

## Chinese Hot Pot

By Wing Tek Lum

My dream of America  
is like *dà bính lòuh*  
with people of all persuasions and tastes  
sitting down around a common pot  
chopsticks and basket scoops here and there  
some cooking squid and others beef  
some tofu and watercress  
all in one broth  
like a stew that really isn't  
as each one chooses what she wishes to eat  
only that the pot and fire are shared  
along with the good company  
and the sweet soup  
spooned out at the end of the meal.

- **Wing Tek Lum** is an American poet and businessman. He was born to Chinese American parents in 1946 in Honolulu, Hawaii. He graduated from Brown University in 1969, where he majored in engineering and edited the university's literary magazine. In 1973 he graduated from the Union Theological Seminary, with a master's degree in divinity and worked as a social worker. In 1973, he moved to Hong Kong to learn Cantonese. Wing Tek Lum is the author of the book of poems, *Expounding the doubtful points* (Bamboo Ridge Press, 1987), in which "Chinese Hot Pot" appears. His work has been published in *New York Quarterly* and several anthologies. He has received a number of awards, including the American Book Award in 1988.

