

Wai Kit Lam - review

A Room of Her View

by Chan Chui Wah, 4 November 2000

Many people take photos of themselves against a background that evokes a certain interest and certain feelings. The works of LAM Wai Kit are different from the majority of self-portraits because LAM uses a different method to generate meaning.

In general, the feelings to be expressed in self-portraits are mostly conveyed directly through the protagonist (as both the artist and the subject). Since LAM records herself and the surroundings together, if she has any special feelings about a certain environment it would be easy to suppose that she presents these feelings directly through the image of herself. But on careful examination of LAM's work, we discover that her facial expressions are not the chief symbols used to evoke meaning. As the photographer herself, LAM is so sensitive to her surroundings that as she is about to push the button of her camera, she comes up with an intuitive composition that integrates her body and the surroundings organically and captures the fleeting impressions of her mind.

LAM is especially contemplative when finding her own image in "spaces" such as mirrors and closed circuit TVs. The reflected and electronically transmitted images of herself sometimes bemuse her. These familiar yet strange images let her catch a glimpse of the multiplicity of her own self. Some of the works displayed here were created in such situations.

Whether LAM has "seen" her "self" in the mirror of a friend's shop or between "Lampada da tavolo bluette con Botticelli (Blue Table Lamp with Botticelli)" *, all the backdrops to her works are daily living spaces. In creating her art, she in fact turns these spaces into different rooms for investigating, interpreting and defining her own self. Thus each of them can be regarded as "a room of her view".

Sandro Botticelli 1444/5 -- 1510, major Italian Renaissance painter primarily active in Florence. Major works include "Spring" and "The Birth of Venus".

Copyright © 2000 Chan Chui Wah. All Rights Reserved.