

HUANG XIANG

CHINA (1941–)

LANGUAGE: CHINESE

獨唱

DÚ CHÀNG

我是誰

wǒ shì shuí

我是瀑布的孤魂

wǒ shì pù bù de gū hún

一首永久離群索居的

yí shǒu yǒng jiǔ lí qún suǒ jū de

詩

shī

我的漂泊的歌聲是夢的

wǒ de piāobó de gē shēng shì mèng de

游蹤

wóu zōng

我的唯一的聽眾

wǒ de wéi yī de tīng zhòng

是沉寂

shì chénjì



Born in Hunan Province in China, Huang Xiang has been writing poetry since 1950 and is considered one of China's greatest modern poets. In 1978, he started an underground writers' society and a literary magazine, both named *Enlightenment*. Ten years later he was arrested for his pro-Democracy activities and sentenced to three years in a labor camp. Ultimately, Xiang served twelve years in prison where he spent many hours in solitary confinement. Huang Xiang and his wife have lived in exile in the United States since 1997. He and his family now live in New York. To this day, Xiang's work remains banned in China.

(A pinyin version has been included below the Chinese characters.)

TRANSLATOR'S GLOSSARY			
CHARACTER	PINYIN	DEFINITION	POSSIBLE SYNONYMS
唱	chàng (v.)	make music with voice	sing, croon, chant
沉寂	chénjì (n.)	quietness, not speaking	silence, stillness, peace
的	de (prep.)	indicates possessive	of
獨	dú (adj.)	without the help or company of others	alone, unaccompanied
歌聲	gēshēng (n.)	set of words sung	song
孤	gū (adj.)	remote, alone or lonely	solitary, forlorn, lost
魂	hún (n.)	spirit remaining after death	ghost, spirit, soul
居的	jū de (intrans. v.)	reside	live in, dwell in, inhabit
離	lí (prep.)	regardless, contrary to	apart from, despite, away from
夢	mèng (n.)	sequence of mental images during sleep	dream, vision
漂泊	piāobó (v.)	to be carried along	drift, wander, glide, coast
瀑布	pùbù (n.)	river water falling over steep place	waterfalls, falls
群	qún (n.)	people gathered together	crowd, mass, throng, multitude
詩	shī (n.)	piece of written verse	poem
是	shì (v.)	conjugations of verb <i>to be</i>	is, am, was
誰	shuí (pron.)	introduces question	who

CHARACTER	PINYIN	DEFINITION	POSSIBLE SYNONYMS
首	shǒu (adj.)	before the rest in order	first, initial, primary
索	suǒ (adj.)	remote	isolated, alone, inaccessible
聽眾	tīng zhòng (n.)	people watching performance	audience, spectators, viewers
唯一	wéi yī (adv.)	solely, indicating condition	only, merely, simply
我	wǒ (pron.)	first person singular	I, me, myself
我的	wǒ de (adj.)	belonging to me	my
游蹤	wóu zōng (n.)	trip somewhere	journeys, voyages, passages
一	yí (indef. art.)	indicates type	a, one, single
永久	yǒng jiǔ (adv.)	for all time	forever, eternally, evermore

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

PHRASE BY PHRASE

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REFLECTING AND FINDING MEANING

Group Member Names:

Date: _____

Pick a scribe for the group, and work together to answer the questions.

What are the best parts of this translation, and why do you think they are good?

What elements of the original poem did you lose in the translation? What did you manage to keep?

Did you achieve something new with your translation, and if so, does it make sense in the poem or not?
