

HERE AND THERE: RE-IMAGINING HONG KONG LANDSCAPES

# 極目足下

想・見香港風光

# 人在旅途， 下一站… ON OUR JOURNEY; THE NEXT STOP IS...

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在〈我們帶著許多東西旅行〉一作，也斯感嘆：

「我帶着你的照片來到異地  
我帶着我的文字  
來到你的照片  
我在上邊漫游  
帶着說不分明的感情  
帶着逐漸形成的觀念…」<sup>1</sup>

我們嚮往四處旅遊，不外乎想擺脫日常生活的框限，尋找不曾見識的美食與美景，又或放飛自我、盡情實現不可能的幻想。可是，也斯說我們旅行總不免帶著行李、情感與想像等許多東西，試圖借著異國風情溶化舊日想法，卻又因著往昔種種而改變眼前所見。或許旅行不過是從家鄉跑出去、又再次重投家鄉懷抱的歷程。離鄉回鄉、帶上行李放下行裝，旅行的經歷如何改變我們對香港的看法？

踏上旅程，也斯說：

「突然來到新的關卡  
回答突發的問題  
一隻腳踏在新的邊界上」

1949 年秋，荷蘭小子 Michael Rogge 因著一家生計的考量，來到了香港工作。與家鄉阿姆斯特丹的肅索相比，他覺得這座容納了二百多萬人的城市似乎已擺脫戰火的創傷，處處洋溢著多姿多采又氣虎虎的活力<sup>fig 1</sup>。人在異鄉促使 Michael 重拾拍攝紀錄片的興趣，將 50 年代香港的繁華景致一一收攝入菲林膠片，好讓遠方的父母看到這座城市動起來的模樣。<sup>2</sup> 1952 年，他加入香港業餘電影會成為其中一位創辦人，攝製《日出》、《島嶼風景》及《香港慶祝伊利沙白女皇加冕盛況》等錄像作品。<sup>3</sup> 近年 Michael 又將作品上載至 YouTube，與人分享自己與香港相知相遇的因緣。他說：這是我所能夠做的事情，讓一段已然消逝的歲月在今天重現、影片所記錄的人得以永遠活著。<sup>4</sup>



fig 1

Michael Rogge 的錄像作品讓父母認識他暫居的城市，也給香港留下了 40 年代的時間印記。圖片由 Michael Rogge 提供。



Michael 的鏡頭捕捉了晨早第一道曙光映入赤柱、漸而照亮北角碼頭港灣、城市慢慢的從睡夢中醒過；他的鏡頭也記錄了油麻地避風塘的漁民故事，主角雖然身無長物、又遭逢喪友之痛，卻對命運有所感悟而決定好好活著。他看到的香港是一座朝氣勃勃的城市，不論寬裕與困乏，這裡的人都勇於開創自己的未來。

然而，看著四周高樓起轉眼又見高樓塌，也斯問：

「那些舊街道既熟悉又陌生  
翻開舊報紙尋找消息  
香港是什麼？」

1948 年末，本地作家舒巷城結束了長達六年天南地北的流浪生涯。重返故土，他驚覺香港變了，連自己也變得像異鄉客。<sup>5</sup> 舒巷城與 Michael 同樣看到 50 年代中環高樓大廈臨立的闊氣、雲霧濃罩山頂的迷漫、灣仔大街小巷熙來攘往的熱鬧、香港仔漁火與明月相映的璀璨，但他毫不客氣的說：「繁華是一把金剪刀，它不會錯過，即使你傷口上的一根羊毛」。<sup>6</sup>

為了記認這座城市的變遷，舒巷城收集不同階層、不同背景的香港故事，再以短篇小說包攬跳槽撈世界的廣告公司經理、游離於社會邊緣的蛋家佬、窮得只有一件「單吊西」的會計、養起一家老少的舞女等都市眾生相。小說所寫的毋寧是繁華世態底下的浮躁、落寞與迷失，倒又在悲喜禍福之間，體現升斗市民互相送暖、努力經營生活的柔韌。這就是舒巷城的香港——市面欣欣向榮卻又千瘡百孔，社會看似包攬百家雜說、實質淺薄無聊，有人撈得風生水起、有人遭剝削欺詐迫遷而不

得安生<sup>fig 2</sup>。儘管一切不盡如人意，但親情友情鄉土情的牽繫卻讓歸人找到了心之所向的歸宿。他默默觀察城市、珍愛生活所累積的經驗、也反覆思量此地的未來，藉此確認家鄉恒在。

家鄉是什麼？一處過日子的地方、一段段定義自我的歷史、重重剪不斷理還亂的牽掛、抑或一切與自己息息相關的人與事？

旅人的目的地又是什麼？沒有回憶、不談歷史的時間碎片？身在其中卻又可望而不可即的地方？漂遊於不同風景而不得安頓的宿泊？

人在旅途上，也斯翻弄著行李的東西一一辨識：

「這是懷念  
這是詛咒  
這是責任  
這是多餘的重擔  
這是生命  
這是累贅  
這是我們的快樂  
這是我們的悲哀…」

藝術家林東鵬認為我們無法選擇鄉關何處，卻可以任意挑選旅遊目的地。伴隨著種種抉擇，家鄉意味著一輩子的休戚與共，旅遊景點銷售的不過就是朝夕歡快，不費思量也莫問承擔。人與家鄉相依相存幾乎毫無間距，林東鵬反而想借助觀光旅遊的經驗拉開自己與地方的距離，重新調校如何看待身邊事物的眼光。透過繪畫、文





fig 2 1950 年代的香港逐漸走出戰爭的陰霾，市面欣欣向榮，但 Michael Rogge 與舒巷城對經濟發展的看法卻大相逕庭。



fig 3 今天我們已然無法認出過去中環皇后大道的模樣。我們如何留住這城市的記憶？

字與錄像裝置，藝術家以觀光客的姿態呈現不同視野、不同年代所見的香港風景。這是 Michael 曾經走過的大街小巷、舒巷城筆下小市民奔波勞碌的生活場景，也是他作客家鄉所遊覽的景點。一幕幕風景包羅觀光客所投射的、本地人記憶所繫的、以至鄉愁所建構的「現實」。本地人與異鄉客看到的，可是不一樣的香港？

2022、2020、2019、2017、2015…順著連串數字貼紙觀眾踏入藝術家所佈置的想像世界，重現他幾番作客家鄉的所思所感。臨時搭建似的木板裝置虛掩，林東鵬所畫的光頭呆子向人打開心扉，只見 Michael 與時空遙遙相隔的觀眾打個照臉，才轉身上班去；有人拿起望遠鏡遠眺、有人左顧右盼；林東鵬沿著阿厘畢道走到遮打道，似要重訪 Michael 過去的足跡。身處這時空交錯的藝術之境，觀眾看到過去的灣仔與展場外的城市環境相交映、也看到藝術家與自己曾經踏足的鬧市小景。生活在此，我們有什麼共同經驗？什麼樣的風景把我們塑造成「土生土長的本地人」？

冷不防疫症來襲，藝術家甫一回港就被困在防疫酒店，由得磚牆與玻璃窗將自己隔絕於家鄉、窗外的熱鬧一概無從過問。走過這些歲月，有人堅持落地生根、有人想遠走高飛、有人熱切投身社會、有人對身邊事冷眼旁觀。疫病、貨物與想法全球跑，這裡所經歷的有否反映不同人的景況，是否也勾連起其他城市對自身處境的思考？

香港曾被稱為「借來的時間、借來的地方」，彷彿一切帶不走留不住 fig 3。或許我們都是香港人、我們誰也不是香港人。我們是天地的匆匆過客，赤條條的來赤條條的走。然而，人於此地所積蘊的回憶與夢想卻生出對美好的追求、對人世的關懷以至對文明制度的希冀。林東鵬說：「歷史不是包袱，她是自由多面的稜鏡，在她的映照下讓我們思考人的種種，從而面對當下。」不管身在何方、旅程或短或長，我們終究只是世間風景微不足道的一點。我們如何策劃下一站旅程？



In his poem ‘We Travel With Lots of Stuff’,  
Ye Si exclaims that

I arrive at a foreign land carrying a picture of you  
Carrying my words  
I arrive at your picture  
Wandering on it  
With feelings difficult to articulate  
With concepts that take form little by little... 1

We yearn to travel everywhere because we want to break free from  
the confines of our daily lives, to find gourmet food and beautiful scenery we  
have never seen, or to be ourselves and live out impossible fantasies. However,  
Ye Si points out that we always carry a lot of stuff with us when we travel, like  
our baggage, emotions, and imagination, trying to dissolve our old thoughts  
with exotic scenery, but transforming what we see in front of us because of  
the past. Perhaps travel is just a journey of running away from our hometown  
just to return to it later. As we pack and unpack our luggage on our journey to  
and from home, how does the experience of travelling change our perception  
of Hong Kong?

Embarking on his journey,  
Ye Si says,

Suddenly at another counter  
Answering a question that pops out of nowhere  
With a foot on a new frontier”

In the autumn of 1949, Michael Rogge, a young Dutchman, arrived  
in Hong Kong for a job to support his family. In contrast to the starkness of  
his native Amsterdam, the city of over two million seemed to him to have  
healed from the trauma of war and was full of vibrant energy fig A . Staying  
in a foreign country encouraged Michael to pick up his old hobby of  
documentary filmmaking, capturing the glamour of Hong Kong in the 1950s  
on film so his parents far away could see the city come to life. 2 In 1952, he  
joined the Hong Kong Amateur Cine Club as a co-founder, filming videos like  
*Sunrise, Island Scenery*, and *Hong Kong Celebrates the Coronation of Her  
Majesty Queen Elizabeth II* . 3 In recent years, Michael has been uploading  
his works to YouTube to share the story of his encounter with Hong Kong. “This  
is what I can do”, he says, “to bring back to life today a time long gone so the  
people on film shall live forever.” 4

Michael's camera captures the first ray of sunlight dawning on Stanley,  
slowly creeping up the harbour at North Point Ferry Pier as the city wakes up  
little by little from its sleep. His camera also records the story of fishermen in  
the Yau Ma Tei Typhoon Shelter, who, upon understanding their fate, are  
determined to live their lives to the fullest despite poverty and the loss of a  
friend. Michael sees Hong Kong as a vibrant city where everyone, rich and  
poor alike, steps up to forge their own future.

As Ye Si watches skyscrapers rise and fall around him, he asks,

Those old streets are familiar and strange at the same time  
I flip through old newspapers for a piece of news  
What is Hong Kong?

At the end of 1948, Shu Hong-sing, a local writer, ended six years of  
wandering. When he returned to his homeland, he was shocked to find that  
Hong Kong had changed, and that even he himself had become a stranger  
to the city. 5 Like Michael, he too noticed the extravagance of high-rise  
buildings in Central in the 1950s, the misty cloud scene on the Peak, the bustle  
of the streets and lanes in Wan Chai, and lights of fishing boats shining under  
the moonlight in Aberdeen, but without feigning politeness he commented  
that “prosperity is a pair of golden scissors that miss nothing, not even a strand  
of wool on your wound.” 6

To record the transformations of the city, Shu Hong-sing collected  
Hong Kong stories from all walks of life. In his short stories, he depicts a  
panorama of urban life, portraying characters like an advertising agency  
manager who jumps from one job to another, a Tanka man living on the  
margins of society, an accountant who can only afford one suit, and a dancing  
lady who is the breadwinner of her family. While his stories approach the  
restlessness, despondency, and loss in a flourishing world, they are also  
about the resilience of ordinary people who help each other out and work  
hard to carry on with their life in weal and woe. This is the Hong Kong of Shu  
Hong-sing — a city thriving on the surface but rotten underneath, a society  
that seems tolerant of all views but is in fact shallow and uninteresting, where  
some do well for themselves while others are exploited, cheated, and thrown  
out fig B . Despite all the odds, the returnee has found a place to call home  
because of family ties, friendship, and his love of his hometown. He observes  
the city in silence, cherishes the experience he gained, and ponders the future  
of this place, thus confirming that his home is always here.

What is home? A place to live, pieces of history that define oneself,  
a tangled web of ties, or all the people and things that are close to oneself?

What, then, is a traveller’s destination? Time fragments with no memories  
or history, one’s surroundings where one can never reach, or a temporary dwelling  
when one wanders through different landscapes without settling down?

On his journey, Ye Si fumbles with the contents of his luggage to  
identify them one by one:

This is nostalgia  
This is curse  
This is responsibility  
This is unwanted burden  
This is life  
This is nuisance  
This is our joy  
This is our sorrow...

Artist Lam Tung Pang believes we cannot choose where we call  
home, but we can choose to travel anywhere. Home means a lifetime of  
solidarity that comes with choices, while tourist destinations sell nothing  
more than fleeting pleasure that does not require anyone to think or commit.  
As people and their hometowns are so closely dependent on each other  
that there is hardly any distance between them, Lam wants to make use of  
his sightseeing experience to distance himself from the place and readjust  
the way he sees things around him. Through paintings, texts, and video



fig A Michael Rogge's video works invited his parents to see the city where he stayed and left a glimpse of Hong Kong in the 1940s. Courtesy of Michael Rogge.



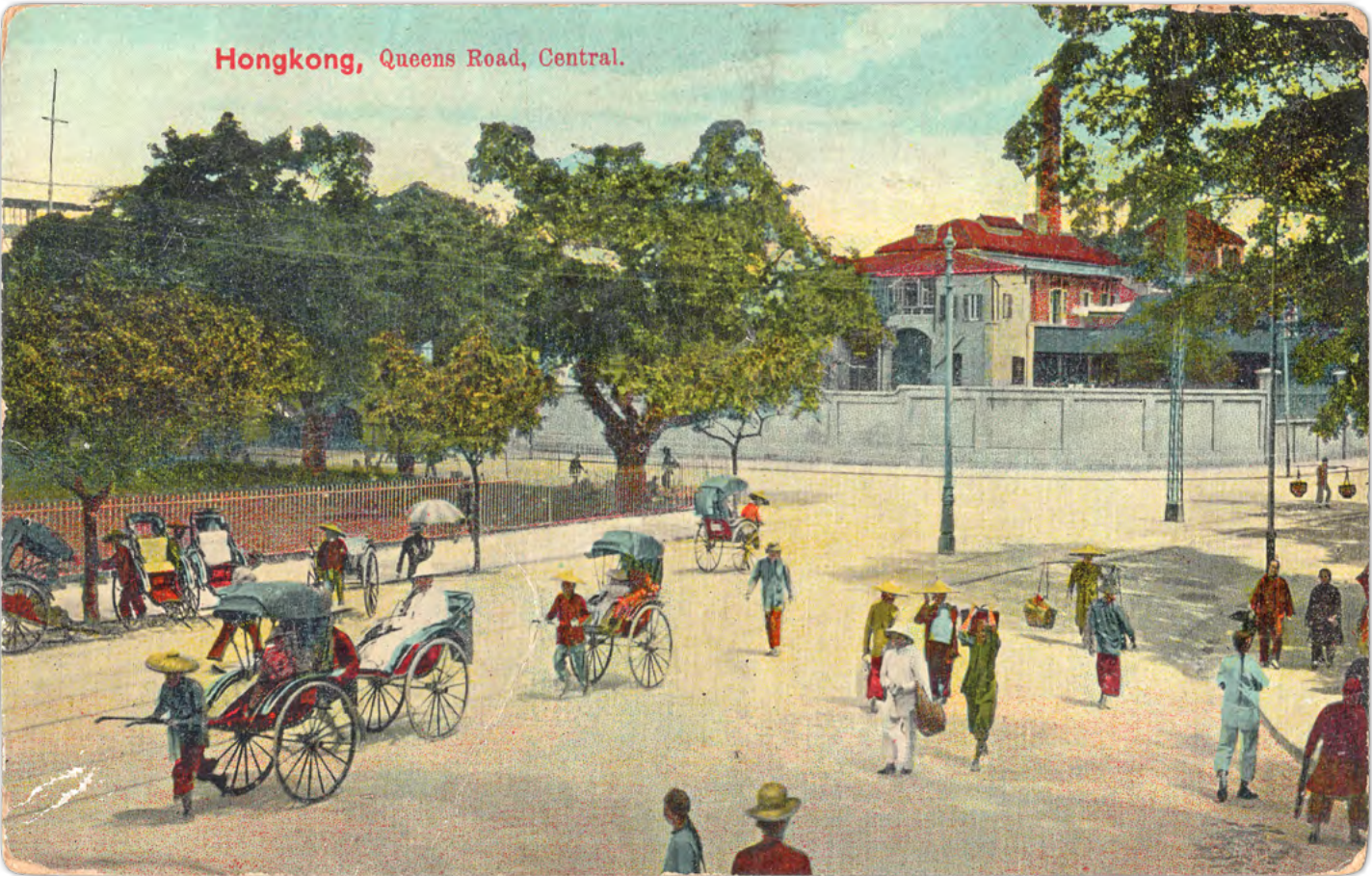


fig B In the 1950s, Hong Kong gradually recovered from the Second World War, and the economy thrived. But Michael Rogge and Shu Hong-sing had very different views on what prosperity meant to the people.



fig C Today we cannot recognise what Queen's Road in Central looked like in the past. How do we keep the memory of this city alive?

installations, the artist takes a tourist's stance and presents Hong Kong's landscapes of different ages observed from different perspectives. These are the streets and lanes that Michael walked on, the places where commoners portrayed by Shu Hong-sing toil away their lives, and the sightseeing spots Lam visited in his hometown as a tourist. Landscapes in his work encompass the "realities" projected by tourists, remembered by locals, and constructed by homesickness. Are locals and visitors looking at two different Hong Kongs?

2022, 2020, 2019, 2017, 2015... Following a series of number stickers, viewers step into an imaginary world constructed by the artist, reliving what he thought and felt during his sightseeing trips in his hometown. There is a makeshift structure of wood planks left ajar. A bald nerd painted by Lam opens his heart. Viewers could see Michael from another space and time come face to face with them before turning around and left for work; some pick up a telescope and stare into the distance while others look around; Lam walks along Albert Road to Chater Road, as if retracing Michael's footsteps. In this artistic space where time and space intersect, viewers witness the old Wan Chai mirrored in the cityscape outside the exhibition venue, and the urban landscape the artist and themselves have set foot on. What experiences do we share living here? What kind of landscape has shaped us into "native locals"?

When the pandemic struck, Lam was confined to a quarantine hotel upon his return to Hong Kong, isolated by brick walls and glass windows from his hometown and the hustle and bustle outside his window. After all these years, some insist on putting down roots while some want to run away; some participate actively in communities, and some look on with indifference. As viruses, goods, and ideas travel around the world, does what we experience here reflect the situation of different people, and could our experience inspire other cities to reflect on their own situation?

Hong Kong was once called "a borrowed place on borrowed time" as if we could take or keep nothing with us fig C . Perhaps we are all Hongkongers, but at the same time none of us is a Hongkonger. We are transient sojourners in the world who come naked and die naked. Nonetheless, the memories and dreams we have here inspire us to pursue the good, to care for the world, and to long for a civilised system. "History is not a burden, but a free and multifaceted prism which, by its reflection, allows us to ponder the human condition so we may face the present," says Lam Tung Pang. No matter where we are or how long our journey is, we are but a small dot in the world's landscape. How shall we plan the next leg of our journey?



- 1 也斯：〈我們帶著許多東西旅行〉，載吳風編，《香港當代作家作品選集·也斯卷》（香港：天地圖書，2014年），頁76–77。  
Ye Si, “Women daizhe xuduo dongxi luxing” [We Travel with Many Things], in Wu Feng (ed.), *Xianggang dangdai zuojia zuopin xuanji · Ye si juan* [Selected Works by Hong Kong Contemporary Writers: Ye Si] (Hong Kong: 2014), 76–77.
- 2 Christopher Dewolf, “Michael Rogge’s Hong Kong: A 1950s Time Capsule”, *Zolima City Mag* June 2021 [online available] <https://zolimacitymag.com/michael-rogge-hong-kong-1950-time-capsule/> Accessed on 9 June 2022.
- 3 傅慧儀：〈尋找米高羅格的香港回憶〉，載傅慧儀（編）：《香港早期電影遊蹤》（香港：香港電影資料館，2014年），頁44–45。  
Winnie Fu, “Xunzhao Migao Luoge de Xianggang huiyi” [In Search of Michael Rogge’s Hong Kong Memories], in Winnie Fu (ed.), *Xianggang zaoqi dianying youzong* [Transcending Space and Time — Early Cinematic Experience of Hong Kong] (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Film Archive, 2014), 44–45.
- 4 Guntar Sinuraya, “Interview Michael Rogge in 2019”, [Online available] [https://youtu.be/un\\_qUcx2Z64](https://youtu.be/un_qUcx2Z64) Accessed on 9 June 2022.
- 5 舒巷城：〈放下包袱，談談自己（代序）〉，載秋明編：《舒巷城卷》（香港：三聯書店（香港）有限公司，1989年），頁4–5。  
Shu Hong-sing, “Fangxia baofu, tantan ziji (dai xu)” [Drop My Pretence and Talk about Myself: In Lieu of a Preface], in Qiu Ming (ed.), *Shu Xiangcheng juan* [Selected Works of Shu Hong-sing] (Hong Kong: Joint Publishing (Hong Kong) Company Limited, 1989), 4–5.
- 6 舒巷城：〈繁華〉，載：《都市詩鈔》（香港：七十年代月刊社，1973年），頁83。  
Shu Hong-sing, “Fanhua” [Prosperity], in Doushi shichao [Collection of Urban Poetry] (Hong Kong: Qishi niandai yuekan she, 1973), 83.