with Rong Gen in Dongguan had offered Yuen the opportunity to learn more about seal script calligraphy from the master. Integrating bronze script with small seal script, *Du Fu's poem - A Hearty Welcome to vice-prefect Cui in seal script* (Plate 21) is a refreshing piece of calligraphic work. The vertically elongated seal script in curved lines are roughened up by the bronze script, resembling the seal script written by the bronze calligraphy expert Wang Fu'an (1880-1960).



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Plate 21 (left)
Yuen Hung-shue, *Du Fu's poem - A Hearty Welcome to vice-prefect Cui in seal script*, ink on paper, vertical scroll, 137x34.5cm, 1980s

Plate 22 (right)
Yuen Hung-shue, *Couplet in seal script*, ink on paper, 137x34.5cm each, 1990s

Each character is surrounded by the right amount of space and there is an overall sense of harmony and balance in the work. Neat, graceful with a naturally raw quality, it echoes with the simple and peaceful scene projected in the poem *A Guest Arrives* by Du Fu. Besides, modelled on Qi Baishi's (1864-1957) rendition of *TianFaShenChen* gravestone engraving, *Couplet in seal script* (Plate 22) is an exceptional piece of work in which Yuen's use of the brush demonstrated great strength while the ink was gently applied. The interplay between the aridness of the brush and the moistness of the ink produces bold yet fluid lines on paper, adequately exhibiting Yuen's supreme mastery of exertion and control.



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Plate 23 (top)
Yuen Hung-shue, *Orchid Pavilion Preface in running script*, ink on paper, 118.4x368.6cm, 1995. Collection of the Art Museum, the Chinese University of Hong Kong

Plate 24 (bottom left)
Yuen Hung-shue, *Lu Ji's Ping fu Tie 陸機平復帖 (A consoling letter)*, ink on paper, 1983. Collection of the Hong Kong Museum of Art

Plate 25 (bottom right)
Yuen Hung-shue, *Heshou 鶴壽 (Longevity as a crane's)*, 130x66cm, ink on paper, 2009

As for running script, *Orchid Pavilion Preface in running script* (Plate 23), Yuen's rendition of Wang Xizhi's masterpiece, is close to the original both in the form and in spirit. Unlike the original *Orchid Pavilion Preface* which was written on a handscroll, Yuen's work is more than ten feet in length. Given the larger size of the plane and thus more space for improvisation, the calligrapher was able to fully express himself and throughout the whole piece runs an air of richness and dignity. With the power of the brush, the characters are closely tied together and there is a strong sense of coherence between them. Combining mightiness with elegance, the work once again proves Yuen's proficiency in the art. In *Lu Ji's Pingfu Tie (A consoling letter)* (Plate 24), his running script shows ambition and radiates outward in full scale. The variations in the use of the brush brings about unpredictable yet natural changes in the shape of the characters, while the complementary use of sparse and dense spacing suggests a coherent style. In the Year of Renwu (2003) at a gathering, he wrote a four-character couplet on gold paper which conveyed a sense of vitality and informality simultaneously. In his later years, Yuen managed to keep up the momentum in his works and *Heshou (Longevity as a crane's)* (Plate 25) is a large piece in running script that was written with considerable vigour. As the strokes stretch and glide over the paper in extremely thick link, the words appear bold and adhesive to each other. While the lines are flowing in an unrestrained manner, in terms of layout, the characters are closely compacted in the centre, resulting in a dense arrangement of the space. It is worth noting that this calligraphic work was created by Yuen at the age of 100. Not only did it serve to celebrate his longevity, but it has also reflected the master's physical strength as well as his strong creative power.

In view of Yuen's calligraphy in regular, seal, clerical and running scripts, he had always attempted to break from the traditional and reinvented the classical styles. Possessing excellent skills and taking pleasure in the dance of the brush and the splashing of the ink, Yuen embraced a spectrum of styles in his works and undoubtedly exemplified the spirit of cultural inheritance and innovation in Chinese calligraphy.

Friendships with Prominent Artists

Actively participating in a myriad of activities in the local art circle, Yuen had befriended a lot of esteemed artists. Apart from Lu Dinggong, his seals were also carved by other celebrated engravers including Luo Shuzhong (1898-1968), Tang Jisheng (1922-2010) and Kong Pingsun etc. Among them, the two seals carved by Lu Dinggong, *Yuen Hung-shue* and *Sanbiyitang* (Plate 26), carry the most special appeal. In the style of the seals of the Han dynasty, the former was done by the exclusive technique from the Zhe School and the characters were simplified, bearing an intriguing resemblance to bronze engravings and conveying a sense of naturalism. The latter was the seal for Yuen's studio, Sanbiyitang. Neatly carved and equipped with the vigour and straight forwardness in Huang Mufu's (1849-1908) work, it reveals a refined quality in the simplicity of the composition. The side of the seal reads "My companion, Hung-shue, named his studio after Zhongni's words on the 10th day of the 4th lunar month in the Year of Wu-shen. Seal made by Shuzhong". Not only

does this tell us that Sanbiyutang was named in 1968 on Western calendar, it also signifies the close friendship between Yuen and Luo. As for *zhuwen* (red characters) seals, *Yuen Hung-shue* by Lu Dinggong and *Hung-shue* by Tang Zhisheng, the former features bronze script and seal script styled after circular tile. Engraved in a formal manner, the characters have the number of their strokes reduced and are presented elegantly, conveying an overall sense of harmony and unity. The latter is made of jade. As the engraver managed to handle the knife slickly and the space is arranged in a very natural way, the engraving showcases a touch of fluidity and delicacy which is parallel to the exquisiteness of jade. Yuen was very fond of the seals and he applied them frequently on his paintings and calligraphic works, which are considerably enlivened by the imprints. The fusion of calligraphy, paintings and seals has not only enriched the art culture as a whole, but it has also increased the aesthetic value of the individual artworks by Yuen. On a side note, this also reflects the superior and respectable position on which Yuen is placed, as well as his friendly relations with the others in the art circle.

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Plate 26
Luo Shuzhong (1898-
1969), seals engraving.
Inscriptions: “Yuen
Hong-shue”, “Sanbuyi
Tang”. 1968

Postscript

Leading a simple life which mostly disregarded fame and vanity, Yuen devoted himself to studying calligraphy and painting and educating the younger generations about art. His creations, instead of mere craft works, are self-conscious works of art in which an otherworldly and ravishing aura is retained. As a consummate master of brushwork, he never deserted the traditions and was resolved to create unique and original works which now remain exemplary to the art world.

Yuen, a cultivated centenarian and a paragon of wisdom and virtue, has taken interest in both Chinese and Western cultures all his life. The huge collection of his works, as well the stories revolving around him, is of immense value. This article, focusing on calligraphy and paintings, only serves to offer a glimpse of Yuen’s wide spectrum of art. Looking back at the many years of apprenticeship, we are deeply indebted to our teacher for the profound knowledge and inspiration he has bestowed upon us. While we fondly remember the old times as if it were yesterday, it is hard to express all the reminiscences of the past in merely a few lines. In memory of our honourable

master, we hope to attract more people to appreciate his calligraphic works and paintings with this article and this, without a doubt, would be the pleasure of the entire art world as well.

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- ¹ From *The Analects, Book VI: Yung Ye*: “The wise find pleasure in water; the virtuous find pleasure in hills. The wise are active; the virtuous are tranquil. The wise are joyful; the virtuous are long-lived.”
- ² Studio name came from *The Analects, Book I: XueEr*: “Isn’t it a pleasure to study and practice what you have learned? Isn’t it also great when friends visit from distant places? If one remains not annoyed when he is not understood by people around him, isn’t he a sage?”
- ³ Ding Yanyong (1902-1978), courtesy name being Shu-dan, alternately called Hong, was born in Maoming in Guangdong Province. At 18, he entered the Tokyo School of Fine Arts in Japan to study oil painting. Obsessed with Fauvist works, he was regarded as “Matisse of the Orient”. After returning to China, Ding was actively engaged in art education. In 1946, he became the Principal of Guangdong Provincial College of Art. While also taking interest in traditional Chinese paintings, his works followed the style of BadaShanren (1625-1707) and Shi Tao (1642-1718) etc. and the subject would revolve around flowers, birds, insects, people, mountains and rivers etc. With sharp lines which convey a sense of fluidity, his “one-line-paintings” were very well-known. He moved to Hong Kong in 1949 and founded the Fine Arts Department of New Asia College in 1957. Having spent years teaching in the Fine Arts Department of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, he was also a prolific artist who had created numerous works of art.
- ⁴ Luo Shuzhong (1898-1969), given name being Ying, was commonly addressed by his courtesy name, Shuzhong. A native of Xiqiao in Nanhai District in Guangdong Province, he learnt about painting from Cheng Zhuyun (1874-1934) and later specialised in seal engraving. In 1923, he moved to Hong Kong. His works were modelled on those in the Zhou, Qin, Western Han and Eastern Han dynasties at first, before he later delved into the study of the technique used by Huang Shiling (1849-1908), a prominent engraver of the Mount Yi School in the Qing dynasty, and tried to integrate the “vertical, horizontal, open, close technique” by the Mount Yi School with the Zhi School’s “cutting technique”. In his later years, he was renowned for his peach-pit carving and olive-nut carving.
- ⁵ Lu Dinggong (1903-1979), given name being Ding, pseudonym Yi-shi and Yan-lu, was a native of Daojiao in Guangdong Province, a poet, a calligrapher, a painter and a seal engraver. In the 1940s, he moved to Hong Kong and started teaching at schools. In 1957, he was invited by Han Chiang High School in Penang in Malaysia to teach there. In 1974, he returned to Hong Kong and founded the China Academy of Art, where he taught about landscape paintings and seal engraving, with Kuang E (1919-2010) and Yuen Hungshue (1910-2012) etc. for people who have a keen interest in Chinese traditional painting and calligraphy. His seals are modelled on the seals of the Han dynasty and his disciples include Kuang E, Zhong Yun-wen, Zeng Chubai and Lu Yi-yan etc.
- ⁶ Cited from the preface written for Liu Qingzhen’s solo calligraphy exhibition by Liu, which was published in *Hong Kong Times* on 9th September, 1990.
- ⁷ Wang Shizhao (1905-1984), courtesy name being Tie-ran, was a native of Fuzhou in Fujian Province. Graduated from Dong Lu University in Yunnan in 1928, he once taught at the Chinese secondary schools in Indonesia and Vietnam etc. In the 1950s, he settled in Kowloon in Hong Kong and was well-known for his poetry and calligraphy.



Plate 27
Photo of Yuen Hung-
shue, 1989

Yuen Hung-shue Chronology¹

1910	Aged 1	Yuen was born on 10 October (the 8th day of September in Chinese Lunar calendar) at 9 RuanbaoJie, Dongshe Fang, Yongkou Xiang, Dongguan County, Guangdong. His father's pseudonym was Yu Wen 郁文, or given name Cong Zhou 從周. He was given the name Hung-shue (Hong-shu), alternative name Yun Xuan 運旋 ² .
1916	Aged 7	Started learning at Rongyin Schoolhouse owned by his father. There he learnt Chinese, letter writing, abacus, history. His father who was proficient in Chinese painting and calligraphy taught him both. He learnt by copying the floral and insect paintings of Ju Guquan (JuLian, 1828-1904).
1922	Aged 13	Studied in Da Yong QiaoSen Senior Primary School, of which his father was a teacher. During this period, he learnt landscape and floral painting from Master Qi Youheng. He was first in class in painting and calligraphy.
1924	Aged 15	Graduated from senior primary school in December.
1925	Aged 16	Joined first year class halfway at Guangzhou Municipal Normal School. During this period he joined the arts research club led by teachers including Hu Gentian (1893-1985). In autumn, he changed school to the Affiliated High School of the National Guangdong University (later renamed as the Affiliated High School of Zhongshan University). He received boy-scout training.

¹ Information on the earlier days of Yuen Hung-shue is based on the original script of Yuen's, *Autobiography*, 1957, and Yuen Hung-shue's *Personal Memo* in 1980's.

² Hung-shue (Hongshu) was first seen in the couplet 天禧三年賜王欽若判杭州十韻 by Emperor Zhen of Song Dynasty. Zhao Mengfu (1254-1322) also employed this term in his calligraphy *The incident of the doors of Xuan Miao Monastery bring repaired* 玄妙觀重修三門記.

1928	Aged 19	Graduated from junior high school in July. Worked as an officer in the Police Trial Office of the Guangzhou Municipal Public Security Bureau.
1929	Aged 20	Married Ms Wang Xiu-kun at the end of the year.
1930	Aged 21	Enrolled to the painting specialty of Guangzhou Municipal Normal Academy in summer, yet had to delay his study due to paratyphoid fever. He was the part-time boy scout instructor at the 40th Primary School of (Guangzhou) City. He built up his foundation of Western painting through learning from Mr. Chen Shijie while his Chinese ink landscape painting teachers were Mr. Lu Zhishu (1900-1978) and Mr. Li Yitao. In the evenings, he learnt floral and bird painting from Mr. Ye Dazhang.
1932	Aged 23	Graduated from Guangzhou Municipal Normal Academy. Started working as a teacher in Yu Yun Gong Li Xi Quan agricultural school in September.
1933	Aged 24	Returned to Guangzhou in September to teach in 40th Primary School of Guangzhou City.
1936	Aged 27	Participated in the National Boy Scout Parade at Nanjing as the serving officer of Chinese Boy Scout.
1937	Aged 28	Taught in cultural secondary school in February, also was the choir instructor of YWCA and Women's Association. Started teaching as a freelance music teacher in the Municipal Li Jian Village Normal School in May. Formed a "service troupe" with other teachers after the "Lugouqiao Incident" in July to teach youngsters in choirs. Started teaching in the Guangzhou Municipal Women's Secondary School in August.
1938	Aged 29	Returned to hometown after the Guangzhou occupation. Soon Hu Men was also occupied so his entire family had to stay in Daojiao (Jichuan) Town so as to avoid the warfare.
1939	Aged 30	Returned to hometown to assist his father to set up Dong Sheng School. Arrived Hong Kong in September and started teaching in Tao Ching Secondary School on Tin Hau Temple Road, Causeway Bay, and in Fong Lam Women's Secondary School, Fung Fai Terrace, Happy Valley.
1940	Aged 31	Served as the Dean of School no.2, Cheung Chau Chinese Fishermen's Association Primary School.
1941	Aged 32	Retreated in the Ap Lei Chau Fishermen's Primary School no. 1, Hong Kong. Returned to hometown at the end of the year.

1942	Aged 33	Started teaching in Yue Shan Secondary School, Huangjiao Town, Zhongshan County in February. His entire family moved to Huangjiao, at which his father served as a medical doctor.
1945	Aged 36	Returned to Guangzhou and started teaching at Yue Shan Secondary School.
1946	Aged 37	Started teaching in Ming Sheng Secondary School in January. During his leisure time he formed "Qing Yu Painting Society" with his friends and they gathered often. They had held an exhibition at the Community Education Center of Gongguan.
1948	Aged 39	His father passed away.
1949	Aged 40	Started teaching in Tak Ming Secondary School Subsidiary School in September. Also doubled up as the special class teacher in afternoon school and evening instructor at the Dongguan Trade and Industry Association Evening School. He made acquaintance with Ding Yanyong (1902-1978).
1950	Aged 41	Started teaching at the Dongguan Tung Yee Tong Evening School on Third Street, Sai Ying Pun, in January.
1955	Aged 46	Started teaching at the School of the Kowloon Firewood and Charcoal Association in September.
1956	Aged 47	Started teaching at Lai Kwan School, Wanchai, Hong Kong, in August.
1957	Aged 48	Returned to hometown during Chinese New Year to visit his relatives.
1958	Aged 49	Started teaching in Jing Hua Secondary School in September.
1959	Aged 50	Started serving as the Dean of Lee Cheng Uk Estate Lutheran Primary School. Studied in the teacher's training class in September and was promoted to the position of the Dean of Dongguan Tung Yee Tong Evening School.
1961	Aged 52	Started teaching at a senior primary evening school. Scripted on the name board of Ting Sze School, Sun Tin, New Territories. His wife passed away because of illness.



Plate 28
Yuen Hung-shue,
Peony (in the style of Yun Shouping), ink and colour
on paper, hanging scroll,
137x69cm, 1947



Plate 29
Yuen Hung-shue at
Aberdeen, 1950

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	1962	Aged 53	Made an application as a certified teacher. Hired as a full-time teacher at the Sai Kung Joint Township School, New Territories, in September. Subsequently promoted to headmaster position of this government subsidised school. He worked there until he retired at the age of 70. During this period he became close friends with Luo Shuzhong (1898-1968) and Ding Yanyong (1902-1978). He had been incessantly involved in arts creation outside of teaching engagements.
	1973	Aged 64	Was the Editor of <i>The selected works of Ding Yanyong from the University Paris Exhibition</i> , a publication associated with the “Ding Yanyong Preview Exhibition, Hong Kong City Hall.” Participated in “Chinese Calligraphy Association Members’ Calligraphy Exhibition” in December and painted during the exhibition. <i>Hua Chiao Daily</i> wrote on the same day that “Yuen Hung-shue can script any style of Chinese calligraphy.”
	1974	Aged 65	Set up China Arts School with friends in art circle, including Lu Dinggong (1903-1979) and Kuang E (1919-2010). The school was initially set up on Jordan Road, Kowloon. In 1977 it was relocated to Argyle Street, Kowloon. Yuen taught calligraphy in person and his students were many. In July, the Hong Kong Teachers’ Association presented a painting and calligraphy exhibition to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Association. Yuen’s <i>Four scrolls of seal, clerical, small regular, and running scripts</i> 篆隸楷行四屏, a scroll of small regular script, and one of stone-drum script, were exhibited. They demonstrated the versatility of Yuen’s calligraphic proficiency.
Plate 30 (left) Senior primary evening school graduation ceremony, 1961	1975	Aged 66	Served as the instructor of the painting and calligraphy class, Chinese Society of the Sacred Heart Canossian College, until 1978.
Plate 31 (right) Yuen Hung-shue, <i>inscriptions of the name board of Ting Sze School, Sun Tin, New Territories, 1961</i>	1978	Aged 69	Served as the instructor of calligraphy class of Kwun Tong Community Center, and Caritas Center, Caine Road. Presented the “The First Joint Exhibition of Teachers and Students of China Arts School” on 8/F, High Block, Hong Kong City Hall, in September.
	1979	Aged 70	Served as the instructor of the calligraphy class of Tsuen Wan Culture and Recreation Association.

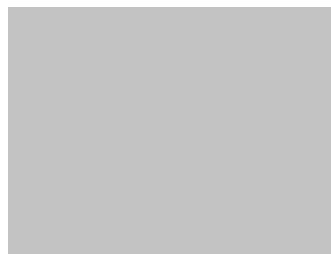




Plate 32 (left)
Yuen Hung-shue
(2nd from right), Luo
Shuzhong (3rd from
right) and Ding Yanyong
(4th from right) at Tin
Hau Temple in Sai
Kung. Around 1965

Plate 33 (right)
Yuen Hung-shue (left)
and Ding Yanyong at
Hong Kong City Hall,
March 1973

1980	Aged 71	Served as the instructor of the calligraphy class of Ho Man Tin Duke of Edinburgh's Award. In September, presented "Joint Exhibition of the Paintings and Calligraphy of Yuen Hung-shue and students" at Kwun Tong Community Center.
1981	Aged 72	Served as the instructor of painting and calligraphy classes of the "YiShuXueHui", University of Hong Kong, until 1982.
1982	Aged 73	Presented "Joint Exhibition of the Paintings of Yuen Hung-shue and students" at Fong ShuChuen Amenities Centre, University of Hong Kong.
1983	Aged 74	Served as the instructor of the calligraphy class at Hong Kong Polytechnic.
1986	Aged 77	Participated in the "6th International Calligraphy Exhibition" (Taiwan), "Singapore Calligraphy Exhibition" and "Korea Calligraphy Exhibition."
1987	Aged 78	Served as the instructor of the calligraphy class at True Light Girls' College. Presented "Joint Exhibition of the Paintings of Yuen Hung-shue and students" in the school hall.
1988	Aged 79	Served as the instructor of calligraphy class of the Chinese Department of Baptist College. Appointed as the consultant of the Hong Kong Calligraphers' Association.
1989	Aged 80	Presented "Yuen Hung-shue Calligraphy Solo Exhibition" at Pao Galleries, Hong Kong Arts Center between 5-8 March. Exhibition catalogue was also published. Upon closure of the exhibition, his works <i>Seven-character couplet in clerical script</i> 隸書七言聯 and <i>Lu Ji's Ping Fu Tie in cursive script</i> 草書陸機平復帖 (<i>A consoling Letter</i>) were acquired as Hong Kong Museum of Art collection. Presented "Joint Exhibition of the Paintings and Calligraphy of Yuen Hung-shue and students" on 21-23 November at Loke Yew Hall, the Hong Kong University, by the invitation of Literature Association, HKUSU. Yuen gave a demonstration during the exhibition.

1991	Aged 82	As a gift presented his clerical script calligraphy <i>Heritage of Lu Yu Style</i> 陸羽遺風 to the Flagstaff House Museum of Tea Ware. In April, presented “Exhibition of the Paintings and Calligraphy by students of Yuen Hung-shue” at the Chinese Culture Association.
1992	Aged 83	Participated in “Bi Qing Mo Qu” 筆情墨趣 joint exhibition with Sun Xingge, Li Zhu-shi, Chen Ruo-hai, Jin Jia-lun, Chen Yun-yao, Huang Wen-long, Zheng Liang-shu, Li Xu-bai, held at Yi Dian Gallery 藝點畫廊. (Plate 34)
1993	Aged 84	<i>Calligraphy and Paintings by Yuen Hong-shue</i> was published.
1995	Aged 86	His Chinese ink painting <i>Landscape</i> was acquired by the Hong Kong Museum of Art in March. Participated in “Joint exhibition of the paintings and calligraphy of Yuen Hung-shue, Zhou Shicong, Liu Qingzhen” held at the Chinese Culture Association in April.
1997	Aged 88	Donated to the Art Museum, Institute of Chinese Studies, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, 166 items of Ding Yanyong’s calligraphy, paintings and impressions of seals which were originally Yuen’s personal collection. Also donated were ten rubbings of the invaluable collection of Sanbuyi Tang. Donated his own collection of Ding Yanyong’s <i>Three Fishes</i> 三魚 (wooden print) and <i>Tall Willow and Buzzing Cicada</i> 高柳鳴蟬 (ink painting) to Guangdong Museum of Art. The Art Museum, Institute of Chinese Studies, the Chinese University of Hong Kong acquired Yuen’s <i>Orchid Pavilion Preface in running script</i> 行書蘭亭序, a horizontal scroll of over 10-feet long, and a seven-character couplet in clerical script.
1998	Aged 89	The Art Museum, Institute of Chinese Studies, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, presented “Sanbuyi Tang Collection of Masterworks by Ting Yin-Yung (Ding Yanyong)” from 10 July to 15 Nov. Wrote couplet <i>Long live the Heaven, Spring everywhere on earth</i> 天增歲月，春滿乾坤 in regular script on scrolls of six feet in height and presented as a gift to the University Museum and Art Gallery, The Hong Kong University. Exhibited three pairs of calligraphy in a spring festival couplets exhibition held at the Hong Kong University library. Donated to the library a couplet. His article “Mr. Ding Yanyong and me” was published in Canada: <i>Toronto Arts Quarterly</i> , Issue 2, P.9. Donated to the Art Museum, Institute of Chinese Studies, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Sun Xingge’s extra-large painting <i>Orchid</i> (1990) and a piece of large calligraphy (1995), and his own ink painting <i>Landscape</i> .



Plate 34
Cover of “Bi Qing Mo Qu” 筆情墨趣 (the emotion and joy of calligraphy) Exhibition catalogue, 1992

Plate 35
Hand painted poster of “Joint Exhibition of Yuen Hung-shue, Chow Sai-chung and Lau Ching-chun”, 1995

1999	Aged 90	Presented <i>Appreciate paintings in Zhan Tang and read proses in Ping Shan</i> 展堂讀畫·平山觀文 in regular script to the University Museum and Art Gallery, The Hong Kong University, as gift.
2001	Aged 92	Accepted the invitation to be the honorary consultant of Qianqiu Paintings and Calligraphy Society.
2002	Aged 93	<p>The University Museum and Art Gallery and the Main Library of the Hong Kong University co-presented an exhibition to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the Fung Ping Shan Library. Yuen donated the couplet <i>Read to accumulate fortune, be satisfied and feel calm</i> 讀書修福·安分養神 in clerical script to the Main Library of The Hong Kong University.</p> <p>Exhibited in the exhibition presented by Qianqiu Paintings and Calligraphy Society in May at Hong Kong City Hall.</p> <p>By year-end, The University Museum and Art Gallery, the Hong Kong University acquired Yuen's oil paintings <i>Vase of Flowers</i> and <i>Fishes</i>.</p> <p>Scripted <i>A Sky-supporting Pillar</i> 擎天一柱 for the stone foundation of a stone sculpture of Yuan Chonghuan at the Yuan Chonghuan Memorial Museum, Dongguan, China.</p>
2005	Aged 96	In December, “Friends of Shijai” and “Cang Lang Shu She” co-presented “CangHai LianBo” Exhibition 滄海連波 — 香港書家與滄浪書社交流展 at the lower block of Hong Kong City Hall. A 6-feet scroll of Yuen's <i>Couplet in running script</i> was among the exhibits.

Plate 36

Yuen Hung-shue, *couplet* presented as a gift to the University Museum and Art Gallery, The University of Hong Kong, 1999



Plate 37

Yuen Hung-shue, *A Sky-supporting Pillar* for the stone foundation of a stone sculpture of Yuan Chonghuan at the Yuan Chonghuan Memorial Museum, Dongguan, China, 2002

2008	Aged 99	In February, Shaw College, the Chinese University of Hong Kong presented “Amusement in the Arts - Exhibition of Collective Works of Chinese Painting and Calligraphy” at YuehChiao Art Gallery. Yuen was the guest of honour of the opening ceremony and he demonstrated his calligraphy at the event.
2009	Aged 100	Wrote running script Heshou 鶴壽 (<i>Longevity as a crane's</i>).
2010	Aged 101	“Taoist Calligraphy and Painting Exhibition”, an event of Taoist Day, was held at the Exhibition Gallery, Hong Kong Central Library in May. Yuen’s <i>Tao</i> in regular script was among the exhibits, ink painted on a piece of red paper and displayed in the middle of the exhibition hall. It is now a collection of the Hong Kong Taoist Association.
2012	Aged 103	Yuen passed away at the age of 103.

Plate 38

Yuen Hung-shue, calligraphy presented as a gift to Hong Kong Taoist Association, 2010

