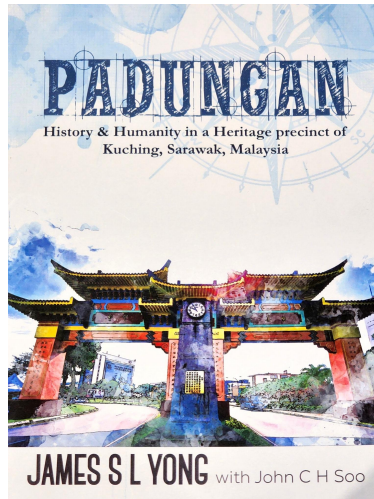


PRESS RELEASE

Newly published: An in-depth view of the history, heritage and humanity of Padungan

Book launch event: Friday 23 December 2022

Telang Usan Hotel, off Jalan Ban Hock, Kuching | 14:00 - 17:00



On 23 December 2022, [JYGlobal Creations](#) launches **PADUNGAN: History & Humanity in a Heritage precinct of Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia**, the first book to focus on the history and heritage of the Padungan area*. Written by James S L Yong (with field research support from John C H Soo) the book documents the people, places and stories of the Padungan area from the 19th century to the present day. Filled with originally commissioned photography by Jee Foong and vivid illustrations by Gabrielle Lim, **PADUNGAN** reflects on the vibrant heritage of the community through field research, testimonials and historical narratives.

Padungan has played a prominent part in the modern history of Kuching and has cultural, social and heritage significance, although it is less studied compared to “Old Kuching” areas around the Main Bazaar, India Street and the Old Courthouse. In a fast-changing urban environment, this vital text puts on record what the place was like in the past; how the people in the area lived, worked and entertained themselves; significant historical events that shaped the landscape; and the cultural heritage that has been passed down.

James S L Yong, author of *PADUNGAN* said: *“Ever since I was a schoolboy in the 1960s and 1970s, I’ve had a fascination for Padungan. I remember it as a hub of various activities which created around it a complex ecosystem and dynamic community full of bustle, both day and night. Back in 2018, I was asked to write an article for a local magazine about Padungan which triggered many of these nostalgic memories and inspired me to begin researching into different sub-zones within the Padungan area. I began to go deeper and deeper into the history, culture and traditions associated with the neighbourhood and four years later, a book was born!”*

*Padungan area refers to not just Jalan Padungan, but also adjacent areas including Jalan Bukit Mata, Ban Hock, Abell, Petanak, Blacksmith and Kampong Lumba Kuda.

Learning about the Padungan from before I was born - the Iban settlements, the Malay kampongs, the sago processing plants - has fired my imagination and influences the way I navigate the area today.

Thinking about my childhood experiences of Padungan and the neighborhood it is in the present, I can't help but feel that a sense of vibrancy and dynamism has been lost. Working on this book has allowed me to think through heritage advocacy and what it means to revitalize an area and an ecosystem in contemporary and relevant ways."

PADUNGAN is written for various groups of readers:

- **Those who have a direct connection with Padungan**, for them this publication would be a good keepsake, as well as a means to understand Padungan before they knew it.
- **Historians and history enthusiasts** keen to know more about the history of Kuching.
- **Heritage practitioners and advocates** who can learn more about the various heritage values of Padungan and what has (or has not) been preserved.
- **Tourists and visitors to Sarawak** interested in learning about the stories behind the places they see and the people they meet
- **Municipal authorities and urban planners** in Padungan who might wish to determine which aspects of the areas to renew and revitalise, while sensitively preserving important elements of history or heritage.

PADUNGAN: History & Humanity in a Heritage precinct of Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia is supported by the Ministry of Tourism, Creative Industry and Performing Arts, Sarawak, Sarawak Heritage Society, Badan Warisan Malaysia and other generous individuals.

About the author

James S L Yong is a writer, researcher, consultant and advocate for heritage protection. He was President of Sarawak Heritage Society (SHS) for the 2020/2022 term. With a background in computing, business and digital government, James is passionate about sustainable heritage management, creativity and business strategy.

NOTES TO EDITORS

For interviews and more information about the book please contact

James S L Yong, Author, jslyong@gmail.com

Press photographs: for high res press photographs see [HERE](#) or scan



Public information

PADUNGAN: History & Humanity in a Heritage precinct of Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia

Written by James S L Yong is available to be purchase at the Borneo Cultures Museum gift shop at RM150

www.jyglobalcreations.com

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