

A Walk in People's Park, Shanghai

Yayun Qian

Early spring, a new cycle beginning.
Although still humidly cold, the winter gradually releasing its hold.
Magenta camellias, pure white magnolias,
Purple and yellow pansies, budding heathers and plane trees.
A waft of peace, a feeling of release.

Turning northward, I saw throngs of people excitedly talking.
Standing crowdedly on the lanes, they prevented others walking.
Beside them stood unfolded colorful umbrellas
Carrying information printed or handwritten on white papers.
Age, sex, profession,
Monthly income, housing condition.
Eager parents exchanging information,
Looking for a Mr. or Mrs. Right,
For their children, who were not in sight.

I felt so lucky to have parents with an open mind,
Who always support my pursuit of happiness self-defined.

Xiangyin Theater

Yayun Qian

Isn't it nice to find inner peace in such a metropolis as Shanghai,
Where the streets are noisy and the buildings are high?
Tucked away in a lane off Nanjing Road West,
Xiangyin Theater is a place that facilitates the quest.
Devoted to storytelling in Suzhou dialect called Pingtan,
An art form that enjoyed great popularity in Jiangnan.
A theater of renown.
A perfect place to wind down.

Soft articulation, musical intonation,
Melodious singing, humorous narration.
An artistic treat.
A genuine retreat.
Delicate and refined.
One could derive peace of mind.

Seated in Xiangyin, waiting for a performance to commence,
That moment is, for me, already the beginning of joy immense.
Engrossed in the performance, I never notice the passing of time.
It always feels too soon to hear the host say: "Until next time."

Pingtan suits both cultivated and popular tastes.
Immersed in her cozy atmosphere no one hastes.
In times which are with hustle and bustle rife,
What a blessing to enjoy a slow pace of life!

Jiangnan: the area to the south of the lower reaches of the Yangtze River in China.

Approaching Amsterdam Airport Schiphol

Yayun Qian

Crystal blue sky, the sun shining, we are approaching land.
Fasten your seat belt, open the window shade. The captain has given the command.
Numerous green rectangular patches on the sea lie,
Like huge stretched flat noodles that have taken dye.

A short stopover to make after landing,
Where the plane for my next flight is standing.
Flying on Chinese New Year's Eve,
I am homeward bound.
What will soon my homesickness relieve?
The familiar voices and sound.