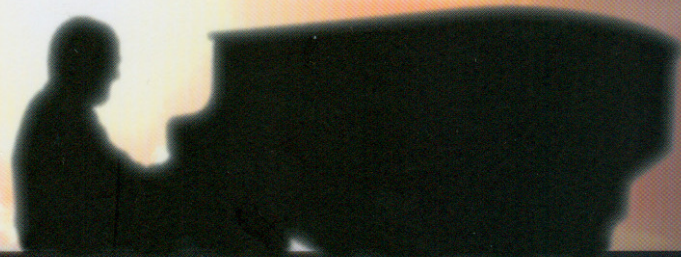


韻縈夢境 曲影心田

Michael Lai
黎小田的歌藝長廊



CASH Hall of Fame Award 2006
音樂成就大獎 2006



3.11.2006

八十年代的香港，一枝濃艷，開在紅樓夢林黛玉初到賈府的繁華前傳。四百萬市民生活在希望裡，既是獅子山下匯聚財富的受益者，也是東西方品味逢盛的領導人。香港的創作以黃昏電視劇為聚焦點，幻開電視、電影、歌曲的三維，凡有華人的地方，莫不受香港流行文化的輻射。

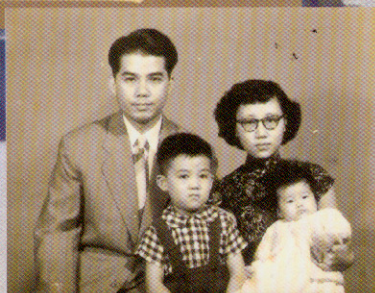
在枝繁葉茂的文化生態圈裡，出現黎小田這樣的曲藝通才，其實很自然。那時的香港，在越戰的炮火外，大陸文革、台灣戒嚴，香港卻恭逢文明世界的一員。黎小田家族——父親作曲家草田，母親作家韋妮，妹妹舞蹈家黎海寧，簡直符合一部外語小說中的虛構情節和背景。今天的香港一提起文藝，即言必歐洲，不是太妄自菲薄了嗎？黎小田的才華，首先來自一種失傳已久的養分，叫做「家學」，後來主要是一個獨特時代風雲化境的加工。

黎小田的音樂身世，既印證了中國社會的動盪多變，也是一個典型的移民的故事。香港便是幾百萬移民故事的結集——城市的时间雖短，面積雖小，但內涵極為駁雜，經歷尤其豐富，而且夾有國際政治變幻的風雨調節，對於創作來說，養分相當充足。黎小田創作的流行曲，嵌合了西方音樂文化的背景，訴說的是風起雲湧的香港故事。

八十年代電視的作品，憑的是電視劇的主題曲及插曲，深入尋常百姓的家庭：主婦正在做飯，小孩快做完功課，鄰居在收衣服，男人才下班回到家，打溼了毛巾擦臉，電視劇開播時最先響起的第一個悠長的音符，和緊接的一串滑音，有如一聲知心的呼喚，伴著千門萬戶的夜炊，使男女老幼共同聚到電視機前，這一串拋珠灑玉的風鈴引子，像舞台上一對似幻如雲翩翩飛揚的水袖，在正式開唱前就先聲奪人地懾住了觀眾，正是黎小田作品的標誌。人在江湖，大地恩情，關正傑的渾厚、柳影虹的薄倖、林子祥的玩世、張國榮的脂粉，隨著黎小田的樂曲，展開了一幅幅戲劇風雲的盛世長卷。只有在動筆之前，心裡早開綻了一幅萬家燈火的壯麗畫面，才可能寫下這般人性化的樂章。

因為只有才華，還不足夠，在專業之外還需要通才。一個「通」字，就是「人情通達」，而這四個字，今天竟成了一曲遙不可及的舊調。黎小田小時候就演出電影，一齣《可憐天下父母心》，依然流動著民國時代的餘韻，白燕和張活游的經典，對黎小田來說，不僅不陌生，而且活靈活現：父親要風骨耿介，母親必須吃苦耐勞，幼稚的童心，很早就學曉了世態炎涼、人情冷暖，人生的種種遭遇，如一枚萬花筒裡永不重複的幻彩圖案。在黎小田的年代，小孩子也很早熟，但不像今天這種——他們必須很早掌握一套複雜的人際關係哲學，將來才能在社會立足。

由童星開始 In the early days



其後，仍然不是才華，而是修養。作曲，先要有音韻學的根本。黎小田曾說過，他作曲用兩把尺，一是中國傳統音樂，只有五個音階，而不是西方標準的七個音階；二是廣東話本身有九個音調，因此作曲家也必須具備一對鋼琴調音師般精妙的耳朵，才能有把握使每一個字都合乎音調。就按這兩條原則，他寫出的作品，旋律和歌詞絲絲入扣得天衣無縫，任何歌手唱都會好聽，時隔二十年已成了經典。黎小田的曲藝，匯貫中西，伴武俠而鏗鏘，音流劍氣；詠文藝而輕盈，韻餘書香；與戲劇主題相扣，與人物角色相隨，因為有一份滄桑過來人的沉厚和寬弘。

細味黎小田的曲譜到精膩處，肚子裡至少要裝下上百首宋詞，不僅是為了掌握平仄節奏，而是為了開拓氣韻千端的意境：花間婉約、秦愁柳媚、蘇詞高曠、辛詞雄沉，不是中文課上的古板術語，而實實在在地活躍在黎小田與盧國沾、鄭國江、黃霑等詞人合作的年代——香港八十年代的流行歌曲就有這樣精彩紛呈的流派。同樣是風格豪邁的男歌手，葉振棠的悲愴，就比關正傑陽剛的正氣，多了一分陰柔。梅艷芳和張國榮都很華麗，但梅艷芳有香港世俗的濃艷和江湖的辛酸，張國榮卻有幾分留洋的高貴和富足的憂鬱。今天重聽《儂本多情》：「情愛就好像一串夢，夢醒了一切亦空；或者是我天生多情，方給愛情戲弄。」令人驚惑今生何世，香港竟一度有過一闕如此夜色迷濛的唱歎和成熟的心智，無論是詞曲的功力，還是歌手的氣質，都呈現了國際大都會的水準，何曾需要自吹自擂？

這證明甚麼呢？二十多年前的香港人，和今天有很大分別。娛樂圈創作的是流行文化，但通俗不代表低俗，填詞寫曲的無學問修養，見不得世面；歌手想開演唱會，沒出過十張唱片站在台上不腳震才怪。而且觀眾也有相應的欣賞能力，能明辨現實的優劣，而沒有忽左忽右的政治包袱——劉家傑在電視裡教英語、父母把子女送到英國讀書、男孩子學披頭四組樂隊，女孩子的夢中，都渴望一個張國榮陳百強般模樣，讀英文書院、彈吉他、穿網球Polo恤的表哥。

然而，「這是最好的年代，也是最壞的年代。」一九八四年中英簽署聯合聲明，港幣與美元掛鉤，賣地政策出爐，香港偏離了國際化的軌道，而走向了區域化和本地化，一面成了珠三角和東南亞的融資中心，一面將歐美先進文化照辦煮碗，釀造本地土炮。黎小田的歌曲，漸漸化身為八十年代理想主義的標準，到今天，則是昨夜星光的一截永恆時空，回音不絕，在遙遠的心靈深處，呼喚香港曾經的一段青春歲月。

文：陶傑

經典音樂拍檔 Unforgettable Music Partners



"家燕與小田"是早期家傳戶曉的組合。
"Nancy & Michael" was a well-known group in the 70s.



黎小田在80年代與關菊英、梅艷芳及張國榮所合作過的唱片，均替各人的事業創高峰。

The albums that Michael produced for Susanna Kwan, Anita Mui and Leslie Cheung in the 80s propelled them to even higher planes in their careers.



黎小田在70年代與葉振棠及關正傑合作過的電視劇主題曲，不少已成為長青金曲。圖為三人在1981年的CASH周年晚宴上演出。

Most of the TV theme songs composed by Michael and performed by Johnny Ip and Michael Kwan in the 70s have now become all time favourites. The three of them performed on the CASH annual dinner held in 1981.

Melody Dreams and Musical Heart

- The Gallery of Michael Lai's Art of Composition

Hong Kong in the 1980s was a long stem rose blossoming in the prosperous prequel to *The Dream of The Red Chamber*. Four million citizens were living in great expectations, both as beneficiaries of amassed wealth below the Lion Rock and as leaders in cultural taste of East meeting West. Creative arts in Hong Kong had a focus in sundown television serial drama diversifying into the three dimensions of TV, film and pop music. No place with significant Chinese populations was unaffected by radial beams of Hong Kong popular culture.

It was only natural for an all-rounder in the song writing art like Michael Lai to emerge from such an exuberant ecology of culture. Beyond the War in Vietnam, the Cultural Revolution in the Mainland and the curfews in Taiwan, Hong Kong belonged to the circle of the civilized world. Michael Lai's family, with composer father Cao Tian, writer mother Wei Ni and choreographer sister Helen, was the veritable fictional setting in a Western novel. Hong Kong is unduly self-belittling today when it looks to Europe where the arts are concerned. Michael Lai's talent was born first and foremost from a long lost nutrient called "family upbringing", and later primarily from the finishing process of a unique era.

The musical breeding of Michael Lai not only illustrated the constant upheavals of Chinese society, but also told a typical migrant's story. Hong Kong is an anthology of millions of migrant stories - a city of short history and small area, but multifarious in substance and extremely rich in experience, regulated by stormy changes of climate in international politics. For creativity, nutritional value here is very high. Michael Lai's pop song compositions were compounds of the great historical background of China and Hong Kong.

Television in the 80s penetrated the common folk's households by means of theme songs of TV drama series. When housewives were preparing dinner, children were finishing homework, neighbors were taking down the washing and the men had just come home from work and were wetting towels to wash their faces, at that moment, the first long sustained note of the TV soap opera's opening number, followed by a string of glissandi, accompanied the evening cooking of millions of households, like the call of a bosom friend, gathering everybody in front of the box. The intro of bells jingling, like fluttering long sleeves of the opera star on stage, spellbinding the viewers even before the singing started, was a trade mark of Michael Lai's works. Man of the sworn brotherhood, love of mother earth, Michael Kwan's deep bellows, Lau Ying Hung's fickleness, the cynical Lam, the effeminate Leslie Cheung: they rolled out scroll after scroll of pictures depicting the glamorous era of TV drama with Michael Lai's signature tunes. Such a grandiose picture of lights from ten thousand households must have already unfolded in the heart before committing pen to score sheet, to enable such humanized movements to be composed.

For talent alone will not suffice. In addition to professionalism, one needs to be an all-rounder. That would entail a thorough mastery of the humanities, which has today sadly become and old remote time so out of reach. Michael Lai played a part in the film "Poor Parents" as a child actor. The story had a smack of early days of the Chinese Republic. The parent played by Bai Yan and Zhang Huo You are a classic pair of stock characters: not alien at all but rather very true to life for Michael. The father had to be honest and proud, the mother patiently suffering and hard-working. The kid had learnt from very early days the coldness of human apathy and the ups and downs of life, like never repeating patterns of a kaleidoscope in variety. In Michael's times, children mature early, but not to the sort of precocity nowadays. They had to adopt a complex philosophy in interpersonal relations at an early age in order to survive later in life.

黎小田的作品多年來獲獎無數。去年，由內地「南方都市報」及「廣東電臺音樂之聲」主辦的「第五屆華語音樂傳媒大獎頒獎禮」頒發了「殿堂作曲家」大獎予黎小田以表揚其成就。

All these years, Michael's works received many awards. Last year, in recognition of his achievements in songwriting, he had received the "Hall of Fame: Composer" award from the "2005 Chinese Pop Music Media Awards" organized by Nanfang Daily and Music FM, Radio Guangdong of China.



Next come, still not yet talent, but accomplishment. A composer must first have a grounding in music and phonology. Michael Lai once said a composer used two yardsticks: one in traditional Chinese music with a pentatonic scale as opposed to the septatonic Western one, the other, Cantonese dialect with its inherent 9 pitches - Hence a composer had to have the skilled ears of a piano tuner, so as to ensure every work fits the music. On such principle, his works exhibit a seamless match between melodies and lyrics, so much so that any singer could render it most pleasing to the ear. After two decades, they have all been elevated to the status of classics. Michael's art of composition combines Chinese and Western cultures: sounding heroic in a martial art series, erudite in a literary romantic drama, always suiting the subject matter and characters perfectly. This comes from a broad and profound life experience.

To be able to appreciate Michael's scores down to the finest details, one needs to have digested hundreds of Song Dynasty Ci Lyrics. Not just for grasping meter and rhythm, but also to nurture the artistic perception of the diversity in imagery displayed in various schools of Song Lyricists: Wen Ting Yun's elegance, Qin Guan's languor, Liu Yong's charm, Su Dongbo's loftiness, or Xin Qiji's profundity. Not archaic jargons in a Chinese lesson, but vividly living imagery in the age when Michael Lai collaborated with lyricists such as Jim Lo, Cheng Kok Kong and James Wong. Hong Kong Cantopops in the 80s did boast of such divers and dazzling schools. Both male singers of helden style, Johnny Ip's pathos was relatively more yin and somber than Michael Kwan's all sunny positiveness. Anita Mui and Leslie Cheung were both glamorous, but while Anita showed a worldly Hong Kong gaudiness and sadness, Leslie smacked of classiness and affluence from overseas sojourn. Listening today to *I'm In Love* again, "Love is like a series of dreams. Wake up and all is empty. Maybe I was born sentimental, hence so easily fooled by love" - makes one wonder how it was that Hong Kong had once possessed such gloomy nocturnal sighs and mature mind. The quality of the lyrics and the song, as well as the singer's airs, all presented the benchmark of an international metropolis, without any blowing of one's own trumpet.

What does that prove? That Hong Kong people 20 years ago were very different from today. The entertainment field presented creative arts of a pop culture which was popularized but not vulgar. Lyricists and composers without learning and accomplishment could not see the light of day. Singers giving concerts without releasing at least ten discs first would get cold feet on stage. And the audience showed commensurate level of appreciation. They could judge good and bad in real life without the political burden of having to shift Left and Right so often. Josiah Lau taught English on TV. Parents sent children to study in England. Boys formed pop groups emulating the Beatles. Girls yearned in their dreams for a cousin who looked like Leslie Cheung or Danny Chan, who studied in an Anglo-Chinese school and played the guitar in Polo tennis tops.

However, "It was the best of times. It was the worst of times." China and Britain signed the Joint Declaration in 1984. The Hong Kong dollar was pegged to the American dollar. The land sales policy was launched. Hong Kong deviated from the track of internationalization towards regionalization and localization, becoming a financing hub of the Pearl River Delta on the one hand, and blindly copying advanced culture of the West to produce the local brew on the other. Michael Lai's songs have gradually transformed into paragons of 1980s idealism. By now it is a section of eternal time and space from the starlight of yester night, reverberating nonstop in the depth of the heart far far away, hailing the youthful days Hong Kong had once passed through.

Michael & Friends 圈中好友



黎小田經典作品精選

風箏	詞：盧國沾	唱：曾路得	歌衫淚影	詞：鄧偉雄	唱：梅艷芳
問我	詞：黃霑	唱：陳麗斯	儂本多情	詞：鄭國江	唱：張國榮
殘夢	詞：盧國沾	唱：關正傑	戲劇人生	詞：盧國沾	唱：葉振棠
一片痴	詞：鄭國江	唱：張國榮	IQ成熟時	詞：盧國沾	唱：蔡楓華
天龍訣	詞：盧國沾	唱：關正傑	大俠霍元甲	詞：盧國沾	唱：徐小明
天蠶變	詞：盧國沾	唱：關正傑	不再少年時	詞：小美	唱：李克勤
心思思	詞：黎彼得	唱：盧業瑀	太極張三豐	詞：盧國沾	唱：葉振棠
再共舞	詞：鄧偉雄	唱：梅艷芳	只因我太痴	詞：鄭國江	唱：呂方
我願意	詞：鄭國江	唱：張國榮	再見十九歲	詞：鄧偉雄	唱：陳美齡
胭脂扣	詞：鄧景生	唱：張國榮 / 梅艷芳	自由在我手	詞：黎彼得	唱：余安安
變色龍	詞：盧國沾	唱：關正傑	武俠帝女花	詞：盧國沾	唱：張德蘭
大內群英	詞：盧國沾	唱：葉振棠	花艇小英雄	詞：鄭國江	唱：李龍基
大地恩情	詞：盧國沾	唱：關正傑	青春三重奏	詞：盧國沾	唱：蔡楓華
中四丁班	詞：鄧偉雄	唱：羅明珠	浴血太平山	詞：盧國沾	唱：葉振棠
心肝寶貝	詞：黎彼得	唱：梅艷芳	問誰領風騷	詞：薛志雄	唱：羅文 / 甄妮
伴我啟航	詞：鄭國江	唱：小虎隊	甜甜廿四味	詞：盧國沾	唱：盧業瑀
似火探戈	詞：林振強	唱：梅艷芳	換到千般恨	詞：盧國沾	唱：柳影紅
英雄故事	詞：黃霑	唱：成龍	濁世暖流清	詞：潘偉源	唱：雷安娜
飛躍舞台	詞：鄧偉雄	唱：梅艷芳	願你繼續醉	詞：黎彼得	唱：陳美齡
浮生六劫	詞：盧國沾	唱：葉振棠	你令我快樂過	詞：鄭國江	唱：呂方
煙雨淒迷	詞：潘偉源	唱：陳百強	驟雨中的陽光	詞：盧國沾	唱：曾路得
痴心的我	詞：向雪懷	唱：張國榮	人在旅途酒淚時	詞：盧國沾	唱：關正傑 / 雷安娜
			忍著淚說Goodbye	詞：黃霑	唱：小虎隊

