

這些照片已放在電腦多個星期，時間愈是緊迫，照片愈是跟我疏離 — 它們像是饑餓似的待與我親和。

要認真看待一張照片是件嚴肅的事。直到現在，我還是不能相信自己真的看到它們。每張照片都是一隅天地。

我該立足在哪裡？立足多遠？立足多近？有需要躲起來嗎？要的話，怎麼躲？我的個體變成了攝影師的眼睛 — 她所涉獵和凝住的一切，就像被我的身體吞掉，這是我個人的體驗。

儘管照相機的目標不是人物軀體，所有攝影作品卻包含著軀體。在現象學來說，所有意識知覺都是軀體的經驗，包含攝影師在拍攝前的自身軀體，也包含觀者的軀體，而觀者是站在以個人的各種形式縮放、修剪、裱裝和懸掛的照片面前。

此外，這還關乎整全的問題。撰文點評攝影作品是不可以達到策展策略所構想的整全和諧效果，因為後者是建基於指定的時空，而前者則建基於穿越時空的信念。又或者是倒過來，我們寬仁地堅持每張攝影作品都有生命，這是寫點評和策展人都願意面對的……

呼吸攝影

楊陽

我氣憤那些叫人驕傲的所謂文明。堆起來石屎大樓，拆下去；糖衣處處，困住了人的生活；我覺得靜止的畫面很引人入勝，它分配著時速。這種視覺和主題上的差異，也是價值觀念的差異。它是構成我們社會和生活面貌的血肉和基石（借來利查·森尼特（Richard Sennet）的名句）。

可是我還是不明白為甚麼沒有船？有說文明社會沒有船，也就沒有夢。

這就是我們的世界，我們的宿命嗎？

父子兩人踏着單車向我駛來。

來到一個減速小墩前兒子趑趄不前。他停下來。

父親催着他回頭再試一次，越過路墩。

兒子照做，可是慌得哭了出來。

父親說，看到了嗎？沒甚麼的，對嗎？您是男孩子，一定要勇敢。

這路墩究竟有甚麼不可跨越的呢？

嚴重得令人害怕。

父親要兒子做一件他害怕的事，他也照辦了，

因為他想當父親的乖孩子。

您可不贊同，認為我太現實主義。照片不是生活紀實，談的也不是社會歸屬感。它們只是攝影師耍玩和著迷的作品。我想，我不能忘卻和放棄作為觀者的權利，在照片將其社會元素灌輸給我的同時，我也堅持照片為我製造現實。

雅絲曼娜雷莎的母親收集了所有提及她女兒的文章，
以「證明[她]存在世上。」

這位作家本人卻從不收集文稿。

「鄙視？超脫？不是。是恐懼，對這些紙張未來變成毫無價值感到恐懼，
也恐懼它們殘酷的諷刺，恐懼遺憾、恐懼時間。」

— 《逝去光華》；雅絲曼娜雷莎 (Yasmina Reza) 著。

我必須從這裡說起：我相信每位攝影師各有處理藝術的獨特手法，而且希望與別不同，不僅跟其他攝影師和他們的風格不同，而且仍忠於現實，藉此活得不落俗套。

從認識到了解

沈嘉豪作品《如何愛自己？》中的人物自信地站着，氣定神閒，自給自足，希望觀者以相中人的自我形象看待他們——圓滿、充滿生命力、漫不經意，從容不迫。王希慎的《鄉土中國》也一樣，要認識貴州的山區農民，必須同時認識他們的土地，跟他們一起迎接現代化。農村是活的，並非固定不變的本質。

當走進粵語電影明星的世界，就如鍾文略應邀走進他們的世界。他捕捉了不自覺的美麗神情，我們有機會以視覺體驗為名人造像。他們的臉孔、眼睛、目光，儘管鮮有片言隻語，明星的獨特氣質卻使人留下深刻印象。不知怎的，就像許多其他東西一樣，這種氣質體驗已漸覺過時。記得一天與友人走在銅鑼灣街頭，她語帶沮喪說，怎麼人人都像從時裝雜誌跳出來？她的意思是：一樣的化妝，一樣的打扮配搭，一樣的生活方式，一樣的髮型，一樣的造型。聽來似是虛構小說的情節，但一切卻都是真實。

吳文正令他的拍攝對象有如名人，不是說把他們變成傳奇的電影明星，而是把握今天尚有的機會而拍攝，鮮明地表達和肯定老文化的那份自豪與尊嚴。《街坊老店》演繹原始歷史中的原始驕傲，訴說人與周遭環境之間的根本人文關係，引發觀眾思考：相中人除了身邊物件和老店這實體，還有甚麼？我想應該是更多。

鄭瑋玲的《香港生活》，主角亦身處於舒暢環境當中。照片中沒有誰不知所措，也沒有誰因被攝下而顯出一刻得意。每個人物都自得其樂，對鏡頭不太在意，與鍾文略鏡頭下那些不自覺地流露美態的香港「明星」有異曲同工之妙。

我總會對相中人微笑 — 只有互信互敬，才能找得平衡。

從陌生到不了解……

陳迹的作品教我們曉得現今追求的都市生活原是不久以前的景象。我們親身接觸到今昔的商店和茶樓，彼此的距離相同嗎？

工作 — 為了一些錯誤的原因，它的重要性被無限放大：利潤、效率、規模經濟……翟偉良展示上一輩怎樣看待工作，以及看重工作的不同原因。每位工人都是獨立個體，全權掌控手上的工具。這裡表現的不是他們的作業，而是他們散發的一股自豪。這系列作品促使我們細問：工作對這人有甚麼吸引之處？是甚麼令她全神貫注？

安杰路·哥密斯 (Evangelo Costadimas) 的作品在街道上找到健壯倔強、穿插不斷而莫名的身軀，盡顯都市慧心。在偶遇中尋覓美感不是陳腔濫調，而是生死一線。

趙嘉榮更進一步，作品中的人物的軀體宏大無比 — 這並不表示他們不宜親近，只是回歸原始、情色、自我陶醉的模樣，跟孤獨離群、僵化、忙於交朋結友的戲碼拉鋸，營造常見於巨像的誇張虛幻感。這系列作品呼喊大家過坦蕩的生活。

米高·沃爾夫 (Michael Wolf) 作品中的人體是經過淨化的，沒有日與夜，沒有影子，全被像素化的。我想這系列作品不能稱作偷窺的終極影像，因為傳統的偷窺者自覺有權主宰誰被窺看，從中得到樂趣，而沃爾夫的作品卻鮮有這個元素的樂趣。在現今網上資訊發達的世代，我們必須改變對偷窺癖的理解；事實上我們在離線世界中的生活方式也是如此，人與人之間漠不關心，甚或承受容忍。

馮建中的《樓花》意不在宏大，亦不在照相機的支配力量。他只是好奇探索，看看影像是否比照相機更謊話連篇。他只有透過虛無的神話才看懂那海市蜃樓的幻象。奇怪的是作品中有些細小而神態自若的人物，是意味不屈服？或只是被壓迫得頭昏腦脹？或許某君曉得。

牆上一個黑跡吸引了伍爾夫的目光。
黑跡就在壁爐台對上位置。她猜是甚麼留下的，
從前的住客究竟是誰。她還宣稱：
「生活充滿神秘！思想毫不準確！人多麼無知！
我們的財產不由我們控制，
說是發達文明，生活卻是身不由己……」單刀直入、徹徹底底的剖白。
說回那黑跡，原來是一口釘子的痕跡。
— 《牆上的污跡》；弗吉尼亞·伍爾夫 (Virginia Wolf) 著

到外面的世界……

外間世界正在消亡。岑允逸的作品《唔係迪士尼！》展現人工現實色彩不斷擴張，重重包圍著人體，構成群組。這個進程何時停止？影像成為設計場景中的一分子，有其角色。剪剪裁裁的度身訂造空間蔓延擴散，岑允逸的評語何其寬容。

梁志和與黃志恆的《城市曲奇》玩盡人工製作。天空從其輪廓的負空間中釋放，一方面更人性化，另一方面被嘲弄為無意義的符號——永久在製造。曲奇是凸透鏡下的城市影像，訴說我城的故事。

若說梁志和與黃志恆的作品揭露人工製造現實的玩意，那麼朱德華透過《遊行》呈獻的解決方案就是無休無止的，甚至泛濫。這裡，個人要讓路給集體意願，成就向高空發展的玻璃框生活秩序。千篇一律的姿勢，讓人群佔據非人性化空間的策略，這場面可以擠出笑容嗎？聽誰在笑。

馬琮珠的作品是一款有趣的遊戲，它穿梭於不同目的地，消除了一般稱為環球、地道和焦點的距離。廣大的石屎森林裡有零星的湛藍泳池，馬琮珠或會問，上谷歌網能學會游泳嗎？距離倒是十分有趣的。

與馬琮珠作品可相提並論的是謝至德的《城市漫遊者的九十年代舊照片》。在他的鏡頭下，城市漫遊者選擇棲居，純粹是要歸屬社會，可是他們不會意志消沉，以致蟄伏不動。看看他們在日常生活狀態如何自處——小睡一會，轉動一下，讓上天靜靜看着，是冷漠的泳客還是漫步的陌生人，都是一樣。

余偉建對邊緣之地很感興趣，他的焦點不在於人們棲息或紮根安居的方式，而是其他跨越的境界的地方。《消失中的海岸線》探討城市荒野，默默地仔細觀察碼頭、貨車、石堆……待之成為邊緣之地。余偉建對邊緣以外的事物不大感興趣，只想知道為甚麼荒蕪空蕩的地方會有一種神話般的氣質。那麼恐龍又如何？

若將陳廣源的《梅加浮娜》送給恐龍，牠定會興奮得亂跑亂跳。陳廣源要找到可站立的地方去領悟梅加浮娜並不容易。由超模當主角的巨型橫額，目的是營造迫切感刺激消費；平常居高臨下壓迫着我們，現在可讓人從容地遠觀。它們輕薄如牆紙，體積卻宏大。它們是石屎公園的主題擺設，佔盡了這浮娜城市。今天的香港，殖民主義驅策下的創富奇蹟不再是榮耀，相反，我們卻以創造這些梅加浮娜的驚人速度和技倆為傲。它們是城市的新圖騰，靈魂欠奉。它們有天會叛變嗎？

之先、之後……

其他作品盡是空間的視覺和身體的探索，有些充滿趣味和親切感，有些卻教人感惱怒和不妥協。不管怎樣，這些作品都堅持把這個建築環境融入意識體驗，令觀者在居住空間中發現它們的蹤影。

這些鋼筋水泥是正在建造還是拆卸時留下的呢？它們是之先的，還是之後的？又一山人的作品《爛尾》由連串進退維谷的爛尾樓宇組成。如此空白的的生活面貌，停滯不前的局面，偏令人夢想到欣羨的安居之所。

若說又一山人的照片滿載反巨像情緒，揭露了把誤導吹噓作當前急務的事實，那蘇慶強的作品便令人想起傳統摩天巨像的模樣，只是這些巨像均已告荒廢殘破。這些照片經過精心設計，變成時間代號，佐證日後高聳建築的沒落。漂白的效果突顯了時間在慢慢流逝，回憶除了是現實的破損拷貝外，還可以是甚麼？

張康生的《密語：關於兒童醫院》是令人眼花繚亂的沉默。今日的醫院，曾幾何時都是生與死的廣大舞台，現在卻剩下頹垣敗瓦，只留下一些房間、牆壁和兒童嬉戲的痕跡。

城市衰敗的威脅步步迫近，孫樹坤用影像帶出震撼，也帶出緣由的不安——問誰可以馴化外間的幾何壓迫？這浪潮慢慢侵佔家居的每個角落，靜悄悄地褪去牆壁，換上它的外皮。《蔽》耳語城市慢慢破裂坍塌的低鳴聲。靜心細聽。看看城市的帷幕如何徐徐落下，覆蓋一切。

劉清平的《薄如空氣》展現遼闊空間，宛如一縷清風。照片敞開廣闊的邊框，也將流轉的時間釋放到戶外，留下屏息的時鐘、一如有規劃地生長的草地，和一道印記照相機軌跡的斜線，然後還有那步入衰老而正要浮現的小孩。

陳偉民的作品是一系列市景照片。城市裡沒有人們聚集和肩摩轂擊的街道，甚至有無人穿着的服裝自由飄動。市景可找到一線光芒，這是璀璨安逸假象遺留下來的多餘物質。這些影像究竟是最後的希望還是最後的噓氣？

一直以來，這城市以甚麼作邊界？
市內有沒有隱喻或實際建造的分界線？

—《城市的形成 — 歷史進程中的城市模式和城市意義》；考斯多夫 (Spiro Kostof) 著

城市的建造和拆卸地盤之間，可以發現一些並存的環境，它們是茫然若失，笨拙地在高速發展下停頓一會。蘇秀儀的照片悉心迴避視覺分界線，她希望觀者看看過去的砂石、樁柱和偶爾的泥頭廢堆。土地的現實意義赤裸裸地擺在眼前，固若金湯。

吳世傑的作品將城市密度平鋪，他以「褶子」縈繞那不斷折合和展開的影像，直至再沒有深度，再沒有出路，只有多重結構和多重核心，暫時隔絕了感性及感傷。

謝明莊選了一個誰都可以佔據的普通位置，拍攝市內協調交通系統裡的移動人流和車輛，拍出來的視野卻非同凡響。這些系統絕對不止運輸那麼簡單，它們是豐富的視像，表露出結構匯集及無名軀體離散這兩種傾向互相角力，有時這些影像甚至會震動心靈。

梁家泰由「背面」出發，以鏡頭塑出圍封、毀壞、離棄、廢置等程序，刻意地描劃了政策規程的一部份。高志強認為幽閉恐懼症都是「消費年代」特別設計打造的產物，他的照片取自神聖的消費金魚缸，展示放任揮霍的情境。當要好好收藏和研究他的照片。這算褻瀆嗎？邱良早已察覺到這些稱為繁榮發展的城市符號。三十年前，正當共享資源及相互依存的社區生活興起，城市卻出現了另一群組，獨行的街邊小販，他們有的是尊嚴和自主權 — 龐大的填海工程一宗接一宗，漸漸成為常規。黃勤帶也注意到這個發展趨勢，他的作品《香港地攝影系列》讓我們知道，曾幾何時政治混亂的三不管地帶，今日已拆除、重建、再造。這些荒廢城中城的影像饒富風情而平實，從淌血的縫隙中，我們可以找到尊嚴。就是那黑調子中的一份厚實感。

從截然不同的角度，賴朗騫找到不一樣的尊嚴。《有我在的天台景象》不盡是景物攝影，更多的焦點放在人物化的天台景象，這些景象有時冷漠有時惡搞，從自閉得到慰藉，就像上 facebook 收收風，簡單直接地解救別人，在幻想破滅後醒悟。

動人的是那城市中的碰合與拉扯；當中的錯中複雜、生生不息。
—《時時刻刻》；麥可·康寧漢 (Michael Cunningham) 著

在「如你向兩端前進」中，王禾璧淘氣地說出關心的事情。她的作品有其罕見賞心而童心未泯的體驗，重點包括穩定與流動、平靜與和諧等。街上突然有七色彩虹落下，任誰也會注意。

蔡旭威的《紅外線》也如絲般細緻。是甚麼拼湊出這種感覺——孤獨飄零的積雲？朝天的植物？後方被重大樹圍繞而靜化了的巴士聲浪？纖巧美麗不等如軟弱，它們很清楚這正是自身美麗的根源。

刻意將尹子聰的痴迷留到最後。他的《城市——亮》佈滿光的骨架線，完全沒有意識到是或非、開或關、後或前、幸或不幸等矛盾所帶出的問題。這系列照片把平常事物和影像交集著。毋庸置疑，這都匯聚了瞬間吸引的不平凡，永遠令人著迷。

說到底，我真的等不及衝進這些攝影作品。
衝撞需要使勁。
衝撞是個進入的動作，
所以亦必須緊緊擠過去，
就像強風打在窗框上，然後散開。
衝撞是肢體接觸，是呼吸，
是透不過氣來，猶如她衝撞、衝撞、再衝撞，
直至沒有尖銳邊角為止。

展覽就是種種真實偶然撞擊下的果子。

我靜待這碰合、要著迷。

不知道未來將如何評價攝影師們的作品。

(原文為英文)

These photographs have been sitting in my computer for weeks. The harder the press of time, the further they withdraw from me - how hungry and kind.

To physically approach a photograph is serious business. Even now, I have trouble believing in myself looking at them. Each one is a world, hungry and kind.

Where should I stand? How far? How close? Where could I hide? How? My body becomes the photographer's eye - what she sees and stabilizes, my body swallows. It is personal.

No photograph is without a body, even when the camera isn't interested in human figures. Phenomenologically, all conscious perception is a bodily experience, incorporating the photographer's body before he decides, and incorporating the viewer in her lived body as she stands physically in front of the photographs, scaled, cropped, framed and hung in particular and peculiar ways.

Besides the body, there is also the question of unity. It is wishful thinking to assume that writing about the works could achieve the same kind of unity that a curatorial strategy promises, for the latter builds on the faith in particular space, particular time, while the former, on the faith in cutting through space and time. Or, perhaps it's the other way round. That kindness that insists there is a life to each work that both writing and curating are ready to cope...

It exasperates me to see signs after signs of that thing called civilization that has been feeding us pride - piling up concrete, tearing it apart, sugar-coating places, trapping human lives and alike. It intrigues me to see repose, punctuating the speed of time. This visual and thematic disparity, also a disparity of values, is the flesh and stone (to steal Richard Sennett's phrase) of our social landscape, this way we live.

Still, I wonder, Why are there no boats? So the legend goes that a civilization without boats is without dreams.

Is this our world? Is this our destiny?

Nothing But a Few Longer Looks

Yeung Yang

*A father and son are cycling towards me.
The son hesitates in front of a small speed bump. He stops.
The father asks him to turn around and try riding through it.
The son does, only to burst out in tears.
The father said, See? That was alright, wasn't it? You are a boy. You must be brave.
I wonder what is in the stump that is so insurmountable;
its graveness must have even been scary.
The father just asks him to do something he finds scary, but does anyway
because he wants to be good for his father.*

You object. You say I am being realist. The works are not documentaries of life. They are not about social belonging. They are merely the result of the play and obsession of a photographer. To this I answer, I cannot forget and forfeit my right as a viewer to assert that the photographs produce realities for me, too, the ways that their sociality becomes mine as they are shown to me.

*Yasmina Reza's mother keeps all articles where her daughter is mentioned
for "proof of [her] presence in the world."
The writer herself, however, keeps nothing.
"Disdain? Detachment? No. Terror. Terror of the future insignificance
of these scraps of paper, terror of their cruel irony, terror of regret, terror of time."
(Yasmina Reza, A Time Gone By)*

This then is where I must start: from the faith that each photographer does her art a little differently from the other, that each one wants to be different, not just from each other and each other's genres, but from reality, so that to live differently is to live.

To Know Someone...

They stand confident, composed and self-sufficient, these persons in Bobby Sham's *How to love yourself?* The portraits invite us to regard them as the persons do themselves - fully, in vitality, without knowing all, without haste. So do Hisun Wong's *Rural China*. To meet these villagers from the hills of Guizhou is to meet their land, to greet with them a modernization that has arrived. The rural is lived, not a fixed, unchanging identity.

Enter the worlds of Cantonese film stars, these worlds of personas. As Chung Man-lurk was invited into theirs, some in moments of beauty that are not self-conscious, we also encounter a visual practice of making portraits of people with fame. Their faces, their eyes, their gazes – their individuality despite the little information offered is striking. Somehow, our days render that practice out of date, as we do in many other ways. I recall a friend's remark as we strolled along the streets of Causeway Bay one day. She said, in a tone of frustration, How come everyone has jumped out of a fashion magazine? Translation: same makeup, same mix and match of outfits, same walk, same hair, same look. It certainly sounds like fiction, but it's all real.

Simon Go makes everyone feel famous, too, not by turning them into legendary film stars, but by articulating and acknowledging the pride that a lot of cultures share when we have a chance to be photographed, a primitive pride from the primitive history of photography. *Hong Kong Old Shops'* portrayal of a radically anthropologic relation in

between a person and her surroundings begs a question – what else is there for the person if not those objects, the materiality of the shops? I worry the frame would crumble.

Tay, Wei Leng's *Hong Kong Living* also portrays persons in places they feel comfortable. But in these photographs, nobody is stuck, nobody is caught in a moment of triumph from being photographed. That each character is self-sufficient and indifferent to the camera enables a similar kind of beauty of the some of the unselfconscious film stars of Chung.

I find it easy to smile to all of them – only trust could yield such poise.

To Not Know Someone...

Chan Chik's works show anonymity as a familiar aspect of urban life today becoming new in a not-so-distant past. Our bodies touch in shops and teahouses, then and now. But are we the same distance apart?

Work – how over-rated it is for the wrong reason: profit, efficiency, economies of scale...Chak Wai-leung show us how work was different, and valued for different reasons. Every worker is an individual person, having full command of the tools at hand. It is not what they do, but their integrity, that is visualized. The photographs compel us to ask, What is it about work that is worthy of the person's attention? What is it in work that absorbs her?

Evangelos Costadimas's works locate intimacy in tough, persistent and anonymous bodies, a streetwise move. To find beauty in accidental encounters isn't cliché; it's survival.

Karl Chiu pushes further. In his works, human bodies are monumental – not that they are not to be approached, but that their return to the primal, the erotic, the narcissistic, in tension with the alienated, the rigidified, the gregarious, gives a quality of exaggerated unreality common to monuments, too. They are calls for getting dirty.

Michael Wolf's bodies are cleansed for being deprived of day and night and of shadows, for being pixelized. I find it difficult to call them culminations of the voyeuristic gaze because the conventional voyeur is rewarded with a sense of pleasure in possessing the power over whoever is looked at. In his works, pleasure is hard to come by. What must be revised about the understanding of voyeurism in this online world that parallels our existence in offline worlds is the mutual exchange of indifference, even toleration.

John Fung's *One Square Foot* isn't interested in the monumental nor the ruling power of the camera. He is curious whether the camera can tell bigger lies than reality does. He is left to make sense of the mirage of market worship via the mythical. The curious decision to leave small and composed human figures in his images...is it a sign of not surrendering, or merely a play on the dizzying impact of oppression? Dog knows.

A black mark on the wall catches the attention of Virginia Woolf.
The mark is above the mantelpiece. She wonders what left it,
how her previous tenants were. She also declares,
"[The] mystery of life! The inaccuracy of thought! The ignorance of humanity!
To show very little control of our possessions we have –
what an accidental affair this living is after all our civilization..." Bluntly, radically.
The mark, she eventually finds out, is left by a snail,
(Virginia Woolf, *The Mark on the Wall*)

To Go Outside...

Outside is in extinction. Dustin Shum's *Not a Disneyland!* shows the indefinite expansion of artificial coloring of reality enveloping human bodies, groups of them. Will it ever stop? The images almost make it desirable to be part of a designed scene, playing a role. What kind comments on the contagion of cut-up and tailored spaces.

Leung Chi-wo and Sara Wong's *City Cookie* takes the production of artificiality to the extreme. The negative spaces of a skyline liberated from their sky trap, humanized on the one hand, ridiculed as a sign-without-meaning on the other – perpetually in the making, the story of the cookie is a convex lens of its original, our skyline.

If Leung and Wong's works are concerned with exposing the manufacturing of artificial realities, Almond Chu's *Parade* finds solution in not stopping, but flooding. Individuality gives way to collective will, culminating in a skyward and glass-organized way of life. Can a laugh be squeezed out of the homogeneity of postures, a strategy of peopling brutalized spaces? Hear who is laughing.

Ivy Ma has a game to offer - it moves between destinations and cancels out distances sometimes known as global, local, and focal. Dabs of blue swimming pools are dished out of a concrete jungle. Ma may well ask, Can Google teach us swim? Distances can still be fun.

Juxtaposed against Ma's works, Ducky Tse's *The Flâneur's Vintage Prints from 90s* touch on inhabitation as a matter of social belonging. But their spirits are certainly not dampened to inaction. Look how they live in the anarchy of everyday life – take a nap, take a turn, let the divine sit and watch, be it the indifferent swimmer or the stranger who walks.

Vincent Yu is interested in frontiers - not how people inhabit or settle into their places, but how they could have been elsewhere, how they would have leaped over. *The Vanishing Coastline* considers urban wilderness. It observes carefully and quietly what it means for a pier, a truck, a heap of rocks...to be a certain frontier. Yu is not interested in what lies beyond, but what gives mythic quality to the frontier laid bare. What about the dinosaur?

If only Dick Chan's *Megafauna* were offered up to the dinosaur, it would have caused quite a stir. It must have been difficult for Chan to find a place to stand so that Megafauna becomes graspable. Designed to rouse desires to consume by being impending and overpowering, these mega banners of super models are now regarded from a distance. They remain airy, that wallpaper quality, yet mega. Themed into a concrete park, they purge the city of fauna. The honour of our city is no longer a colonialist-driven and abstract miracle about rags to riches, but the speed and skills in putting up megafauna, our new totems, spirit not included. Will they ever rebel?

Before, after...

The rest is a visual and physical exploration of cavities. Some have been curious and kind, others, irritated and uncompromising. Whichever, they are all insistent with having to incorporate this built environment into conscious experience so that it is in dwelling that they are countered.

Have these skeletons just arrived or have they been left behind, outcast, by the homogeneous time of construction and destruction? Are they skeletons before or after? Another mountain man's *lan wei* are portraits of states of limbo – it is almost possible to imagine envying such a blankness of life, moments of non-development.

If Wong's images are counter-monuments that expose imperatives that glorify the wrong things, So Hing-keung's works recall conventional images of skyward monuments, only in their dilapidation. They are carefully designed to become tokens of time, as proof of the future decay of verticality. The bleaching shows slow loss in time. What are memories but scratched copies of realities?

Enoch Cheung's *Secret Dialogue: About Children Hospital* is in a busy silence. Any hospital today is once the house of the immensities of life and death, now collapsed into some rooms, some walls, some traces of child play.

With visualizations of the intimidating impact of urban corrosion, Leon Suen offers a powerful take on the restlessness of reason – how can anyone expect to domesticate the oppression of geometry outside, a tide slowly encroaching on every corner of home, quietly replacing its walls with a skin of its own? *The Obscured* whispers a slow and low hum of the crackling and crumbling. Listen. See how the drape of total urbanity hangs.

Expanse arrives like a refreshing breeze. Lau Ching-ping's *Thin as Air* opens their frames in expansive gestures. They also throw the passing of time into open air, leaving a clock holding its breath, patches of green growing as planned, a diagonal line marking the camera's trajectory. And then there is the child getting old and ready to float.

Raymond Chan tolerates. His works are city scenes without streets where people meet, where bodies brush, even just outfits swishing past each other. Cityscapes tolerate brightness that is some unwanted leftover from the pretence of glamour and wellbeing. Are these glimpses of the last hope or the last breath?



*Historically, in what ways has the city defined its limits?
Within the city, what divisions were implied or built?
(Spiro Kostof, The City Shaped, Urban Patterns and Meanings Through History)*

Between construction and demolition are the spontaneous environments that blankly and awkwardly wait for the next speed hump on the highway of development. Gretchen So's images carefully avoid geometrical divisions of space to lure a desire to see what comes before, the disorder of sand, piles, occasional rubble, so the bare reality of the meanings of land keeps watch.

Ng Sai-kit's images are density laid flat. Pleats, as he calls them in Chinese, are an obsession with folding and unfolding, until there is no more depth, no more ways out, only the coexistence of multiple orders, multiple centres, insulated, albeit temporarily, from sensationalism and sentimentalism.

Taking up an ordinary position that any other person can take, Tse Ming-chong offers extraordinary views of the city's coordinated systems of people and traffic on the move. But these systems are by no means single-minded. They are a visual feast on the competing propensities of the convergence of structures and dispersal of anonymous bodies. Sometimes, they may even vibrate.

Leong Ka Tai comes "from the back", figuring processes of fencing, mutilating, deserting, abandoning, all but parts of the deliberate policy of order. For Alfred Ko, claustrophobia is specially designed and engineered by "Consumerism". His photographs are specimens from sacred aquariums of excess. They must be collected and studied. Will this be blasphemy? These signs known as prosperity and development have long attracted the attention of Yau Leung. Three decades ago, a parallel world next to that of a shared, interdependent communal life, the dignity and autonomy of the lone street hawker, gradually became visible – projects of reclamation that were spectacles became routine. Wong Kan-tai notices, too. *Hong Kong Walled City*, that place once known as Anarchy, is now removed, renewed, re-claimed. These images of the deserted inside out from the city within the city bear an erotic and down-to-earth quality, so much so that pride manages to ooze out of bleeding crevices. It must be the thick of the black.

In a very different light, Lai Lon-hin finds a very different pride. *Me on the Rooftop Scenery* is less a scenery than a personification of the sometimes indifferent and sometimes mischievous roof things. Their autism offers solace, like a gentle poke on facebook, as a simple cure of others' disillusion.

*It's the city's crush and heave that move you; its intricacy, its endless life.
(Michael Cunningham, The Hours)*

If You Move Towards Two Ends, Wong Wo-bik says with a smile, beware. Wong's works add a rare and delightful tinge of adventure to this exhibition. They attend to the states of stability and fluidity, as well as tranquilly and harmony, too. How can anyone on the street not notice the drape of a full rainbow?

A delicate touch of silk is visibly present in John Choy's *Infra-red*, too. What brings all these together – the busy solitude of the cumulus clouds, the upward looking plant, trees enveloping and silencing the bus in the background? Their fragility doesn't make them weak. They are well aware this is the source of their beauty, in and with each other.

To save the obsession for last – Simon Wan's *City-Glow* shows grids over grids of light are not self-conscious about any big question marked by conflicts of yes or no, on or off, back or forth, fortune or misfortune. They are a concrete amalgamation of ordinary distraction, ordinary submission. No doubt, the ordinary never stops to mesmerize.

*All said, I can't wait to crash into the images.
Crashing involves throwing with force.
Crashing must be a crashing into.
Therefore it must also involve a tight squeeze,
like strong wind on the frames of a window. It then disperses.
Crash is about bodily encounter. It's about breathing,
and getting out of breath. That is as if she crashes and crashes
and crashes until there are no more sharp edges.*

An exhibition is a collision of realities.

I wait for the crush, the infatuation.

I wonder how future is to regard their vision.

(The essay is originally written in English)