

# A City on the Water

*Katherine Leung*

My first memories of Hong Kong take place at the Victoria Park pool. As an adolescent Asian American, I was following in the steps to become a competitive swimmer and I wouldn't let summers in Hong Kong get in the way of my rigorous training. My mom would accompany my walk from our Wan Chai apartment to the Victoria Park pool in Causeway Bay in the early mornings. The British-style locker rooms and lack of lane lines differentiating personal space in the pool embodied a different kind of swimming etiquette. The water was usually packed with older people - and without the lane markers, it was a microcosm of the traffic and chaos of the larger city. The Victoria Park pool at peak times was not a place to prove my athletic ability or selfishly get a "work out," at least in the individualized, American way that I was used to.

Hong Kong's history - past and present - is intertwined with its island locale. Before British colonization and before dynastic rule, Hong Kong was a collection of fishing villages. The estuaries and coastal habitats make it prime for some of the most biodiverse wildlife found on earth. Both residents and visitors of Hong Kong get a glimpse of this through its cuisine, a rich gastronomic tradition rooted in seafood and portability, but the oceanic geography has endless cultural implications. From its geopolitical position, robust history of piracy and conquest, to the port location which lends itself to being a safe haven for refugees and migrants - many of the works in Volume III address the modern-day repercussions of that very concept. In a sense, Hong Kongers are drifters, prone to adapting to new situations, which could explain why our diaspora is as diverse as it is.

Cantonese people in the United States arrived by sea to establish New York City and San Francisco's Chinatowns, which are referenced frequently in this volume. Volume II was released at the end of a year-long lockdown, but here we are in July 2021- simultaneously experiencing the same hopefulness and homesickness. Many artists have turned to food to reclaim autonomy in their lives. In uncertain times, art will always be a source of comfort and familiarity.

我對香港的第一個記憶是維多利亞公園游泳池。那時我還是一位十多歲的亞裔美國人，正準備成一位游泳選手，不會讓香港的夏日阻礙我的嚴密訓練。母親一大早就會陪我從灣仔的單位，步行到銅鑼灣的維園泳池。游泳池用的是英式儲物櫃室，池內沒有泳線間隔出私人空間，游泳禮儀習慣上也因此有所不同。池內擠滿長者，沒有間出泳線，泳池就變成這城市人多混亂的縮影。繁忙時候的維園泳池不是我展示運動細胞或是自私地鍛煉身體的地方，至少不是我熟悉的那種較有個人空間的美國模式。

不論是過去還是現在，香港歷史都跟其小島地性有關。英國殖民時期前，甚至遠在史前時期，香港曾擁有多條漁村，其河口灣及海灣也是多種野生動物上好的棲息地。香港很多飲食習慣也跟海產和其港口位置息息相關，居民和旅客可以透過美食看到香港海洋性的一面。香港的地緣政治地位、海盜及佔據的豐富歷史，以及港口地理(使其成為難民及移民的避風港)，這些事情在現今的

影響，也在第三冊的作品中涉獵。某程度上，香港人一直在漂泊著，經常就新環境作出應變，這也是我們離散群體如此多樣的原因。

粵裔人從海路到達美國，建立了紐約市及三藩市的唐人街，今期不少作品也提及到這一點。第二冊在長達一年的封城後期出版，而現在已是**2021**年7月，同時經歷希望與鄉愁。很多藝術家都以飲食來重據自己的生活。在動蕩的時候，藝術永遠都是熟識的慰藉。