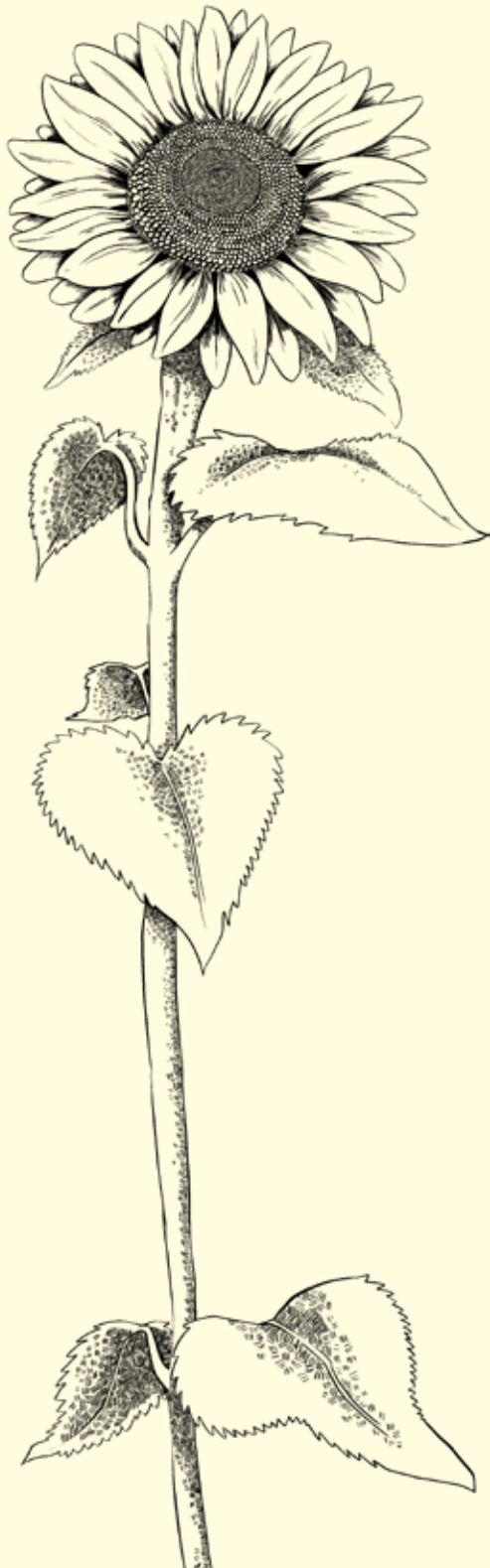


A Celebration of Life *Carrie Chang*

June 2, 1970 – April 19, 2024



Sunnyvale Heritage Park Museum
September 15, 2024



A Celebration of Life *Carrie Chih-Chia Chang*

June 2, 1970 – April 19, 2024



Obituary

Page 1-2

Monolid Magazine

Page 3-4

Books: Fiction

Page 5-6

Books: Poetry

Page 7-8

Lotus Magazine

Page 9-10

Paintings

Page 11-14

Poetry

Page 15-18

Readings in honor of Carrie

Page 19-23



Carrie Chih-Chia Chang, a writer and poet whose creative spirit never wavered throughout her 53 years, passed away unexpectedly of congestive heart failure on April 19, 2024, at her home in Sunnyvale, California.

Born in 1970 in Syracuse, New York, but then transplanted to California, Carrie had a quintessential Silicon Valley Chinese American childhood. From early on her artistic bent was apparent, in the flair she brought to her creative writing and the expressivity of her piano and violin performances. Outwardly shy but warm and witty with her close friends, she was a standout student who blossomed as a writer on her high school newspaper, where she made her first forays into wielding the written word to tackle thorny issues of racial identity and U.S. politics.

Carrie's passion for language and literature drove her to obtain a trifecta of degrees: a BA/Master's in English from Stanford University, a Master's in Journalism from UC Berkeley and a Master's in Fine Arts (Creative Writing) from New York University. But she truly found her voice when she launched *Monolid*, an Asian American political and literary magazine. As editor, journalist and poet, Carrie delighted



in provoking people with trenchant opinions on controversial topics, bringing uniquely Asian American issues to the fore while blurring the bounds of poetry and prose.

Despite lifelong challenges with mental health, Carrie continued to write prolifically, publishing multiple novels and volumes of poetry. In recent years she founded an annual poetry magazine, *Lotus*. She also explored a new avenue of artistic expression through painting. Her legacy of words and images are a testament to her inexhaustible creative energy, idiosyncratic style and fearless desire to share her art.

Carrie's memory is cherished by her parents I-Cheng and Phoebe, her siblings Nancy and Sand, her nieces Nora and Nina, and the many friends, family members and colleagues whose lives she touched.





The debut of *Monolid* in November 1999 realized Carrie's vision of "an Asian American magazine for those who aren't blinking." Its mission, in her words:

"to scope out gems of Asian American life and bring those pockets of brilliant subculture to a wider audience hungry for substantial fare on race, culture and media."
— Carrie Chang

Monolid tackled topics like Asian fetishism, mental health in Asian Americans, the rape of Nanking, and media portrayals of Asian men and women—all decades before it was in vogue to do so. Over its eight-year run, its distinctive voice and hybrid of political and literary content gained a nationwide following, including press notices in *Glamour* and 世界日報 (*World Journal*, a prominent Chinese-language newspaper in the U.S.).

Why monolid?

"A monolid describes an eye without an extra fold at the top. The name is a symbol of our struggle with the domination of Western aesthetics and sensibilities. Consider it a salutation from a fellow

blinker glowing in the dark, or a back-atcha, cultural synecdoche for a race whose eyes have so often been caricatured with

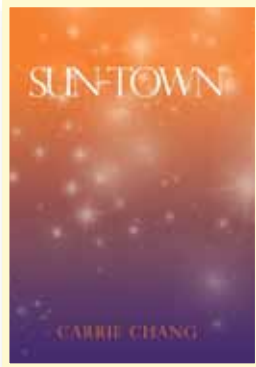
cruelty and derision and yet are still burning with the light of Asian dignity."

"I cooked up this magazine with hopes that Asians would stop annihilating their God-given features and, instead, put up a yellow fist."

— Carrie Chang

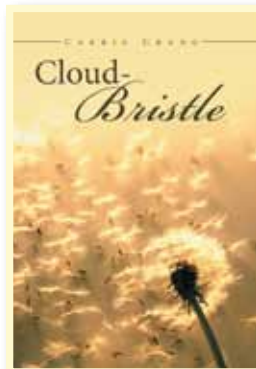
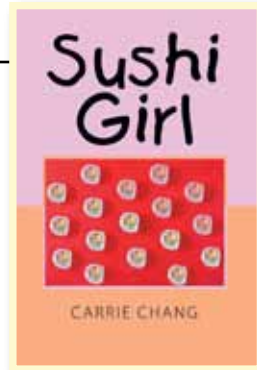


Books: Fiction



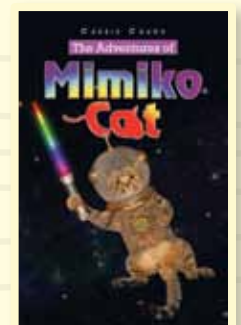
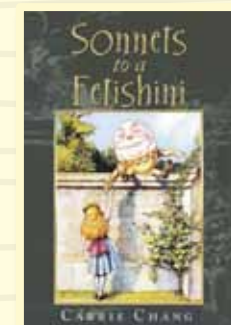
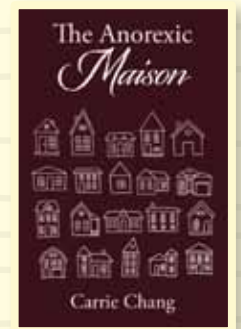
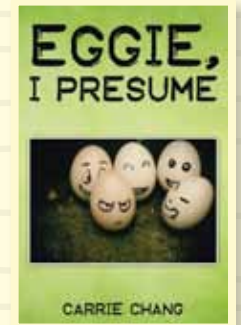
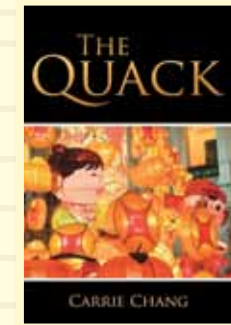
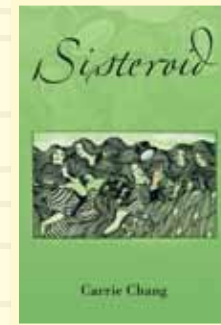
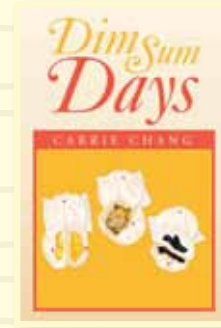
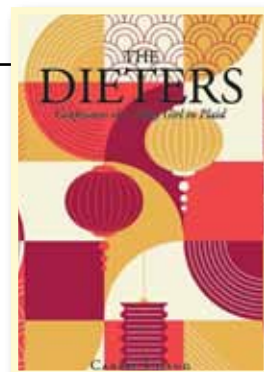
Sun-Town: In this ragtime melody of beat-prose and surreptitious wordplay, simplicity bedevils the young Chinese girls of California small towns, leaving them upbraided by their parents, who can do no more than witness their descent into a netherworld of tattletale games and raffish jealousies.

Sushi Girl: The art of sibling rivalry becomes intertwined with a sushi smorgasbord, as the Su sisters find themselves on the verge of a nervous breakdown, living with hilarity and neurotic breakneck speed in racy Manhattan.

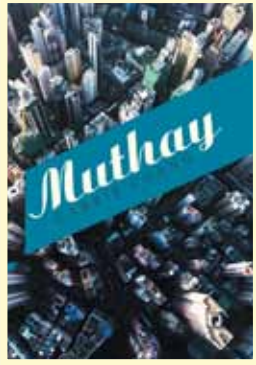


Cloud Bristle: In this darkly woven comedy rapt with poison pen and raucous threads of scintillating beauty, the female voice is scattered like pollen throughout the text at intervals with a magnificent joy in the tradition of the talk story.

The Dieters: A feel-good travesty of gourmand pleasure, a no-no to eating while you're in the monkey bars of time, a *pièce de résistance* of literary treasure that describes the hijinks adventures of living on the edge in the world of food recreation and diet revolution; read it with a matcha mochi donut and laugh.



Books: Poetry



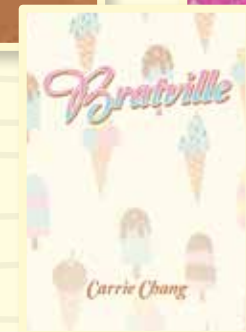
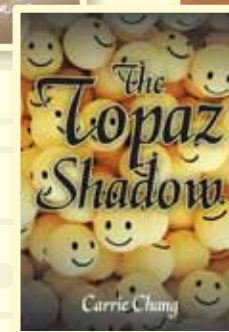
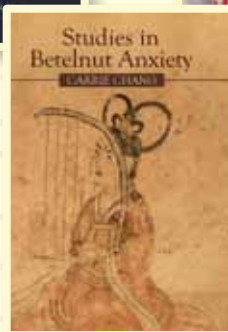
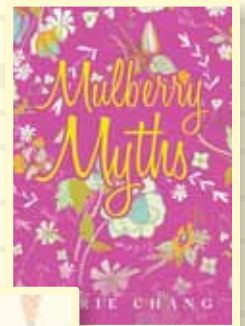
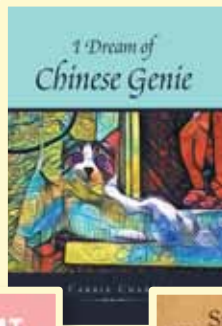
Muthay: This imaginary repast of words, cut across a terra incognito of porcelain and useless dragonoid fever, is a feast of dynastic worth, love, and joy ra-ta-ta felt across the shimmering alphabetim of self-hood in a desperate world of unicorn inkwells and blue-tattoo monkeys.

If Gretel Were Chinese: These finely crafted ecofeminist poems cut from brown sugar and green cloth are the stuff of starfish whiz and Asian American turmoil, a yin-and-yang duo turned inside out with a glamorous hint of sassafras and old-time honey.



Marshmallow Men: These syncopated tropes reflect the heart of a Chinese-American poet in full conscience, ring-a-ding poems of earth and light that descry the *ding-hao* gestures of an ethnic girlhood in full bloom.

Fairytale Origami: These poems are mis-sives from the velveteen earth, and sketches of a divine immortality. They sing of nocturnal vision, searing with eternal life on the map of botanical weather; sunny expatriates in the demesne of feminist struggle sing of triumph in the purple sunrise, with wild tongues of glory.



Lotus Magazine

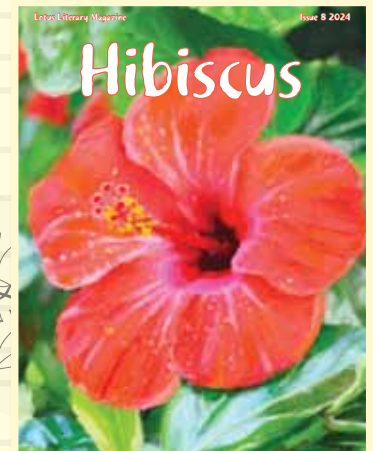
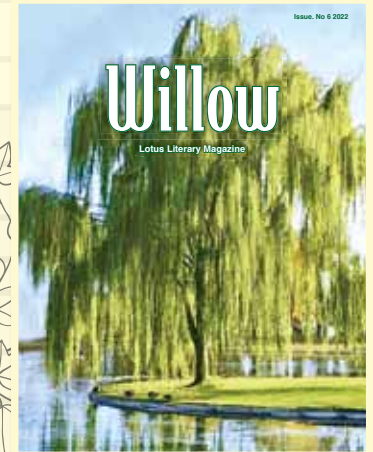
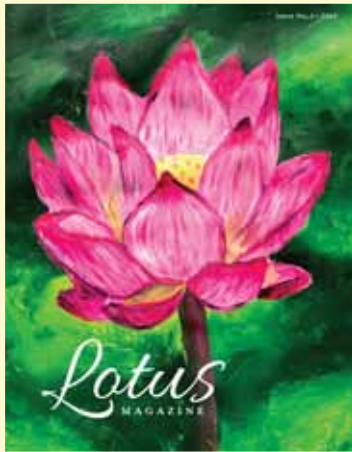
Starting in 2016, Carrie published an annual collection of poetry, *Lotus Literary Magazine*. In her words:

***Lotus* is a bee-bop, serendipitous collection of bric-a-brac verses hidden in the opaque light of the antiquarian wheel of no-return.**

Call for submissions!

Lotus invites you to share your words, your art, your heart, in a special issue dedicated to our beloved founder and editor, Carrie Chang. Let your creativity bloom in honor of Carrie's vibrant spirit and unwavering passion for the arts.

Submit your work by **June 2, 2025** (Carrie's birthday!) to carrielotustribute@gmail.com.



Paintings



Paintings



The Blanket

read by Nancy Chang, Carrie's sister

My polyester confidante,
you came to me
when I was crawling
in a jungle of mottled carpet. You
sanctified my feet and sang
a psalm of verdant blue.

Bedeveled by giants whose voices
dropped as stones, I stole
into the sanctuary of your
vast, cornered sky, splashed deep
into your crescent waves, drowned
out the rumble from above.

And when the house sighed of
flies and tired paper fans, I felt
your tepid hands upon my toes
and vowed to kiss my raiments
unto you.

I dressed you in fine
chocolates and applesauce, watched you
blush with strained beets as she
frowned in the living room,
wielding patient
scissors.

I did not see her
each night trimming your borders
a cautious half-inch,
did not notice you shriveling
quietly in my arms.
And when I first walked away
from the blue
handkerchief by the stair
I did not know
I had forsaken you.

Frogger For the Season

read by Nick Hay, Carrie's brother-in-law

Frogger is a good video game,
you must admit,
In the maelstrom of the forgotten city,
you seem to calmly sit,
And boing into the next space
Of that summer day, no quirky,
Famed direction, is too much
To say, shift up, shift down, there's
A universal town, of griffins in the trees
Who please us, and knock us when we're
Found, there are the coaxing grandmas
Who say too much, whether we
Are putting on the makeup,
Or looking elementary butch,
No need to be so honorable,
Or afraid of such-and-such
In this city the stoplight flickers,
But never changes color, we
Must ribbit, ribbit j-walking traffic,
Catch the moment, scare
The feller, whittle, diddle,
I'm soft in the middle, all
About the frogger, and playing
A happy fiddle, we can't stand
To be so proper and proper,
So we become the baron
And the quaint bank robber,
What to do on summer days,
just clobber clobber

For the One Who Waits Patiently

*read by Rina Hui, Carrie's close friend
since high school*

For the one who waits patiently
inside Rina's womb,
having never sensed the summer calm
of a New Haven moon,
or the winds waiting out on the edges
of the universe: tell us your dreams!

For you have known
the kick and heartbeat of another world
and one with mother in
aching and beating,
gladness and feeding,
copious moments of oneness
with your maternal world,
like a lamb ensconced by furtive grass.

A thousand smiles receive you,
a million stories await you
like a bevy of colors green grey gold
which will soon adorn your eyes.
Blessed, unnamed, tiny soul,
enjoy the thirst inside her womb
for mystery's unknown cache
of intimate treasure.

When you awaken
in your mother's arms,
there will be love with good measure
beckoning from brown soft orbs called
your parents' eyes.

Last Hotpot

*read by Viola Lee, Carrie's NYU
classmate and Lotus contributor*

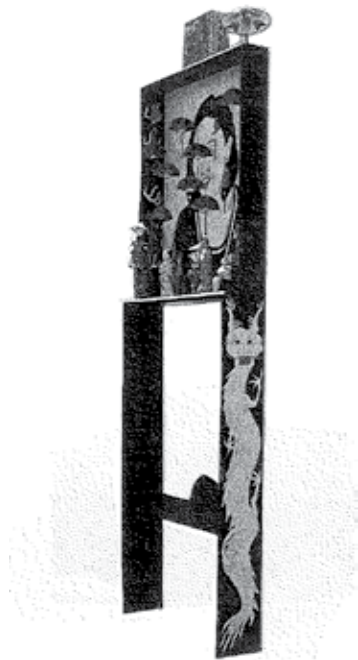
Last time we threw curried
Fish-pods into the white swirling water,
You declared me "warped," and hooked
On mutual war, dear, crazy war on
Spaceships, hypocrisy, and pain,
Everything elevated in the cool
California
Rain, the lips that cried for the *fin de*
siècle,
Revealed that you were nothing more
Than Hyde and Jekyll, FOB
And Twinkie on your flat sundry days,
Doing shingo dingo in all your
Sadder, homesick ways, admit
That steamy chopsticks a soul man
Doth not make, and for Chesapeake tea
The still heart starts to ache,
Altered by the sight of ego
And the taste of salty melon,
You were just the trickster delight
And the macho, in-transit felon
Bubble bubble toil and trouble,
Gossip no more, it will cost you double,
The year I ate hotpot I started to hate
The sight of all those beefcake bods,
And that is your dish anyhow

Poetry

Of Miss Saigon, Madame Butterfly, Etc.

read by Lena Loveridge, Carrie's close friend since college

"Oh Chris, say it isn't so." But it was,
and as she hurled herself into the ravine,
little Asian girl
dumped by the American GI,
I thought of you
and your Asian fetish.
Cinema's fool, you envied Pu Yi, wanted
exotic women
with silky black hair flowing over you, clad
in tiny slippers, serving you tea, rubbing
your feet with perfect piety,
the Last Blond Emperor of California.
How you thought my mandarin quaint
or perhaps that I, the frail peacock would
faint if exposed to loud noises. And
when you saw that I
wore size 8 sneakers talked back munched
on toast drank diet Pepsi instead of
Jasmine tea,



• you coughed and said
• "This is not the way it was in the movies."
• And when I did not yield
• As easily as China did Hong Kong to the
• Brits,
• you dusted me under
• your oriental rug.
• But I am not a butterfly, will not
• sigh cry die
• be plucked by the wings from the grave
• by a bored Puccini
• be pressed into some tragic score and
• resurrected onto the stage so
• the artsy crowd might
• dab the corners of their eyes with kleenex
• and remark
• "How beautiful is death!" as I take my last
• gasp of air.
• I will not be trampled on,
• am not
• a cherry blossom Ming vase silk fan
• rice paddy
• you can easily crush,
• am not
• an embroidered dragon whose red and
• gold threads
• you might yank out at will.
• I am
• breathing 3,000-yr-old purple smoke more
• imperial than your dreams,
• my scales crammed with the strength of
• 3 billion steel butterflies
• whose wings course upwards over
• the Great Wall Forbidden City the Yangtze
• River whose waters will flow and ripple
• with life
• long after your petty whims
• have passed away.



Front of "China Doll Cabinet," artwork by Bay Area artist Barbara Milman that was inspired by Carrie's poem and featured at a 1998 art show in Sacramento.

A Dowager Reflects Kindly

read by Tzu-Chang Lee, Carrie's father's
best friend since childhood

Something I should say to mommy,
I am not emotional enough,
I should keep her jade rings
singing, and eat all
The roast boeuf boeuf,
Something I should say
About the old days, about
The house in the dust court,
Where rainbows visited highways
And nostalgia was retort,
And sister's Klee's a sentimental
Head of privilege that's a tessellated
Turf, and father just a ray of light
That's a superannuated nerd,
Why fight the Chinglish
Seeping into your overbite,
And the things you've overheard?
Those days before karma made
A Frodo out of everyone
And we ate mac and cheese
Instead of cha-siu buns,
one Summer I peered into the mirror
And thought I looked
Like the dowager, chilled,
Never knowing I resembled
You sideways, but that
Was before I got damn
Ill, speaking of it now
Makes me giddy, it
Wasn't always that fun
Or escapist, kiddie

茲禧回顧莞然

translated by Tzu-Chang Lee

• 我需要跟媽咪說
• 是的,我不夠感性,
• 我應該保留着她送的玉戒指
• 唱歌,多吃烤牛肉,
• 談些往事,像
• 老舊的房子,灰塵滿地的院子,
• 那有彩虹和公路交集着。
• 其實懷舊是一種反駁,
• 妹妹的克莉玩偶擺成方陣
• 那是神聖不可侵犯的地盤,
• 爸爸的那一道光芒
• 不過是過時的科技迷情。
• 當你聽到一些傳言,
• 何必讓洋金幫英文的反應,
• 咬到舌頭?
• 那些日子 我們尚未啟蒙
• 老是吃麥克通心粉,卻
• 忘了茶燒包。
• 一個夏日我照照鏡子
• 覺得我長的像慈禧太后
• 我說的是在我生病之前的模樣
• 現在呢,只是側面像她,
• 說來真好笑
• 我從來沒有這麼開心過
• 孩子,逃避現實吧!

Remembering Carrie

by Uncle TC — Tzu-Chang Lee, Carrie's father's
best friend since childhood

A gentle soul, full of poetic mystery
Without adieu, she left
Can we ever fathom the gems in her heart
Or the anguish and the sadness?

I will read her Lotus poems again
Treading over the idioms and hard words
No, they are not hard, just rocks and pebbles
Above which the river flows ever peacefully.

紀念 Carrie

李叔叔 — 李作昌

溫柔的靈魂裏,充滿著神秘的詩詞
沒說個再見,她消失於世間
誰能窺視她心底的寶藏,
或是她的痛苦和憂傷?

讓我重溫荷花詩集 她的作品
慢慢品嚐那些堅硬難懂的詞彙
不,不堅硬,是夢般的小石子
被平靜的河流默默的覆蓋。

Readings in honor of Carrie

紀念 Carrie Chang 及慶祝她不朽的生命 Celebrating the immortal life of Carrie Chang

濮青阿姨

by Aunt Pu Qing — Jean Pwu Lee, Carrie's mother's best friend
since childhood and Lotus contributor

在人文的巨流中，每一個人都只是一滴小小的水滴，沒有人能夠選擇他的出生與離去的日期。每個人所能做的只是在兩點之間做了一些自己喜歡的決定與選擇。

In the vast river of humanity, every person is but a tiny drop of water. No one can choose the date of their birth or their departure. All each person can do is make some decisions and choices they like between those two points.

在我一生中，我無保留的給 Carrie 獻上我的至愛，不只是因為她的母親，鄧福依是我一生最好的知交，而是我和 Carrie 之間的惺惺相惜。

我知道一個人發現自己要用文字來表達他的內心和真實，是多麼的艱難和困苦，但是我也知道當我們能夠用文表達出內心的細膩和敏感，甚至描寫痛苦，也是最快樂的人生感受。我想 Carrie 和我是有默契的。

雖然 Carrie 英文語言造詣比我強，我不是百分之百的了解她所有的英文詩篇，但是我是懂得她的心是多麼純潔，新穎，奇葩，勇敢又深邃雋永。
「李清照的廚房」虧他想得出來！

正如他讀我的中文詩一樣。她是懂得我的漢字詩的。我懂她的善良，聰慧，精緻，美麗，熱情，堅強。還有我羨慕她的是，她有深愛他的父母和姐妹們愛她一輩子。謝謝 Nancy, Sand, Phoebe 和 IC。

In my life, I have loved Carrie without reservation, not just because her mother, Deng Fuyi, is my best friend in life, but because of the mutual admiration between Carrie and me.

I know how difficult it is for someone to discover that they need to express their inner self and truth through words. But I also know that when we can express the subtleties and sensitivities of our hearts, and even describe pain, through writing, it is the happiest feeling in life. I think Carrie and I had a tacit understanding of each other.

Although Carrie's English is better than mine and I don't fully understand all of her poems, I do understand how pure, novel, unique, brave, profound and timeless her heart is. "Li Qingzhao's Kitchen"—who would have thought of that!

Likewise, she reads my Chinese poems and understands them. I understand her kindness, intelligence, refinement, beauty, enthusiasm, and strength. And I am grateful she has parents who love her deeply and siblings who will love her for a lifetime. Thank you Nancy, Sand, Phoebe and IC.

Merton Prayer

by Thomas Merton

read by Dennis Kuo, Carrie's friend

My Lord God,
I have no idea where I am going.
I do not see the road ahead of me.
I cannot know for certain where it
will end.
nor do I really know myself,
and the fact that I think I am following
your will
does not mean that I am actually
doing so.
But I believe that the desire to please you
does in fact please you.
And I hope I have that desire in all that I
am doing.
I hope that I will never do anything apart
from that desire.
And I know that if I do this you will lead
me by the right road,
though I may know nothing about it.
Therefore will I trust you always though
I may seem to be lost and in the shadow
of death.

I will not fear, for you are ever with me,
and you will never leave me to face my
perils alone.

A Person

by Denise Levertov

read by Jason Horowitz, family friend

'Living a life' —
the beauty of deep lines
dug in your cheeks.

The years gather by the sevens
to fashion you. They are blind,
but you are not blind.

Their blows resound,
they are deaf, those laboring
daughters of the Fates,

but you are not deaf,
you pick out
your own song from the uproar

line by line,
and at last throw back
your head and sing it.

Readings in honor of Carrie

綠島小夜曲

Green Island Serenade

sung by Phoebe Chang, Carrie's mother

這綠島像一隻船 在月夜裡搖啊搖
情郎呀你也在我的心海裡飄呀飄
讓我的歌聲隨那微風 吹開了你的窗簾
讓我的衷情隨那流水 不斷的向你傾訴
椰子樹的長影 掩不住我的情意
明媚的月光 更照亮了我的心
這綠島的夜 已經這樣沈靜
情情郎啲你為什麼還是默默無語
椰子樹的長影 掩不住我的情意
明媚的月光 更照亮了我的心
這綠島的夜 已經這樣沈靜
情郎啲你為什麼還是默默無語

This green island is like a ship sailing on a moonlit night.
Darling, you're still floating in my heart.
Let my song blow your curtains with the wind
Let my true feelings flow and flow towards you.
The long shadows of the coconut trees cannot hide my love.
The bright moonlight shines brighter in my heart.
The nights on this green island are so peaceful.
Darling, why are you still quiet?



Up and down.
What is this helium
kool-aid balloon of
creativity that jots
you into disbelief at
your own flowery
reflection? ...

I, for one,
cannot see a better
way to spend an
afternoon or a life.

Carrie Chang

The Chang Family thanks you for your presence and love.
Please visit Carrie's memorial site to share your memories
and reflections: memorialsources.com/memorial/carrie-chang

