

Listening to Voices, Discerning Cadences

Chris Song

SOME voices come from rice fields, piers, Yau Ma Tei and Sham Shui Po; others arrive from Penang, Europe, Scotland, Denmark, Iran, Brazil, and from the borders of apocalypse and whiteness. Poetry attends to the texture of daily life: from a bowl of rice, a mirror, a stretch of street noise, a window, or a journey home, it discerns intimate relationships, the cracks within them, and the sounds our language makes amid translation, inheritance, mishearing, and aphasia. Many works in “Creative Space” begin with ordinary objects yet move beyond them. Sweet potatoes, mirrors, rainbows, amber, haircuts, sourdough starters, orange peel, guitars, and graves become organs of memory and the body. These poems carry youthful intensity and mature restraint; they render the city’s textures and acutely transpose emotional experience, returning poetry to ordinary scenes and things.

The special feature “2026 Winter Limited — Poetry Workshop” (edited by Keith Liu and Matthew Cheng) is especially valuable. The fifteen participants’ works move in different directions: toward the risky edges of the love poem, the intermittent sounds of streets and communities, or poetry’s entryways through family, fathers, labour, the spring equinox, photography, and communication. A poetry workshop matters not only because it trains craft, but because it preserves an ethics of reading, revising, and believing together that poetry can still reach another person. New writers and new voices continue to appear, still refreshing sight and hearing; this is reason enough for a poetry magazine to exist.

The critical essays in this issue also form a deeper thread. Ian Pang’s essay on Derek Chung’s *The Thinking of Stones* beings from stones, houses, uprootedness, inheritance, and the evolution of poetic craft, placing personal experience of home within the longer course of Hong Kong poetry. Lut Ming’s essay on Ken Lee’s *Kintsugi* reads fracture as repair, showing that wounds need not be hidden; they may become poetry’s golden seams. Matthew Cheng’s comparison of two Chinese translations of Eliot Weinberger’s *The Life of Tu Fu* shows that this kind of translation is not merely a transfer between languages, but a search for poetic coordinates amid the dislocations and echoes between classical and modern poetics, Chinese and Western traditions. Such work requires both reference to Eastern and Western scholarship on Du Fu’s poetry and a meticulous intertextual reading of different translations.

The translation and introduction sections further widen this issue’s horizon. The Anglo-American modernist master Ezra Pound, the Scottish poet Edwin Muir, the Brazilian modernist poet Cecília Meireles, the contemporary Iranian

poet Bānoo Zan, and the selection of contemporary Danish poetry (edited by Bo Ærenlund Sørensen and Gabriel Tsang) together form a translingual poetic map. Muir seeks a voice for the human community between John Milton and Franz Kafka; Meireles, with clear and flowing lyricism, condenses time, the sea, solitude, and spiritual experience into an inward landscape close to song; the Danish poets approach the body, daily life, and things through indirection, philosophical deliberation, humour, and heartfelt feeling. Portuguese, English, Persian, and Danish meet here not to be domesticated into Chinese, but to preserve difference in its necessary strangeness.

I would like to mention the Iranian poet Bānoo Zan in particular. She settled in Toronto in 2010, writes in Persian and English, and founded Shab-e She’r, “Poetry Night,” in 2012, making poetry readings and open mic sessions into a meeting place for different languages, ethnicities, faiths, and experiences of exile. Toronto’s urban landscape and poetic map are equally diverse; and it is in such cultural spaces that poetry allows individual voices to be heard, and differences need not be flattened. The recent flames of war in Iran make the concerns in her work—exile, memory, identity, religion, politics, and spirituality—feel still more urgent. When news describes catastrophe through numbers, maps, and military reports, poetry preserves what cannot be counted: thirst, fear, displacement, memory, and the wish, even amid ruins, to draw closer to one another.

The two English-language special features, “Apocalypse” and “White,” appear like two distant beams of light in this issue. The former writes of floods, fires, plastics, plagues, wars, migration, algorithms, and astral threats; yet it does not merely speak of the end of the world, but asks how human beings, within a sense of ending, continue to remember, sing, love, and bear witness. The latter writes whiteness through snow, mist, moonlight, mourning clothes, congee, bones, flowers, and oblivion, making white no longer a matter of purity alone, but a composite colour of mourning, absence, inheritance, and rebirth.

To read the poems, criticism, and translations in this issue is to recognise anew how people live—across dining tables, street corners, rooms, stations, markets, sickbeds, ruins, and journeys home. Plants still sprout in the ruins of war; after exile and uprootedness, people still write poems; within whiteness remain many layers; before the apocalypse, someone still saves water for tomorrow. These are the proofs daily life itself, bit by bit, leaves behind. May readers find here not only a poetry magazine, but a city still breathing; amid turbulence, fracture, translation, and reconstruction, may they listen to voices and discern cadences in the details of life. ■

聽聲辨韻

文 宋子江

有人從稻田、碼頭、油麻地、深水埗走來，有人從檳城、歐洲、蘇格蘭、丹麥、伊朗、巴西、末日與白色的邊界走來。詩觀看日常的肌理：它從一碗飯、一面鏡、一段街聲、一扇窗、一趟歸途裏，辨認出親密的關係，也辨認出關係的裂縫，還辨認我們的語言在翻譯、承傳、誤聽與失語之間發出的聲音。

「創作天地」中的作品多從日常物象出發，卻不止於日常。蕃薯、鏡、彩虹、琥珀、飛髮、酸種、橘子皮、結他、墳墓，皆在詩中成為記憶與身體的器官。這些詩作有年輕的激烈，也有成熟的節制；有城市肌理的細密描摹，也有情感經驗的尖銳轉譯，把詩意重新放回最平常的景物裏。「2026 冬季限定——詩作坊」特輯尤其值得珍視。十五位學員的作品各有方向：有人走向情詩的危險邊緣，有人捕捉街道與社群的斷續聲響，有人從家庭、父親、勞動、春分、拍攝、溝通中尋找詩的入門。詩作坊之所以重要，不只因為它訓練技巧，更因為它保存一種共同閱讀、共同修正、共同相信詩仍可抵達他人的倫理。多年來，新的作者仍然出現，新的聲音仍然使我們耳目一新，這本身就是詩刊存在的理由。

本期評論文字亦構成一條深層脈絡。彭依仁論鍾國強《石頭的思考》，從石頭、房子、失根、承傳與詩藝演化談起，將個人家園經驗放回香港詩的長線之中；律銘談不清《金繼》，則把斷裂視為修補，指出傷痕不必被遮掩，亦可成為詩的金線。鄭政恆對艾略特·溫伯格（Eliot Weinberger）《杜甫一生》（*The Life of Tu Fu*）兩種中譯本的評比，則讓我們看見此類翻譯不只是語言轉換，而是在古今中西的錯置與回聲之間，重新尋找詩的座標；其間既須參照東西方學者對杜詩的研究，也須對各種譯本進行細密的互文比讀。翻譯與譯介部分，使本期的視野進一步展開。英美現代主義大師龐德（Ezra Pound）、蘇格蘭詩人繆亞（Edwin Muir）、巴西現代主義詩人梅雷萊斯（Cecília Meireles）、當代伊朗詩人巴努·贊（Bānoo Zan），以及丹麥當代詩選，共同構成一張跨語際的詩

歌地圖。繆亞在彌爾頓（John Milton）與卡夫卡（Franz Kafka）之間尋找人類共同體的聲音；梅雷萊斯則以清澈而流動的抒情，將時間、海洋、孤獨與靈性經驗凝成近乎歌唱的內在風景；丹麥詩人以迂迴、思辨、幽默與衷情處理身體、日常與物；葡語、英語、波斯語與華語在此相遇，並非為了彼此歸化，而是讓差異保留其必要的陌生。

在此我想特別提一下伊朗詩人巴努·贊（Bānoo Zan）。她於2010年定居多倫多，以波斯文及英文寫作，並於2012年創辦 Shab-e She'r「詩之夜」，使朗讀與開放麥克風成為不同語言、族裔、信仰與流亡經驗相遇的場所。多倫多的城市面貌與詩歌版圖同樣多元；也正是在這樣的文化空間中，詩讓個別的聲音得以被聽見，讓彼此差異不必被抹平。近期伊朗的烽火，讓她作品中關於流亡、記憶、身份、宗教、政治與精神性的思考更顯迫切。當新聞以數字、地圖與戰報描述災難，詩保存的，正是那些難以被統計的痛感：乾渴、恐懼、流離、記憶，以及人在廢墟中仍試圖彼此靠近的願望。

末兩組英文特輯「Apocalypse」與「White」，像本期的兩道遠光。前者書寫洪水、火災、塑膠、瘟疫、戰爭、移民、演算法與星體威脅，卻不只談世界終結，而是追問人在終結感中如何仍然記憶、歌唱、愛與見證；後者以白色書寫雪、霧、月光、喪服、粥、骨、花與遺忘，使白不再只是純潔，而是哀悼、空缺、傳承與重生的複合顏色。

讀本期詩刊中的詩作、評論和翻譯，就是在飯桌、街角、房間、車站、街市、病榻、廢墟與歸途之間，重新辨認人如何活著。戰爭廢墟中仍有植物發芽，流離失根後仍有人寫詩，白色之中仍有不同的層次，末日之前仍有人把水留給明天；這些就是日子本身一點一點留下來的證據。願讀者除了讀到一冊詩刊，也讀到一座仍在呼吸的城市，在動盪、斷裂、轉譯與重建之間，從生活的細節中聽聲辨韻。 ▽