

## **ARTIST'S STATEMENT (2004)**

**Harris, Dominique**

Two areas of image making always fascinate me: my travels and 'the familiar' here in Hong Kong. The two appear, on the surface, antithetical; yet they are for me one and the same.

Documenting one's travels is not new to anyone for whom it seems unorthodox to travel without the visual companionship of a camera. Being born in Malawi and having grown up in Hong Kong entailed much traveling; so I set about capturing images of the places visited from an early age, initially with a plastic toy camera, then a 35mm and now today with a wooden pinhole camera, a tool almost as idiosyncratic and imprecise as the toy camera, yet yielding the similar square images. I now appear to be repeating similar itineraries of my youth, revisiting familiar places: a photographic rediscovery of the same. The images are emotional reactions capturing a succession of trance-like moments and whimsical situations. They attempt to portray both the physical and metaphorical sense of languor, heat, and colour typifying the places visited. To me, the photographs are a curious convergence between the idea of setting out to see 'the sights' and what I actually encountered.

The images of Hong Kong are similarly presented as evidence of a past, a record of events, a record of a life that has existed – an autobiographical journey. They represent a sort of visual diary that reflects the fleeting nature of memories, lost moments in time - the old worn-out, just-about-standing buildings, places and parks now overlooked and ignored for the newer, shinier versions: new memories for the younger generation. I am drawn to scenes that reflect the dilemmas between past and future, myth and reality - a re-interpretation of a universal theme, yet one that is utterly subjective and personal.

© Dominique Harris 2004.