

The

Relational

City:



The

Production

of

Space

Food

through



Memefest 2022

# The Relational City: The Production of Space through Food

University of Architecture HCMC  
RMIT Australia  
RMIT Vietnam  
Memefest Network  
Black Yield Institute

Dec. 7 - 17, 2022  
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam



The project was funded by the New Colombo plan, an initiative by the Australian Government.



Australian Government



NEW COLOMBO PLAN

Connect to Australia's future - study in the region







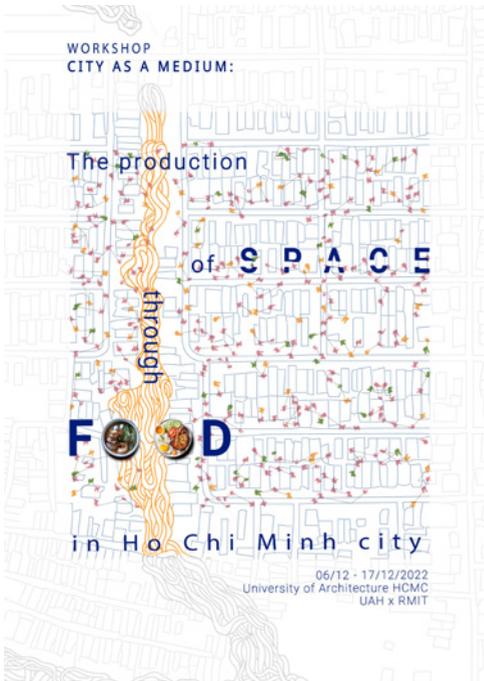
# The Relational City: The Production of Space through Food

Since 2002 Memefest has been engaged in creating situations that have the potential to engage people in transformative social relations through design. We are focusing on decolonisation of knowledge and the public sphere, social and environmental change. Memefest operates between academia, community and professional practice and marginal social positions. Imagine, we are a global network of critical academics, curious students, adventurous professionals, passionate activists, gifted amateurs and close friends.

The loose network enjoys its many different roles and integrates education, curatorial and editorial work, publishing, investigation, organization of events, facilitation and production of various media including communication in the public sphere, theory, photography, design and art. We work in both- physical and virtual public spaces and usually like to connect them. A key focus of Memefest is to engage different disciplines with design and to develop critical praxis.

In 2022, Memefest went to Saigon (HCMC), Vietnam and partnered with RMIT Australia, RMIT Vietnam and the University of Architecture HCMC. For three weeks mentors from the Memefest network, Black Yield Institute and collaborating universities worked with some ninety students

from Australia and Vietnam on what we called “The Relational City”. Our premise was that cities and especially their spatial realities are significantly shaped by food systems and practices. In fact the very production of space happens importantly through food. Saigon is of course the perfect place to investigate this topic. Being a large South-East Asian economic hub of some ten million people, Saigon breathes food on almost every step. As one of the street food centers of the world, and with a vernacular entrepreneurialism of its citizens, their resilient inventiveness as well as their incredible warmth, Saigon operates very differently than the western cities we are used to. The historic legacy of a communal culture mixed with unmistakable state capitalist tendencies create visible tensions



and contradictions — perfect for our extra-disciplinary methodology, which focuses on the marginal and its potentials.

**The Relational City: The Production of Space Through Food** event resolved around a preparational workshop in which students have started to develop a sensibility for the city through walking, observing, immersing and reflecting. This led to the main workshop, which had students working in interdisciplinary groups in a structured process working towards concrete projects.



The workshops were mentored and have also been importantly informed by a special two day symposium. These activities were based in the fantastic spaces of the University of Architecture HCMC, and this is also where we presented our final works in a special exhibition.

How can we better understand cities through food? From smart “high-tech” cities to “forest” cities to “sustainable” cities, we are seeing more metropolitan centers becoming experiments in urban innovation. What are the risks and what is at stake in seeing cities as “experiments” in innovation? Where are examples of cities that resist experimentation? What can we make of cities that are decaying or that have been left abandoned by the corporations and governments that built them? How can cities be understood as ideal “Future States”?

The human-built environment now has a larger material mass than all of the natural environment, including trees, animals and all plants. Architecture, urban planning, urban design as well as design as a broader category play a crucial role in this development. But, despite the fact that our world is largely designed, the focus of the disciplines largely is centered on the object and the technical and material aspects. Perhaps, to paraphrase Bruno Latour, we need to shift from architecture/ design as a matter of fact to architecture/ design as a matter of concern: “As matters of fact, buildings can be subjected to rules and methods, and they can be treated as objects on their own terms. As matters of concern, they enter into socially embedded networks, in which

the consequences of architecture are of much more significance than the objects of architecture.”

Environmental issues too are often reduced to technical matters, regulations, and material protocols. But the focus on the technical realm alone narrows the reality of architecture, design, urban planning to efficiency and control. Environmental understandings need to realize that design is embedded in much wider networks and relationalities. For Polish sociologist Zygmund Bauman to assume an ethical stance is to assume responsibility for the other, to see the other, to listen to the other.



As we see the world becoming increasingly urbanized and overpopulated, we are encouraged to take stock of how we consider “space”, “place” and the built environment. We invite symposium participants to consider questions of relationality, food and the city in the context of radical interdependence.

To this end, we are working within a rich history of inclusive and collaborative design practices. Participatory design started in Scandinavia in the 1970s as a Marxist approach with the aim to create better working conditions and leverage power between workers and managers (Spinuzzi 2005). Social design happens when problems cannot be solved by the market or the state, positioning the design process as relational within a gift economy (Mauss 2002). The demands for such design are not formal because the problems have not yet been internalized by institutions. It is at this exact point where innovation and experiments become a matter of ideology and power. Reasons for including social design is for people to encounter new or ongoing problems or simply because they do not have the power to formalize their needs and demands. Questions of participation commonly emerge linked to the ‘invisibility’ of problems in so far as ‘problems’ are not made visible (due to lack of power) and/or are not seen at all. How can we make problems visible and how can we see them in the first place?

Cities and metropolitan areas are powerhouses of economic growth—contributing 60 percent of global GDP. Urban centers account for 70 per cent of global carbon emissions and more than 60 percent of resource use. Rapid urbanization has led to an increase in slum dwellers, inadequate and overburdened infrastructure and services, worsening air pollution and

unplanned urban sprawls. COVID-19 has only added to these stresses on our cities and introduced overcrowding challenges to complicate social distancing, self-isolation, and health and wellbeing priorities. The United Nations warns that hunger and fatalities are expected to rise significantly in urban areas, with socio-economic impacts on the most vulnerable residents particularly people’s access to food, water and homelands.

Food is not just a basic need or a commodity, but a fundamental aspect of human culture and identity. The way we produce, distribute, and consume food has a profound impact on our environment, our health, and our social and economic well-being. We need to rethink our relationship with food and our urban environments in order to create more sustainable, equitable, and resilient cities. We believe that new approaches to urban planning and design are necessary. Approaches that prioritize food as a central element of our built environment, and encourage people to reconnect with the sources of their food and with each other. The Relational City Memefest event aims to develop a deeper understanding about the current and potential relationalities, which put food at the center of design in relation to Ho Chi Minh City.

## People, place and pedagogy: insights from RMIT spatial design students' active place engagement in the Saigon District 4 hems (alleyways) and with the local community

→ **Rachel Jahja**

RMIT Vietnam, Associate lecturer

This presentation outlines the pedagogical benefits for students from active engagement in a place analysis framework implemented in the Spatial Concepts second year stream in the Design Studies discipline at RMIT University Vietnam that is designed to better engage them with the Saigon District 4 hems (alleyways) community, people and place. Complementing and addressing qualitative limitations in spatial education of a generic site analysis approach that typically takes into consideration more quantitative data relating to understanding site, the purpose of implementing a place analysis framework is to apply and test a new method of qualitative place analysis that supports students' investigations and developments in generating a better understanding of the essential qualities of place (District 4 hems). Additionally, this bespoke place analysis approach allows and encourages students to actively engage with the local community to gain a deeper awareness of the local culture and needs of people inhabiting this specific and unique geographical domain that typically is different socially, sensorially, spatially and demographically from their own. The objective of this presentation is to discuss the place analysis framework design, objectives, findings and significance for spatial design education.

**Rachel Jahja** is an Australian designer, spatial theorist and educator with a transnational teaching background interested in exploring phenomenological relationships between creativity, self and space.

## Relational City: Food, Pleasure, Space and Knowledge

→ **Oliver Vodeb**

Memefest, RMIT Australia,  
Senior Lecturer

This presentation draws on the insights gathered in the three weeks of the Memefest activities in Saigon and builds on long time research on “pleasure media”, a term I coined, describing a specific type of media with potency for communicability and relationality directly being charged by our longing for pleasure. I will specifically investigate pleasure media in relation to what I learned, in Saigon, to call the “restorative city”. I will speculate and elaborate on explorations of the emancipatory potentials of food, image and space.

**Dr Oliver Vodeb** is a critical design theorist, creative practice researcher, student and educator. He’s mostly operates between the university, design practice and marginal social positions and his approach is extra/transdisciplinary. He is senior lecturer at the RMIT School of Design in Melbourne, teaching in the Master of communication design. Oliver co-founded Memefest in 2002 and is the principle curator of the Memefest festival and facilitator of the Memefest international network. He is widely published, has lectured internationally, and has designed and directed dozens of public campaigns and interventions across the world. He’s latest book is Food Democracy, published by Intellect Books. He’s new book Radical Intimacies, by Intellect Books was published in 2023.

## The Anatomy Of The Generous City II

→ **Archie Pizzini**

Architect, HCMC

There is a type of generosity present in Vietnamese cities that is missing in the globalized cities that form the context of many urban designers today. Vietnamese cities nurture and are nurtured by their occupants through their structure and the way they operate, producing non-monetary and low-tech resources that benefit their citizens. These resources do not exist separately, but are intertwined with a network of systems that is the working part of Vietnamese culture.

This rough but massive network of intricate systems operates through a very different method of coordination than many designers have encountered before. Furthermore, it is often powered not by corporate spending and technology, but by individual initiative enabled by loose controls on several key aspects of the urban environment.

Because of this, Vietnamese cities, their structure, their buildings and the types of lives people lead are all tightly bound together. City form, architecture, economics, anthropology and sociology are all closely intertwined, readily support and are supported by several things:

- individual human interactions
- small scale human endeavours
- climate adaptation
- unregulated use of public space
- improvisation and resiliency

Improvisation, networks of personal relationships, climate adaptation and small-scale individual enterprises are renewable resources that are strengthened, not depleted, by use, but they depend upon a loosely controlled environment. These resources have been used to empower people who

**12** have less money to cope with a lack of monetary resources and yet improve their living situations. Similarly they might be used to empower designers to design more resilient cities.

Vietnamese cities nurture and are nurtured by their occupants in a similar way that individual humans support and are supported by the organisms that live within us. The recent increase in studies of our human microbiome has brought new understanding and benefits to health care by exploring and investigating this symbiotic system. Similarly, a deeper understanding of the systems that exist within, sustain and are sustained by dense organic cities like Vietnam's could provide valuable insights as we endeavor to produce more resilient community structures.

**Archie Pizzini**, PhD, is an American architect, artist and teacher educated at Rice University (BA Architecture, BFA Painting), the University of Houston (Master of Architecture), and RMIT University in Melbourne (PhD Architecture). In 2005, following twenty years practicing art and architecture in the U.S., he moved to Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam to form HTAP, an architecture and interior design partnership with Hoanh Tran.

In addition to being an architect, interior designer and furniture designer, he has had several recent shows of his photography in Vietnam, Australia and Japan. In his work, art, street photography and architecture combine to deepen his understanding of the built environment. He has taught through various universities including the Ho Chi Minh City Architecture University and the RMIT Master of Architecture and Master of Urban Design programs. His designs, photos, and writings have appeared in books and magazines in the U.S., Australia, Germany, Thailand, Korea and Vietnam. His work centers on close observation of

the built and social context, with emphasis on making and improvisation. His design work contains an idea that everyday design solutions by non-designers, observed in places like Vietnam, often demonstrate a relevance through economy, elegance, sustainability and resilience that could immensely benefit design efforts throughout the world.

## Liquid City and Routine

→ **Andrew Stiff**

RMIT Vietnam, Lecturer

The everyday experience of cities is a rich and complex layering of the tangible and intangible. Our experience is defined by our movement through atmospheres. Filming found atmospheres, rather than constructed ones is difficult. However when mediated through light, atmospheres respond to the medium of film and video, as an emerging visual impression. This presentation will present a moving image practice that explores the built environment and its relations with community. Rather than seeing the built environment as a fixed set of objects, post-production processes liquify the solid, to play with emergent form, and its absence, dependent upon lighting conditions. Physical space is also challenged through routine and changing occupancy through the day and night by street food vendors, pop-up cafes, and the Saigonese love of the street.

**Andrew Stiff** has been teaching at RMIT Vietnam since 2016. Prior to arriving in Vietnam he taught in Malaysia and at the University of Arts London, UK. Andrew focuses on developing first year students through creative thinking and third year students in capstone 1 and 2.

His research interests focus on developing moving image representations of the Saigon, that reflect the impact culture has on the built environment, and our experience of it. This research has contributed to extra curricula student projects, and course development.

## Sense-Making Urban Change

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→ **Kevin Yuen Kit Lo**

LOKI, Concordia University, Memefest,  
Creative Director, Assistant Professor  
Montreal/Tiohtiake

How do we sense, feel, describe and define a particular place? What graphic “effects” do we read and what stories do they tell? Whose stories? Gentrification is a central issue facing urban centers in North America (and elsewhere), a key faultline of social conflict, hotly contested on multiple fronts, and with dramatic and often generationally long lasting socio-political effects. Design plays many key roles in this process, from policy-making and urban planning to the design of consumer products and spaces, and importantly, as part of the creative and culture industries that often shape the material and symbolic first waves of urban “renewal”.

This presentation will take multiple viewpoints, both literal (topographic, street-level and interior) and metaphoric, to sense the changing nature of the Mile End neighborhood in Montreal/Tiohtia:ke, a neighborhood emblematic of the gentrification process in North America. Using discernable graphic artifacts as analytical-critical signposts, I will weave together a narrative of design and displacement, consumption and contestation, that provide insights into how cities are shaped by and in spite of design.

**Kevin Yuen Kit Lo** is a graphic designer, educator and community organizer. He is the principal and creative director of LOKI in Montreal Canada. The studio is interested in designing for socially engaged projects, which work towards sustainability, social justice and giving voice to important ideas. Kevin is Associate Professor of Visual Culture and Design Communication at Concordia University.

## 14 **Black Yield Institute: Reconnecting Food, Land, Culture, and People**

→ **Eric Jackson**

**Black Yield Institute, Servant director  
Baltimore, USA**

Black Yield Institute (BYI) is an institution in Baltimore, Maryland (United States of America). The work and mission of BYI is two-fold—combat food apartheid and build movement for sovereignty or control. Movement is not possible without radical intimacy because social movement building is not possible without relationships. Relationships are the building-blocks of movement building. In fact, relationships are the building-blocks of healthy socialization. Healthy social relationships are discouraged and destroyed through oppressive systems.

Community-based organizing is necessary to restore these relationships and thus engage in radical intimacy; organizing allows organizers and other contributors to disinvest from oppressive systems that continue to disconnect us from our food sources, the land, and from ourselves. The presentation explores the problems that are created from the existence of food apartheid and lifts up approaches to restoring and reclaiming relationships for the purpose of building power and establishing control of our food environments, food systems, and our own destinies.

**Eric Jackson** is an organizer, educator, and filmmaker, humbly serving as the visionary and a co-founder of Black Yield Institute, committed to building a movement toward Black Land and Food Sovereignty in Baltimore. Currently, he and his team are committed to a 1.25 acre urban agriculture operation and building a cooperatively-owned grocery store in South Baltimore, while also conducting Black-led research, facilitating political education, and organizing an action network.

Eric has over a decade of experience working in and with communities operating programming and helping people to build power and address a myriad of issues, including food inequities. A Baltimore native from the Cherry Hill Community, Eric is the recipient of numerous awards and a public speaker who has presented hundreds of addresses and workshops to diverse groups about food sovereignty, building power, and establishing strong organizations to address complex social issues, specific to people of African Descent. He is affirmed in and secured this work through the love of his family and friends.

## Walking Saigon

→ **Olivia Guntarik**

RMIT Australia, Associate professor

Our visit to Vietnam was marked by surprise, the unexpected and moments of shame about the American war and its ongoing effects in the everyday. Our study tour engaged 50 Australian students in intensive learning and local collaboration. Upon reflection, I would say we cannot expect outsiders, newcomers or tourists to immediately understand what it means to “read” cultural differences or histories of colonial violence. We bring our own assumptions and ways of seeing to the fore. It is often only through reflection that we find pause to view what we don’t understand or can put words to in new light. In Vietnam we spent time walking together, discussed with students the challenges of presenting emerging ideas, and reflected on who we are and how we live in the world. This talk discusses a way to reimagine our environment and our place in it, taking walking as a method to organise thought and action. I draw on memory and a personal history of migration to complicate people and place.

**Olivia Guntarik** teaches in the Music Industry program at RMIT University in Melbourne Australia. A creative writer of non-fiction, fictocriticism and ethnographic narrative, her writing emanates from and within struggles for social justice and human rights. A descendent of the Dusun-Murut hilltribes of Borneo, her traditional and ancestral homelands stretch from her birthplace in the interior plains of Tenom to the foothills of Mount Kinabalu and the river Kiulu, her grandmother’s country. Olivia’s fieldwork encompasses Australia and the wider Asia Pacific region, and includes creating digital stories shared through oral histories, song and sound walks with First Nations storytellers.

## YULENDJ GADABA - Knowledge Rising

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→ **N’arweet Carolyn Briggs**

RMIT Australia, Professor

N’arweet Carolyn Briggs will discuss her work in human rights, land rights and social justice with Indigenous youth spanning more than 50 years.

**Carolyn Briggs** is Respected Boon Wurrunjung Elder and academic at RMIT in Melbourne.

## 16 Culture-led Approaches to City-making

→ **Yuri Frassi and Afra Rebuscini**  
Officine Găp

According to JLL's City Momentum Index, Ho Chi Minh City, formerly known as Saigon, is one of the top 3 most dynamic cities globally. This index analyses a number of key growth drivers, including talent attraction and the expansion of innovation hubs. Continuous changes and 'rapid momentum' come with their own challenges and put under pressure the existing infrastructure and the city's administration. In this ever-changing context, traditional models fall short of understanding the complexity of these changes. However, this can also lead to an opportunity to integrate innovative and interdisciplinary approaches. Although the economic, political and social dimensions of development have always been considered by the international community, the cultural dimension has been greatly undervalued. By applying creativity and culture to urban concerns, it is possible to achieve new, unconventional and effective approaches to the solution of imperative urban concerns as well as expand traditional notions of city-making. In this symposium, we would like to highlight the relevance of interdisciplinary and culture-led approaches to analyzing, reading, and designing the city as opposed to traditional modes. These can play a vital role in developing complementary tools to face rapid changes in the city and inhabitants' needs and contribute to introducing flexibility in spatial and urban processes, broaden the demography of urban interventions, help in preserving and repurposing different forms of heritage (architectural, urban, intangible), shed a light on processes of participatory and informal design, and diversify the know-how of government agencies and regulatory bodies with the

help of creative practitioners. As a case study, we will focus on the city's soundscapes as an indicator of social behaviors, and well-being as well as the environmental and economic state of a city land as an analytic tool for studying changes in society and understanding the transformative processes of places through the integration of tools and methodologies traditionally used by sonic practitioners (such as soundwalks, sound-mapping, and field recordings).

**Yuri Frassi** is a cultural manager based in Sài Gòn, Vietnam. He is the co-founder of Officine Găp, an interdisciplinary studio working on exploring the impact of alternative, unconventional, creative-led approaches to urban planning, place-making, heritage preservation, as well as social and city identity. With a background in finance and management, Yuri's work and research interests lie at the intersection of art and social sciences supported by a broader understanding of the economic, cultural, and social context. His early interest in the creative field started with his final research paper on arts and heritage management during his university studies. Today, Yuri is also exploring the practice of art curating through a collaborative approach and actively participates in the production of cultural events.

**Afra Rebuscini** is an architect and independent art curator based in Sài Gòn, Vietnam. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Architecture from the Polytechnic University of Milan and a Master of Arts in Curating Contemporary Art from the Royal College of Art, London. She further consolidated her interest in the social use of urban spaces through a postgraduate course in the Anthropology of Social Spaces and the Built Environment from Goldsmith University, London.

In 2021, she co-founded Officine Găp, an interdisciplinary and research-led firm based in Sài Gòn and dedicated to working with cultural institutions, policy-makers, architects, artists, and city planners to develop and improve the cultural framework of Southeast Asian cities.

Her research and practice interests lie at the intersection of art, architecture, design, urban studies, and sustainable development.

Key research interests include the use of neglected urban spaces in contemporary cities, the politics of the city and how culture and art can shape public life and contribute to heritage management and city development.

In her work as a curator, she focuses on how city-makers and art practitioners can collaborate to improve the cultural and social life of cities as well as the exploration of community planning and sustainable urbanism through public architecture.

Currently, her work at Officine Găp focuses on developing and implementing culture-led strategies with the aim to integrate cultural assets into traditional urban design and placemaking.







Case 12: Mapping + branding

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# Workshop & Exhibition

Dec 7-17, 2022

Memefest workshops aim to operate on the margins of dominant social orders, narrow disciplines, and extractive paradigms and imagine possibilities for new and sustainable worlds and social relations. These values are embedded in our pedagogy and practice and expressed through the deeply collaborative nature of our workshops.

The Relational Cities workshop looks at Ho Chi Minh City and its production of space through food—its production, distribution, representation, and consumption. Acknowledging that space is politically contested as well as socially constructed, we look at food as a key medium which defines our relationships to the world. We position design as a central domain of thought and action concerned with the meaning and production of sociocultural life—a set of complex systems and relationalities between people, structures and culture. By looking at food as a form, subject and medium of design (in/of the city), we seek to raise and explore critical questions about urban life, development, sustainability, and culture within Ho Chi Minh City.

Research Themes include:

- Identities of different districts, streets, spaces and places (street signage, visual representations, distinct architectures of place)
- Ecological sustainability of space and city (infrastructures of production,

- distribution and consumption)
- Informal space and city (informal structures and spaces, transitory and temporal structures and the social relations they create)
- Cultural identity, heritage and transformation (traditions, customs, religions and belief systems)

Project formats include zines/publications, maps and counter-maps, installations, Videos, etc.

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The workshop was facilitated by Memefest mentors while project outcomes were self-determined by multidisciplinary student groups.

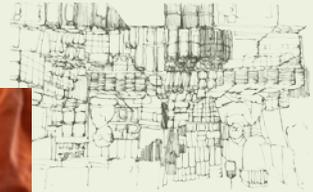
On Dec. 17th, 2022, the projects were presented at a special exhibition on the 5th floor of UAH. The exterior halls and landing space were used to create a streetscape with installations from students taking the metaphorical form of street vendors and food cart stalls.



**LIVE/  
LOCATE/  
OCCUPY/  
INHABIT/  
POPULATE/  
HOUSE/  
RESIDENT/  
SITUATE/**



**FOOD  
RELATIONSHIP OF  
IMMERSED IN THE**



# MAXI-MISING



**SMALL CHAIRS**

Allows space for more people to sit while creating close proximity when eating, resulting in a sense of togetherness



**STACKED DISHES**

Space is utilised vertically in order to minimise the amount of bench space used

## IMPROVISATION OF OBJECTS

Uses objects in a way that they aren't typically intended for. Allows for the objects to have multiple purposes thus taking up less space overall



# THEIR RESOURCES

The diversity of food found in Ho Chi Minh City's markets means they can accommodate for anyone's needs, locals and visitors alike. This allows for the production and sharing of food to take place in a defined site, creating community and cementing relationships.

hành cẩu chà - háh tẻn hằm yàng - hằm đừn  
mìn tằm - háh nít - hó hó - còm tằm - phở  
súp cẩu - mìn tẻn - háh tẻn tẻn - háh xỏ  
gỏi háh hó - chà háh nùng

# FRESH COOKED



# UTILISING THEIR

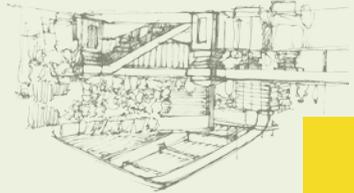


Within markets, the people set up and operate in such an efficient way that productively *utilises* and *maximises* the small space that they have.



# COOKING PROCESS

The preparation and cooking of food often happens in tight, confined spaces. People can watch their food being cooked in front of them while immersing themselves in the culture of the market. There are no separate sections, everything cohesively merges and overlaps.



Accommodating one with their environment

# CREATING SPACES FOR FOOD SHARING IN AN EMERGING MEGA CITY.

Whether it's outside or spinning out onto the sidewalks and roads, people are creative in making a space that appears impractical.

↑ **Creating Spaces for Food Sharing in an Emerging Mega City**  
 Nguyen Ming Truc, Le Phuong Ve,  
 Isabella Livis, Lucinda Johnson-Cornes,  
 Elinor Devenish-Mearns



"The word **õ** when translated to English contains a lot of meanings: Live/Locate/ Occupy/ Inhabit/Populate/House/ Resident/Situate

Every one of them represents a part of people's lives within the market. Their lives revolve around the market, they make connections within the market, they eat and sleep in the market. It shows the hardships that people go through to make a living and food is one of the few things that keep them on their feet."



Fig. 102 Nguyen Minh Truc (2022), *õ* (in Vietnamese) Drawn in ink on paper

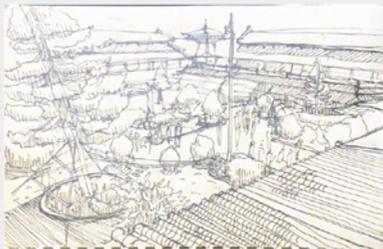


Fig. 103 Nguyen Minh Truc (2022), *õ* (in Vietnamese) Drawn in ink on paper



Fig. 111 Nguyen Minh Truc (2022), *õ* (in Vietnamese) Drawn in ink on paper



Fig. 112 Nguyen Minh Truc (2022), *õ* (in Vietnamese) Drawn in ink on paper







Group D  
**SUNDAY**  
 17.12.2022

# NUOC MAM

The production of space through food system

made by  
 JESSIE THUAN GONG THANH  
 (LAZY) LONG HOANG NGUYEN  
 ANHUA HANG  
 ANHUELLICA THRONO  
 NGUYEN THI MINH NGUYEN

PRICE: 2000 VND

**T**he production of space through food system

page **3**

**T**he art of resourcefulness

page **8**

**A** fridge is a lazy time capsule

page **10**



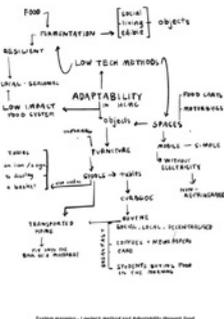
**F**ermented foods are social, living, edible objects

**R**ecipe of the day #ROTD



page **13**

Preservation responds to the transitional entropy of time to intensify and develop flavours in smell and taste. Fermented foods are social, living, edible objects.



↑ **Nước Mắm**  
 Tuan Cong Tran, Long Hoang Nguyen,  
 Aisha Hara, Angelica Trono, Nguyet Thi  
 Minh Nguyen



### ← Street Vending - How the movement of vendors portray the story of Saigon

Martin Jovanoski, Phu Nguyen Hoang Anh, Hy Doan Gia



#### UNCLE TU

- ① Schedule: - 2am - 8/3am: Prepare the food (by himself)  
 (4am) go to the market (Tuan Chau market)  
 - 8am - 6/7pm: Sell cake (All the cakes)  
 - 8am - 2am: Sleep

- ② Route: Binh Phai crossroad, Phan Van Oanh Str, Bai Trade Bridge, Quai 7 Str, Dien Bien Phu Str, Ho-Di-Du, Nguyen Thi Dinh  
 - Address: 46 Recultural area, Binh Chanh ward, Thu-Du

- Bus: Ho Chi Truoc Str, Dien Bien Phu Str
- Old route: 10 Van Tu, 10/7 Str, Nguyen Binh Chuan Market (With his wife)  
 - He sells all cakes at "Thu-Du"  
 - He has travel from Thu-Du to D3, now he doesn't cut at a same market  
 - All morning, sleep only in the night

- ③ Relationship: Wife, son (All sell cakes) (Family business)  
 - Sell cakes for 55 years, he is 70 years-old  
 - Used to sell with his wife, Now with his sons.

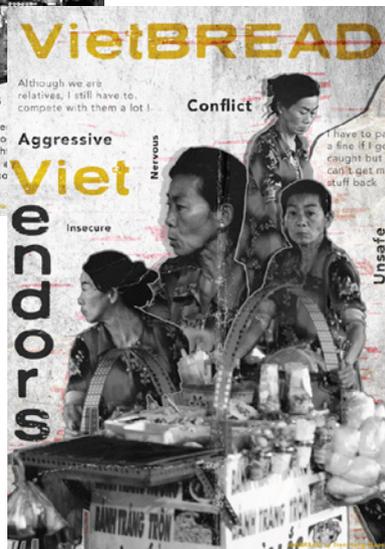
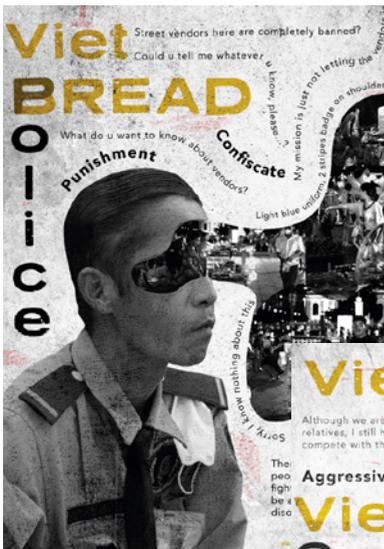
- ④ Income:  
 - Enough to live  
 - Bring up his family (wife, children)  
 - No saving, saving every day in cash  
 - 20k - 25k price  
 - Study how to make cakes <sup>from</sup> his former boss (Bao Linh Phuong)  
 - Buy cart at Hung Vuong Str.

- ⑤ Heritage: Bao hien (Dessert name of Vietnam)  
 - Went to Saigon with family when he was a child  
 - To make more money.





Despite being a main tourist attraction for the city, the practice of street vending in Saigon lives in a liminal space between legality and illegality. In many areas of Vietnam, street vending has been legal since 2008 but the laws around it are largely interpretive; Hawkers cannot take up space on roads or sidewalks and must keep their ingredients safe for consumption. The lack of clarity surrounding these laws leaves ample room for corruption and interference by those who enforce them.



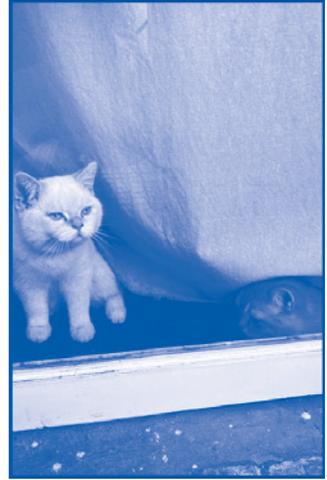
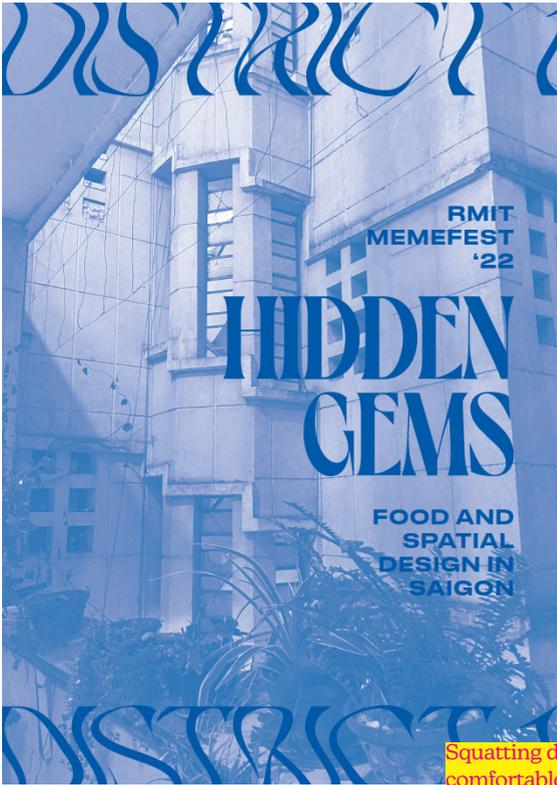
← **VietBread**  
Stanley Henghui Sun,  
Trần Hồng Quang, James  
McCannon



Stanley Henghui Sun







Squatting down on the low chairs, we soon got comfortable in an uncomfortable position. Perhaps it was because we all were sitting in front of each other with our knees to our chins and were excited to also cradle our own cup of heavenly goodness, but it all made the experience even better and more intimate.





CEMENT SU

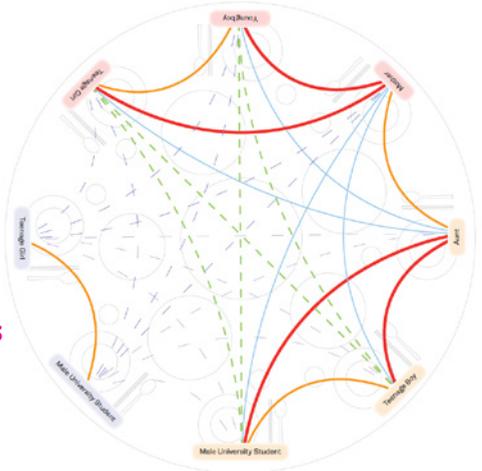
2000  
gia 720  
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Đền Ông Hoàng ở Đền Bà  
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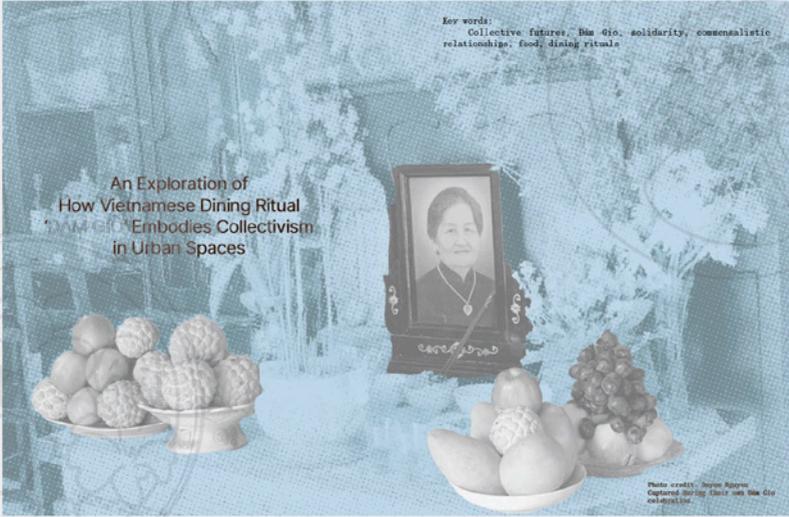
← **Food is the Window to the Soul**  
Trin Minh Huong, Jye Mara,  
Daisy Nichols, Kayla Nguyen



↓ **Dining Ecologies—An Exploration of how Vietnamese Dining Ritual ‘ĐÁM GIO’ Embodies Collectivism in Urban Spaces**

Madelaine Thomas, Jasmine Griffith, Nguyen Minh Duy, Phan Le Que Anh, Lâm Phương Nguyên, Elizabeth Morrell





Key words:  
Collective future, Đám Giỗ, solidarity, consensualistic relationships, food, dining ritual

An Exploration of How Vietnamese Dining Ritual 'ĐÁM GIỖ' Embodies Collectivism in Urban Spaces

Photo credit: Nayan Nayyar. Captured during lunch on the Đám Giỗ celebration.

2

3

# ĐÁM GIỖ

Death

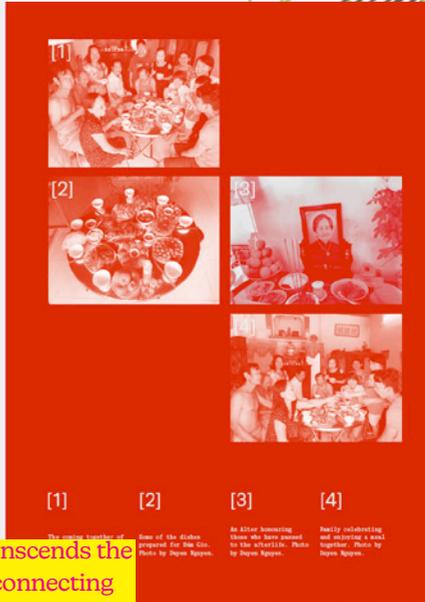
Anniversary

A Vietnamese celebration that honours the dead.



Annually, a two-day ceremony called 'Đám Giỗ' is held to remember loved ones who have passed. Rooted in the religious history of Confucianism and Buddhism, Đám Giỗ is a manifestation of ancestral worship (Johnson 2002). The occasion is not one of sorrow but instead honours and celebrates ancestors who have passed away. Đám Giỗ stems from the belief that the spirits of ancestors

invited to visit. Đám Giỗ creates a space for reflection and a sense of closeness (Vo C, 2019). It invites families to appreciate the connections they have, the memories they share and the teachings and learnings passed down through generations. It allows people to hold onto the presence of loved ones, keeping both physical and non-physical presence of family and



[1] [2] [3] [4]

The central location of the dining table is the focus of the Đám Giỗ. Photo by Nayan Nayyar. An altar honoring those who have passed to the afterlife. Photo by Nayan Nayyar. Family celebrating and enjoying a meal together. Photo by Nayan Nayyar.

The concept of food as a gift transcends the physical realm and serves as a connecting thread; a dynamic, intricate network that emphasises purpose and interdependence.

4



→ **Food as Offering and a Medium for Life and Death in Vietnamese Buddhism and Caodaism**

Bao Tran Luong Huynh, Brandan Lapeyre, Chelsey Connor, Đoàn Gia Trí , Hong Anh Vu Nguyen



↓ **Chợ Vườn Chuối Market as Sublime Experience**

Mia Peeters, Harper Pestinger, Tien Le, Rupert Beaufoy, Sam Pradd, Michael Le





Luân hồi



↑ **Riversong**

Nguyen Vu Thien An, Tomas Barnes, Nick Symons, Tahlullah Gumm

Macro  
 why should people give a fuck?  
 → Micro: representation of the necessity of water  
 • Community  
 • Care  
 • Contribution? →

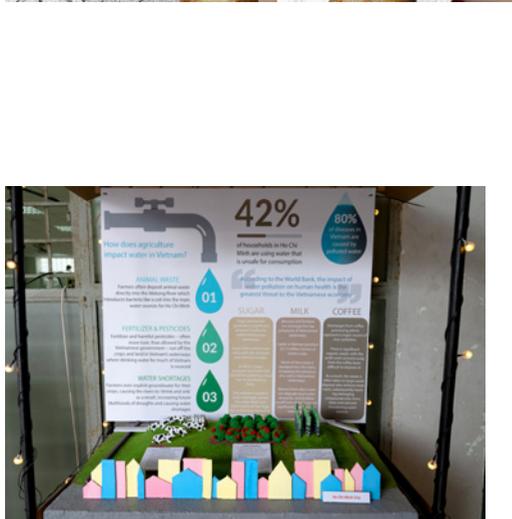
tolunian  
 password & website

Potential Directions  
 Gallery?  
 Photo on map?  
 Video?  
 Quiz?  
 Gallery...  
 \*   
 → challenges of...

Website  
 • Map ~ Distribution  
 • Insights from interviews  
Video background  
 & audio  
 What does water mean?  
 What can we learn from a city interconnect with water bottles?



← **Hang Hem / Food Stories**  
 Harriet Dicks,  
 Lachlan Wills,  
 Minh Dang Ngoc  
 Hoang, Ly Tu Ngoc





How does the intensity of Ho Chi Minh City affect our embodied experience of space, taste and place? Synesthetic Saigon reflects on our embodied experiences in the city as outsiders curious about the sweetness in the food and drinks here. The concept of synesthesia guided our investigation into the relational and sensual intensity of HCMC. The piece intends to generate fragments and glimpses that reflect the city's complexity which only offers vignettes of an organic whole.



← **Synesthetic Saigon**

Nguyen Duy Son, Madison Weeks, Lucy Wallace, Yasmin Wallace, Brodyn Harty, Chester Murdoch



→ **CU-ZINE – The Threat of Floods to Street Food Culture in HCMC**

Le Kien Quoc, Khan Vu, Sophia Cuthbertson, Kelsey Williams

**Emerging threat of floods to street food culture in Ho Chi Minh City**

The ability for every town to have a sustainable and resilient food system is an extremely important aspect of a thriving urban city. Currently Vietnam has a thriving street culture region that comprises its food needs to the inner cities, ever-growing population. However, Ho Chi Minh is a low lying flat or near sea level city that combined with global warming and rising sea levels creates concern. The concern is that in 2050, much of this particular region, as well as some of the inner city districts will



Concretely Vietnam's food culture is built on the movement and flexibility of street vendors. Some street food vendors are constantly on the move, they can park by their stall and move a couple meters away with a matter of minutes without on the back of bikes or by foot. These vendors products will as they are easily accessible on the street on foot or motor traffic. This type of street food vendor is successful in Ho Chi Minh as they are able to sell small amounts of fresh food that come from local areas. With the projected 2050 floods, the availability of fresh food will be impacted. The 2050 projected floods will significantly change the food culture in the Cu Minh City as the movement and flexibility of street food vendors will be forced to change.



**The survival and resilience of street food culture**

In Ho Chi Minh City street food culture can be seen as an act of survival. It has been here for 50 years since the end of the war, and Vietnam has been able to rebuild not only infrastructure but also its culture. A large part of the resiliency of the street food is seen through the experience and survival of the Vietnamese people. Similarly in the traditional Owners of Australia have survived the survival of their Country through passing on knowledge through language and song. The street Country is defined as being a "surviving street... a place that grows and grows life... it is lived in and lived with" (Cook, 2018, pp. 12). Street food in Vietnam through the lens of Country is not just a means of subsistence in terms of space and place. Country is not becoming, it encompasses everything in a state of experience and relationship. (Coates 9 2016, pp.46). Rubin et al. (2022) found that passing on cultural knowledge to younger generations is vital to ensuring living people and Country (Rubin et al. 2022, pp.43). One way that cultural knowledge has been passed down is through food. Vietnamese youth may not relate and connect with traditional ways of passing on knowledge, thus the reason for their food culture being an incredibly important aspect of the city's identity. Understanding food is very important to us to grasp the full extent of its importance. Through this we can appreciate the need for food and gain a comprehensive understanding that will occur if places of food are washed away.



**How might people change the market level and what is the future?**

All Vietnamese people, in general, do not tend to occur in the future before the invention of money, people seem to exchange their goods in certain locations known as markets because they were each gathering places. One may say that the Vietnamese people have been like a village by the market. It is important to them and to people as well as a place to meet and exchange goods. It is important to people as a place to meet and educate people about the market. The majority of people's attention is on the market as a place



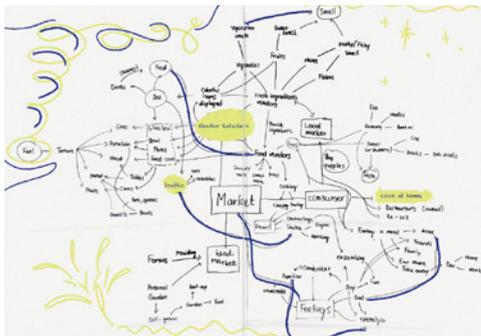
**What does the market mean for people?**

Everyone, especially Vietnamese people, depend on the market. This is the spot that, in everyone's memory, nurtures the town's childhood memories while also accompanying them throughout life. They can see this location as a second home, a community center, and a place to trade things. Small business centers may trade steadily to support their family business of the market. The market has helped individuals become friends with previous strangers.



**How do we sustain our food?**

Food is also widely diverse, ranging from sweets and cakes for treats to more than 1000 types of rice and noodles and a range of beverages. The variety of sources used in Vietnamese food is one of its unique features. They enjoy dipping everything, including fresh herbs in dipping sauces. To best complement it, each dish needs its own sauce. The eating has already begun in the morning. Restaurants are open early to serve people breakfast options such as broken rice, bahn mi, and pho. A cup of coffee is necessary to begin a long workday. It is common that the beverage has a powerful effect that keeps energy up until the coffee begins early in the morning. To avoid fatigue at work, self-provided energy is not enough. Spending the time of day is not particularly busy, but it is a very important part of the day. This is the best period of the day as people crowd the street together.

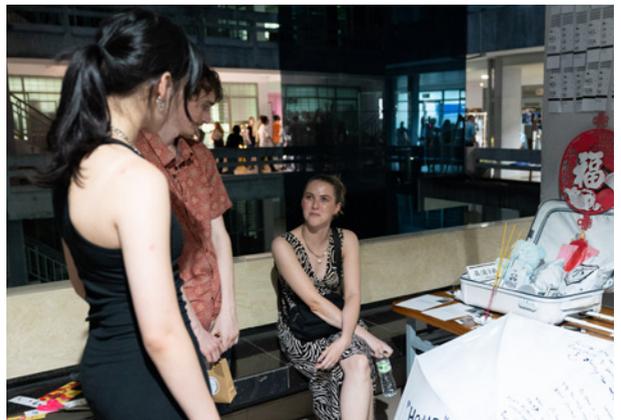




This artwork is an abstract representation of the agency of street food vendors. Authoritative documents line the bottom sections of the structures, appearing to slowly decay and form cracks in their officiality. In direct juxtaposition are the vibrant polychromatic structures stacked on top, seemingly putting the authority to the test.

### ↑ Underdog Heroes

Trinh Tien Dat, Katie Zhou,  
Daniel Watson, Pham Te Bao







→ **Home**

Hilary Zhao, Kin  
Pan Lo, Do Nhat  
Long

When you leave a country for an extended period of time you not only become a time capsule of that country, living in a different cultural space means that you can never quite re-assimilate into your home culture again. Many will often search for the few connections available to them—the most prominent being food. We invite you to look a little bit closer into this suitcase—and to find your own connections to home. What are you packing and carrying with you as you move through life?

The following section is a selection of short, annotated bibliographies, written by the student participants of the workshops. These readings and the reflections served as guiding frameworks and inspiration for our work.

↓ Thuan Cong Tran, Long Hoang Nguyen, Aisha Hara, Angelica Trono, Nguyet Thi Minh Nguyen

**Mattern, S. (2020). *A city is not a computer*. In *The Routledge Companion to Smart Cities* Routledge. 51-72.**

Through the focus of the differencing events of the year 2020, the author embarks on the question of what makes a city a city, as much of the occasions influence how society values and uses a city. This chapter describes how complications that happen within cities are now being raised after the events in 2020 such as the global pandemic and worldwide anti-police movements. Creating a connection with space and technology, the author raises concerns on the stagnant development of cities that are framed to be incompatible to this era where urban innovation is needed as well as the overwhelming reliance of society towards the internet. The author also makes a point on the contradictory concepts of technological designs in order to solve human issues in cities as there is a lack of local knowl-

edge and public appointments. This paper is useful to the group research of spatial relations with human interactions in Ho Chi Minh city as the author suggest that urban epistemologies should be in consideration when exploring new cities, this includes the admiration for local knowledge and groups rather than those that fund or construct the city instead we should look at those who build the city's esoteric. However, although the paper has mitigating features about new design perspective, it was limited to social backgrounds that control designs of the cities, contribution of other stakeholders involved other than governments and local communities can enhance complexity. This paper will build the framing of our perspective in our work as well as help raise questions when exploring Ho Chi Minh city.

Awan N, Schneider T and Till J (2013). *Spatial agency: Other ways of doing architecture*, *The Sites of Spatial Agency*. Routledge. 55-65.

In this chapter the authors aimed to define spatial agency through the perspective of social interactions. They raise the impor-

**48** tance of design through personal motivations such as privatization which demonstrates social aspects of space. The author describes this concept as a hierarchy system that ignore other public motivations which include local knowledge, which often results in resistance. Architectural concepts are used throughout the paper making relations between law and the understanding of location when being built. A main objective the authors portray is the importance for all stakeholders including residences to be part of construction processes which essentially proves that there is a need for more collaboration in the Architectural industry. This concept includes sustainable resource management such as the use of local materials to create a holistic system that involves social, environmental, and economic values. This paper relates to our project as our workshops values collaborative spaces that are showed in design, for example Ho Chi Minh city is designed through the local knowledge of food and pleasure similar to the concept the authors illustrate. The Memefest organisation also highly values collaboration and this paper was able to articulate the importance of it as well as changing the perspective on built social constructs, which in turn allowed our groups to clarify our purpose of our journey. An important concept of our project was also the holistic system of seeing things for their properties and not for the preserved usages like what is proven in the streets of Ho Chi Minh city. This paper helped add more complexity in our project.

**Truong V (2018) *Tourism, poverty alleviation, and the informal economy: the street vendors of Hanoi, Vietnam, Tourism Recreation Research, 43:1, 52-67***

Truong, a researcher for tourism at the National Economics University of Hanoi, used a qualitative research approach which included interviews of street food vendor owners to describe and identify the experi-

ences of food vendors during tourism and events of poverty alleviation. Through the identification of the motivations for the pursuit of the street vendor occupation, Truong argues that underlining social barriers causes street vending such as decline of non-farm jobs. The main issue currently in Vietnam is government restriction on street food which can lead to further poverty. The author suggests that the disregard for the hustle and complications with vendors results in the silencing of locals during poverty alleviation. The author also examines informal economy where connections were made on income generation due to informality, further supporting street vendors, however the author claims that informality often is framed for poor people which paints a negative picture on the business. Formal versus informal was one of the main concepts our group analysed during workshops, this paper was useful to the research as it suggests the benefit and limitations of the informal economy. This paper gave us a new perspective on government framing of street vendors which was a used as supplementary information for our project on the state of space design. The main limitation of the paper is that the site examination and interviews was restricted to the streets of Hanoi, thus further studies in other regions in Vietnam such as Ho Chi Minh city can provide a greater depiction of circumstances.

**Lopes A M and Zettel T (2017), 'Making Time Food Preservation and Ontological Design', in Vodeb O. (ed) *Food Democracy: Critical Lessons in Food, Communication, Design and Art*. Intellect Bristol UK.**

Founder of Memefest, Oliver Vodeb's edited book *Food Democracy* explores the many avenues in which food is the medium to support socially responsive extradisciplinary communication, design, and art. The chapter 'Making Time Food preservation and Ontological Design' explores the dy-

dynamic of how a performance artwork can be a form of advocacy for food democracy. This chapter focuses on fermented and preserved foods and the design of food technology around keeping foods fresh. This chapter starts by exploring the role of a performance art project entitled 'Making Time' (2010-present) in critiquing western food cultures and amplifying the unseen intercultural and intergenerational practices of food preservation. The chapter highlights the careless unsustainability of reliance on refrigeration, repositioning the normative conditions for safe and comfortable eating spaces and the cultural social practice behind traditions such as Tomato Day in Italy.

In our research avenue we explored the use of objects in street food vendors and marketplaces in Ho Chi Minh City, similarly this chapter argues that often objects are given roles from their ideas instead of their matter. By utilising the research and articulation of Lopes and Zettel our research can be guided in the discussion of the relationalities between fermentation and innovative spaces. By positioning the concern for sustainability with how we trace our concept of things like a 'fresh' supermarket purchase which has been through a long process of chemical treatment and dependency on refrigeration the chapter outlines ways in which preservation can be a way of honouring the social and considered making of time involved. Our project utilises many aspects of these arguments to direct our attention towards how fermentation is an avenue for a low-tech food system and an environmentally conscious food system. The fermentation process is slow, natural, and social as people gather culturally to make something to eat months later. This chapter located our prior observations of our surroundings into a direction focused on combining both spatial and food related elements into our consideration of environmental, cultural, and social food systems.

**Vansintjan A (February 2017), 'Vietnam's Low-tech Food System Takes Advantage of Decay', Low-tech Magazine website accessed 12 December 2022** 49

In this opinion piece the observations and benefits of fermentation practices in Vietnam are outlined in critique of Western societies need for refrigeration. The article discusses fermented food being healthy, low-tech and a fundamental part of a sustainable food system. By suggesting that fermentation cultures in Vietnam give us the possibility for a food system which can be sustainable and last a long time. The piece particularly outlines how fermented foods allows for a localised food system. The intricate web like system of wholesale night markets, mobile street vendors and guerilla gardening on vacant land is positioned as making it possible for a low-tech food system in other parts of the world. This article articulated the point that the 'West' has a long way to go in learning to unlearn the reliance on high-tech food systems as they have created a global, anonymous, and vulnerable food system. Low-tech alternatives are local alternatives and consider the climate, culture and geography making systems of fermentation resilient solutions to food democracy. This article specifically explores the dishes in Vietnam which utilise fermentation such as nước mắm (Vietnamese fish sauce), mắm tôm (fermented shrimp paste) and rượu nếp (fermented sweet rice wine pudding). This detailed position within Vietnam allows for our research to be guided by the specific climate, geography, and traditions specific to Vietnam. This article develops the understanding of our group in the formation of our argument for fermentation as a potential food solution to create local, sustainable, and healthy foods for the future.

**Malasan P L, (2019), 'The untold flavour of street food: Social infrastructure as a means of everyday politics for street vendors in Bandung, Indonesia', *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, DOI:10.1111/apv.12217**

The vendors in Indonesia are often considered out of place in urban planning and settlement. By keeping the legality of vendors in constant flux the unofficial lines keep their presence under scrutiny. Exploring the 'people as infrastructure' idea of the vendors whose economy exchanges is informal and social this peer-reviewed research paper is suggesting that street vendors are the politics of every day. The vendors regularly open business from morning till afternoon their business is the formation of social networks. This paper takes a behind the scenes approach travelling along the daily life of a street vendor. The author had visited and followed along with three different street vendors in Bandung Indonesia. The anecdotal nature of the description of the vendors preparing foods at home, visiting each supplier, and having bonds with the farmers whose fresh produce they sell explore the behind-the-scenes elements of this social network. In concern for what the future may look like for this culture of street vendors the author interviews the new generation of vendors who utilise social media, modern stall designs and an overall different approach. Street vendors are positioned as a powerful network within the community and thus practice subtle resistance to the repression of urban development agendas to eradicate street vendors.

This research paper has a similar concern and avenue of researching another's culture in subtle ways that do not outline a black and white position between vendors and the oppressive state. Instead, the research looks deeper into the vendors

lived experience, their daily activities, and the relationships they have formed as a social infrastructure more powerful than it seems. This paper positions street vendors as adopting everyday politics challenging the negative perceptions attached to their role and the subtle resistance they perform. Despite Indonesia being geographically different, there are similarities in the oppressive nature of the reforms against street vendors in Vietnam. This asks the questions that develop within our research of what it means to have a resilient and social food network.

**Hays, J. (n.d.). *Society In Vietnam: Confucianism, History, Social Structures And Communism* | Facts and Details. [online] factsanddetails.com. Available at: [https://factsanddetails.com/southeast-asia/Vietnam/sub5\\_9c/entry-3404.html](https://factsanddetails.com/southeast-asia/Vietnam/sub5_9c/entry-3404.html).**

The factual website provides background and context into the history and social structure of Vietnam enabling us to really understand how the current social structure came about and how it continues to challenge human agency.

The Vietnamese are quite distinguished stratifications in society, many people were left impoverished because of the American War and the politics of the Communist Party's regime. They do not like to stratify people into classes and prefer to feel unified in their society, with this view being supported by the communist government. Although it is still quite distinguishable that there is an enormous gap between the classes in Vietnam.

There is not much of a recognised middle class in Vietnam, rather people are mostly distinguished as either 'rich' or 'poor'. While there is a general cultural acceptance of hierarchies in society regarding age, gender, status and education. In Vietnam, one's age determines the grading of respect in many interactions. Often this

means a person has to unconditionally obey its seniors or defer to the views of an elder in an argument. Whilst one thing that gives one power in this society is their age, being part of the government and authorities and being rich does not at all determine how much agency you have in this society.

In modern Vietnamese society, there is a sustainable element to the local urban economy — and the economic benefits from sidewalks are very real. Vietnamese people rarely complain and continue to be motivated and are resilient despite having experienced so much adversity. Street vendors play an important role in urban Vietnamese commerce. They provide very low-priced goods and generate employment for a large number of people across the country. For many people, it is just to earn a living and to earn money to survive. The average amount earned is much lower than the average wage in Vietnam and sometimes just enough for vendors to make a living for themselves. In Vietnam street vendors have taken things into their own hands, whilst the government is not a fan of them, they continue to flourish and resist it. They remain undefeated against the social pressures they face. Their agency can be exercised through a number of ways. One of which being how their food and cultural traditions have not only been passed on through generations but have defeated Westernised food options introduced to southeast Asia such as McDonalds.

**Anon (2017) 'Contested Cityscapes in Vietnam.' Available at: <https://contestedcityscapes.wordpress.com/hanoi/street-vending/politicsandresistance/> (Accessed: 17 December 2022).**

This article explains the reality of street food vendors, in terms of the tension between them and the government. In 2008, Hanoi's government banned street food vendors from many spaces, in hopes

of creating more space for modern transport, rather than the traditional mobiles of street vendors. The politics of the government has made vending a somewhat mechanism of resistance to authority, with the purpose of vendors maintaining livelihoods through their vendor's income, despite threats of the state's exclusion towards them.

Thus, this research provides interesting background research as to the politics of street vendors and the way the government does not fully accept them. This may relate to other points of a typical government that likes to focus on order and rules, which may clash with the everyday lives of people. It is interesting to think about what rules make sense to follow, and what rules people may find loopholes around. Street vendors are not doing any harm, so their resistance is understandable and healthy in making food accessible to many people.

Hence, for our research project, this point of tension will be a dominant focus. Creating some point of visual contrast between the structure and rigidness of the authority, in juxtaposition with the liveliness and unique culture of the street vendors will be imperative. Communicating the relationship and interaction between the two, in the light of street vendors standing against the authority and still continuing to thrive, will be important.

**Memefest Relational City Lecture series open conversation talk about McDonald's. December 2022.**

During one of the lecture series at the University of Architecture, a student brought up the concept of McDonald's. The crux of what was spoken about is as follows. While McDonald's local adaptation in the menu includes chicken rice and grilled pork rice with egg, both the quality and price that you pay is incomparable to locally sourced street food. Much of the menu in-

**52** cludes internationally exported food such as beef from Australia. Stepping inside a McDonald's chain in Vietnam feels different in the sense that it is not praised by locals one bit. It's clear that the locals are not financially prepared to step inside McDonalds frequently due to its high prices compared to the same chicken and rice which you could find on the street for a fraction of the price. Street food is arguably more nutritious, locally sourced and even more convenient.

McDonalds is a prime example of how the world is embracing a Western diet which is unsustainable and at the same time how it has failed in a country with a flourishing street-food culture. Food is readily available in Vietnam and locals did not want to settle for a limited range of items when they have a lot of cheaper and traditional options at their disposal. McDonalds is competing with many local businesses with pho or banh mi already an option on-the-go which could not compete with a cheeseburger.

This was a very eye opening conversation about food. Due to this, we specifically chose to focus on the traditional Vietnamese foods of banh mi, pho and Vietnamese pizza for our research project, as they are much more popular than chains that everyone visits in Western countries.

The popularity of these local foods relates to the popularity of street food vendors rather than chain restaurants, and in turn, more government approved places that are much more generic. Hence, for our final artwork, we want to create a space that elevates these local foods in an ethereal and praising light, to showcase this point.

**The Guardian. (2015). Saigon street food: 'There's no future for my son selling food this way'. [online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2015/jun/29/saigon-street-food-vietnam-illegal-vendors>.**

A news article published by the Guardian in 2015 includes a study undertaken by the UN's International Labour Office in 2014 which estimated that up to 78% of street food vendors operate their businesses illegally, proving the politics of the government and resistance to authorities by street vendors shows that those at the bottom of the social hierarchy actually have human agency.

The article also includes arguments by Lisa Barthelmes. According to Barthelmes, (a PhD candidate studying Vietnam's informal economy at Germany's Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology), Vietnam's economic liberalisation reforms of the mid 1980s aimed to create a modern country, and thus street vending in the urban realm was seen by the government as "a visible manifestation of backwardness".

But three decades on, as any pedestrian on Saigon's crowded sidewalks can see, the industry is far from decline. Although unregistered street vending is still not sanctioned by the government, it has flourished in spite of economic reform. Street vendors are both cheap and nutritious and cooking in the open in front of its consumers ensures that the food is fresh and unadulterated. Much of their food practices are widely sustainable as food is locally sourced and Vietnamese cooking is very efficient and sustainable.

**Christopher Earley (1997). *Face, harmony, and social structure: an analysis of organizational behavior across cultures*. New York: Oxford University Press.**

Entailed in Professor of Neurology Christo-

pher J Earley's book titled *Face, Harmony, and Social Structure: An Analysis of Organizational Behavior* (1997) is the concept of Anthony Giddens's structuration theory. Through this resilience, strength and power it can be considered that Anthony Giddens's theory of structuration is challenged in Vietnam. Whereby he looks at two things; structure and agency. Structure: is where the rules and resources are organised as properties of social systems. Agency: is where an individual is able to observe his/her own experience and then be able to give reasons for their action. According to Giddens, structure and agency are mutually dependent on each other. The relationship between structure and agency as the duality of structure whereby individuals reflexively produce and reproduce their social life. In Vietnam, the amount of human agency exercised by ones position in the social structure does not necessarily determine how much agency they can hold.

Structuration theory aims to explain social practices across space and time by viewing action and social structure as linked by their interdependency. Human agency and social structure each act as an enabling condition of the other. In Vietnam, food is a rich source of knowledge and this cannot be taken away from the street vendors by a government policy because the street vendors will always flourish in this society because vending can only be done by the tough and the resilient and it is the people at the bottom of the social hierarchy that truly represent this and this is how they can exercise human agency.

↓ Tomas Barnes, Nick Symons, Tahlullah Gunn

**Li L, Su Li C, Wichelns D (2016) 'Assessing household willingness to pay for bottled water in rural areas of the Mekong Delta, Vietnam', *Water Resources and Rural Development*, 7,36-49, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wrr.2016.03.001>.**

In this article, Li et al. assess the willingness of Vietnamese locals in the Mekong Delta area in paying for bottled water during the dry season when access to rainwater is limited. The contributors of the article use research methods such as surveys and focus group discussions to identify the lack of economic growth in bottled water enterprises in rural areas; and whether this is linked to lower income households in the area. The research shows that when poorer regions do not have access to rainwater in dry seasons, they turn to drinking unsafe groundwater as bottled water is too expensive. As such, the article is useful to our research as it underpins the inequality that arises for low income regions and households when faced with no access to clean water. The main limitation of this article is that it does not specifically focus on the low socio economic culture of the Ho Chi Minh city region, thus more research needs to be done to address specifics to HCMC. This article provides a foundational level of information surrounding issues of accessibility and water; and is useful in understanding the wider issues of bottled water inaccessibility.

**Circular Economy Network. (n.d.). Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. [online] Available at: <https://circulareconomynetwork.co/the-network/ho-chi-minh-city-vietnam/>.**

This website, and its various sub-articles, offers a brief overview of the environmental landscape in Vietnam. It provides crucial information and statistics concerning how

**54** water is consumed within the nation; and ultimately how the infrastructure has been established. The Circular Economy is a global organisation offering credible research for understanding water systems within Vietnam; and through this the site seeks to educate communities, global and local, about the water usage and wastage in the country. The site also provides insights into the cultural practices surrounding water in Vietnam - especially in relation to how recycling operates on a community not government level within the nation. This practice known as “ve chai” makes up the majority of recycling practices, and is entirely community led. As such, this article served as a springboard for our group’s insightful research into water wastage and recycling of plastics; and how this operates on a ground level. This site thus served as a great foundation for understanding the current state of Vietnam, and specifically Ho Chi Minh’s current waste infrastructure.

↓ **Kelsie Williams, Sophia Cuthbertson, Jack Nguyen, Kate Vu and Le Jay**

**Country, B., Wright, S., Suchet-Pearson, S., Lloyd, K., Burarrwanga, L., Ganambarr, R., Ganambarr-Stubbs, M., Ganambarr, B., Maymuru, D., & Sweeney, J. (2016). ‘Co-becoming Bawaka: Towards a relational understanding of place/space.’ *Progress in Human Geography*, 40(4), 455–475. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132515589437>.**

This article focuses on Indigenous understandings of relational space and place through terms of co-becoming and gurrutu. This is unlike other articles in that the lead author is Bawaka Country. The article also has many Indigenous elders as co-authors and then three non-indigenous academics. This rounds out the article and allows the knowledge of the elders and the Bawaka Country to be centered in what would otherwise be a western centered way to

displace knowledge. The article focuses on conceptualizing relational space and place through the concept of gurrutu. The article states that western academic ways of knowledge often struggle to comprehend the relationality of space and place, by having Bawaka Country as lead author it centers the knowledge of Indigenous Elders.

This article was chosen to be included in our research as it explicitly looked at another type of knowledge about relationality that wasn’t western centered. This was important to us as, although Vietnam has western influences, it is not a western country so it shouldn’t be researched in the same way. This also helped us to understand what relationality was, and that it was the place where humans and non-humans co-become together in space and place.

**Lakoff, G. (2010). ‘Why it Matters How We Frame the Environment. *Environmental Communication*,’ 4(1), 70–81. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17524030903529749>.**

This article aims to explain the reason the environment is often framed throughout unconscious messaging. The article is mainly based on new ideas and doesn’t have a set methodology, just that the author follows where his research takes him. The originality of the article is often praised and cited in other research as an integral contribution to the field of study. There are some general criticisms of the article in that the author cites his previous work three times, and only references five other articles to support his claims. This could be seen as a gap in the research that could be filled in the future.

This article was influential in our work as it helped to establish the foundations for the current framing of food and eventual flooding in Vietnam. This gave us further ideas of how we wanted to continue our research based on personal feelings and thoughts in regard to food and flooding. We

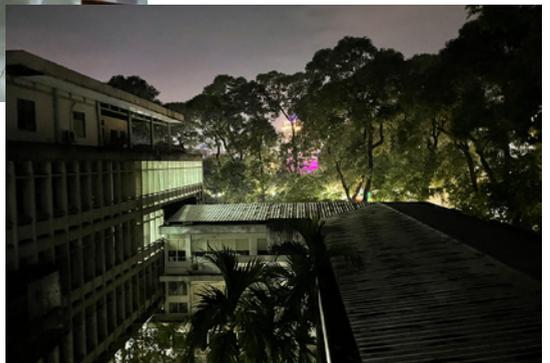
decided to focus on our stories, an example of framing, so that we could better explore our own internal frames. We used this article over others, due to it a foundational article in the field and it being cited many times in other research.

↓ **Mia Peeters, Harper Pestinger, Tien Le, Rupert Beaufoy, Sam Pradd, Michael Le**

In *Architectures of sound* (2017), Michael Fowler labels cities “acoustic ecologies”, “series of embodied sound-spaces” and “reflection[s] of order” (p. 164).

These apt descriptors opened our eyes and ears to the granular aural intricacies of the ecosystem we immersed ourselves in: Vườn Chuối Market. The order and state of play at the market is almost entirely reliant on the time of day; during rushes, the streets become a dense jungle of sound where aural stimulation is heavy and changing for every metre one walks, wades or rides. Through an uninitiated Western lens, this may signal a state of disorder, but for the hardened Vietnamese marketeers, it’s in fact a daily routine and lifestyle. In contrast, what comes with off-peak hours are gushes of sound blowing through the straight-line, open-air alleys. Walter Ong (1982, cited in Fowler 2017, p. 24) says “the centering action of sound (the field of sound is not spread out before me but is all around me) affects man’s sense of the cosmos”. Never before had we experienced such vast surrounds of, upon first listening, cacophonously striking yet, after deeper immersion, harmoniously layered sounds. High-frequency rooster calls bled into the mid-range human chatter, which in turn was upheld by the low rumbles of bike motors. The echoing barks of market-dwelling dogs could’ve been five metres or 100 metres away, such was the nature of Vườn Chuối Market’s design.

Fowler’s vivid descriptions and explanations of the relationships between sound, architecture, time and space allowed us to think about sound in ways the average marketgoer wouldn’t and, in turn, transpose our newfound knowledge into the soundscape component of our exhibition. As he says (2017), “from the vibrations [of the air we breathe] come distinct feelings, distinct notions about space, about time, and our connection to the immediate environment.” Sound defines much of the human experience so, especially after reading Fowler’s work, we found it only right to incorporate it into our artistic summary of space in Saigon.



# About the Faculty of Architecture UAH

The Faculty of Architecture is one of foundational faculties that dates back to the establishment of the University of Architecture, Ho Chi Minh City. The faculty has officially provided the very first architecture training program in Vietnam since the last 45 years. Currently, the faculty's Architecture Program is the leading architecture program in Vietnam.

## **Vision**

To strengthen its position as the leading architect training faculty in Vietnam. By 2030, the faculty becomes the leading architect training institution in Southeast Asia.

## **Mission**

Provides high-quality human resources for the Architecture industry, with focus on research and applications in order to fulfill the needs for community service and international integration.

## **Education philosophy**

To provide training for architects on the basis of design practices, creativity, cultural identity, and international integration.



# Memefest 2022

## Participants

### Workshop Mentors and Symposium Speakers

N'arweet Carolyn Briggs  
Yuri Frassi  
Olivia Guntarik  
Eric Jackson  
Rachel Jahja  
Lee Jordan  
Rok Klemencic

Kevin Yuen Kit Lo  
Duc Anh Nguyen  
Archie Pizzini  
Afra Rebuscini  
Andy Stiff  
Oliver Vodeb

### UAH Facilitators

Vu Thị Hồng Hạnh  
Tô Thanh Phương

Lê Hoàng Thủy Trân  
Lê Nguyễn Gia An

### RMIT Vietnam Students (Design Studies)

Nguyen Vu Thien An  
Phan Le Que Anh  
Vu Nguyen Hong Anh  
Pham The Bao  
Trinh Tien Dat  
Nguyen Le Duc Duy  
Nguyen Minh Duy  
Trinh Minh Huong  
Nguyen Hoang Khanh  
Nguyen Dang Khoa  
Do Nhat Long  
Nguyen Ngoc Hoang Long  
Dang Ngoc Hoang Minh  
Ly Tu Ngoc  
Lam Phuong Nguyen  
Nguyen Hoang Anh Phu

Tran Hong Quang  
Le Kien Quoc  
Nguyen Duy Son  
Ngo Minh Thu  
Tran Cong Thuan  
Kim Mai Thy  
Luong Huynh Bao Tran  
Doan Gia Tri  
Nguyen Minh Truc  
Nguyen Thi Ngoc Tu  
La Khanh Van  
Le Phuong Vy

### UAH Students

Nguyễn Phạm Thảo Vân  
Vũ Văn Khanh  
Nguyễn Thị Minh Nguyệt  
Nguyễn Thế Bảo  
Le Anh Khoa

Nguyễn Huy Khôi  
Đoàn Gia Hỷ  
Lê Nguyễn Kiều Tiên  
Trần Khôi Nguyên

## RMIT Melbourne Students

Nicholas Symons (Geospatial science)  
 Henghui Sun (Photographer)  
 Annabel Cohen (Media)  
 Tallulah Gunn (Media)  
 Tomas Barnes (Media)  
 Martin Jovanovski (Legal and dispute studies)  
 Elisabeth Morell (Comms design)  
 James Mcgannon (Comms design)  
 James Lamande (Architecture)  
 Tess Mccracken (Journalism)  
 Jasmine Griffith (Environmental science)  
 Madelaine Thomas (Comms design)  
 Lachlan Wills (Business)  
 Brodyn Harty (Mechanical engineering/industrial design)  
 Lucy Wallace Chrichton (Advertising)  
 Chelsea Connor (Comms design)  
 Hillary Zhao (Comms design)  
 Jasmin Wallace (Architecture)  
 Harriet Dicks (Communications advertising)  
 Brandon Lapeyre (Media)  
 Maddison Weeks (Media)  
 Chester Murdoch (PR)

Kin Pan Lo (Comms design)  
 Tara Ekanayake (Environmental science)  
 Daisy Nichols (Interior design)  
 Jye Mara (Interior design)  
 Jesse Mahoney (Fine art)  
 Daniel Watson (Journalism)  
 Elias Tsourdalakis (Media)  
 Guy Lamond (Media)  
 Elinor Devenish-Mearns (Environment and Society)  
 Isabella Livis (Comms design)  
 Katie Zhao (Comms design)  
 Kayla Nguyen (Comms design)  
 Lucinda Johnson -Cornes (Textile design)  
 Sophia Cuthbertson (Comms design)  
 Kelsey Williams (Environment and Society)  
 Angelica Trono (Environmental science)  
 Rupert Beaufoy (Architecture)  
 Aisha Harra (Fine Art)  
 Mia Peeters (Interior Design)  
 Samuel Pradd (Fine Art)  
 Mike Le (Advertising)  
 Harper Prestinger (Journalism)  
 Myfanwy Halse (Media)  
 Nhu Pham (Communication design)  
 Claudia Gross (Comms design)

RMIT academic directors of the project and course  
leaders: Dr Oliver Vodeb and Dr Olivia Guntarik

Photography by Oliver Vodeb, Stanley Henghui Sun,  
and Kevin Yuen Kit Lo

Graphic Design by LOKI.



The project was funded by the New Colombo plan,  
an initiative by the Australian Government.



**Australian Government**



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