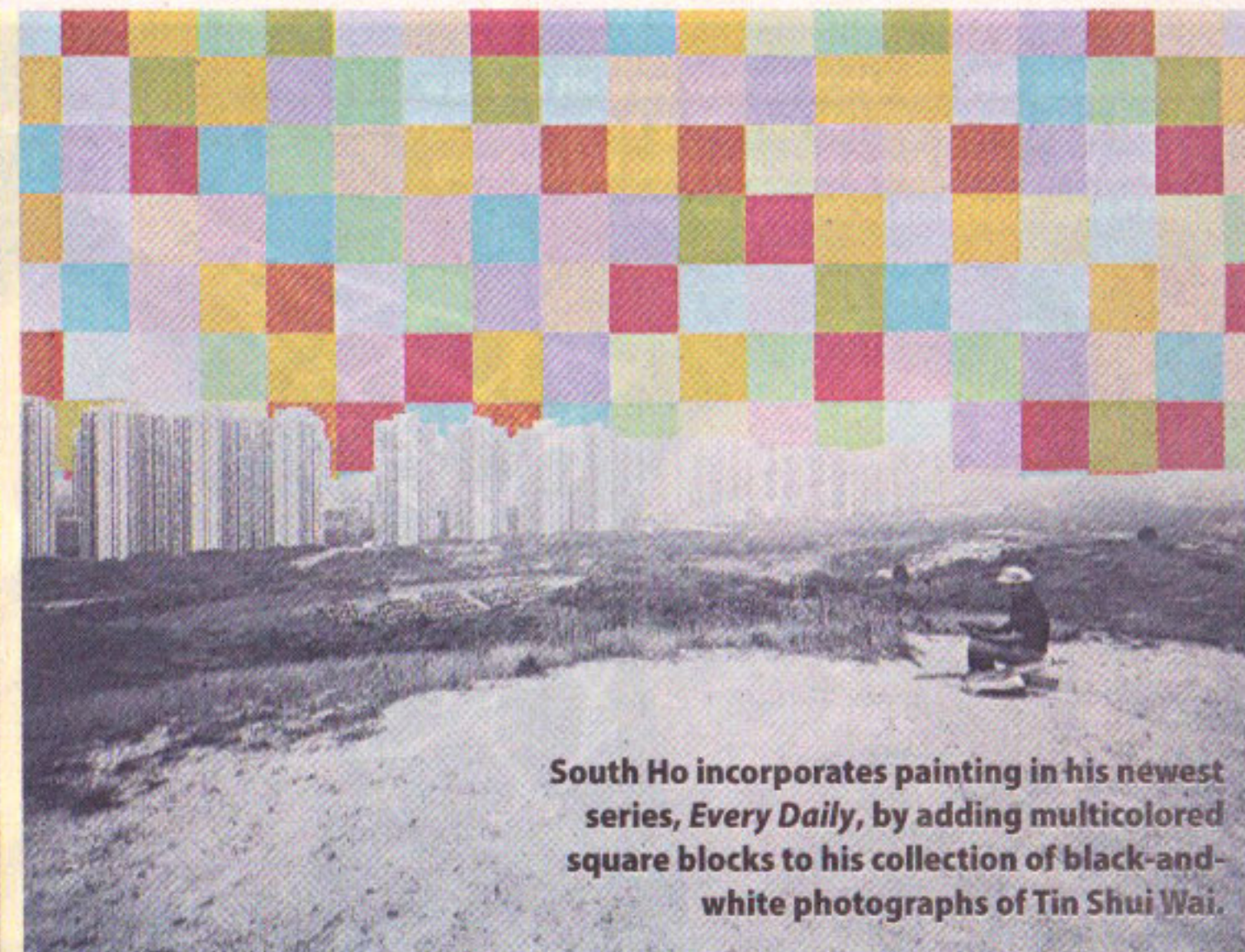
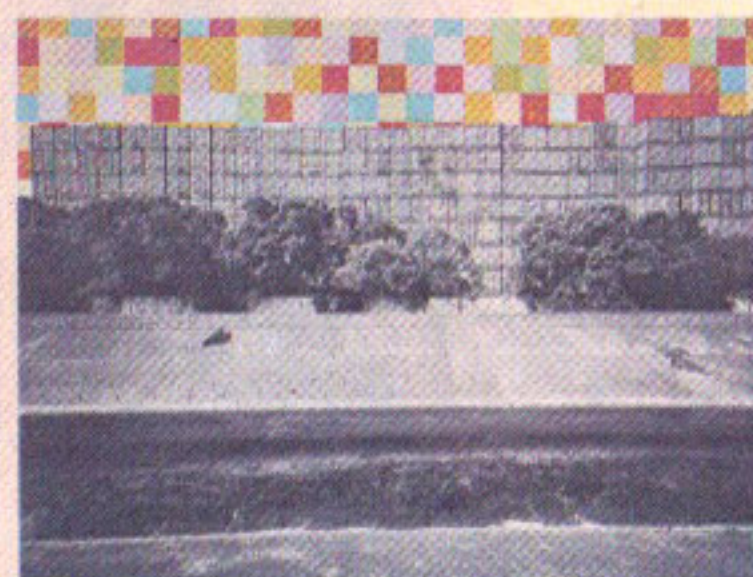
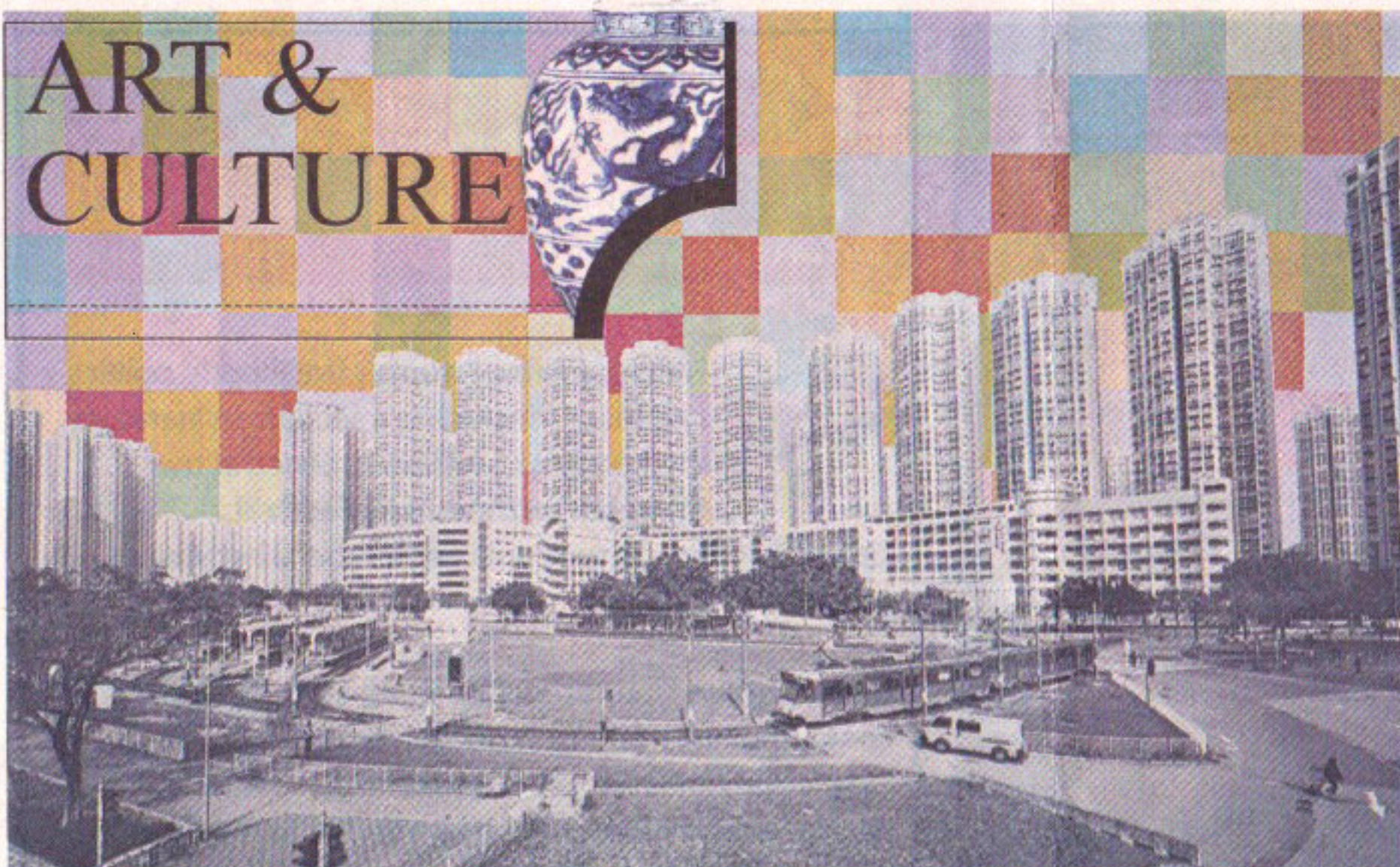


## ART &amp; CULTURE



South Ho incorporates painting in his newest series, *Every Daily*, by adding multicolored square blocks to his collection of black-and-white photographs of Tin Shui Wai.

# FATHER AND SON

A photographer tells *Mercy Lo* why he decided to 'destroy' the sky in his shots by painting over it

**SOUTH HO** Siu-nam wanted to do something different this time. The local photographer found that mere images were insufficient to express his deepest emotions.

So for his new series, *Every Daily*, he added a little personal touch to his black-and-white photographs of Tin Shui Wai by painting the sky with multicolored square blocks.

In a photo, most of the things that are captured, say, people or buildings, are tangible. But not the sky, Ho says.

"Even if we fly up to the sky, we still can't touch it. There isn't an apparent boundary between earth and sky."

Despite being a full-time artist, Ho focuses mainly on photography. And this is the first time he has integrated another medium into his photos. The white sky between buildings and trees are filled up with same-sized square blocks of 12 different shades – the color of each block is chosen at random by throwing a dice.

Last year, when Ho, 29, was cleaning up his flat, he found a set of paintbrushes, bundled together. They belonged to his late father, a graphic designer who worked in advertising.

After Ho's father died from cancer, the family decided to move to another place and ended up settling down in Tin Shui Wai, widely dubbed the City of Sadness.

"If it weren't because of my dad, we wouldn't have left our previous home. Now it's almost like he brought us there," Ho says.

"My dad passed away when I was still young. He didn't get to see me grow into an adult; he missed my college graduation and my first day of work in the 'real world,' as well as my art exhibitions. I wish he had been part of all of these significant events in my life."

All this is what inspired Ho to stray away from his usual practice and go a step further with his photography. "Perhaps, you can say this is a crossover between my dad and me."

Stroke by stroke, these multicolored blocks once again bring the two together and create a new journey for the father and son. A brand new path without sorrow but joy and peace.

If his father hadn't died, he would have reached retirement age by now, Ho reflects, adding that he imagines the two of them just wandering around the district and exploring new things together.

At the beginning, Ho did not dwell too much on the sad news, or he thought he was simply too young to grieve.

But as time went by, sorrow returned. Negative emotions started to accumulate within him.

"The creative process of *Every Daily* is almost a self-guided art therapy. While grieving, I am also liberating myself from sorrow. When I look at all my work now, I feel joy and satisfaction," he says.

As simple as it may appear, Ho revealed it's difficult to maintain the same consistency of paint and uniform sizes in all squares.

And he can manage to paint only four squares at the most in an hour.

But it was through this repetitive and monotonous process of throwing the dice and in block painting that allowed him to slowly emanate from negative emotions.

Ho chose to throw a dice to pick the colors because he wanted to retain a certain level of spontaneity in his work.

"Just like photography, there are always some things that are out of your control. You can adjust the camera settings and

work hard on the composition, but you can't control every single element," he says.

"No matter how smart you are, you will never be able to control everything in life. Besides, is it a good thing if one can control it all?"

Instead of wanting to be in charge, Ho enjoys being on the other side of the table more. "Sometimes it feels good to let nature take its course," he says.

Among all the elements of the photographs, Ho decided to "destroy" the sky because "I believe that is where my father now lives, in a world that I cannot reach."

"However, because of these colorful blocks, we are somehow connected again. He is partly involved in my art, and even in my life. That's why I have reserved that particular space for him."

*Every Daily* is on display at the Blindspot Gallery, located on 24 to 26A Aberdeen Street, Central.

The exhibition is currently every day except Mondays and Sundays, and will run until September 28. Admission is free. [mercy.lo@singtaonewscorp.com](mailto:mercy.lo@singtaonewscorp.com)

The photographer uses his art to work through the grieving process.

