

Rufina Wu / Stefan Canham

PORTRAITS FROM ABOVE – HONG KONG'S INFORMAL ROOFTOP COMMUNITIES

樓上風光——香港天台窩

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樓上風光  
Portraits from Above



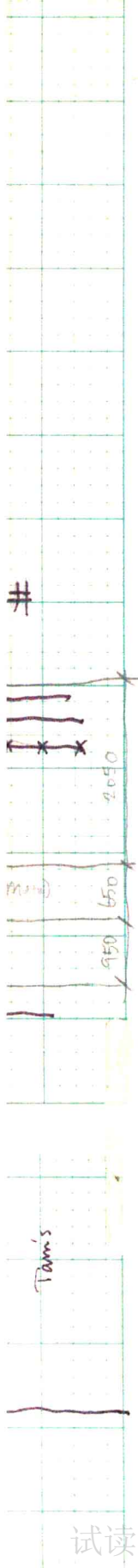
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There is no elevator. We walk up the eight flights of stairs, hesitating on the last one, looking at each other, out of breath: we have no right to be here.

The roof is a maze of corridors, narrow passageways between huts built of sheet metal, wood, brick and plastics. There are steps and ladders leading up to a second level of huts. We get lost. Our leaflets in hand, Rufina knocks on a door. There is an exchange in Cantonese. Stefan stands in the background, the foreigner, smiling, not understanding a word. They hear us out, smile back and invite us into their homes.

Later, we look down at the building from a higher one across the street. The roof is huge, like a village. There must be thirty or forty households on it. From the outside there is no way of knowing what is inside. Whether they have Internet or not. Whether they have a toilet. And there is no way of knowing their stories.

Who makes a picture of this? Who keeps a record? Sometimes a newspaper will print an article, or an NGO will launch a campaign. Various government departments keep files on so-called “unauthorized building works”, coding the huts with permanent markers and photographing them. The files are not on public record, but residents may look at them to learn why their homes are to be demolished. Very rarely do rooftop

自己的生活空間。看他們的家庭照，家人對著鏡頭微笑，背景可能是向日葵花間，可能是中國大陸某條村，可能是街上某人的汽車旁，就只是不是他們的家。

再走那些樓梯。我們不再在通道中迷路了。我們弄懂居民如何改建和修葺他們的家。他們當中，有人在天台屋中住了二三十年，曾投入建設這個城市；近年，不少從中國大陸、東南亞，或巴基斯坦來的移民接下這個任務。七零年代，他們當中有人參與建造地下鐵路。現在，他們當中有人在高樓大廈的建築工地工作。

香港不少舊區都在重建。有些大廈看似搖搖欲墜，因為它們用了以鹹水攪拌的混凝土來建築；另一些大廈就要讓路給更高更能賺錢的大廈。很少天台屋居民介意入住新落成的高樓大廈，只是他們負擔不起。他們都怕被安置到偏遠的新市鎮，那裡謀生的機會可能更少，社區網絡也有限制。

我們再走那些樓梯。天台屋是都市傳奇，說的是香港的故事，是中國大陸政治巨變的故事，是市區重建的故事，是人們希望和城裡生活所需的故事。

鄔南薰、斯特凡·坎漢



residents document their own spaces: the family pictures we saw were taken standing in a field of sunflowers, or in a village in the mainland, or down on the street beside someone else's car, smiling.

We walk up the stairs again. We no longer get lost in the corridors. We learn how residents modify and maintain their homes. There are people who have been living on the roof for twenty or thirty years who have helped to build the city. The new immigrants from Mainland China, from Southeast Asia, from Pakistan, continue to do so. In the seventies, they built the underground, and now they are working on the new tower blocks. Hong Kong's older districts are being redeveloped. Some buildings are crumbling because they were built with salt water concrete. Others have to make way for taller ones that yield higher profits. Few rooftop residents would mind living in the new towers, but they cannot afford it. All are afraid of being resettled to the remote satellite towns, where there may be few opportunities and limited social networks.

We walk up the stairs again. The rooftop settlements are an urban legacy, telling the story of Hong Kong, of political upheavals in Mainland China, of urban redevelopment, of people's hopes and their needs in the city.

Rufina Wu / Stefan Canham

那裡沒有升降機，我們要爬八層的樓梯。走最後一段樓梯，喘不過氣時，我倆望著對方，禁不住猶豫：我們怎麼要到這裡來？

天台上，窄窄長長的通道穿插在金屬片、木板、磚塊或塑膠皮搭成的寮屋之間，形成迷宮似的空間。當中還有台階或梯子連接寮屋的上層。我們迷路了。Rufina 拿著我們的單張，敲門，然後是一連串廣州話對答。Stefan 這個外國人站在一旁，只是微笑，可不明白一字一句。對方聽罷，報以微笑，請我們進他們的家去。

後來，我們從對面的一幢大廈俯瞰這個天台。天台很大，一間一間的寮屋聚在一起，形成一條村落似的。那天台上住了三四十戶人家吧。從外頭又哪知道裡頭有些甚麼：他們會上網嗎？他們有洗手間嗎？當然，更無法知道他們的故事。

誰勾勒天台屋的模樣？誰給天台屋留下記錄？有時，報章會刊載一篇有關天台屋的報道或文章；有時，非政府組織會來一次跟天台屋有關的行動；有時，政府部門會為所謂的一「違例建築工程」存檔，用不脫色箱頭筆給天台屋編號，並拍下照片。然而，這些檔案不會對外公開；居民或會一讀，為要知道何以要拆掉他們的家。天台屋居民鮮有記下

**New Territories**



○ Tsuen Wan

**Kowloon Peninsula**

⊕ Sham Shui Po

⊕ Tai Kok Tsui

○ Ma Tau Wai

○ Yau Ma Tei

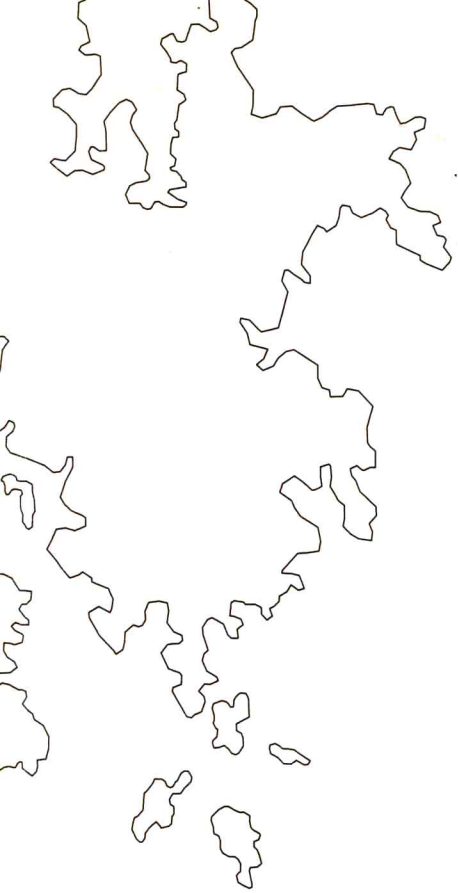
⊕ Kwun Tong

○ Yau Tong

○ Sai Ying Pun

○ Wan Chai

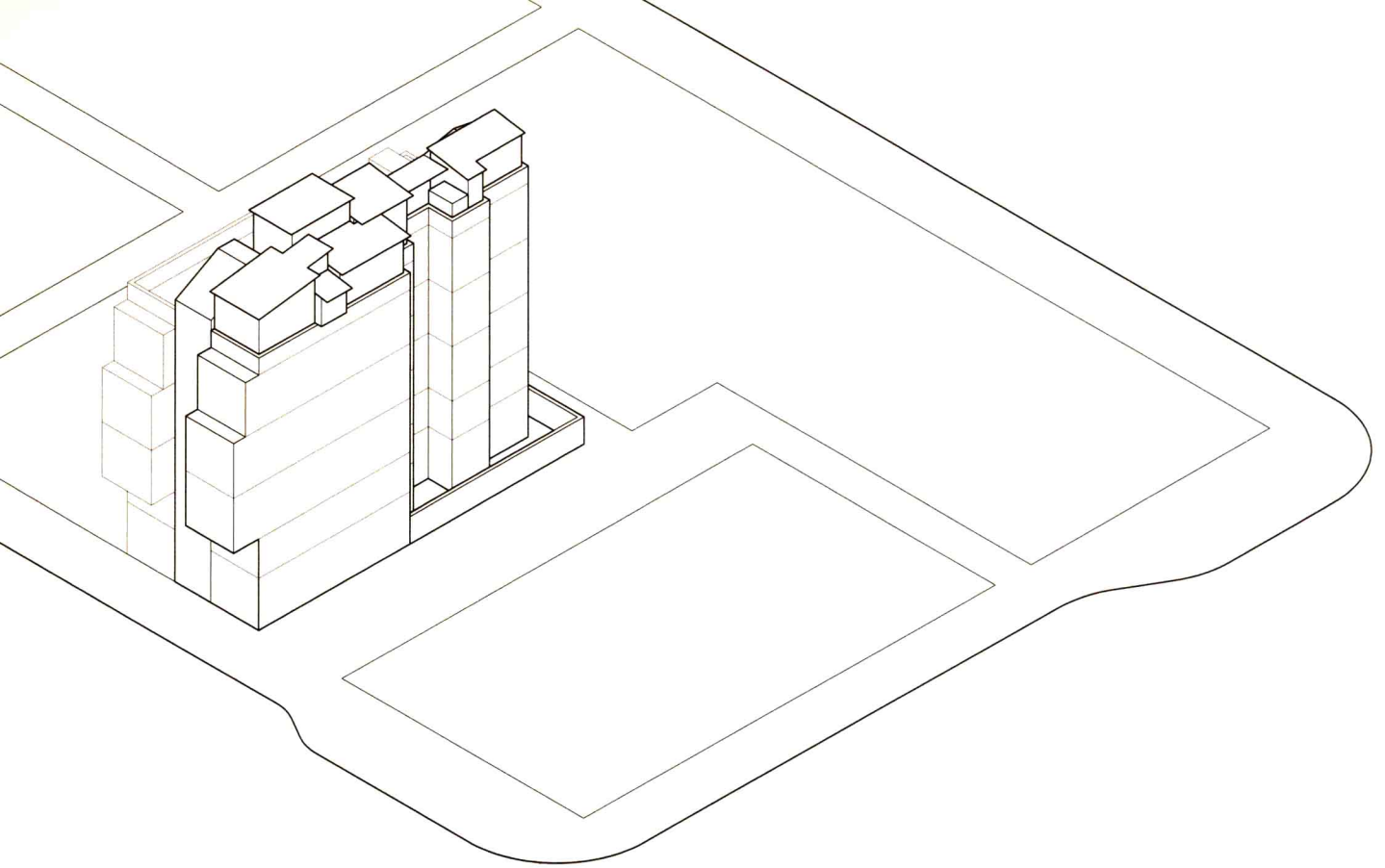
**Hong Kong Island**

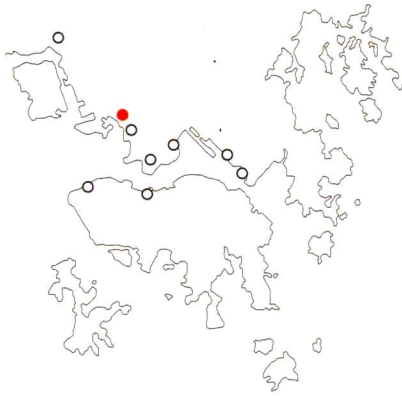


⊕ Study Areas 研究區域

○ Areas Targeted for Redevelopment by 被香港市區重建局納入  
Hong Kong Urban Renewal Authority 重建計劃的地區

0 1 2 3 4 km 1





### Building 1, Sham Shui Po District

Dating from 1956, Building 1 is an example of Cantonese-style shophouses found primarily in Southeast Asia and southern China. Designed with the harsh tropical climate in mind, this building type is characterized by high ceilings to allow greater indoor air circulation, and verandahs to provide shade and shelter from rain. When built in rows along a street, the cantilevered upper storeys protect pedestrians from the elements. A number of Hong Kong's remaining shophouses, some dating back to the pre-war period, can be found in the Sham Shui Po district.

Only half of what was Building 1 remains – it has been severed by the new residential development on the adjacent lot. The remnants are simply waiting to be demolished. All the regular flats are empty, only the rooftop units and the ground floor hardware shop remain occupied. A single, unguarded staircase leads up to the roof of this 4+2 storey building. Five rooftop huts, ranging from one to two stories high, sit on 100 m<sup>2</sup> of unconsumed roof area. Three rooftop households are documented.

### 大廈一·深水埗區

大廈一的歷史從1956年開始。它是一棟廣東式唐樓，下舖上居，常見於東南亞及華南地區。設計這類廣東式唐樓，會考慮建築物所處地區屬熱帶氣候，所以樓底特別高，有助空氣流通，並有遮蔭擋雨的「騎樓」。這類唐樓往往沿著街道一列排開，以懸樑支撐靠街一節的上層，行人經過就不會晴天曬、雨天淋了。香港的深水埗區尚存這類廣東式唐樓，部分更建於二次世界大戰前。

現存的大廈一只是原來的一半，因為大廈的其中一半所處的地段給發展商收購了，他們拆去舊建築，重建新住宅。當然，剩下的「一半」大廈一給拆卸重建，是遲早的事。住宅單位已人去樓空，只餘天台屋和地下（第一層）的金店仍有人居住或使用，並僅有一道樓梯從這4+2層大廈的地下通往天台，沒有任何保安設備或看更。100平方米的天台上現有五間天台屋，樓高一層或兩層。以下是其中三戶的記錄。









