



A visual representation of "At the Daipaidong" by Kate Rogers

At the Daipaidong¹

Kate Rogers

Noodles bite me back
with garlic and chilli,
singe my palate.
Take that, yearning tongue,
they whisper as they slither by.
Dumplings fold plump hands
in their laps.

At night I dream of pinching shut
the gaping mouths of perogies²,
stuffed not with pork and leek,
but cheese curds and sauerkraut³.
They dive into boiling water
to do somersaults.

Chow fan⁴ could easily fill cabbage rolls:
Those Holubsti⁵ my mother made
to line my winter stomach.
Char Siu⁶ is as sweet
as the crackling on her pork roast.

If she were here she'd say,
Don't talk with your mouth full.
It isn't clear what language
You are speaking.

She grips English syllables
carefully between her teeth—
enunciates each morsel of sound.

The instrument I hold by the throat
in Tom Lee's Music
looks like an Er-hu⁷,
but could have been a mandolin.
There may be eight tones, or nine.
In Cantonese, words are sung
more than said.

Mother didn't want me to learn
the language of her childhood.
In Ukrainian my only phrase is,
Ya ne znayu: я не знаю⁸:
I don't know.

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¹ a casual street restaurant

² Ukrainian or Polish dumplings

³ sour fermented cabbage

⁴ fried rice

⁵ cabbage rolls stuffed with rice and meat

⁶ Cantonese roast pork marinated in a sweet sauce

⁷ a traditional Chinese two-stringed musical instrument

⁸ Cyrillic script for "I don't know."

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Daipaidong is an important part of Hong Kong culture. It is a lively and vibrant place, filled with all kinds of people and cuisines.

The poem provides the inspiration for my painting, which aims at capturing the details and emotions evolved from daipaidong. Every person has their own unique story and expression related to daipaidong. The spicy garlic and chili flakes, along with steaming hot noodles, make one's mouth water. Dumplings and Char Siu are also signature dishes of Hong Kong's daipaidong. I present these delicacies in my artwork, hoping that everyone can experience the beauty of daipaidong.

I also place emphasis on the use of colours. By using warm colours to present the details, I try to guide the audience to feel the warm and lively atmosphere of the scene. The bright colours and vivid tones help to express the liveliness and energy of daipaidong. At the same time, the soft colours and grey tones show the warmth of the scene.

My painting aims to capture the scene and atmosphere of daipaidong, allowing the audience to experience the diversity and vitality of this city.

Positive value(s) and attitude(s):

Respect and love

Positive message(s):

The warm and lively atmosphere in daipaidong deserves our cherishment.