

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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“New Collection of Poetry Conjures Honolulu Chinatown Circa 1900”

(HONOLULU) Bamboo Ridge Press is pleased to announce the release of Wing Tek Lum’s third collection of poetry, *The Oldtimers*. Imagining life in Honolulu Chinatown circa 1900, Lum gives voice to the forgotten pioneer generation of sojourners and settlers, detailing the trials and temptations of this bachelor society living far from their homeland—their hard work, their diversions, their challenges, and, even amidst the notorious plague and fire, their perseverance.

Wing Tek Lum’s poetry, renowned for its vivid imagery, emotional depth, and historical consciousness, revives archival voices with insight and empathy. Verses in *The Oldtimers* reflect on themes of displacement, labor, isolation, familial bonds and obligations, cultural heritage and adaptation, and the preservation of traditions and values amidst the islands’ rapid growth.

Excerpt from “At Dusk”

The cook inside fires up his wok, deeply patinaed,
stir frying slices of pork belly and vegetables
then adding a dollop of his secret shrimp paste,
this tiny seed quickly blossoming into a bouquet
permeating the courtyard as the light recedes.

The oldtimer hanging his threadbare wash
revels in the savory aroma of this serendipity.
In the gloaming he breaks out into song,
his taut line of bleach-white clothes pegs
paddling in unison into the gathering wind.

Wing Tek Lum is available for interviews. Visit the website for launch and event details. *The Oldtimers* will be on sale via www.bambooridge.org.

**For more information, call 808-626-1481,
e-mail read@bambooridge.org or visit www.bambooridge.org.**

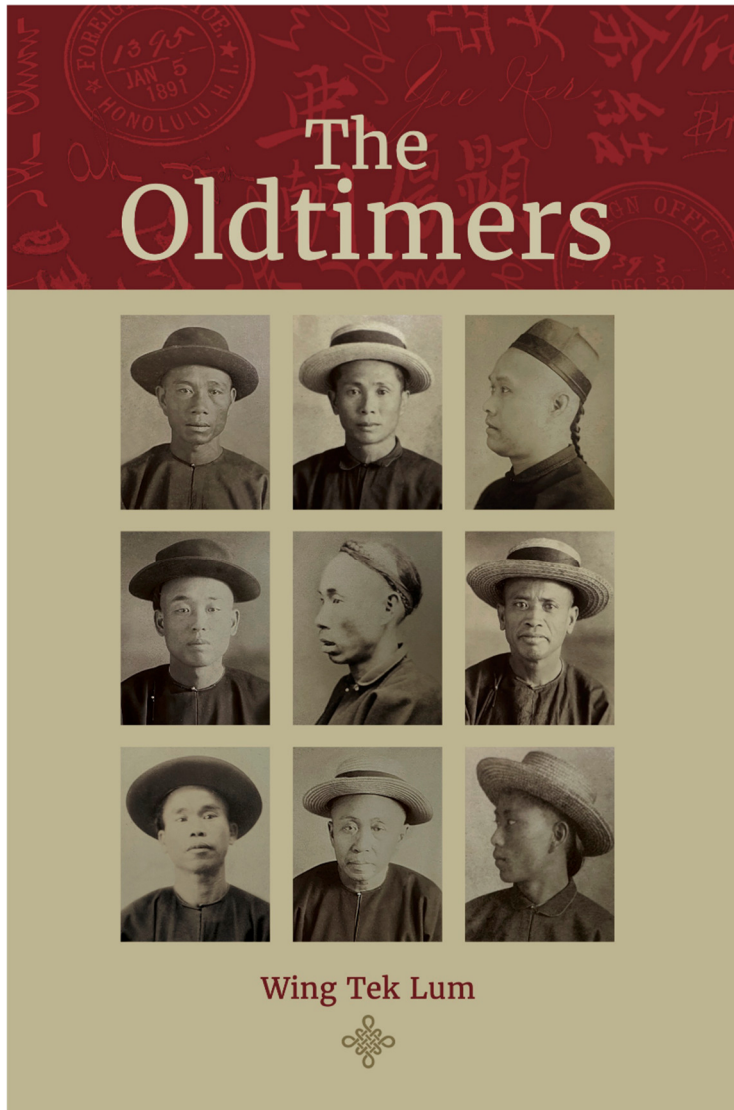
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***The Oldtimers* renders the silent audible, inviting readers to traverse one of Honolulu’s oldest districts through vignettes of memory and change.**

“Wing Tek Lum’s *The Oldtimers* is an origin story about arrival, displacement, and finally a sense of belonging during a time of exclusion. The words here are not about laws and documents but about heartfelt family stories sourced from the basic elements of earth, air, fire, and water of the islands.”

— Shawn Wong, author of *Homebase* and *American Knees*



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www.bambooridge.org



“This impressive collection lets us see through the eyes of those who went overseas and those loved ones they left behind in China and makes us feel their sadness, loneliness, terror, and frustration as if it were our own. Wing Tek’s precise, insightful poems transform the shacks, fields, and streets of Hawai‘i into a grand stage for the moving drama of Chinese America itself.”

— Laurence Yep, author of *Dragonwings*

“What is astonishing about *The Oldtimers* is how, by recreating the daily lives and desires of the denizens of old Chinese Honolulu, Wing Tek Lum does something that few poets do: he tells stories. Continuing his poetics of archival resurrection, this book expresses a generous curiosity about his *dramatis personae*: the domestic servant, the plantation worker, and the prisoner; the street peddler, the cook, and the sex-worker; the bandits and the bachelors as well as the many victims of anti-Chinese violence. What results is a series of vivid dramatic monologues with the richness, intimacy, and humanity of a social novel.”

— Ken Chen, author of *Juvenilia*

“Full of wisdom and insights earned from a life of paying attention, these wonderful poems draw on memory and proceed by an earnest storytelling in an unassuming and understated tone in order to restore an individual voice to its rightful context of culture and, beyond that, cosmic inheritance.”

— Li-Young Lee, author of *The Invention of the Darling* and co-translator of *Dao De Jing*



Wing Tek Lum is a Honolulu businessman and poet. Bamboo Ridge Press has published two earlier collections of his poetry: *Expounding the Doubtful Points* (1987) and *The Nanjing Massacre: Poems* (2012). With Makoto Ōoka, Joseph Stanton, and Jean Yamasaki Toyama, he participated in a collaborative work of linked verse, which was published as *What the Kite Thinks* by Summer Session, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa in 1994.