

YUNIZAR

(b. 1971, Talawi, West Sumatera, Indonesia)

Yunizar earned his fine arts degree from the *Institut Seni Indonesia* (The Indonesia Institute of the Arts) in Yogyakarta—an institution of national pride at the heart of Indonesia’s artistic and cultural capital. During his studies, he co-founded *Kelompok Seni Rupa Jendela*, an art collective formed with five other Minang artists. At a time when the Indonesian art scene was inundated with socio-political themes following the 1998 Reformation and the fall of former President Suharto’s regime, KSR Jendela deliberately distanced itself from overtly political statements. Instead, the group served as a creative sanctuary, fostering artistic exchange, experimentation with form and material, and the development of distinct artistic sensibilities.

By the late 1990s, Yunizar’s work emerged as a refreshing departure from grand narratives and didactic messaging, shifting the focus towards the essence (*rasa*) of everyday life. His paintings, with their raw, childlike aesthetic and fantastical imagery, might initially appear naïve, yet they exude a deep, enigmatic presence. His early works from the 2000s often depicted haunting human figures rendered in dark, muddy hues—capturing the alienation of anonymous, fragmented psyches.

In the mid-2000s, Yunizar drew inspiration from street graffiti and vandalism found in bathroom stalls and urban corners, incorporating rhythmic, impressionistic scribbles into his paintings. This series, known as *Coretan* or “unreadable letters,” deliberately evades direct meaning, instead evoking a visceral, oral-tradition-like resonance—a nod to the storytelling heritage of the Minangkabau culture. Over the years, his motifs have evolved to further blur the boundaries between the real and the imaginary, featuring everything from domestic structures to mythical beings such as the Garuda, a symbol deeply embedded in Indonesia’s national identity.

In 2012, Yunizar made an unexpected foray into sculpture, bringing his whimsical, often surreal subjects to life in bronze—ranging from village gangsters to primordial creatures. Despite these dynamic transformations in his practice, a deep-seated trust in intuition remains central to his artistic philosophy, allowing him to extract poetry and power from the ordinary.

Yunizar’s work has garnered critical acclaim across Southeast Asia and beyond. In 2007, he held a solo exhibition at the National University of Singapore Museum (NUS). His works are part of major institutional collections, including the Singapore Art Museum (SAM), the Long Museum (Shanghai), and the Benesse Art Collection (Japan). In 2021, he was the only Southeast Asian artist selected to participate in *Frieze Sculpture*, London. In 2022, he launched his first book, *New Perspectives*. His recent exhibitions include his solo show *New Perspectives* at Gajah Gallery Jakarta and the group exhibition *Big Bang: A Myth of Origins* at Gajah Gallery Singapore.

Yunizar currently lives and works in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

EDUCATION

- 1993 Fine Arts Degree, ISI Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 1988 Indonesian Fine Arts High School, Padang, Indonesia

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 *YUNIZAR: Perspektif Baru*, Gajah Gallery Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2022 *YUNIZAR: New Perspectives*, Gajah Gallery, Singapore
- 2019 *The Original Story*, Sin Sin Fine Art, Hong Kong
- 2016 *The Garden in Eden*, Gajah Gallery, Singapore
- 2014 *Yunizar Solo Exhibition*, Gajah Gallery, Singapore
- 2012 *Yunizar: Story*, Ben Brown Fine Arts, Hong Kong
- 2010 *Jogja Psychedelia*, Galeri Soemardja, Bandung, Indonesia
Jogja Psychedelia, Sangkring Art Space, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Jogja Psychedelia, Gajah Gallery, Singapore
- 2007 *Coretan – Recent Works by Yunizar*, National University of Singapore Museum, Singapore
- 2006 *Biasa Aja*, Gajah Gallery, Singapore
Coretan Rasa, Emmitan Fine Art Gallery, Indonesia
Petualang dalam Rasa, Sin Sin Gallery, Hong Kong
Alam Garis, Andara, Jakarta
- 2005 *Reborn*, Sin Sin Fine Art Gallery, Hong Kong
- 2002 Chouinard Gallery, Hong Kong
- 2001 *New Sensation*, Gajah Gallery, Singapore
Exploring Spacing, Mien Gallery, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Room, Space & Wilderness, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2025 *Big Bang: A Myth of Origins*, Gajah Gallery Singapore
- 2023 *Beyond Borders*, Gajah Gallery Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Forging Ahead: 10 Years of Yogya Art Lab, Gajah Gallery Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2022 *Navigating Entropy Jakarta*, Gajah Gallery Jakarta, Indonesia
New Beginnings, Gajah Gallery Jakarta, Indonesia
Reframing Roots, Gajah Gallery, Singapore
- 2021 *TWENTYFIVE Yogyakarta*, Gajah Gallery, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
TWENTYFIVE, Gajah Gallery, Singapore
- 2020 *Playing with Paper: Intimacies and Possibilities*, Gajah Gallery, Online Show
Navigating Entropy: Artists in Residence, Gajah Gallery, Singapore
Retrospective Utopia, Tang Contemporary, Bangkok, Thailand
Fresh Vision: Complex Humour, Gajah Gallery, Online Show
Fresh Vision: Rejuvenating Hope, Gajah Gallery, Online Show
The Humanity of Small Things, Gajah Gallery, Online Show
Art Basel Hong Kong 2020, Gajah Gallery, Singapore
Genset, Gajah Gallery, Singapore
- 2019 *MONUMENTA: In Lightness*, Gajah Gallery, Singapore
Bebas, Sakato Art Community, Yogyakarta
Genset, Gajah Gallery in collaboration with Tabularasa Studio, PUBLIKA Whitebox, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- 2018 *Power, Play, Perception*, Gajah Gallery, Whitebox, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Landscape's Legacies: Visualizing Alam Minangkabau, Gajah Gallery,

- Singapore
- 2017 *Jogja Biennale XIV*, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Landscapes Legacies: Visualizing Alam Minangkabau, Gajah Gallery, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2016 *Archaeology of the Present* — Gajah Gallery, Singapore
- 2015 *Bermain Rasa* - joint exhibition with Ugo Untoro, Gajah Gallery, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2014 *Thinking of Landscape: Paintings from the Yeap Lam Yang Collection*, Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore, Singapore
Intersections – Latin American and Southeast Asian Contemporary Art, travelling exhibition in Sangkring Art Space, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, and Gajah Gallery Singapore
Trajectories – Galeria Habana, Havana, Cuba
- 2013 *Lokanat – Ground Zero*, Lokanat Galleries, Yangon, Myanmar
- 2012 *Contemporary Indonesia*, Ben Brown, London, United Kingdom
Paperworks, Group exhibition with S Teddy and Anusupati, Gajah Gallery, Singapore
- 2011 *Back to The Future*, Sangkring Art Space, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2009 *Jendela - A play of the Ordinary*, NUS Museum, Singapore
Jogja Biennale X, Jogja, Indonesia
Reach for the Heart, Sin Sin Fine Art, Hong Kong
- 2008 *Expose #1 – A Presentation of Indonesian Contemporary Art by Deutsche Bank & Nadi Gallery*, Four Seasons Hotel, Jakarta, Indonesia
Manifesto, The National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia
Tribes, Sin Sin Fine Art, Hong Kong
Indonesian Invasion, Sin Sin Fine Art, Hong Kong
- 2007 *Coretan – Recent Works by Yunizar*, NUS Museum, Singapore
Indonesian Contemporary Art Now, Nadi Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
Keindahan dibalik karya garis, Jogja Gallery, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Cilukba, Valentine Willie Fine Art, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
40 Plus, 40 Minus, Sin Sin Fine Art, Hong Kong
- 2006 *Angkor - The Djin Within*, Gajah Gallery, Singapore
My Favourite Paintings & Sculptures, Art Forum, Singapore
Common Link, Vanessa Art Link, Beijing, China
Grand Opening Exhibition, Galeri Jogja, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Art & Tobacco, Gedung Serba Guna, Magelang, Indonesia
Time & Sign, Vanessa Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 2005 *Indonesian Contemporary*, iPreciation, Singapore
The Ordinary - KSRJ (Kelompok Seni Rupa Jendela), Nadi Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
Urban/Culture :CP Open Biennale, Jakarta, Indonesia
Spirit of Play, Bentara Budaya, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2004 *Merahnya Merah (How Red is Red)*, Nadi Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
Object(ify), Nadi Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
Faces, Chouinard Gallery, Hong Kong
Mempertimbangkan Tradisi, Sanggar Sakato, The National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia
Membaca Dunia Widayat, H. Widayat Museum, Magelang, Indonesia
- 2003 *Interpellation - CP Open Biennale*, National Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
EPIC, Gajah Gallery, Singapore

- Borobudur International Festival*, H.Widayat Museum, Mungkid, Magelang, Indonesia
Mosaic of Contemporary Indonesian Fine Art, Vanessa Art House, Jakarta, Indonesia
Infatuated, Sunjin Gallery, Singapore
- 2002 *Alfi - Yunizar - Mantofani*, Chouinard Gallery, Hong Kong
ECSTATICUS MUNDI – KSRJ (Kelompok Seni Rupa Jendela), Group Exhibition of the JENDELA, Selasar Sunaryo Art Space, Bandung & AIR Art House, Jakarta, Indonesia
Indofood Art Awards, National Museum, Jakarta & ARMA Agung Rai Art Museum, Bali, Indonesia
Pose – KSRJ (Kelompok Seni Rupa Jendela), Affandi Museum, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2001 *Opera*, Langgeng Gallery, Magelang, Indonesia
Not Just the Political, H.Widayat Museum, Mungkid, Magelang, Indonesia
Bias Batas, Edwin Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
Perupa Muda dari Empat Kota, Jakarta, Indonesia
Sebelas Windu Ourbakala, Taman Budaya, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Sakato, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Philip Morris Indonesian Art Awards Exhibiton, Agung Rai Museum of Art, Bali & Graha Lukisan TMII, Jakarta, Indonesia
88 Years Primordial, Taman Budaya, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Hiding, Santi Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia
New Sensation, Gajah Gallery, Singapore
Room, Space & Wilderness, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 2000 *Indonesia Expression*, Singapore
Exhibition of Contemporary Arts, Bali, Indonesia
Membuka Kemungkinan/Opening up Possibilities – KSRJ (Kelompok Seni Rupa Jendela), Taman Budaya Yogyakarta & Cipta Gallery, Taman Ismail Marzuki, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 1999 *From a Window*, Group Exhibition of the JENDELA II, Padma Gallery, Bali, Indonesia
Festival Kesenian Indonesian I, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Prasidha '93, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 1998 *Refleksi Zaman*, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 1997 *Jendela*, First exhibition of KSRJ (Kelompok Seni Rupa Jendela), Purna Budaya, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Syawalan Exhibition, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Paspatra I Exhibition, Tegal, Indonesia
From a Window, with Kelompok Seni Rupa Jendela, at Hotel Padma, Bali, Indonesia
Pelukis Muda Yogyakarta, Museum Benteng Vredeburg, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
NAMNAMA, Taman Budaya Surakarta & Ganesa Galeri, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Festival Kesenian Yogyakarta IX, Museum Benteng Vredeburg, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Festival Mahasiswa se-Asia Tenggara, Brunei Darussalam
Sakato II, Purna Budaya, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Philip Morris Indonesian Art Awards exhibition, Agung Rai Museum of Art, Bali & Braha Lukisan TMII, Jakarta, Indonesia

- 1996 *Dialog Dua Kota I Exhibition*, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Gelegar 10 Exhibition, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Dialog Dua Kota II Exhibition, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 1995 *Eksplorasi Hitam Putih Exhibition*, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Dies Natalis Exhibition, ISI, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Peksiminas III Exhibition, Jakarta, Indonesia
Sakato I, Purna Budaya, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
- 1994 *Prashida '93*, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

AWARDS

- 1998 Best Painting, Philip Morris Award V
- 1995 Best Painting, Peksiminas III Exhibition, Jakarta, Indonesia