

## Progress Report

### Project Title:

Alternative Dwelling Space: *Partitioned Suite for living in Hong Kong*

### Summary:

- Since I have started the project in the beginning of year 2010 with the social work teams from Caritas, we revisited more than 30 families, whereas there are more than 100, who are living in *Partitioned Suite*, counted only in the community of Tsuen Wan.
- In the summer of 2010, I created an artwork, with the helps from student (Lo Hiu Fung, Goby) and alumnus (Cheung Wai Lok) in HKAS, to be displayed in public forum in Mongkok and centers around the network of Caritas organizations, in order to draw the attentions from and trigger discussions among the public.
- I also managed to hold a drawing class for the children in the neighborhoods of Tsuen Wan, again with great helps from the students in HKAS, so as to know more of their thoughts about the idea of play in the context of family.
- After several months of discussion, the research team had decided the content of the book that published in the middle of October, also is the final outcome of the research at this stage.

### Timeline:

Jan – Jun 2010	-Review the materials from Caritas, including the data, found images and details that gathered from the interviews implemented from 2008 to 2009. -Plan to disclose the stories of <i>Partitioned Suite</i> through publishing a book.
Oct 2010	-Public Forum organized by Caritas, with guests from the committee of Legislative Council and scholar in university, with the topic of “香港·你住得起?” -artwork was displayed in the public forum and centers around the network of Caritas organizations
Dec 2010	The direction of the content of the book as well as the visual style was decided.
Jan - May 2011	-Start revisit the neighborhoods and pre-production of artworks - drawing workshop was held for children in the neighborhoods

Jun – Aug 2011	Production of the book
Sept 2011	Finalizing and planning promotion for the book

### **Stages in Research and production of the book:**

*To create the stories in the book—*

- From the previous interviews and visits in the neighborhoods by the social work team in Caritas, I found that the living condition of the people, who lives in *Partitioned Suite*, are encountering not only the difficulties in the insufficient space, but also an emotional contradictions, while they seek for their right on the unfairness occurred in different issues. For example, majority of the neighborhoods refused to make their appearance in the book, hence there are only few of them emerged in the images that showed the scene of their protest on the street. To show the terrible home space to the public certainly is a shame, especially for Chinese who have better living environment in their home town- Mainland China. They also concerned if it affects their children if they were recognized by their friends and relatives. It leads us to focus on the female neighborhoods who married to Hong Kong people and immigrated to Hong Kong. In fact, they committed to participate varies activities and discussions, thus we had more chance to understand their life and thoughts.
- After we decided our focus, we had elaborated more on the living condition of female and their needs. Wing Ki is the imagined character but most of the details about Wing Ki, who lives alone in *Partitioned Suite*, are being collected and observed from the real situation and real persons. While we talked to the girls whose belongings were stolen, she showed very insecure and worried about if she can protect herself. This instance brought us to investigate the psychological fear of the single girl and eventually created the story of Wing Ki, who desparated to look for her “prince” who can protect her and bring her to live in “palace” like living space.
- Finally, we invited the children who lives with their parents in *Partitioned Suite*, to join in a drawing competition named “畫出我的遊樂園”. We placed their works in the book as to show their needs and imaginations. Although they feel not satisfy in their home, they creatively play around in different spaces around the community, e.g. playing hide and seek in shopping mall, jumping around in the rooftop and meeting friend in the park.

### *How to visualize the issue--*

Since there are mainly 3 chapters in the book including different parties live in *Partitioned Suite*:

- the stories of Wing Ki who lives alone
- the young wife who married to Hong Kong people and lives in Hong Kong
- the drawing works from the children

Basically the design approach is being objective, as this is the strong will among all the members in the research team because we believe we disclose the truth and only the real situation. The visual elements neither exaggerate nor beautify the reality. However, we did have debate on how much we could put into the visual in order to address the stories objectively, whereas transformation needs certain manipulations of the images and text. This also caused some time to discuss in order to find a balance for both designers and writers in the research team to compromise and work things out. We even clarified the objective of the book after we realized that we had different understanding of 'how to visualize the truth'. Meaningful discussions were brought out and I examined various approach to the entire narration of the book.

### *Final Outcome--*

Since I was advised to employ an editor during the meeting with research committee members in HKAS, I Yuen (part-time tutor in HKAS) was invited and she helped all the editing of the book and gave us valuable advices on the writing style of the book.

Luckily we invited Shih Wing Ching (Founder of Centaline Property Agency Limited) and Howard Chan (scholar in the subject of anthropology) to write preface for the book and their contribution did add values on the meaning of the project and very encouraging.

The book finished printing on 11<sup>th</sup> October, right before the announcement of 2011-12 Policy Address. To make the selling progress more effective, we also invited the distributor, Sing Fai to help out selling and delivering the books to different bookshops. We will review the selling progress every three to four months.

## Conclusion:

The issue of living is always a problem in Hong Kong but it getting more complicated while it affects the varies social problems, unfairness and misunderstandings among different class of people. I believe this project is only a starting point to examine the issue and further research will sustain. Thus, I look forward to explore the possibilities in extending this project to the next step, by using the online platform to gather more information and provide the community an alternative way to discuss and voice out. Thus, this is a valuable and profound experience for me to further develop my research development on this social issue.

Since this project involved the current students and school alumnus, I found this is a good chance for them and also for me to spend these 20 months to work together and overcame many difficulties. Although there were debate and argument throughout the process, we understood more from different members' point of view and try to find ways out and solve the problems.