

12<sup>th</sup> February, 2009 – 4:00pm / MK TAM

The last time I saw MK was in London. I asked him to join me for a cocktail in the swanky Soho Hotel. He turned up with his wife looking like two students traveling Europe on two Under-26 rail passes. There was an air of innocence about this couple; I remembered the conversation was lively and they liked their wines.

This time, I ask MK to meet me in the quaint tea room. Again, MK's rug sack contrasts with the delicate bone China matching cups and saucers. But evidently, MK has the amazing skill of being completely comfortable in any one place. This time, he liked the tea too.

The video had made MK think of his "V8" days. They were, he recalled, his "V8" days, then his "high 8" days and then the digital years. He helped his friends to make documentary films. The most vivid memory was of a scene when they had to film the small rooms built illegally on rooftops of buildings. The whole streets were blocked off. The last remaining residents who refused to move were defiant when the policed charged in. It was war. And they witnessed it. It was the unfairness of it all that struck MK. They recorded it on film, waiting for a chance to show it. That year, they received the Gold price in the Hong Kong Independent Short Film and Video Awards (IFVA).

Linda's video also made him think of a plan that he had for years. He wanted to start a film project where he would film a group of people in their twenties, then again in their thirties and in their forties. It remained a plan only and because of that, he had appreciated Linda's 13 year video project. She had put a lot of thought to it. He did not think that the video is about Linda herself because he could not see her in the video. But what he saw was enough. The video would not let him see her, what he could see was what was available to see. Linda had many cultured friends. He knew one of the characters in her film: Man Kit-wah. He had always wondered whether Man was always the way she was and the film confirmed it for him.

MK thought the walk from the tea room to the studio was an important part. It was especially true for a man who needed to sit down and watch so much "stuff" about women, the most "womanly stuff" being the part about the mother in law. He was glad that the tea room prepared him for the experience because otherwise he would have skipped these details. It was fitting that Experimenta was situated in this part of Central. Central has two meanings for him: one was Graham Street where he buy his frozen meat from and second was the IFC where he visited his banker friends.

MK then presented me with a CD as a present. MK was part of a band that I knew before. I did not remember though that he played the electric guitar. This new CD was produced by his friends. He did not take part in this. We played the CD, "this strange world, spending money to buy, do not say it is too expensive... from cartoon to cup, you watch the news wearing your slippers, kids learning English, you take care of everything...you only say it, government would let you buy up everything...what a wonderful strange world."

Injustice, reggae music, documentary, witness, poverty, youth.

Alan came to the studio unexpectedly at this point. I was delighted that he could meet MK. We then talked about MK's recent trip to Taiwan. MK had just returned from a cycling trip with his wife in Taiwan. They cycled for more than 40 km with group of seven. I took a deep breath – a picture of a green lush Taiwanese countryside came into my mind.

Freedom, life, triumph, road, search, rug sags, youth.

(Gina Wong / LiTA)