

**LUNAR NEW YEAR FESTIVAL
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT**

WASHINGTON, DC

Oral History Interview

**with
JENNIFER LOW
by
DAN KERR**

**CHINATOWN
January 26, 2020**

**LUNAR NEW YEAR FESTIVAL
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT**

NARRATOR: Jennifer Low
DATE: January 26, 2020
INTERVIEWER: Dan Kerr
PLACE: Chinatown

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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Dan Kerr 00:05

Today is January 26. We are at Chinese New Year's parade in Chinatown in Washington DC. Could you tell us your name?

Jennifer Low 00:13

Hi, I'm Jennifer Low.

Dan Kerr 00:15

And could you tell us about your project that you're working on this afternoon?

Jennifer Low 00:19

Yes, definitely. So it's called "Dear Chinatown." It's a making and sharing project for the DC Chinatown community to declare what they love most about their neighborhood. So I am a design student at the University of Michigan, but I am also a Washington, DC resident. And also I'm Chinese American and I have a lot of different Chinatowns in my life that are part of my own history and my memories. So this project is both very personal to me and also, like, professionally really interesting in how we can sort of generate insights from the people that actually live in a place and what matters to them about the places they live.

Dan Kerr 00:59

That's terrific. Could you tell us what you find most meaningful and important about Chinatown for you?

Jennifer Low 01:05

Yeah, I find it meaningful because places like Chinatown are places where people feel belonging. There's something that's very sort of visible and tangible about

going to places like Chinatown where people can find people that speak the same language. They can eat food that is familiar or is comforting. So these spaces that people can sort of like claim to be their own, I think are really important.

Dan Kerr 01:39

Where would you like to see Chinatown in 10 years from now?

Jennifer Low 01:43

In 10 years, I would really like I guess, for the community and the people to really reclaim the place. I think in particular, and DC's Chinatown... I think people have been living here for so long, but we're starting to see some of this lack of visibility of the people that made this place and made its character, and all of the sort of the community leaders that have really shaped what this neighborhood was. So I'd really like to see sort of that more visible in the public realm. I want for these spaces, like, sort of like in public space to be able to be used by community and people to feel comfortable about being here, and that we actually have places that people can use and that actually fulfill their everyday needs.

Dan Kerr 02:30

All right, thank you so much.

Jennifer Low 02:32

Thank you.