Poems

Abstract
POK FU LAM RESERVOIR, HONG KONG, BETRAYING
The reservoir is a cliché of calm
despite its Cantonese name. Masters
and indentured agreed these were trees
‘Lam’ and mountains. One saw
England, mists and winds rolling down
the Peak another Lake District,
except off the coast of China. The other
saw China, classically brushed
in bamboo lines; and the greater China
behind it, reaching beyond the tears
of the Yellow River all the way to Beijing.
‘Lam’ Cantonese for ‘Lim’: ideogram
of trees upright with thick thrusting branches.
Leaves fall close to their roots. Cliches
surface from speechless calm,
returning me unspeaking to
where I had not known I’d left.

BETRAYING

Betraying no one but my self,
Music sings loud and louder,
Filling the hours between speaking
And sleep. Among the young
This morning I treaded water,
Floating on airs; but tonight,
An old woman, am led by music
Whose voice suffuses then falls,
A tempo that slips away,
Like you, memory, measured
And immeasurable, betraying
No one but myself.