

create designs from ideas that resonate with children and the community, rather than confining our imagination to catalogue product lists. Is it possible to refresh our understanding of playgrounds as sophisticated public spaces that bring joy to people, rather than relying on collections of prescriptive equipment?

Five years have gone by since I first saw photographs of *Shek Lei Playground*. I have written articles long and short, given talks to audiences ranging from primary school students to professional designers, and, in 2021, published *The Abstract Playscapes of Hong Kong*. I believe that Selinger's beautiful sculpture park has meanwhile become the most-talked-about case study in the history of children's playgrounds in Hong Kong.

To keep the stories of playgrounds alive and relevant, it is not enough to just write and talk about them though. Following my publishing project, I started organising guided walks around three different neighbourhoods. My hope is that through this kind of knowledge sharing, participants will come to read the place in which they live differently and become more sensitive to their surroundings. I invited my interviewee Lau Wang Tat and his collaborator Siu Kam Han to host ceramic and cyanotype workshops. Adults and children were asked to make mini ceramic playgrounds based on their experience or imagination.

With the help of architectural drawings and photographs, physical models were built to help us understand the spatial experience and design features at Sha Kok Estate playground (built in the early 1980s), another abstract playground almost completely rebuilt and refitted with new proprietary equipment. Finding high-quality photographs of the abstract playgrounds proved very difficult. Therefore I exhibited my research findings alongside scale models of several ground-breaking, though barely discussed local playgrounds from the 1960s to 1980s.²¹⁷ These events were not only fun and engaging. They were also attempts to provide participants with the tools and vocabulary to keep history alive.

217 For more about the project, see: *Our Abstract Playscapes*, <https://abstractplayscapes.wordpress.com>.

290 Drawing by Lau Wang Tat after he left Shek Lei estate

