

afterbefore

**images and sounds from Hong Kong**

an exhibition of photography, video, sound art, and the written word



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SIU Wai Hang  
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TSE Ming Chong  
TSE Pak-chai  
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### **Written Word:**

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**Documentation Support:** Asia Art Archive

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**Venue:** The Gallery at Chinatown Soup, 16B Orchard St, New York, New York

**Dates:** Wed. 29 Jan. to Sun. 9 Feb. 2020

# afterbefore

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## images and sounds from Hong Kong

*an exhibition of photography, video, sound art, and the written word*

**afterbefore** is an independent, multimedia exhibition initiated by a collaborative group of Hong Kong photographers, videographers, sound artists, writers, and arts practitioners. The mission of the afterbefore project is to create a platform for Hong Kong artists to be seen and heard at this critical time; to open a more authentic, personal, and intimate window into the Hong Kong experience; and to generate communication, exchange, and dialogue with a global network. In addition to the core exhibition of artworks the project features texts by Hong Kong writers and cultural figures, as well as a special selection of zines created spontaneously during the protests of the last few months by artist collectives, students, activists and ordinary citizens from all over Hong Kong.

Photography, video, and sound art are essential media in Hong Kong, as artists working with them consciously straddle the realms of documentary witnessing and visceral response. During the last six months, the world has seen reports and imagery of the evolution of the mass citizens protests in Hong Kong, the government's increasingly authoritarian response and the subsequent destabilization of possibilities for dialogue in an unprecedented climate of violence, much of it directed against young protestors. While the situation in Hong Kong continues to evolve and intensify, this project expands the focus from the scenes of confrontation and violence that are largely the purview of the international media towards a focus on both the outer and the inner landscapes of Hong Kong in this moment: the way Hongkongers are responding, surviving, communicating, questioning, resisting, and caring for each other within the landscape of this city. How the shifting ground on which they stand is affecting the very fabric of their lives and emotions.

Outside of Hong Kong, the impression exists that citizens' protest actions erupted only in the summer of 2019 in response to the proposed Extradition Law Amendment Bill (ELAB), and the deaf ear the government turned to citizens' widespread and emphatic opposition to it. However, Hong Kong citizens, including artists, have undertaken a number of peaceful, evocative protest actions over the last 20 years in response to different social, economic, and political issues. While the core focus of this project is on current events, works

relating to earlier actions are also included, most notably to the two-month long "Umbrella Movement" of 2014, which call for long-delayed universal suffrage. Through the lens of these visual artists and writers other windows are opened, and other dimensions of Hong Kong's history of protest movements are revealed, as processes of mutual communication and concern, as urgent calls towards preserving Hong Kong space, culture and identity, as well as of resistance. In this way, afterbefore also highlights the universality and resonance that the Hong Kong experience holds for other citizens of the world.

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## ARTWORKS

## Photography

### XYZA CRUZ BACANI

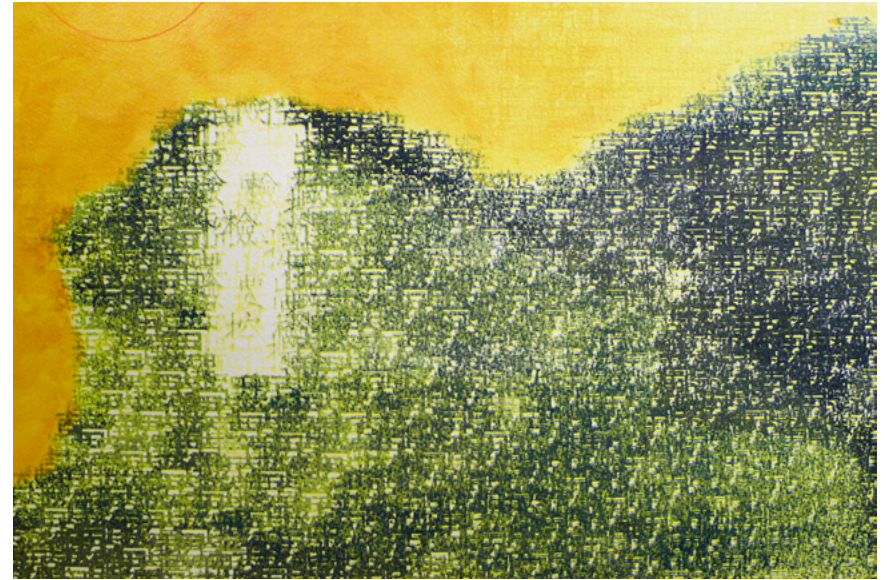


Xyza Cruz Bacani, detail from *The Bystanders*  
Diptych, direct print on aluminum backing, image dimensions: 21.3 x 8, in., 2019

*What does it mean to be a Hong Konger? In the past six months, this has become a glaring question. Does being a Hong Konger mean to be pro-government or anti-government? In a city divided by scenes of violence and Infowars, whose side are we on? In between these two sides are the bystanders, the people who are caught in between. Photographing the protest for months, I turn my lens to these bystanders watching the protests unfold. It has been a challenging year for everyone, but these people have played a very important role. They have become citizen journalists, recording with their phones and continuing to live and hold on in Hong Kong, even when the world says that the city is burning. They often end up as casualties as well, with the teargas not choosing its victims. I will never know which side they are on, as I never asked them, but do we need to choose sides? Or do we all need to take a stand, together, for the city we call home?*

—Xyza Cruz Bacani

### ENOCH CHEUNG



Enoch Cheung, *The New Lion Rock Spirit*  
Digital presentation of silkscreen print, 90 x 60 cm., 2015

*This series of works is related to the Umbrella Movement of 2014. During that time, I collected online comments (in Chinese) posted by the different campaigns of the two opposing sides: the protest groups known as the “yellow ribbons” and the anti-protest groups identified as the “blue ribbons.” Appropriating iconic images from the news and social media during the Movement, I made prints and used a silkscreen process to overlay them with fragments of these oppositional messages, creating images of a clash of ideologies and facts which is still occurring today.*

—Enoch Cheung

## SOUTH HO SIU NAM



South Ho Siu Nam, top row: 20191102\_Wan Chai and 20191020\_Yau Ma Tai;  
bottom row: 20190701\_Central and 20190825\_Tsuen Wan.  
Each: pigment inkjet print, 20x24 in., 2019

## MC (CHAN KAI CHUN)

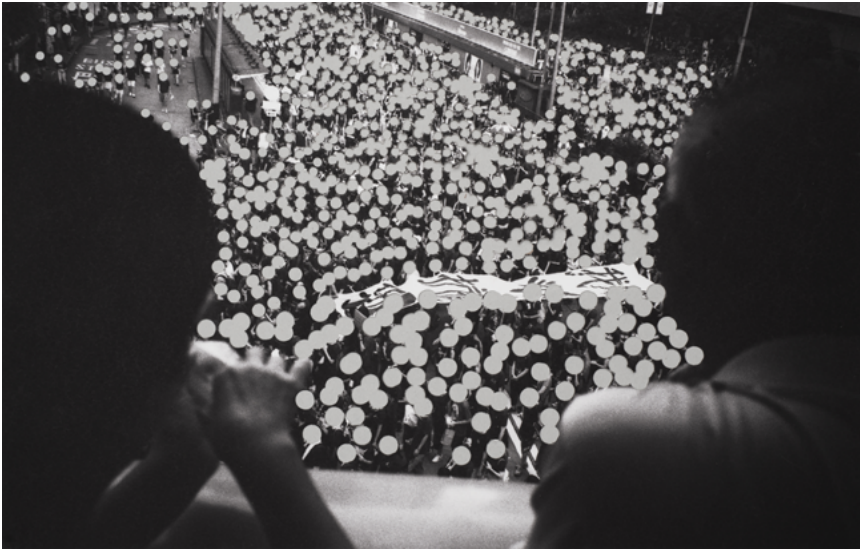


MC, *Gaze* - 20191126\_01\_041 and *Gaze* - 20191126\_01\_040  
Gelatin silver prints, each 40 x 40 cm, 2019

*In 2019, the Hong Kong Government ignored public opinion and tried to forcefully amend the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance. In response, a million Hong Kong people protested against the amendment. However, the government still ignored the public's opinion and tried to pass the amendments through structural violence. Fortunately, many Hong Kong citizens, including many teenagers, rallied together and tried their best to fight against the government's intention, which in turn caused the government to reluctantly suspend the amendments. As a tribute to show my respect, this series of photographs tries to record the spirit of 100 teenagers involved in this social movement. In order to help the public better understand the thoughts and feelings of these young people, these photographs and the teenagers' own statements have just been published as a book.*

—MC

## SIU WAI HANG



Siu Wai Hang, *Clean Hong Kong Action*, 2019.6.16-I, archival inkjet print, 46 x 28 cm, 2019

*As a man who is used to responding to the world with a camera, I felt powerless carrying my instrument and facing the current situation in Hong Kong. This doesn't mean I think that photography is not effective in revealing reality, but rather that its strength of documenting the physical world also turns it into a deadly weapon. The Hong Kong protesters don't welcome cameras, worrying that if their faces are captured in any image it would become a piece of evidence in the government's hands. I didn't take many photos, even though I brought my compact camera to every protest I attended in 2019. Every time I picked up my camera and got ready to shoot, I felt guilty and afraid to capture people's faces. I was caught in a dilemma of choosing between being a protester or a photographer. Finally, I decided to punch out all the faces in my photographs to protect the people, and at the same time, as both a protester and a photographer, to re-establish the importance of photography in this event. The action of punching out the faces in my photos speaks to two extremes. First is the original intention, that this action will prevent people from being recognized. But on the other extreme, it evokes the violence of the powers that be: from their perspective, Hong Kong is an important place for the entire country, but not for the Hong Kong People. And the way they solve a problem is to stop the people who bring out the problem into the open. So my series has an ironic title: "Clean Hong Kong Action".*

—Siu Wai Hang

## ERIC TSANG TSZ YEUNG



Eric Tsang, *White Night #1*

Inkjet print on glossy paper, 60 x 40 cm, 2019

*The title of my photographic series, "White Night", is taken from a novel by Japanese writer Higashino Keigo. The story is irrelevant to the movement, but to me the implication of the title resonates with how Hong Kong people are feeling now: not sure about which situation is worse, never-ending sunlight or never-ending dark night. In either case, the only choice is to keep walking. In the first image, taken on the night of Mid-Autumn Moon Festival (Sept. 13th 2019) anti-extradition bill supporters hold lights at the top of Victoria Peak on Hong Kong island, to show their support for the movement. In another image, taken two weeks later, blue chemical dye is sprayed on the streets by Hong Kong police with water cannons, as a means of identifying those who participate in the protests. Coincidentally, the pro-government and pro-police camp also use blue as their representing color. So the dye is like trying to force people to join their camp.*

—Eric Tsang

## TSE PAK-CHAI



Tse Pak-chai, *Tramways series: Causeway Bay Plaza*,  
Inkjet print on photo paper with glossy lamination, 24 x 16 in., 2019

*This series of photographs shows the tram stops along the Central to Causeway Bay line on Hong Kong island over the last half of 2019. These images reveal the struggles happening in a city of high density, against a background of consumerism and capitalism. Someone told me that “these scenes look empty and silent and yet show the presence of people who were there to leave the traces of their voices and emotions. “ I like this comment.*

—Tse Pak-chai

## TSE MING CHONG



Tse Ming Chong, detail from *City Series II: The Road* (detail)  
Photographic essay of two-image panels, each: inkjet print on semi-gloss paper, 59.5 x 30 cm., 2014

*On 30th September 2014, I woke up at 4 a.m. and couldn't fall back to sleep, so I took a car to Central district. In the early morning, I walked on the empty, quiet streets in Central towards Causeway Bay. Sleeping on the roadside were teenagers who were fighting for their dreams; their tired faces radiated a charm with no regret. I couldn't believe it had been 25 years, from Civic Square to Tiananmen Square; images of me walking from Beijing Hotel to Tiananmen Square every morning at the end of May 1989 suddenly popped into my mind. A quarter of century has passed; yet we are still fighting for democracy and freedom. It is my hope that our pursuit won't be in vain and the light will come.*

—Tse Ming Chong, written in 2014



## KENJI WONG



Kenji Wong, *Hello Darkness My Old Friend: Hong Kong Polytechnic University*  
Inkjet print on Luster paper, 2019

*In 2019, Hong Kong people connected with each other within a context of social turbulence. Strangers became acquaintances, and acquaintances began to bond in fellowship and into an inseparable, collaborative community. Weak beams of light joined together, cutting through darkness and showering upon the world. Lights may be fickle in the wind or dance through the rain. Shadows may fill the void or calm the pace. There are so many currents and emotions between the lights and the shadows.*

—Kenji Wong

## PAUL YEUNG TAK-MING



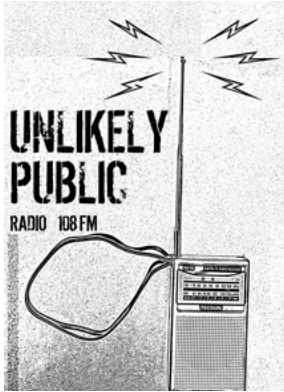
Paul Yeung, *Dark Light: Tale*  
Print on archival glossy paper, 100 x 66.7 cm, 2019

*“Dark Light” is based on a series of photographs I took during the anti-extradition movement protests in 2019. I selected those photos that included “light” elements and converted them into negative color using photoshop. “Light” is always regarded as a symbol of “Hope” and “Positivity” in our universal culture, but during these months I have experienced a feeling of frustration and sadness when I see elements of “Light,” because I can’t see much “Hope” in the future. “Negative” images always remind us of the analogue age, when we used film as our medium of photography, while the images here are all digital. In the end, this series is more a reflection of my personal ups and downs, frustrations and contradictory emotions during the movement.*

—Paul Yeung

## Sound

### CEDRIC MARIDET x FIONA LEE



Cédric Maridet, *Unlikely Public Radio*  
Sound installation of field recordings by Cedric Maridet and Fiona Lee with FM transmitter and transistor radios, 2019

*Unlikely Public Radio is a radio that broadcasts a selection of field recordings from the 01st of July 2019 till January 2020. With a strong focus on slogans, and songs from the public assemblies and rallies that took place in various locations in the streets of Hong Kong, inside shopping malls or stadium, I am interested in the expression of the emergence of a new public sphere through sound. The chronological selection of the*

*recordings highlights its constant renegotiation through the evolution of the various slogans and songs. How does the various communities of Hong Kong sound together? How usually inaudible voices can be heard in different locations and contexts in the city? With these recordings, I am interested to document these ephemeral unstable encounters, these sounding together, where certainties are removed and where questions of ethics and responsibility are constantly asked.*

*With moveable portable radio displaced in the space, these questions are transferred to the radio listeners with the possibility to control the volume, intensity and locations of these sounds, hence asking the question again: how do we sound together?*

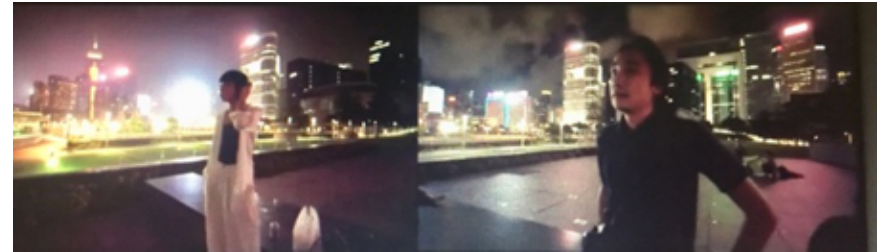
—Cedric Maridet

*My field recordings document sounds from seven of the days I participated in the Hong Kong demonstrations, between 9 June 2019 to 1 January 2020. From slogans like “No extradition bill to China” to “Independence for Hong Kong,” the collective voice and thoughts of the people were an urgent call to fight back for greater autonomy. From my observations during this last half year, ordinary citizens as well as frontline protestors have been more willing to spontaneously make their voices heard and call out these slogans than in past protest actions. And many spontaneous actions are initiated by individuals, whether on the street or in a shopping mall. In these past six months, a huge number of Hong Kong citizens have been transformed, becoming more awake and more aware that we must take action in our communities to ensure our freedom. Most of us woke up in 2019, and now that we are awake, we can never return to the past.*

—Fiona Lee

## Video

### SOUTH HO SIU NAM



South Ho Siu Nam, *If only it were possible to forget everything*  
Video, 28.55 mins, 2018



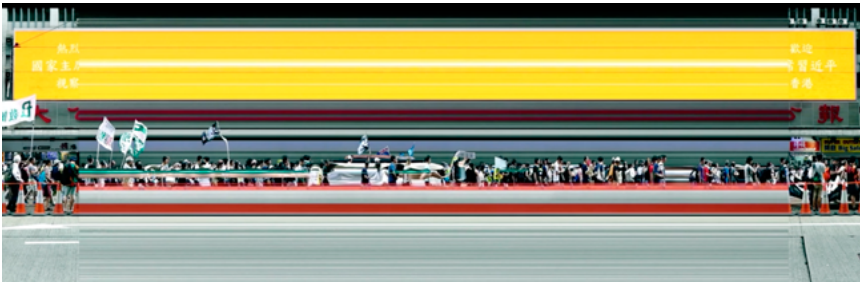
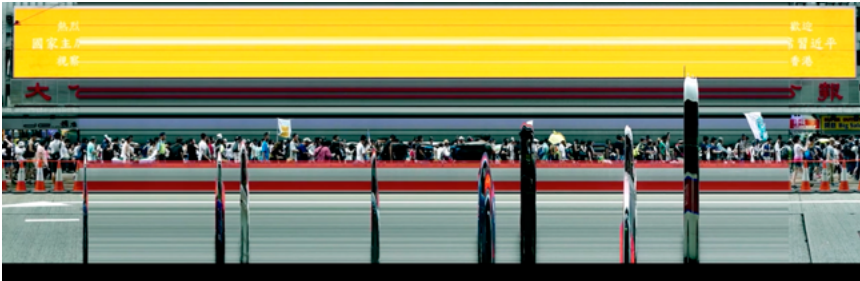
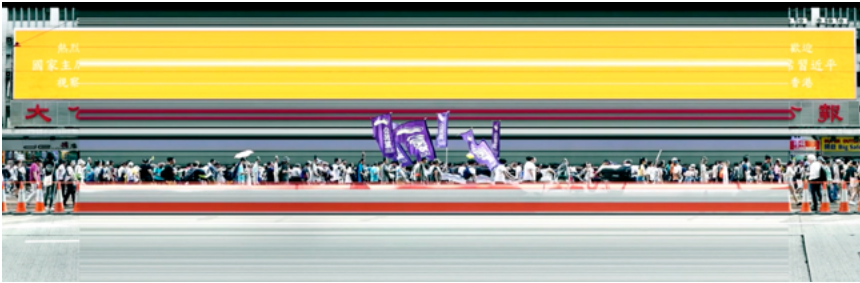
South Ho Siu Nam, *Untitled*  
Video, duration 31.5 mins, 2019

*“If only it were possible to forget everything” was made in 2018 and retraces a journey I took almost every day four years earlier during the Umbrella Movement, going to buy beer from a Wanchai 7-Eleven and bringing it back to the protestors camping area at Tamar site. The title and script reference a scene in Wong Kar Wai’s film “Ashes of Time,” where a warrior is given a bottle of magic wine to make him forget his pain. But it doesn’t work.*

*The second video is a composite of footage I shot showing Hong Kong citizens demonstrating on four different days in June and August 2019.*

—South Ho Siu Nam

## SIU WAI HANG



Siu Wai Hang, *Open Ta Kung Pao*, 2018  
4K video, 15min

*Numbers, the indicator of dissatisfaction, but it seems that doesn't work anymore.*

*Tired, no matter how long we walk, we will never reach the goal.*

*Doubt, our voices are ignored, even though we are exercising our rights; is that the purpose of freedom of speech?*

—*Siu Wai Hang*

WRITTEN WORD

## The Ballad of Queen's Pier

Liu Waitong | 2016

*With you through bleak wind and wretched rain  
With you cloaked by the moon, capped in stars  
- Chow Yiu Fai "Queen's Robber"*

That night I watched a fisherman place a white candle  
in the water along the pier, leading the way for ghosts.  
Whoosh, I was a gust of wind, lingering, unwilling to leave.

That night I watched a chess-player filling words on the chessboard,  
piecemeal as a genealogy in Kowloon ink, each word as mystical.  
Whoosh, I was a gust of wind, lingering, unwilling to leave.

That night I watched a dancer whirl a white dress  
into flowing clouds, upon the clouds a golden monkey gnashed his teeth  
with fierce eyes.  
Shu shu, I was a shower, pattering away, unwilling to leave.

That night I watched a widower drum on a pan and sing,  
a song as clear and strong as a fearless youth of forty years ago.  
Shu shu, I was a shower, pattering away, unwilling to leave.

"With you cloaked by the moon, capped in stars." Tonight I burn  
letters at the pier,  
demons rise up on the city's thousand needles,  
with you I boil rain and burn wind, call for sleet in a melting pot.

Tut tut, I am human, bite my finger, write in the sky.



Photo courtesy of Liu Waitong

*Translated from Chinese by Audrey Heijns  
Published in Exchanges: Journal of Literary Translation*

# The Mask I Wear on the Weekends

Karen Cheung | Aug 30, 2019

In August, the air in Hong Kong takes on a life of its own. The winds weep with so much moisture that it often feels suffocating. On one of those stifling days, I welcomed a sweaty handyman into my flat. The tanned, smiling, 30-something stranger, whom I had found on a local household-repair version of “seeking arrangements,” was there to dismantle a spare bed that I was hoping to sell.

As he removed the nails from the bed frame, he asked, “So you’ve been out on the streets, eh?”

I took a step back, immediately suspicious. “What gave it away?”

“There’s a yellow hard hat by your sofa,” he said, laughing. “Don’t worry, I’m out every other week too. I’m with the first aid. Just doing what I can.”

While he smoked a cigarette in my kitchen, we chatted about the protests that have swept across the city, seeking to secure the promises made by our leaders for checks and balances on Hong Kong’s government and for certain democratic rights and freedoms. “My son keeps asking me to explain why the police are beating people up,” he told me. “Even the children know there’s something wrong.”

Before he left, he told me to call him if I ever needed anything else around the house fixed. “We’re allies,” he said. And if I was ever on the scene and needed help, he added, I had his number.

That encounter epitomizes an uncanny sensation I’ve been experiencing for months. My “real” life — the one where I show up to work every morning, have a drink in the evening with friends, hide underneath the covers reading a book at night or call a handyman for odd jobs — exists in a parallel universe, one in which the city isn’t burning. On the weekends, I enter that other world — the one in which I head out wearing safety gear, my hard hat and face mask in place — to witness the thousands marching and then go home to watch live feeds of the news late at night.

It feels as if those two worlds do not converge neatly. I don’t know most of my fellow protesters. Except for a few close friends, most people I see on a day-to-day basis, either at work or in my neighborhood, are not those I’d turn to for discussions about politics: The topic is too heavy for small talk. So on Monday mornings, I have no idea which of my colleagues also got tear-gassed the night before. Or if the grandmother who lives across the road was the same one I saw offering snacks to hungry demonstrators.

On weekends, parts of the city transform into a battlefield. The riot police take their formations, and the metal barricades on the sides of the roads are coated with pepper spray residue. On weekdays, the graffiti seems out of place as the streets are again filled with office workers, all of them hurrying somewhere.

For the past two months, wherever I go, I wonder about the people around me: Do they know what’s happening in this city? I look at them — the impossibly fit women in leggings at my weekend yoga class, the employee at the Japanese takeout shop who hands me my bento, the teenagers playing basketball outside my building. Are any of them out there at the protests?

Even my family lives in an alternate reality. They have been taking turns forwarding me misinformation that smears the protesters, text messages that originate from unknown sources. One of them assures me the family has “no intention of meddling with my life,” but sends me pro-China propaganda anyway.

Once in a while, something pierces through the illusion. At a recent demonstration, a protester in black grabbed my arm.

“Hey! You recognize me? I was in the same class as you in law school!” I didn’t.

“Maybe if you took off your mask?” I suggested. “I can’t tell who you are just from the eyes. Though you probably shouldn’t take it off now.” Fifteen minutes later, we were hit by tear gas, and he dissolved into the crowd.

The looming threat of prosecution, for taking part in what the Hong Kong government calls “illegal protests,” has forced us into anonymity. In the online forums where protest strategies are discussed, we adopt weird handles and real names are never used. A popular saying among the protesters these days is, “One day, we’ll be able to take off our masks, embrace and finally see each other.” The Hong Kong government has arrested over 800 people since the first major anti-

extradition protests in June, including several prominent pro-democracy activists on Friday, so that day seems further and further away.

Even the online world has fractured into different planes. While forum discussions are anonymous, regular social media has become a way for Hong Kongers to express their positions on the protests. Many of my friends are journalists, so perhaps I live in a protest bubble — most people I know on social media are posting about nothing else. Some of my friends, who experienced their political enlightenment during the Umbrella Movement in 2014, have now completely dedicated themselves to stalling the rapid undermining of Hong Kong's remaining freedoms. Even those who never used to follow politics — as if politics were separate from our everyday lives — are suddenly posting about the protests on Instagram.

The ones who are silent are silent for the predictable reasons. I had seen them proudly post photos of themselves standing next to government officials, or hint at their career ambitions in China. Other friends, who I knew were active in the protests, choose to keep their contributions discreet. One of them explained it in an interview: "Perhaps we're staying anonymous out of fear. But it's also egalitarian in a way, that whatever we do, we're just ordinary people who love Hong Kong."

At least those who oppose the movement outright are taking a stance. More inexplicable are those who refuse to engage, secure in the privilege of brushing the protests aside. Or those who claim to support the protests and then withdraw that support once it disrupts their everyday lives, even though that is the point of civil disobedience.

All these worlds are increasingly colliding. Two weekends ago, I met friends for dinner at Causeway Bay, one of Hong Kong's busiest shopping districts. When we left the restaurant, there were police charging at protesters. The huge billboard outside, usually flashing with ads for luxury bags or beauty products, was switched off. I had never seen those streets at night so dark. That evening, I stepped over a pool of blood at the subway station as I took the train home.

The protests are getting harder to ignore. They are no longer confined to specific locations; they are popping up sporadically all over the city, often on weekdays, too. It is becoming impossible to pretend that this political movement exists only on the fringes.

This is the only parallel universe I long for: the one where kids spend their summers at the malls, singing karaoke and complaining about holiday homework — not organizing rallies or worrying about where to stash their gear so their parents can't find it. It's the one where everyone in the city can be out in the streets, and no one has to guess who their allies are.

## 3Hours to #weConnect

Vivek Mahbubani | Oct 2019

3 hours and some water was all it took to cement the idea that the Hong Kong identity is more than skin color or ethnic background, but rather a state of mind combined with a love for this city—another positive outcome thanks to the Hong Kong protests, yet something the Hong Kong government has a hard time comprehending, adding to its list of incompetence. This all began when the convener of Hong Kong’s Civil Human Rights Front, Jimmy Sham, was attacked by what some people claimed were ethnic minorities on the night of Wednesday, 16 October 2019. This sparked an immediate online discussion of retaliation with suggestions that the Tsim Sha Tsui Mosque and Chung King Mansions, a famous cultural melting-pot, as targets during the marches in that area scheduled for 20 October 2019, despite the fact that the Tsim Sha Tsui police station was just a few blocks away.

When my group of friends and I heard of this, we were shocked and heartbroken to hear about Jimmy’s incident. The online talk about revenge worried us, as this didn’t sound like the Hong Kong we know and love. We knew this was a crisis waiting to happen and began discussing what we could do in our capacity. The mood was tense but everyone took it upon themselves to come up with ideas and do something; after all, one of the slogans in the Hong Kong protests is “各自努力”—“everyone doing their part,” which aligns perfectly with Hong Kong’s can-do spirit. Within a few hours, talks on forums like LIHKG.com shifted and people dismissed anyone suggesting attacks, stating this would be counterproductive, making it a conflict of race and religion. Discussions later took a 180 degrees flip with people saying they would stand guard outside the Mosque and Chung King Mansions to make sure nothing happened and to protect the innocent people there. The irony that HongKongers have to volunteer and risk their own lives to stay safe rather than seek help from the police is all thanks to the free-flow of brutality by the police force during the protests, which has lost Hong Kong people’s trust in them. This sparked more discussion in my group chat made up of ethnic minorities who identify ourselves as HongKongers, because we all agreed we had a duty to do our part as well.

At first, someone said we should stand outside Chung King Mansions and welcome people in as a gesture of solidarity with our fellow HongKongers. Later someone else suggested that we hand out water to people passing by. We



Vivek Mahbubani (right) and Jeffrey Andrews (left) outside Chungking Mansions, an iconic landmark and a gathering place for the ethnic minorities in Hong Kong.

Photo courtesy of Arianne Mae B

all cheered on this simple idea and everyone started doing their part. Things were looking good, everyone was busy working out the logistics when we found out the Hong Kong Police decided to issue a letter of objection to the march because they deemed it too risky for their liking. This would basically translate into yet another tear gas buffet and random beatings and arrests by the police force if they were to see crowds roaming the streets of Tsim Sha Tsui on Sunday. We were disheartened when we heard the news, but felt the idea of giving out water to passers-by still a great gesture and decided we'll go on with it nonetheless. After all, there's nothing wrong with handing out bottles of water on a warm sunny day. It was noon on Sunday, we started setting up at the entrance of Chung King Mansions. The building management saw what we were doing and felt encouraged by it and even offered their sound system for us to use, allowing us to not just connect with people via bottles of water, but also to make announcements welcoming anyone and everyone to come in for a break, a meal or a hug. People who had never entered Chung King Mansions visited for the first time. Others came over and took a bottle, returning the gesture with a hug and a "We are all HongKongers!" cheer. Many of us took turns on the mic to speak words of encouragement. As the crowds grew so did the smiles and goodwill. Wherever you looked, you could only see HongKongers happily walking around.

3 hours later, the police had had enough. A few blocks away, where the Tsim Sha Tsui police station is located, the first doses of tear gas were fired and the whole mood took a U-turn. We had to quickly pack things up and take shelter. We were all exhausted from the last 3 hours and everyone needed lunch. I remember as I was eating some food, someone handed me their phone with a video of the police's water canon driving by the Mosque, stopping outside it, aiming at the few reporters and people standing outside and concluding that with the headline event of the day—spraying blue-color water at the Mosque. After two sprays, the water cannon drove off to continue its journey down the road. Within a short period of time, people came back out and voluntarily scrubbed, wiped and cleaned the affected areas of the Mosque. No one would have thought the attacks we were all trying to avoid would end up being from the Hong Kong police force.

Later that night, hours after the Mosque was cleaned up by the general public, the police decided it was their turn to visit. They made sure to include a couple of South Asian police officers in their group for the cameras and proceeded to wipe a few handlebars and quickly dab a few railings before leaving. The next morning, the chief executive Carrie Lam also visited the Mosque and was

probably in such a rush to speak with the leaders that she forgot to respectfully cover her head as she entered. After the short meeting, she left. Senior members of the Mosque came out and announced that they had accepted the chief executive's explanation, and chose peace over conflict. Even though everyone clearly knew the government and police were lying about their claim that the water cannon was merely trying to protect the Mosque, the religious leaders chose the higher road of forgiveness. Sounds absurd? See for yourself: <https://tinyurl.com/hkpoliceprotect>.

Water, when placed in the hands of HongKongers, manages to connect and build bridges. The same water when used by the polar opposites, manages to destroy and disrespect monuments. One of the original slogans of the Hong Kong protests is "Be water." Combine that with the Hong Kong spirit and you have an attitude that has evolved into the revolution of our times and the slogan everyone chants during the movement—光復香港時代革命 (Liberate Hong Kong, Revolution of Our Times).





Photo courtesy of Liu Waitong

## To the Youth who Jumped Off

Liu Waitong | 2016

I don't believe you haven't  
blown up this city's determination  
to make your heart beat loud as thunderclaps.

I don't believe your forced landing  
is the same as people flying upward  
crawling into the sky like snakes  
meandering countless express trains and bridges  
like brambles catching birds  
puncturing countless hospital beds, writing desks, votes.

I don't believe you're not Superman  
how else can you navigate the heavy Hong Kong air, a torture machine  
returning to his mother's arms unharmed as a baby.

I believe your birthmark is the blood that's just sunk in.  
I believe your streets have always been inverted cluster bombs.  
I believe man-eating ants crawl out of the corners of officials' smiling mouths.  
I believe the extreme nearness of the ice surface is boiling.  
I don't believe this time's bang can't change the planet's orbit  
a little bit.

9 March 2016

*Translated from Chinese by Audrey Heijns  
Published in Exchanges: Journal of Literary Translation*

## From Taipo via waterfront to CUHK

Yeung Yang | Nov 15, 2019 | 2 - 4.30pm

Today felt weird.

It began from my point of departure. I passed a bike shop and a man sitting on an office chair with wheels suddenly said to a woman and a kid with him in the shop,

“A cleaner just got killed by an arrow.” He showed them his phone. He sounded as if watching a movie. I immediately stretched my ears. I was not far from Tolo Highway, and if there had been any serious accident as this, there would have been sirens of ambulances and fire services. I heard nothing. I was by the waterfront very soon. Pedestrians and bikers came towards my direction just as they would in any other sunny and breezy day. The traffic was super slow. I saw no emergency vehicle. I decided the man was looking at fake news.

At the waterfront promenade, though, I did see two slow-moving, routine police vans driving into the park area. They passed some 60 people holding signs that said, “I want to go to work” and “Taipo has become isolated”. They were not marching nor shouting. They seemed happy and relaxed and gathered for a photo shoot.

I was obviously faster than the vehicular traffic in the beginning, up until where Science Park roughly began. Roads were clearing up and cars were moving through in normal speed now. I sensed also that I would be near Bridge #2 at CUHK soon. My apprehension level turned out to have diminished much more than when I began the walk.

“War zone” had been used to describe the aftermath of the confrontation on campus on Monday. I have never been in a war zone, but don't want to belittle the suffering of those who had been through wars and their trauma, nor that of those who were subjected to the insanity of arbitrary power that claimed they were the law just a few days ago. I would like to find another language — not to mask or evade, but to not let go of the multiple layers of reality present, albeit feebly and precariously so.

I entered campus at the gate next to Science Park. One traffic lane was closed. The other was open. I saw cars passing through.

Closing onto Bridge #2, I saw ashes, shells, bottles, and mangled mess scattering.



Photo courtesy of Yeung Yang

There was no ID checking nor bag searching. I passed smoothly and in peace through multiple make-shift watchtowers that frontliners had piled up. There were unopened lunchboxes, plastic bags as “provisional garbage collection points”, and of course, lines and lines of umbrellas. It was an aesthetics of ruins, installations of protest.

I took Pond Crescent towards my office, with Chung Chi student canteen on my right and Lake Ad Excellentiam on my left. The barricades outside Elisabeth Luce Moore Library were on one vehicular lane, leaving the other empty and unblocked. The lake and its pavilion were intact. No garbage, no damage. Tranquil as usual. Occasionally, students pushing carts of full garbage bags went past me.

I checked email at my office. Some have come from students having settled back home. They responded to an e-announcement I made for them earlier this morning. I offered to write to each of them a qualitative narrative interim assessment, and said that if they wish to self-study for the last texts we would have covered in the semester, we could do Skype, or they could send me writings for me to comment on. They have done their work, and I have a record of that. No one could take that away. I scanned parts of the textbook so they could be of use to them — many left campus in a hurry and didn’t grab their books with them and they asked me for help with this. I put their grade sheets and written assignments in my backpack, ready to go.

On my way out, I was a little more disturbed. Not that there was any imminent danger, but that I saw the walls becoming thicker, and a man with a bow and a bag of arrows speaking to two members of the press. I don’t know if he was a student or not. I hope the press would ask. I overheard a conversation between a young man and woman, that “True frontliners were those who were trying to save others from police beatings and other brutalities.” I went out from Chung Chi gate for the first time since the Monday confrontation. I saw the gatekeeper asking for a bag search from a man nearing the entrance. The gatekeeper said, Excuse us [for having to search the bag].” The questions and doubts I had accumulated through the day began to come back.

These are all quite scattered thoughts but I hope sharing them would spark off more reflection, and eventually wisdom.

Random bag search violates the principle that everyone is treated as innocent before proven guilty. Walking up Taipo Road, I saw all vehicular lanes blocked by fallen trees. I immediately associate the scene with an image I saw in the media,

showing a man with an electric saw. I condemn those who fell the trees, that had taken decades to be, and would have provided us with shade for so many more decades to come. No emergency vehicle would pass this part of the road. Only helicopters now could be relied upon for rescue.

Why has there been such anger, hatred, and resentment, that was so hardened that it became more difficult for our capacity to love to triumph? I recall walking past luxury residential apartments on the Tolo Harbour water front just now, I have images of students feeling trapped in dormitories that sit right in the middle of prime property sites as Beacon Hill (where one of the City University student dorm is situated), Kowloon Tong low-density housing area (where major Baptist University facilities are), Tolo Harbour low-rises costing tens of millions of dollars (visible and accessible in a short walk from CUHK campus)... How could students not feel disenfranchised and entrapped, by these material and symbolic declaration of the one and only, arguably misguided vision - a measure of success as owning a private fortress? How could they not break out? I am not saying the dorms should not be there — I am much more primitive than practical in my thinking: I wonder how the so-called free market had become an imperative, the only option for anyone to survive. Is it not wrong that there is no other way than being forced into the market to flourish? Why, I imagine the whole generation asking, can there not be policies that make space for different kinds of human flourishing?

The university - I read CUHK VC Rocky Tuan’s open letter today. I quote this particular part: “In the past few days, a large number of masked protesters entered the University campus in response to online appeals and have caused wide mayhem. We have reason to believe that the majority of these masked protesters are not CUHK students.” (The letter continues here: <https://www.cpr.cuhk.edu.hk/en/press>) I see VC’s point that the university campus is for making and transmitting knowledge and not weapons. I wonder how to make sense of the many activities CUHK itself and many academic units have organised, open and free for the public. The university is also a bridge between society and knowledge and the ruling power. If this part of the letter suggests a sentiment of “cutting the mat” (GOT ZEK 割蓆) with non-CUHK members of society, or “radicals”, or “frontliners”, what does this make of the role of the university in society? While protest slogans speak of NO GOT ZEK as solidarity with those in the frontline using violence as a means of defence, in a more profound way, it could also mean that no one can shed responsibility for the acts of others — be they right or wrong. This is close to what Buddhist Master Thich Nhat Hanh’s interpretation of the Buddhist Heart Sutra as a teaching of “interbeing”, conditioned by each other and everything else. It is not enough as a moral

ground to say, “You are the one who act violently, not me.” That is, we are also responsible for the lameness of the government, the brutality of the police, and much more - for we are born of the same conditions. There are fault lines, and there are calls for erasing the fault lines. I think we need to take more reflective moments to discern where and how the fault lines are, and where work to loosen them up can apply.

The government — please, more constructive action and fewer words, fewer finger-pointing at this and that. The blockades ought to wake those in power up to their responsibility to protect everyone in such cases of emergency, even disasters of a natural or humanly-induced kind. Instead, our (dare I say) government induces “emergency” by law rather than showing charisma and leadership in safeguarding people’s basic right to safety.

Back home, I had a chat with an Indian neighbour who manages a restaurant. Due to the blocked roads, he said the restaurant had not been able to get all ingredients they ordered. I thought of the blockages on Tolo Highway as relating to how Hong Kong had been made to be dependent on the PRC, and the physical disruption made by frontliners aimed to shake up these economic relations. The restaurant manager said, “Both sides are to blame — I was in army training and learnt to aim and shoot a gun at someone’s leg, and yet the HK police pointed a gun at a youngster’s heart. We do business so that we don’t have to pick up weapons to fight. Students should stop making weapons.”

Who knows what will happen next...



*Originally posted to Facebook, Nov 15, 2019*

Opposite: Photo courtesy of Yuli Riswati

# Some Notes about Hong Kong as My Second Home

Yuli Riswati (aka Arista Devi) | Jan 2020

In early December 2019, I was sitting inside Cathay Pacific Flight CX 779, on my way back to Indonesia, leaving my second home of Hong Kong. Flying at an altitude of 36,000 feet above the sea, my eyes could no longer see the land I was leaving, nor could I see the land I was heading back to. However, I could see myself in the reflection of the plane's bathroom mirror: a pale-faced migrant domestic worker who had been deported from Hong Kong, after having been forced to spend 28 dark days being detained at Hong Kong's Castle Peak Immigration Centre (CIC).

## White Terror in Hong Kong

In Hong Kong I witnessed how the “white terror” or anonymous violence created a climate of fear, increasing as the anti-extradition movement grew; but I never thought that I myself would become one of its victims, treated as bait.

In the wake of the shootings, beatings and even some mysterious cases of death which have befallen everyone from journalists, politicians, students and pro-democracy activists to ordinary citizens in Hong Kong, not only local people became concerned, but also many of my fellow Indonesians domestic workers living there. And after the shooting of Veby, an Indonesian journalist, migrant domestic workers became very scared. Many followed the entreaty of Indonesian government representatives in Hong Kong who appealed to our community to keep quiet, shut our eyes, and hide from what was happening: stop taking photos, be aware of information and talk about anything related to the anti-extradition movement, and keep away from all areas of the demonstrations.

My detention, expulsion from Hong Kong and repatriation to Indonesia all happened because I chose to write and report about the anti-extradition movement. News of my detention increased the sense of “white terror” among other migrant domestic workers and also resulted in harsh criticism against me: I was I considered to have crossed the line for my impudence to dare to write and speak about what I was witnessing in Hong Kong.



Photo courtesy of Yuli Riswati

## **I and Migran Pos**

On March 28th, 2019, I launched a website and invited a number of fellow Indonesian migrant domestic workers to write and manage the website as a team of citizen journalists. Our mission is to write and try to publish whatever we find informative and necessary for our community to know. All the activities of writing and managing the website on normal days we do in between our busy workloads at our employers' houses, from buying groceries at the market, cooking, washing dishes, mopping the floor, and other routine tasks. We are able to do live coverage only on our day off.

Since the anti-extradition movement began, Migran Pos has become a trusted media source for information about the demonstrations for Indonesian domestic workers in Hong Kong. In addition to doing live coverage, my friends and I also translated news from local media in Hong Kong to provide information and prevent disinformation, because I was aware that a lot of fake news has been circulating and rumours have surfaced several times, confusing and upsetting our community. Examples include the circulation of Indonesian-language leaflets asking migrant domestic workers to report employers who take part in demonstrations, or edited pictures showing that an Indonesian migrant domestic worker was arrested by the police for taking part in a demonstration in exchange for money.

## **Writing Is My Hard Way**

In the past, I never thought that one day I would become a citizen journalist, writing articles that are read by so many people, as well as poetry and short stories. Most of all, I write because of necessity. I needed information related to the problems of my community, but I could not find it in existing media. Therefore, I decided to do the research and writing myself, and share it with my community, who faced the same problems as I did.

When I write and report on the anti-extradition movement it is not to interfere in people's political affairs; it is because I feel that we as migrant workers who live and work in Hong Kong have the right to know about what is happening in Hong Kong. It affects our daily working lives as well as our holidays. This includes everything from the closure of the MTR stations, bus routes or traffic diversions, to clashes, tear gas, shootings, etc. There has been a lot of false news

circulating among the migrant domestic worker community, which causes widespread anxiety. Some people said that taking photos of the demonstrators could cause domestic workers to be fired; there were rumours that people who took photos or recorded demonstrations would be arrested and taken to prison by the police. People would say, "I heard this from a friend;" but no one really knows who said it. Some say that talking or posting anything about the demonstration movement on social media can cause migrant domestic workers problems and even jail sentences. Meanwhile, many of us do not understand Cantonese well, it is even harder to distinguish between facts and false news; it's easy for domestic workers to be afraid or easily believe in rumours.

As a minority vulnerable to discrimination, we are overlooked in Hong Kong: there is no one helping us to understand what is really happening, even our government representatives. That's why our community needs someone to provide us with information; and why I took on the assignment voluntarily.

## **My Community Are Vulnerable to Discrimination**

The number of rumours circulating made many employers complain about domestic workers, because they were foreigners, in the sense of being 'foreigners in their home' – employers complained that they did not know if we could be trusted or what actions we might take. But as workers, we also felt insecure and uncomfortable because of undeservedly losing the trust of our employers. I know for sure the root of mistrust is actually discrimination and bias.

But I thought to myself, not wanting to know or to find out the truth about what actually happened was also dangerous. Because it will cause us to be trapped in fear and unable to protect ourselves. Therefore, I always try to find information from the grassroots, and will not believe anything that has no clear source or confirmation.

## **Anti-extradition Movement in My Eyes**

And so a great curiosity to find out what actually was happening pushed me to look for information more closely on the front lines. And the closer I got and the more clearly I knew the truth, my sympathy turned towards the demonstrators and away from the police who are becoming increasingly brutal and out of control.

One time, when I was covering the demonstrations in Admiralty, I saw a teenager who was hit by tear gas and water cannon near me and looked in great pain. His friends and first aid workers helped him take off his mask and treat his wounds. I was ready to take a picture. But when I saw the face of the young man frowning in pain, I put down my camera and picked up an umbrella to shield his face from other photographers' cameras. Seeing me cry some people asked if I needed help, but I shook my head. I felt sad and touched by what I had witnessed. Those young people were mostly only teenagers, if not for the situation I was witnessing, they would certainly be busy playing video games at home or playing with their friends. But for the sake of the future, they are willing to endure ill treatment from the police and experience pain together.

Far from the front lines, I also saw how contradictions and conflicts occurred also at employers' houses. Young people argued with adults in their homes. And many of my friends also said they were caught in the middle of employer family conflicts. We are in a difficult place, stuck in the middle. No right to take sides even though we want to.

### **Strangers Who Love in Silence**

I know that my friends and I are "strangers at home" to our employers. So we do not have the right to speak and are we considered to be practically non-existent, even though our position is at the heart of the employer's family. Yet we consider our employer's family as our family, treating the employer's children as our own children or younger siblings so we care deeply.

My friend told me, that one time she realized her employer's son had forgotten to bring the mask he had prepared for joining the protests, so she immediately ran after him to give him a mask. Another friend of mine also told me how she would be busy preparing lunch and trying to make sure the employer's family had eaten fully before going out for a demonstration. I also did the same thing, when I found out that my employer's daughter was at a demonstration and forgot to bring the house key. I sent her a message so that she would know to contact me so that I could open the door for her, because I knew my employers would not like it if they knew their daughter had become a protester and was returning late at night.

### **I Am Proud and Never Regret What Happened**

All my activities and my choice to speak up according to my conscience and my knowledge trapped me in politicization and resulted in my being detained by the Hong Kong authorities. It was a very difficult situation, and I had to endure bullying from many people who did not like my actions. Actually, I know what I'm doing, and I don't regret it. Even if it really makes my life like this, it's worth it, because Hong Kong is my second home and I learned a lot there. I don't think citizens should be afraid of the government. The government should be afraid of the people. They think I'm afraid. Others dare not come to Hong Kong and will not write anything about Hong Kong. But I am not. After this terrible experience, I actually have a new perspective on the human rights situation in Hong Kong. Previously, I thought Hong Kong was better than Indonesia, but now the human rights situation in Hong Kong is as bad as in Indonesia.

The authorities used the power of the police to terrorize and make young people and ordinary people feel they were not treated as human beings. The Police arrest people indiscriminately, there is not even a law, eliminate the demonstrators if the opportunity presents itself, or they can kill someone without reason.

Democracy is a part of Human Rights. By supporting democracy, I am actually trying to push myself to be a human being that has a true sense of humanity. Hong Kong is known as a cosmopolitan and a developed city with freedom and rule of law in the eyes of the world. However, during the anti-extradition movement, the cases of police brutality and arbitrary arrests revealed the oppressive nature of the regime and greatly destroyed the image of its civilized culture.

Even though I am far away now, together with people all over the world who respect human rights and support democracy, we stand with Hong Kong. Hong Kongers, Add Oil! Wishing Glory to Hong Kong!

*Indonesia, January 2020.*

*(Editor's note: for more information on Riswati's detention in Hong Kong, see [www.hongkongfp.com/2019/12/02/indonesian-woman-covered-hong-kong-protests-citizen-journalist-deported-visa-issue/](http://www.hongkongfp.com/2019/12/02/indonesian-woman-covered-hong-kong-protests-citizen-journalist-deported-visa-issue/))*

## Grownup

Tacitly Wong | Sep 2, 2019

One night, after a quarrel over how I should treat Dad, I explained to Mom that blood ties meant as much as a can of chickpeas to me and that my love for her was a completely different matter.

Across the dining table, she sat back as her whole body visibly stiffened like a wall of glass before its fracture. The corners of her mouth twitched in a way that I rarely see them do because parents rarely let you know that something was hard to swallow. Slowly pulling away, she assessed me from a distance, as if gauging the thing in me that she must expel although she was not sure how much of it was me.

“You’ve really changed,” she finally broke the silence in a shaky voice. She suddenly did not know where to put her hands so she traced her fingers along the brims of the cooled oven tray. She didn’t stop mumbling. “I shouldn’t have ‘sent’ you to HKU. I shouldn’t have ‘allowed’ you to study politics.”

I felt sad but threatened, like a shallow river trodden by a pair of shodden feet. For a second, it appeared that she was blaming herself, drowned in guilt. But as I left the words hanging, something more began to effuse from underneath — it was fear. She did not even have the courage to admit that I made those “wrong” decisions.

Instead, she chose to annul an integral part of my existence. Everytime she announced such verdict, this time being the third, I saw in her eyes a better version of what I could have been, one that she would have immediately swapped the current me for if given the chance.

But I had been preparing my mind for this. I had already become too sure about two things to feel torn again: myself and the futility of re-weighing all the paths in the past not taken.

“People don’t change,” I told her matter-of-factly, surprised at my own calmness. “They only become more and more of who they really are. I thought people your age should’ve long understood this.”



Photo courtesy of Tacitly Wong



She bit her lip and looked at me. As I returned the gaze I noticed that not one version of me was in there anymore. She averted her washed out eyes, picked up her navy blue prayer beads, and repositioned herself in front of the small altar in the living room, her shoulders slumping as the softly breathed sutra took up weight in the air.

It dawned on me that all children, one way or another, were raised to spoil their parents. The moment that the children realize this would also be when they start confronting their parents as mere women and men. Then they send these women and men into a whole other reality on a broken yacht that they will have to make afloat for themselves.

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I woke up to the afternoon sun. The neighbourhood was as quiet as the inside of a dead man's head. The inside of a dead man's head allowed me to think about the dream that I just had. The dreams the many others told me they had had. The dreams that we all brought into slumber after running away from or through them during the daytime.

I switched on my phone. Thousands of notifications popped up from more than ten Telegram channels. Now I had woken up again, this time to many others' sleeplessness.

None of us had ever seen Hong Kong change so tangibly. Everything could be felt under the tips of our fingers.

"Are you heading out today?" Mom asked me anxiously as soon as she saw me walking out of my room. I shook my head in silence. She let out a sigh of relief. She was so pleased that she finally cooked for the first time in a long while. Salted egg yolks were sizzling in the oven an hour later, about to be ready for homemade mooncakes in a few minutes.

I suddenly remembered that summer was ending soon.

It was the first weekend since the beginning of June that I was not heading out. It meant a lot of things. It meant that there was one person less out there on the streets. It meant giving up on what you cared about was much easier than a lot of people would have thought. It meant that my mom was very happy.

Then I also remembered something else. I mulled over it before turning to Dad, who was lying on the couch scrolling through live videos hosted by pretty young girls on a Chinese app, and said, "I promised myself to learn swimming this summer so can we go to the pool."

Upon hearing my request, my mother turned to face us at once in the kitchen. "Go now," she prompted. "Go before the sun set so that you make it home before dinner." As she twisted her neck to look at us, the crook of her neck glistened with the sweat of joy.

I took the gas mask, goggles, and saline water out of my small backpack and put the swimsuit and towel in. Dad watched me from the side and said nothing.

We walked down the red-bricked pavement side by side with an eerily visible gap between us. It was only a 5-minute walk from our apartment building to another apartment building, the swimming pool of which we were going to sneak into, but it's already long enough for Dad to rummage through the backpack three times to check if we had really brought everything we needed. We spoke of nothing else.

As I heard his thick nails scratched the bottom of the nylon bag, I tried to imagine his death. Will I be sad? I think it depends on whether we are still in a fight. Underestimating anger and overestimating death are two things I never did.

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I held my breath and went underwater as carefully as I would drop raw meat rolls into boiling oil. Among azure and white lights that took the form between pinched smoke and crooked blaze, Dad's flaccid chest was staring back at me, his belly taut as a drum. His calloused hands soon grabbed my feet and made them kick after being fully straightened out. He instructed me to fully immerse my head in the water and feel the friction that pushed my head back out of water naturally. My head was supposed to bounce like a ball.

"Not too bad," he complimented after my few attempts to swim a few feet away. "So you do know how to swim after all."

For whatever reason that I would not like to delve into, he had become much more patient. When I was still a child, he would drag me to the pool every chance he got, in some weird belief that I had the genetics for an athlete. But my reactions always broke him, as I frantically shook my head at the thought of getting out of the ring and floating on my own. He would let out a sigh and shake his head disapprovingly, although later I remembered the sentiment in his eyes as disappointment.

For someone who grew up on the farm that used to run over hills and grassed waterways barefoot, it would've been too unromantic for him to not have hoped the slightest that those precious moments would pass onto his daughter through the mystic bloodline, despite knowing that she would grow up in a place where she could only ride her scooter in the shabby mall downstairs and the abandoned roundabout next to it.

It was not like he put great efforts into making sure that I adhered to a path he dotted out. But vaguely in the back of his head, the untraceable dotted line somehow remained and allowed for my deviation throughout the years. Naturally, he became easily content whenever I did something that fell under, or even was just going in the direction of, his wish.

He and Mom detested disagreements. They disliked it so much that they had chosen to be more lenient with me on things that we could agree on; I finally agreed that I needed to learn how to swim, then he couldn't ask for more. Although he still asked questions that I did not know the answers to: "why would you choke on the water?"

He wanted me to become stronger. But stronger for what? In what way stronger? Has he himself been strong for this world? Am I not strong when I disobey? Is he strong when he takes things as they are?

After all, maybe I should have become an athlete.

I worked hard on my frog style. My arms kept spreading the same time my legs did but the two actions were supposed to cross each other. I focused on my posture and then my breathing got disrupted.

"It's OK," he assured. "You don't have to follow the standard posture, as long as you swim. You know, Mao Zedong swam in a weird posture; a bit lopsided in

the water like this," he demonstrated. "I've never seen anyone swim like that. He swam slow, but he swam long and stable."

I submerged myself in the water again, trying to think. Trying to make out why I was swimming with Dad. Maybe it was my attempt to create peaceful episodes like this, so that when the time came I would have enough memories of him to feel mournful.

The thought scared me and I choked on the water.

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People were waving their arms, pointing to a direction, and shouting at us from the second-floor rooftop of a parking lot. I was not sure if they knew, but all gestures from afar looked the same to people who dispersed in horror and didn't exactly signal anything useful. They all meant "things behind you look really bad".

The people held up their phones and braced themselves for the moments that couldn't go down in history unknown. To keep an affair intact, there must be someone who remained on the rim of it to balance out the weight, or it crumbled inwards from the center where the stage was set. The distance from centre was necessary.

Out of the stinging corner of my eye through the goggles, I saw an arching silhouette. Then I turned to see a lanky young man bending over by the fence, panting, pulling down his mask, seemingly unable to finish one breath before taking in another. I forbid myself to think further and ran towards him. I took him by one arm and my friend took him by the other. He limped forward with us while mumbling words between "thank you" and "fuck the police".

It was only then from his high-pitched voice that I realized he was a kid. The commercial buildings scattered along Connaught Road and the clear sky behind suddenly looked surreal. It made me wonder what tomorrow was going to be like.

We sat him down by one of the entrances to the underpass. He pulled out a ringing phone. He started talking to his aunt who apparently knew about his bad legs.

“Whatever la, what even if I can’t walk anymore? My life isn’t worth a penny...”

I turned away from the private conversation.

So how should we get him out? I asked. Let’s all chip in and call him a cab? Oh wait, but the entire Connaught Road is blocked right now. I proposed and turned down my own suggestion. My friend offered to take a look around and see if there are any voluntary drivers. I asked the boy for his address and Googled the nearest bus stop.

“Can you walk another 10 minutes?” I kneeled down to ask. The worst scenario was, we walk to the next block and get him on a bus, all in black and looking too haggard to be in Central. The boy shook his head imperceptibly. “No, I don’t think so. I’ll just sit for a while.” Usual manners were that he would go on to say “it’s OK. You can go.” Because manners in this city meant to always tell people that they can leave you dying. But this wasn’t exactly an occasion for “manners”.

My friend returned with no news of any voluntary drivers. I told him about the situation and he looked ruminative.

“I mean,” he began. “If he doesn’t mind, I can carry him on my back and we can run for the bus stop.”

I took a long, deep look at his black headscarf and T-shirt that had the name of some Swedish heavy metal band on it.

“Do you mind?” I asked the boy softly. He seemed to be startled by the suggestion and whispered something with what remained of his “manners”.

“Oh, if it’s not too much trouble...”

My friend went to stand two steps lower than where the boy was sitting. “Ready?” He asked as the boy teetered to his feet. Then I realized he was asking me. I was going to lead the way. But I always got lost. I didn’t know how nervous I should be about this. I said OK.

The underpass was only dimly lit but already bright enough for us to see how pedestrians had halted to wonder and walk on. Then we re-emerged into the last streaks of daylight and ran on the most dustless grey-stone pavement in town,

passing by the designer brands’ shops that were all emblazoned with towering names half the size of the shopfront. The salespersons were unusually out in the heat, their hands

graciously overlapping, pressed against their abdomen under fine fabric. I didn’t have to look to know they had nicely trimmed nails. They studied us from one end of the street to another in a steady posture. They looked extremely well-composed, as if the situation which we abruptly ran through was one under their control.

They might have looked calm on the surface, but deep down, they were probably wondering furiously how my friend had managed to run so quickly on flip-flops.

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“Hey! Stop getting in line for the bus, there are too many of us. Let’s walk to Tung Chung. Come on!”

Someone stood on the side and yelled to the crowd, pointing to the path that forked into a wide opening. I had ever left the airport by walking in that direction; it did not look like it was connected to anywhere. But the flock of people promised it did as they climbed the unscrewed metal barriers next to the curbs that were used as ladders.

Two hours had passed since we started walking. The highways were broad enough for us to walk with the vehicles. From time to time, we came across grassed slopes that would be perfect to lie down on after a long bike ride and watch planes fly by.

For a second, I thought maybe all this time the life that we deserved had been tucked away in some unreachable corners of the city. And maybe unreachable didn’t mean that far.

“Do those in the front really know where they’re going?” After another fifteen minutes, I couldn’t help but voice my doubts to the man who was holding my hand.

He shrugged. “I guess so,” he answered mindlessly. Then he chuckled as if remembering something funny.

“What?”

He gave my hand a squeeze. “You know the Exodus?” “Only a little.”

“So it took Moses and his people forty years in the desert before reaching the Promised Land, yeah?” He looked at me, his face the colors of the clouds. “But according to modern-day GPS it could have just taken them six days had they taken the shortest route,” he grinned.

“Well,” I said, raising one eyebrow. “Do you think it could have been six days?” “I don’t know. Could it?”

We were about to walk past another road sign with cameras installed in front. Umbrellas sprung open around us as shouts of “it’s raining” bounced off and sprouted between them. The “rain” had become too dangerous to dance in for the past two months.

“What if some of them parted ways with Moses and found the quickest way to the Promised Land?” I proceeded. “Like, what if some of them actually arrived in six days? While Moses and his followers arrived thirty-nine years later only to find a decent life they had missed out on for four decades? People would’ve been fucking mad.”

He took a glimpse of my thoughtful face and planted a kiss on the back of my hand. “Well, maybe they knew something was wrong halfway but they couldn’t break away from this,” he gestured at the sea of blackness that curved into somewhere beyond our sight. “It’s not about getting there, it’s about the walk.”

I shook my head slowly. “Actually, you know what. Maybe if they had arrived in six days, a Civil War would have broken out right after. Maybe they needed that hardship.”

We returned to silence and walked some more towards the auburn sky.

“Let’s cancel the trip to St. Petersburg,” I announced abruptly.

He blinked quickly. “What? Why?”

I felt extremely uneasy. “There’s just been a nuclear explosion there. I don’t feel safe.”

He let go of my hand and fished out his phone. He typed something in and held the screen upright before my face.

“It’s a 9-day walk from Arkhangelsk to St. Petersburg. How can we possibly be affected?”

“Are you actually serious? Do you think nuclear particles travel on foot?” “I’m just saying that you’re paranoid.”

“Yeah,” the corners of my mouth curled up into a disagreeing smile. “And I don’t think I have to justify my fear.”

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A small shed loomed on the horizon as we approached a village in the mountains.

We sat on the blue plastic chairs and ordered three bowls of tofu fa. Mom went to talk to the woman wearing oversleeves with small floral prints on them under a beach umbrella. The woman then led Mom over to the riverside for the clusters of stinkvine, an essential ingredient for making a specific kind of cha kwo.

“This tastes so plain,” sitting across the wooden table was Dad, whining over and over again as he shoved spoonfuls of tofu fa into his mouth. I turned up the volume of a video I was watching.

He snorted. “We’re out in nature, can’t you just enjoy the view?” He asked as if he didn’t just fervently take dozens of snapshots a minute ago and sent them out on WeChat.

I pretended not to hear. He leaned in and caught a glimpse of my phone’s screen.

“What’s the point of damaging the facilities? Now you’re giving them a chance to break into the MTR station and arrest people, no? And you can’t expect them to arrest you nicely when that’s the case.”

I raised my head to look at him squarely in the eye. “So if I bash one of those CCTVs it’d be legitimate for them to beat me up?” I retorted.

His face turned beet red. “How dare you talk to me like this. That’s not what I meant. Why are you always distorting my words? You think I don’t hate the police? But there are always two sides to every story, no? Why are you saying it like I’m siding with the

cops? You young minds are too easily manipulated. Sometimes you just have to take a step back and look at things from both sides.”

“I just don’t understand how you managed to not give yourself one moment of sheer anger seeing scenes like this,” I said icily.

“I said I’m angry! But you have to look at the violent protesters too! Aren’t they affecting others’ livelihood? Keeping people from work...I would’ve wanted to beat you guys up. What I mean is, there is no absolute right or absolute wrong.”

He wanted the “full picture”. He wanted to say that there was no truth. He wanted to talk like one rational person to another. He thought I should’ve known better as the more educated one. He thought by being educated, it meant to see everything as right and wrong at the same time.

But to be wise is to not let wisdom be an excuse for cynicism. The knowledge of a well-learned person should have led her to understand that, in moments like this, setting aside rationality and letting pure anger take over is the way to reverse what she has learned.

“I don’t understand,” I whispered genuinely. “You are from up there. You escaped what we are furiously resisting now. What did you expect of resistance? So we should always be tragic? Just to elicit sympathy from people like you?”

But as soon as I finished speaking, I was beginning to understand.

Those temporary moments of support I had seen from him were simply reactions out of sympathy — sympathy, a sentiment underpinned by no belief, was the frailest form of support. This man that sat before me had fled his home because he refused to be

a part of any change. He smelled uncertainties and immediately sought to resettle in another place where changes had already been made. There, they became

obsessed with everything established — the sacred government buildings, the almost metabolic railway system, and the order that they could not decipher. They were enraged when the order faced attacks, for the attacks heralded changes; it meant that they had to look for another haven again. To be rational in their sense was to be a complete free-rider in society.

That was what they meant when they told me to take responsibility for my life. To focus on my career and stop meddling with politics.

Live wisely. Don’t be manipulated. Every destruction is a self-destruction.

Mom returned to sit between us with a grim look on her face. “Remember what you promised me? No politics for today,” she demanded, almost begging.

But the man was not done. He was exposed.

“I just want a stable life. Is it my fault?” His chest heaved as he went. “Didn’t you study wars? Don’t you know how horrifying they are?”

“I did,” I looked down at my hands.

“I know how horrifying it is if we don’t win the right ones.”

## Be Brave

Liu Waitong | 2019

Be brave  
Your heart will follow  
Your liver and your bones will follow  
Even the downy hairs on your body, and your fingernails will follow  
Even the bees and the ants nearby you will follow  
And as the air grows thick with mist and particles  
The songs you chant so lightly become your mask against the poison

You've used the last five years to study the meaning of love  
You've tattooed maps all over the skin of your body  
So that love wanders lost in the lines of your palms  
When you have scrutinized every inch of this city's face  
You still can lift your hands in a caress  
And trace the rolling path of its tears  
And trace the murmurs at the corners of its mouth

Be brave  
There will always be a message in a bottle floating in the harbour  
Fold yourself up and squeeze inside  
And like a line of a forbidden song  
Flame into light in the flowing cold, give warmth to that great sea  
In the coming winter, someone will find you  
As the lies fall like snow over Nathan Road

He thought of a circus that had once passed by the road  
When he was a small boy in Tai Kok Tsui  
The clown lovers never once took off their masks  
His father had comforted him with a pat on the shoulder  
Just as you pat the shoulder of the person next to you  
We embrace, and our shouts become a whisper in our ears:  
The dawn is not far off, be brave



Photo courtesy of Liu Waitong

*Translated from Chinese by Valerie C. Doran*

## Anti-ELAB Movement Zines

When 1 million people took to the streets on 9 June 2019, no one could have envisioned that it would spark a six-month-long-and-counting movement that enveloped the entire city. More popularly referred to as the Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill Movement (Anti-ELAB), the initial protests called for the withdrawal of the bill that would have sent Hong Kong fugitives to Mainland China, subjecting them to China's own heavily criticized judicial system. These protests and conflicts have since violently spiraled into the current state of social unrest in the city. Zines, therefore, have become a way for the people to document, process, and respond to the socio-political situation in Hong Kong.

Usually adopted by the oppressed and the marginalized, zines are freely circulated works of effort that provide a personal and autonomous space for the maker to express their own opinions without any institutional restraints. Neutrality, therefore, becomes secondary. Zines also frequently create a feeling of comradeship and connection as they capture, often in fragments, a creative momentum influenced by our surroundings. They evoke and draw from collective experiences and trauma that the maker and reader have both encountered.

Created simultaneously with the developments of the protests, these zines encompass various facets and perspectives of the participants, physically preserving a moment in time, in ways that news reports cannot. In this collection, there are various types: zines with timelines and photographic documentation explaining the protests to locals and foreigners alike; satirical commentary unique to the current generation; self-care zines that deal with mental health, digital security, and basic first-aid instructions for protest-related injuries; a father's point of view on why he's participating in the protests; documentation of songs parodied and written for the movement; letters expressing solidarity from overseas Hong Kongers; as well as writings and diary entries from frontline protesters.

These zines could be found anywhere. They could be picked up at rallies, on the shelf at an independent bookstore, circulated by the zinesters themselves or as viral posts on social media platforms, or even like this; at an exhibition.

This curated selection of zines, drawn from Asia Art Archive's collection (collected between June to December 2019), is but a corner of an ever-growing movement.

*Special thanks to Lydia Lam who helped reproduce the zines, and to Siu Ding and Pop and Zebra who have kindly provided copies of their zines for the exhibition.*

Charlotte Mui and S. Yiyao Chao  
**Asia Art Archive**





## COLLABORATOR BIOGRAPHIES

Left: Enoch Cheung, *TIME's Cover*, digital presentation of silkscreen print, 40x60 in, 2015



## PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO

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### **Xyza Cruz Bacani**

Xyza Cruz Bacani (b. 1987) is a Hong Kong and New York-based Filipina street photographer and documentary photographer. She is known for her black-and-white photographs of Hong Kong and documentary projects about migration and the intersections of labor and human rights. Bacani grew up in Bambang, Nueva Vizcaya, and studied nursing before leaving the Philippines at age 19 to join her mother in Hong Kong, working as a nanny to help support her siblings. Bacani started taking casual photographs after purchasing her first digital single-lens reflex camera with a loan from her employer. She has covered the 2014 and 2019 Hong Kong protests in Central and documented the lives of other domestic helpers at Bethune House Migrant Women's Refuge in Hong Kong. She is one of the Magnum Foundation's Human Rights Fellows and is the recipient of a resolution passed by the Philippines House of Representatives in her honor, HR No. 1969. Xyza is one of the BBC's 100 Women of the World 2015, 30 Under 30 Women Photographers 2016, *Forbes* 30 Under 30 Asia 2016, and a Fujifilm Ambassador. She is the recipient of grants from Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting 2016, WMA Commission 2017, and part of Open Society Foundations Moving Walls 24.

### **Enoch Cheung**

Enoch Cheung is a multi-disciplinary artist, with an interest in the reconstruction of the photographic image and the creative intersections between curatorship, media and artistic practice. Cheung obtained his BA and MFA. (Painting) from the RMIT University, Australia, and his MFA (Interactive Media and Environment) from Frank Mohr Institute of Hanze University, the Netherlands; and an MA (Fine Art) from Chelsea College of Art and Design, London. Solo exhibitions of his projects include *Digital All* (2001, Para/site, Hong Kong), *Collective Memorabilia* (2007, Too Art Gallery, Hong Kong) and *Secret Dialogue: Half a second* (2011, Lumenvisum, Hong Kong). Group exhibitions include *Move on Asia: Video Art in Asia 2002-2012* organized by Gallery LOOP which showed in Europe at ZKM and other arts institutes; *Pseudo Writing* (Burger Collection and 1a Space, Hong Kong); *Breathing Space: Contemporary Art from Hong Kong* (Asia Society HK, 2017); and *City Flaneur: Social Documentary Photography* (Heritage Museum, 2010) among others.

### **Eric Tsang Tsz Yeung**

Eric Tsang is a Hong Kong artist and media photographer. He holds a Master of Arts (Fine Arts, 2014) and Bachelor of Arts, School of Journalism and Communication (2006), from The Chinese University of Hong Kong. His works were twice awarded the Focus on Frontline Award in Photo Essay (2015) and Portrait (2018) from the Hong Kong Press Photographer Association and have been featured in numerous exhibitions in Hong Kong, including *The Wall 2019 at Cattle Depot Artist Village*, and *Other Sides of Evidence* (2017), Osage Gallery. His photography and mixed media works are held in the collections of the Hong Kong Museum of Art, the Hong Kong Heritage Museum and the Hong Kong Film Archive.

### **Kenji Wong Wai Kin**

Kenji Wong is a photojournalist, interdisciplinary artist and video producer. Born in Hong Kong in 1987, he graduated with a Master's of Cultural Studies from Lingnan University and a BA from the School of Creative Media of the City University of Hong Kong. Engaged in cross-media creation such as performance, video, photography and installation, Wong focuses on the way time is revealed through the phenomenal world; and on unpacking current social issues, as evidenced in works such as *Parade* (2010), *I read newspapers on the subway on June 4th* (2011), and *Exercises in violence* (2015). Wong has worked as a photojournalist for the Hong Kong online independent news platform Stand News. In 2019 he was named a finalist for the WYNG Media Arts (WMA) Open Photography prize. His works have been exhibited in New York, Taipei and Hong Kong.

### **MC (Chan Kai Chun)**

Born in 1980 in Hong Kong, MC uses photography as a medium for investigating the relationship between people, the man-altered landscape and photographic language. He was awarded a fellowship to complete his Master's degree in Arts at the University of the Arts London (London College of Communication, 2016) and holds a BA from RMIT University, with a concentration in photography (2012). He came to international attention with his "elite" series, which he presented at the Pingyao International Photography Festival and Donggang International Photo Festival in 2013 and 2019 respectively. MC developed the photography course for the Hong Kong Design Institute and is currently a

part-time lecturer at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, The Open University of Hong Kong and Hong Kong Design Institute. His photographic work has been exhibited in Hong Kong and internationally and has been shortlisted for other major awards, including WYNG Masters Award, Hasselblad Masters Award, and Donggang International Photo Festival. His works are in both private and museum collections.

### **South Ho Siu Nam**

South Ho graduated from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University in 2006. Ho's artistic practice began with photography and has since evolved to the inclusion of performance, drawing and mixed media installations. His works encompass the wonders and helplessness of living and the spirituality of existence, as well as the socio-political awareness of Hong Kong. Ho's work has been featured in numerous solo and group exhibitions in Hong Kong and overseas, including LOOK/17 Liverpool International Photography Festival (Victoria Gallery and Museum, Liverpool, UK, 2017); *Breathing Space* (Asia Society, Hong Kong, 2017); *Works in Progress* of the CHINA 8 project (Museum Folkwang, Germany, 2015); and *Basically. Forever* (Kiyosato Museum of Photographic Arts, Japan, 2014). In 2009, he was awarded the Hong Kong Contemporary Art Biennial Award. His work is collected by the Burger Collection, Hong Kong Heritage Museum (Hong Kong), Legislative Council of Hong Kong (Hong Kong), Kiyosato Museum of Photographic Arts (Japan) and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (USA). Publications by the artist include *Every Daily* (2013), *good day good night* (2015), and *Space and Energy* (commissioned by Tai Kwun, 2017). In 2013, Ho co-founded 100 ft. PARK, a non-commercial art space dedicated to providing an open platform for exhibiting and sharing art. In 2019, he initiated the artist residency project *CHT.Art Project* Ho currently lives and works in Hong Kong.

### **Siu Wai Hang**

Siu Wai Hang is a photographer and a new-media artist. Siu uses photography and video to investigate the manipulation of images and the qualities of visibility, temporality, and subjectivity inherent to these media, and often applies these investigations to create social and historical commentary. Siu holds an MFA from the Department of Fine Arts, The Chinese University of Hong Kong and BA Hons in Creative Media from the School of Creative Media, City University of Hong Kong. Siu was the recipient of Hong Kong Human Rights Art Prize (2018)

and the WYNG Masters Award (2014 and 2016 respectively). He was also named as an ifva Emerging Talent (2016). His work has been exhibited in solo and group exhibitions in Hong Kong, mainland China, and Taiwan. Siu currently lives and works in Hong Kong, and holds teaching positions at various universities and art institutions.

### **Tse Ming Chong**

Tse Ming Chong is an artist who works in photography, image-making media, time media and theatre art. Born in Hong Kong in 1960, for over 30 years Tse has documented and responded to the unfolding history of Hong Kong, from its change of sovereignty, its evolution as a metropolitan city in China and the effects of 'One Country, Two Systems' on its inhabitants. Tse received an MA in Image and Communication from Goldsmiths College, University of London in 2004 after graduating from Hong Kong Baptist University in the Department of Journalism in 2003. In 2018 he completed the International Leadership Program in Visual Arts Management, NYU Steinhardt and Deusto Business School. He is Chairman and Co-founder of Lumenvision, a photography workshop/art gallery dedicated to promoting photography education, and a senior lecturer at Hong Kong Design Institute. Tse's photographic essay, *The Road*, was a finalist for the Hong Kong Human Rights Prize (2015). Tse's works are held in the collections of the Hong Kong Museum of Art, the Hong Kong Heritage Museum and the Hong Kong Film Archive.

### **Tse Pak-chai**

Tse Pak-chai is a photographer whose work has focused on issues of social justice and social change. Tse has documented protests and changes in local communities in Hong Kong for a number of years. He has participated in various projects as a researcher and photographer, and is a founding member of the Hong Kong curatorial collective Community Museum Project, which explores indigenous creativity, visual culture and public culture through the collection and interpretation of artifacts and visual evidence. Major past projects have included *Objects of Demonstration* (2002) and *Street as Museum: Lee Tung Street* (2005).

## Paul Yeung Tak-ming

Paul Yeung (b.1978, Hong Kong) is a documentary and conceptual photographer. Yeung graduated with an MA in Image and Communication (Photography) from Goldsmiths College, London in 2011. He embarked on a career in photojournalism after receiving his BA in Journalism and Communication from the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 2000. He served as past chairman of the Hong Kong Press Photographers Association (2007, 2008), and is currently a part-time lecturer in the Chinese University of Hong Kong and a freelance photographer. He has received more than 20 awards from distinguished organizations such as The Newspaper Society of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Press Photographers Association and Invisible Photographer Asia. He participated in *Count to 12*, a part of *The Road to 2012* project commissioned by and exhibited in the National Portrait Gallery, London (2011). Yeung opened his first solo photography exhibition *The Flower Show* (2012) at Blindspot Gallery in 2012. He published his photobook *Yes Madam, Sorry Ah Sir* in 2017. His works and photobooks have been exhibited internationally, including in the UK, Argentina, Cambodia, Singapore and China and are in public collections at The Hong Kong Heritage Museum, Library of The Chinese University of Hong Kong as well as in private collections.

## SOUND

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### Cédric Maridet

Cédric Maridet, born in France, is a Hong Kong-based artist. His practice includes intensive field work and research to create video, installations, photography, sound compositions and works on paper, constructing narratives based on history, fiction or science. He studied literature and sociolinguistics in Paris VII University, and holds a PhD in Media Arts (City University of Hong Kong). Maridet has participated in solo and group exhibitions and artist residencies internationally, including at Tate Modern in UK, Para Site and Asia Art Archive in Hong Kong. In 2014, he was awarded the Hong Kong Arts Development Awards – Artist of the Year (Media Arts) and Gold Award in Media Arts Category at the 19th ifva. In 2005, he was awarded Prize of Excellence in the Hong Kong Art Biennial. In 2013, he was commended by Secretary of Home Affairs for making outstanding contributions to the development of arts and culture. Maridet currently lives and works in Hong Kong.

## Fiona Lee

Born in Hong Kong, Fiona Lee creates works derived from the intersection between installation and performance, and feature sound, video, music and objects. Listening creates an important connection between Fiona and the world; this is when she feels the movement of every single moment. She believes her art creations represent the progress she is making in exploring and accepting her own and others' possibilities. Lee's installations have featured at a number of art festivals, including ART CAMP TANGO 2017, Around Sound Art Festival 2014 (Kyoto, Japan), Transi(en)t Manila Project Glocal 2014 (Manila, Philippines), the 12th Seoul International New Media Festival and the 16th ifva (Interactive Media Category) Finalist Works Exhibition (Hong Kong). Her sound and light performance "delight" has been hosted internationally in Taiwan, Korea, Macau and Hong Kong. She was invited to perform at the Asian Meeting Festival 2016 in Japan, and she also takes part in improvisations with a variety of musicians & sound artists. Recently, she joined Namiji, an artist group formed with Samson Cheung & Wong Fuk Kuen. Fiona has released her self-published album, *walking in a daze* (2016), a collection of sound works she has created.

## WRITERS

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### Karen Cheung

Karen Cheung is a writer and editor from Hong Kong. She is Associate Editor at Asia Art Archive, and previously a senior reporter at Hong Kong Free Press. Her essays and creative nonfiction have been published in the New York Times, Foreign Policy, LA Review of Books' China Channel, and others.

### Liu Waitong

Liu Waitong is a poet, writer and photographer. He was born in Guangdong in 1975 and moved to Hong Kong in 1997. In 2001, Liu went to Beijing where he lived for five years before returning to Hong Kong. It is above all through poetry that Liu reflects on the past and present of China and Hong Kong. He has been awarded several literary prizes in Hong Kong and Taiwan, including the China Times Literary Award, the United Daily News Award, and the Hong Kong Arts Development Award for Best Artist (Literature). He often receives invitations to participate in local and international literary events, including the Taipei Poetry Festival in 2011 and Poetry International Rotterdam in 2013. Since his debut in

1995, Liu has published eleven collections of poetry, along with several books of critical essays and photography.

### **Vivek Mabhubani**

Vivek is a Sindhi of Indian descent and was born and raised in Hong Kong. He graduated from Diocesan Boys' School, and City University of Hong Kong with a degree in creative media in 2005 and currently runs his own design firm. Vivek is also a stand-up comedian in Hong Kong, performing in both English and Cantonese. He is a regular headliner and host at The TakeOut Comedy Club Hong Kong. In 2007, he won the Cantonese-language category of the competition to find Hong Kong's funniest person and in 2014, he was ranked as one of top 10 comedians in the World Famous Laugh Factory's Annual Funniest Person in the World Competition (USA). In 2015, Vivek was chosen to participate in the Melbourne International Comedy Festival's Inaugural *Comedy Zone Asia*, and in 2016 was featured in Comedy Central's first *Stand up Asia!* shows. Having faced cultural challenges himself, Vivek often uses comedy to battle racism and to address other social issues. He feels that the current protests have opened up new dimensions to the meaning of the term "Hongkonger."

### **Yuli Riswati (aka Arista Devi)**

Yuli Riswati is an Indonesian writer, citizen journalist and street photographer who has been living and working in Hong Kong as a domestic worker for over a decade. Her interest in writing and photography is grounded in her belief in the power of words and pictures to induce change both personally and globally. Having experienced the struggles faced by her community, she wishes to continue working towards achieving economic, social and legal justice for migrant domestic workers. Her writings include a book on stories of migrant workers in Hong Kong, *Empat Musim Bauhinia Ungu*, and essays in *Afterwork Readings*, a major anthology of literary works created by domestic workers compiled by Para Site Art Space (Hong Kong) and Kunci Cultural Studies Centre. Riswati established an online portal via Facebook providing assistance to domestic workers which has over 15,000 followers, and works with nonprofit social organizations such as Open Door and Lensational, which seeks to empower marginalized women through photography. Yuli was honoured as a Resolve Hong Kong Foundation Fellow (2018), was winner of BNI Photofun (2018) and received a Taiwan Literature Award for Migrants (2018).

### **Yeung Yang**

Yeung Yang is an art writer, independent curator, and university lecturer. Her curation includes *Art Responds to 14QK* (2007), *Burdening Representations – historical memory of China from Hong Kong* (2009) and Around sound art festival & retreat 2009, 2010, 2013. Her recent publications include *Hong Kong/China Photographers Series 7 – Alfred Ko* (Hong Kong, 2012) and *Pocket 2: say, Listen* (Hong Kong, 2013). Yeung founded the nonprofit soundpocket in 2008 and is currently its Artistic Director ([www.soundpocket.org.hk](http://www.soundpocket.org.hk)). Yeung currently teaches classics in the General Education Department at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. She is a past recipient of the Asian Cultural Council Fellowship (2013) and was recently art writer in residence with Contemporary Art Stavenger. Yeung currently is a lecturer at The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

## **CURATORIAL SUPPORT**

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### **Valerie C. Doran**

Valerie C. Doran is an independent curator, art critic and translator specializing in the field of Chinese contemporary art. She lived in Hong Kong for over 30 years and has worked with artists, public institutions, private galleries and alternative spaces in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Mainland China, Indonesia, and Los Angeles on a range of projects. Her most recent project was as guest curator for the Hong Kong Arts Centre's 40th anniversary flagship exhibition, *Wan Chai Grammatica* (2018), featuring 18 Hong Kong artists of diverse generations. Doran has served as editorial director of two major catalogue publications on Chinese contemporary art: *China's New Art, Post-1989* (1993, 2004) and *Three Parallel Artworlds: 100 Art Things from Modern Chinese History* (2015). She has written frequently on Asian contemporary art and is an active translator in the field of Chinese contemporary art criticism. She has lectured at the School of Creative Media of the City University of Hong Kong and Hong Kong Baptist University, among others. In November 2009 she was awarded the Certificate of Commendation from the Hong Kong government for contributions to arts and cultural activities in Hong Kong. Doran is currently based in Boston and Hong Kong.

## Angela Su

Angela Su received a degree in biochemistry in Canada before pursuing visual arts. Su's works investigate the perception and imagery of the body, through metamorphosis, hybridity and transformation. Her pseudo-scientific drawings often combine the precision of scientific sketches with a mythical aesthetics, challenging the audience's visual sensation of the pleasure of pain. Her research-based projects include drawing, video, performative and installation works that focus on the interrelations between our state of being and scientific technology. In 2019, Su was commissioned by Wellcome Trust to present a commission project in *Contagious Cities: Far Away, Too Close* at Tai Kwun, Hong Kong. She has also participated in exhibitions in museums and institutions internationally, including the 17th Biennale of Sydney, Australia; the 2nd Shenzhen Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism, China; National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul, Korea; Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, Austria; CAFA Art Museum, China; Saatchi Gallery, UK; and He Xiangning Art Museum, China. Su currently lives and works in Hong Kong.

**Cédric Maridet** (see bio on p. 65)

**Tse Ming Chong** (see bio on p. 63)

## DOCUMENTARY SUPPORT

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### Asia Art Archive

Asia Art Archive is an independent non-profit organization founded in Hong Kong in the year 2000 in response to the urgent need to document and make accessible the multiple recent histories of art in the Asia region. With one of the most valuable growing collections of material on the recent history of art from Asia, freely available from our website and onsite library, AAA builds tools and communities to collectively expand knowledge through research, residency, symposia and educational programmes. Asia Art Archive has also established a branch in New York City, Asia Art Archive in America.

Opposite: Xyza Cruz Bacani, detail from *The Bystanders*  
Diptych, direct print on aluminum backing, 21.3 x 8, in., 2019



## Acknowledgments

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The afterbefore collaborative team would like to express our sincerest appreciation and gratitude for the support, goodwill, advice, generosity and sheer kindness of many colleagues, friends and allies, as this project has taken shape.

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Texts by members of the afterbefore project collaborative team

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