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The Body and the City: Re-Envisioning Hong Kong Through Protest Poetry

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The Body and the City:
Re-envisioning Hong Kong
through Protest Poetry

Kimber Young

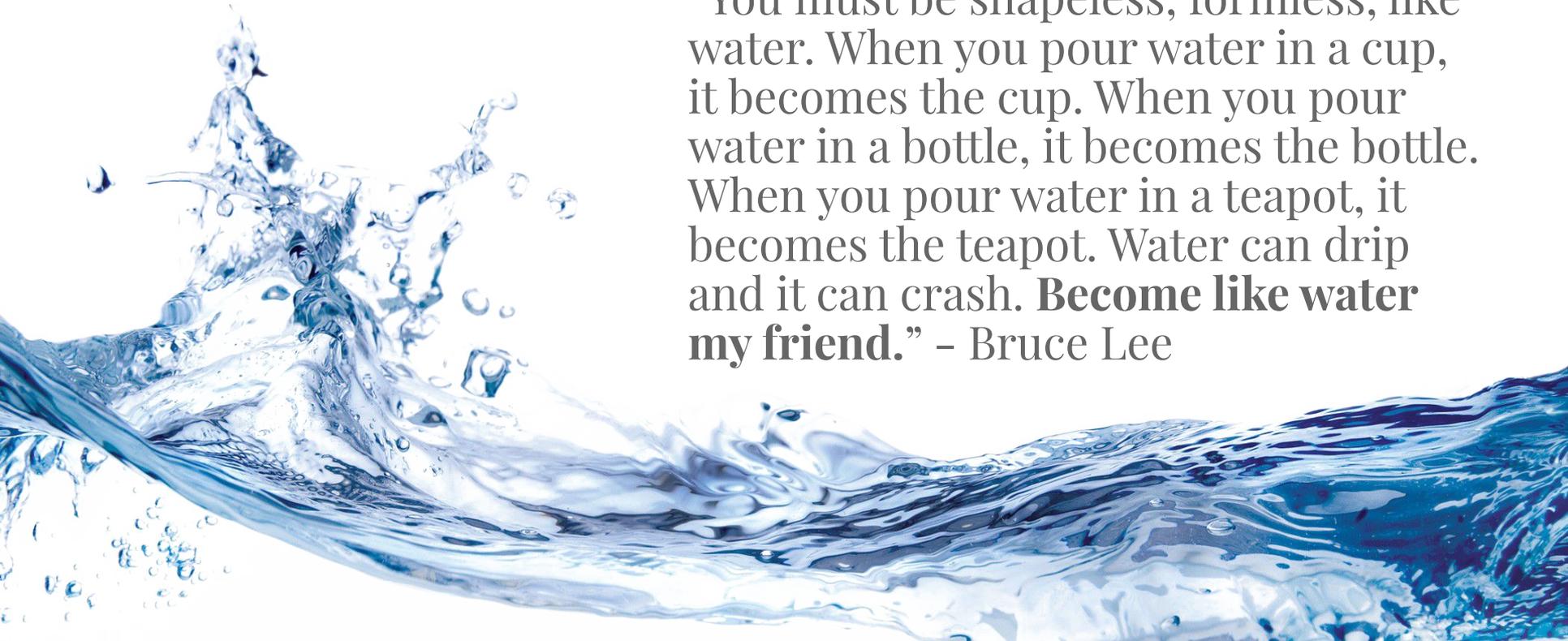


Summer 2019

- “One country, two systems”
 - 1997-2047
- Umbrella Movement
 - 2014
 - Umbrella symbol
- 2019 Extradition Bill
 - 2 million protestors in June (out of 7.2 million population)
 - Most protestors were students
 - Shift in political and lifestyle ideals for young people
- 2020 National Security Law

2019-2020 Protests

“You must be shapeless, formless, like water. When you pour water in a cup, it becomes the cup. When you pour water in a bottle, it becomes the bottle. When you pour water in a teapot, it becomes the teapot. Water can drip and it can crash. **Become like water my friend.**” - Bruce Lee



2019-2020 Protests



Why study poetry?

“While people continue to march in the streets, some of Hong Kong’s writers and poets are trying to express the inexpressible – their concerns for the future of the city and the freedoms they hold dear.”

– Nicole Baut, *The Globe and Mail*

Umbrella Movement Poetry



“Trek”

by Tang Siu Wa

Waking up one day, people see
they no longer need inessential cover.
They see an umbrella in their hand for
their trek to the distant sky...

...

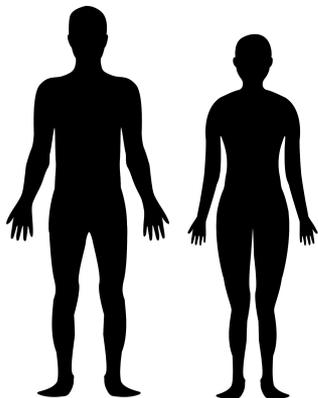
No trial can strike down
their small and fragile umbrellas.
They are trekking into the depth of the sky
without thinking too much.

Disembodiment

1. Physical cityscape
2. Physical violence (bodily violence)
3. Disembodiment of political ideals
4. Disembodiment of presumed identity (individual and societal)



2019 Protest Poetry



城——記香港2019

／阿鈍

你的青春
就是你的罪
你的罪是這個時代
時代是一隻破洞的眼睛

眼睛是黑暗
而血明亮
空氣中瀰漫著眼淚
風吹過
日曆撕開了新的一頁

我站著
用我的罪, 我的青春
(我僅有的一切)
站成一支火把
釘住一條黑色的長街
燒穿黑夜
用地上的星圖
在城市上空燒出一張
嶄新的命盤

“City - Remember Hong Kong 2019”

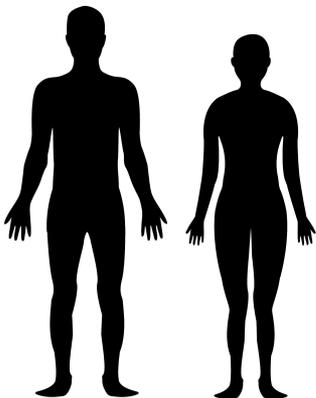
By Ah Dun

Your youth
Is your sin
Your sin belongs to this era
An era like a pair of gouged eyes

And the eyes are darkness,
And light is blood,
The air filled with tears.
The wind blows
Another page tears from the calendar

I stand
I use my sin, my youth
(My everything)
And become a torch
Lighting the long dark road
Burning through the black night
With the charts written on the ground
To scorch a new chart
In the heaven above the city.

2019 Protest Poetry



城——記香港2019

／阿鈍

你的青春
就是你的罪
你的罪是這個時代
時代是一隻破洞的眼睛

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The Protestors

