

## About Gretchen So

SO is a Hong Kong-based fine art photographer and educator. She holds an MFA degree from the Yale School of Art and has attended the MA program in Arts Administration at Columbia University. She has been awarded the Lila Acheson Wallace Scholarship from Reader's Digest, the Arts Administration Fund from Columbia University, and a full tuition waiver from Yale University. In addition to her administrative roles at the Museum of Chinese in American, New York and the Hong Kong Arts Centre, she has taught at the SVA, RMIT, BCU, SCAD, and other higher education institutions since the mid-90s.

SO's photographic work focuses on capturing the dynamic and ever-changing cityscape of Hong Kong. She has obtained numerous publication and exhibition grants from the Hong Kong Arts Development Council. Her work has been showcased in Asian cities including Shanghai, Guangzhou, Hanoi, Singapore, and Seoul, as well as overseas locations such as Wellington, Frankfurt, Vienna, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, New Haven, and Richmond. She was selected as a finalist for the Asian Art Prize in 2008, 2011 and 2013.

To commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Gardens in 2021, the Art Promotion Office entrusted SO with the creation of site-specific artwork for the "Hi! Flora, Fauna" project. She was previously commissioned by Nikon Asia for the 4th edition of the "Through Asian Eyes" campaign, which was curated by the Objectifs Center for Photography and Film in Singapore. One of her series, "A Thousand Messages," was featured at the thematic exhibition of the 4<sup>th</sup> Hong Kong International Photo Festival and acquired by the Hong Kong Heritage Museum.

Her current projects, "Nights in Suspense" and "Nightlife," represent another milestone in her artistic pursuit. They provide insights into Hong Kong's urban environment and city life at night. Her deep understanding of the subject matter was cultivated through her personal experiences of enduring long-term insomnia and severe anemia spanning a five-year period.

## 非常印像——香港外籍家傭的堅毅寫照

### Hidden Narratives— Portraits of Resilience in Hong Kong's Migrant Domestic Helper Community 20.8—24.9.2023

#### 蘇秀儀作品展

#### A Solo Exhibition by Gretchen So

#### 開幕招待會 OPENING RECEPTION 20.8.2023 SUNDAY 星期日 4-6PM

展覽設團體導賞，歡迎查詢。  
Guided tour for groups is available.  
Please contact us for details.

#### 光影作坊 LUMENVISUM

「光影作坊」是香港註冊之非牟利慈善文化團體。自2007年成立以來，致力推動香港攝影文化發展，為本地唯一集教育、交流、推廣及資源分享之攝影平台。我們定期舉辦不同主題的攝影展覽、講座、攝影課程和各種交流活動，位於賽馬會創意藝術中心的會址除展覽廳外，還設有黑房、圖書館暨書店。

香港九龍石硤尾白田街30號賽馬會創意藝術中心 L2-02  
852. 3177 9159 | info@lumervisum.org |  
www.facebook.com/lumervisum.hk | www.lumervisum.org

主辦  
Presented by



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Hong Kong Arts Development Council fully supports freedom of artistic expression.  
The views and opinions expressed in this project do not represent the stand of the Council.

# 非常印像

## HIDDEN NARRATIVES



## 香港外籍家傭的堅毅寫照

### Portraits of Resilience in Hong Kong's Migrant Domestic Helper Community

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#### A Solo Exhibition by Gretchen So 20.8—24.9.2023

## 關於蘇秀儀

蘇氏為本地攝影藝術家及教育工作者。她持有美國耶魯大學藝術碩士學位，並於紐約哥倫比亞大學修讀藝術行政碩士課程。在學期間獲《讀者文摘》頒發 Lila Acheson Wallace 獎學金、哥倫比亞大學藝術行政獎學金和耶魯大學之全額學費資助。除了任職紐約美國華人博物館及香港藝術中心外，九十年代中期起分別任教於紐約視覺藝術學院、薩凡納藝術學院、伯明翰城市大學和皇家墨爾本理工大學等多所高等院校。

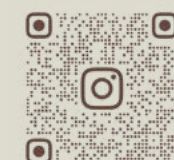
香港迅速發展又不斷變遷的城郊景色是蘇氏主要的攝影題材，作品多次獲香港藝術發展局資助出版及展覽，曾在上海、廣州、河內、新加坡和首爾等亞洲城市以及惠靈頓、法蘭克福、維也納、溫哥華、多倫多、紐希雲和烈治文等歐美地點展出；更於 2008，2011，2013 年度入選「亞洲藝術大獎」。

除了由星加坡 Objectif 攝影及電影中心策劃的尼康亞洲第四屆「Through Asian Eyes」的藝術委約外，蘇氏在 2021 年受藝術推廣辦事處委託，為紀念香港動植物公園成立 150 週年的「邂逅！市中森」項目進行特定場地創作。作品「萬千訊息」為第四屆香港國際攝影節專題展覽，被香港文化博物館永久收藏。

患有長期失眠和經歷五年嚴重貧血，對黑夜有着深刻體會的蘇氏，病情期間拍攝了「Nights in Suspense」和「Nightlife」兩個系列，探索香港在夜闌人靜時的都市環境和居民生活，是她在藝術路上的又一個里程碑。



www.gretchenso.com



GRETCHENSO.PHOTO



眾志成城 Stand Tall



彩妝女神 Beauty Queen



平民壽宴 Birthday Feast

上世紀七十年代，香港從一個製造業中心轉型為現代金融中心的時，開始輸入外籍家庭傭工。時至今日，她們的人口接近四十萬，佔本地勞動市場十分之一，主要是來自菲律賓和印尼的婦女。她們經常面對工作時間長、缺乏私隱，甚至可能遭受僱主虐待等問題。然而，大部份外傭都抱著樂觀的態度，展現出堅毅不屈的精神，在逆境中尋找快樂和意義。

作為攝影藝術工作者，我對她們在閒暇時候的活動特別感興趣。在難得的假日裏，許多外籍家傭會把握機會，自我增值；學習新技能或者從事兼職，為日後創業或退休籌集資金。她們勤奮能幹，不單為自己，而且為家鄉的親人，努力創造更美好的明天。

除了每周辛勞的工作，外籍傭工也有豐富多彩的社交生活，會悉心打扮地參與各種聚會。她們互相慰藉，同舟共濟，建立一個彼此支持和鼓勵的網絡。我的作品捕捉了她們之間的連繫，以及喜樂與共的情誼。她們不僅是勞工，還是默默奉獻的母親、女兒、姐妹和妻子！

是次展覽揭示這些群體的非凡旅程，特別是熱情開朗、充滿生命力的一面。雖然每人的經歷不盡相同，但都充份體現了愛、尊嚴和毅力。她們能屈能伸，在追求充實人生的同時，亦對本港的經濟發展產生深遠影響。

透過這系列影像，我嘗試表揚外籍傭工的努力付出和積極貢獻，加深社會各階層對她們的了解和包容，並讓觀眾思考大家對邊緣社群的共同責任。我們必須認同外傭的存在價值，才能構建一個更公平，又富同理心的未來。

The migrant domestic workers began arriving in Hong Kong in the 1970s as the city was transitioning from a manufacturing hub into a modern financial center. Today, they constitute a significant population of nearly 400,000, predominantly women from the Philippines and Indonesia, making up 10% of the territory's labor force. These individuals often endure long working hours, a lack of privacy, and even instances of possible abuse. Despite these challenges, most of the foreign workers demonstrate resilience and optimism, embodying the indomitable human spirit and finding joy and meaning amidst adversity.

As a fine art photographer, I am fascinated by their leisure activities. On rare holidays, many domestic helpers seize the opportunity to pursue self-improvement, learn new skills, or engage in part-time work to save funds for their entrepreneurial inspirations or retirement. Their unwavering diligence, dedication, and resourcefulness are truly inspiring as they endeavor to build a better life not only for themselves but also for their families back home.

In addition to their demanding work schedules, foreign helpers also enjoy a vibrant and diverse social life. They dress their best and actively participate in various gatherings, finding solace in companionship and forming meaningful connections. They have built a community that provides support and encouragement to one another. My work captures the essence of their camaraderie, shared laughter, and friendships. They are not merely laborers but devoted mothers, daughters, sisters, and wives, silently shaping a brighter future for all.

This exhibition unveils the extraordinary journey of these groups, highlighting their cheerfulness and vitality. Although their individual experiences may differ, they all embody love, dignity, and perseverance. While they adapt and strive for a fulfilling life, they have a profound impact on the economic development of our city.

Through this series of candid images, my aim is to foster a sense of shared humanity and inclusivity, deepening our understanding of migrant domestic helpers in Hong Kong. The audience is encouraged to contemplate our collective responsibility towards marginalized communities. By recognizing their inherent value and celebrating their positive contributions, we can create a more compassionate and equitable society.



幸福枷鎖 Happy Entanglement



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頭頭是道 Heads Up