

Memory & Place

CC^o CALIFORNIA COLLEGE OF THE ARTS





Memory & Place



Engage: Memory & Place

ENGAGE: Memory & Place

This book and exhibition is a result of a collaborative project from the students in the course, ENGAGE: Memory & Place at the California College of the Arts and the residents at the partnered Community Organization, Bethany Center Senior Housing.

These projects are based on the residents' recollections on oral histories and memories of a specific place followed by the student's responses through exploring those places and making visual their experiences. The results are then shared again with the seniors, developing a collaborative dialogue and a pluralistic visual narrative applied through different disciplines and studio practices.

In our first visit to Bethany Center the students and residents paired themselves up naturally and opened individual dialogues; periodically we met and shared presentations and socialized over food generously hosted by Bethany Center, this was helpful in creating a social environment that supported this endeavor.

During this brief time the residents shared glimpses of their life stories and the students responded carefully, listening and sharing moments of trust and intimacy, employing their own art making skills and sensibilities in transforming these experiences into visual narratives.

Mariella Poli



Margie Ramirez

Placing Memory's and Place into a visual, I thought of rotation and repetition, landscapes and icons, concluding to spark senses of that memory that may have been forgotten taking the one reminiscing into a deeper consciousness and personal life reflection. The memory-scape is, vast and complex, when entering memory-scape; I imagine that it is like walking down never ending spiral stairs, with each pivotal point bringing out the emotion of the original entry of that memory.



Immi Hill

Margie Ramirez is a great person, more than that she is a wonderful Mother, Grandmother, and a phenomenal woman. Margie is Mexican-American; born in Riverside, CA and she spent most of her adult life in Fresno, CA. Kindly enough, Margie has shared with me some of her most favorable memories. Although, these memories were during a time in her life where she felt most vulnerable, she took great pleasure in caring for the ones that truly loved her. Now in her life, Margie stands strong and takes great joy being the person that she has become,

receiving the love that is given to her by family and friends. She also has taken the lead role for the Latin community at The Bethany center Senior Housing, Located in the San Francisco Mission. Margie is a voice for people, who are not represented, overlooked, and who are alone. The visual imagery represents the times in Margie's life that were most memorable, although, in some ways are very candid, she overlooked the bad and recanted the most favorable of times.



^ *Legends Of Fall*

Born in Riverside, CA and Lived most of her life in Fresno, CA, Margie is very capable and enjoys the scenery of her new neighborhood San Francisco, CA. Although, she may not have the time or means to travel to every place, which her heart desires, she holds dear the places that she has traveled, and will never forget those feelings.



A River Runs Through It ^

Margie remembers her Brother and her Mother, who both have passed along far from where our eyes can see. While in Fresno, CA Margie did volunteer work at Catholic Schools. As a Mother she gave her ambition to her children, and still to this day she can remember the time when she dressed her two children Jose, and Stephanie as Raggedy Ann and Raggedy Andy for Halloween. In 2011 Margie was in a car accident that could have killed her, but because of the convenience of her Smart car, which she loved dearly, she lives to tell the story!



^ *Oceans Eleven:*
Life according to Talia

Now that Margie's children are living an adult life, her nurturing now goes to her eccentric, extremely articulate, funny, cute granddaughter Talia. One memory that her and Talia share are the time they went to Hawaii. Although Margie cannot remember clearly, she has Talia to describe word for word the wonderful time that they shared in this place together. The way Talia describes the sea life; I imagine it to be an array of colors and fish, swimming in sync with each other among other things that might be too vast to understand. Talia's love for the sea life is recanted in this visual.



Across the Tracks ^

Traveling through time, this visual represents where Margie is in her life now. Combining places that she has been too and remembers fondly and reflecting back to the beginning of her memories and places, this series comes to an end with her new life in San Francisco, CA. Never forgetting where she has been and who she is now.

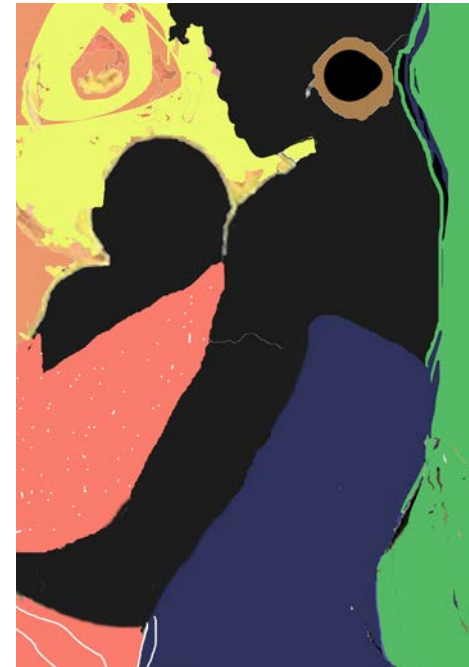


Queen Anne Krubally

Queen Amie Krubally, also known to her friends and family as “Queen Amie”, was born in Bakau, The Gambia. Amie was introduced to the art of Batik in 1963 and it has been a thriving relationship ever since. Amie has gained worldwide recognition for her Batik work. The Gambian government granted her the title “Queen of Batik”, honoring her wide-reaching influence in the art of Batik. Over the past forty years, she has taught, worked and exhibited in diverse locations all over the world such as Los Angeles, London, and Berlin. Amie uses her batiks to tell stories of her Gambian heritage and other themes related to her life. For the past several years Queen Amie has been living in the Bay area and wants to continue her life making a difference in the world. Queen Amie is one of the most fascinating women I have ever had the pleasure of speaking with and it has been an honor working with her.

Tyler Tornaben

Queen has opened my eyes to a beautiful batik-filled world. This project has allowed me to create a visual interpretation of Queen's incredibly rich life. Her travels, personal relationships and career has given me such inspiration. Each image I created uses a limited color palette that represents her home in the Gambia. Throughout our conversations I have decided to create seven images that depict some of the significant moments in her life thus far.



^ Image1

Queen had her first child courageously at thirteen and immediately had that special bond that exists between a mother and her first born child.



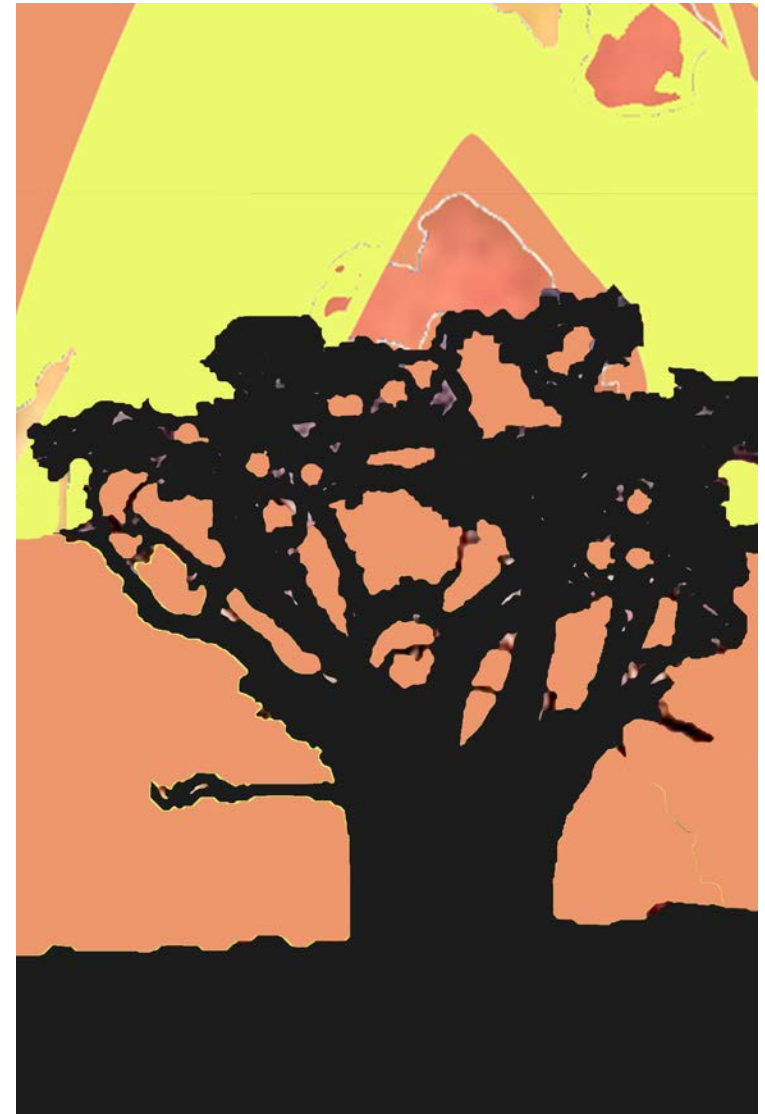
^ Image2

Queen is a mother to seven and was married four times. Queen was a very progressive woman in the Gambia and wanted to be in a relationship that she felt was two-sided.



▲ *Image3*

Queen would smoke fish from the bark of the Baobab tree to. Her and her mother sold the fish at the market to provide a consistent income for her and her family.



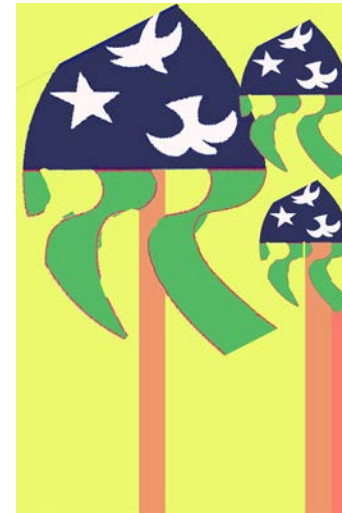
▲ *Image4*

The Baobab tree is also known as the tree of life. It is capable of providing shelter, clothing, food, and water for animals and human inhabitants. Queen would use this tree for different reasons, but it is very symbolic image of The Gambia, and Africa in general.



▲ *Image5*

Queen has a very strong relationship with Batik. While living in Gambia, Queen was working for a German woman, who owned a batik factory. Queen fell in love with the art form and began making Batiks.



◀ *Image6*

Queen meet Melanie, a woman from the United States, who was living in the Gambia working with horses at the time and they quickly become friends. Queen refers to her as her sister. Melanie's parent surprised her for her birthday one year with a ticket for Queen to come to the United States and she has been here ever since.



Image7 ▶

Queen was able to get involved with several projects through a friend working at the Peace Corps and is how she was introduced to her good friend Melanie. The Peace Corps gave her an award of recognition for her involvement with the community and beautiful artistry in 1996.



Guadalupe Portillo

Guadalupe Portillo was born September 2, 1941 in Barrio el Calvario, El Salvador. She grew up around San Salvador and lived with her extended family, who always had an open table to anyone who wanted a meal. She had three kids, two boys and one girl, and worked in a factory before coming to the United States in 1989. She worked as a nanny and a caretaker for seniors here in San Francisco, and now sings in a group at Capp Street Senior Center. Guadalupe's children and family still live in El Salvador, and it has been 10 years since she has been able to see them, but she still sends money back to her kids. She has a love for animals and currently lives at Bethany Senior Center with her black Chihuahua.



Monica Garwood

Hammock

Guadalupe fondly recalled a childhood memory of her and her cousin Esperanza in El Salvador. In the early evening, the girls would sit in a hammock and sing songs from a song book while the family made dinner. Guadalupe's later memories of El Salvador are horrifying in comparison, so I wanted to create an illustration that protects her memory of childhood innocence.

Lost

This illustration depicts Guadalupe in a frantic search for the money she and her cousin lost on the way to go buy bread in town. Guadalupe's cousin was distracted by her boyfriend at the time, leaving Guadalupe to find the money herself. This piece alludes to the darker times to come in Guadalupe's life, both personally and with the tumultuous history of El Salvador. Family was a huge part of Guadalupe's life in El Salvador, but she is now disconnected from her loved ones and must make new connections on her own. These three illustrations depict Guadalupe's memories as an adult.

Factory

When Guadalupe lived in El Salvador, she worked in a factory making clothes for the United States every day from 2pm to 6am. She had a son during this time, but continued

to work and brought him along with her. She was able to make a living for her and her son, but soon the Guerilla warfare in El Salvador led to US companies not wanting to work with them.

Bus

Guadalupe took the bus to work every day. She recalled a memory of the Guerillas throwing gasoline on the bus and then lighting it on fire, but this didn't stop her from still taking the bus to work. Using the bus as a general symbol of transition, we can see the changes in Guadalupe's life that drove her to leave El Salvador for United States.

Sing

Today, Guadalupe retains her passion for singing. She is a singer in a group at Capp Street Senior Center, where she goes around to several senior centers and entertains them with music. Guadalupe is currently separated from most of her family in El Salvador, but her spirit doesn't show it. She is vivacious and full of life.



▲ Lost



▲ Hammock



▲ Bus



▲ Sing



▲ Factory



Savita Padel

The Big Day

The year is 1962, and 22-year-old Savita is about to marry Hasmukh Patel. It was an arranged marriage, and Savita had never seen, heard, or talked to her future husband. She got engaged when she was 17, and the home wedding with 200 guests was planned for when she finished school. She was scared and nervous, but kept her poised composure for this photo, where only a small trace of apprehension can be seen. The wedding was short and she was relieved that she got along with her husband right away (and he was handsome!). Savita's children have also had arranged marriages, but she says its easier nowadays because the internet allows one to become familiar with their prospective spouse.



▲ The Big Day



Savita Padel

Savita came to the US in 2004. She is originally from India, but she used to live in Zimbabwe for a long time before she moved here. Savita got married when she was 22 years old and she moved with her husband to Africa where he ran a successful business. After they moved to America, Savita's husband got depressed and now he struggles with dementia. Savita's children and grandchildren live in the United States too. She and her husband are the only Indians at Bethany



Tatiana Pavlova

Colors of Life

Savita has experienced a lot since she moved to the United States - her husband struggles with dementia and severe depression and she had unsuccessful operation after which she had to recover for a long time. However, in spite of all life difficulties, Savita tries to stay cheerful and optimistic. She has beautiful collection of traditional Indian dresses called sari in many. She wears her colorful sari and brightens the day for all Bethany residents.





Faina Musychenko & Alexander Zinger

Faina and Alexander had been living in Bethany Center for the last 5 years. Their daughter and granddaughter live in California too, but for the most of the time they are here by themselves. Because of a doctor's mistake Alexander became very sick and now he is disabled. Faina takes care of him and gives a lot of support. Back in Russia Faina used to be a doctor and a head of hospital department and Alexander used to be a University professor.

Thaw

Both Faina and Alexander like to think about their youth when they were young, energetic and full of hopes. In my collage that is called "Thaw" I've tried to reflect

their memories about 1960s in Moscow. This period in Soviet history, right after Stalin's death, called "Thaw". The Thaw initiated irreversible transformation of the entire Soviet society by opening up economy and international trade, educational and cultural contacts, festivals, new books, foreign movies, art shows, popular music and fashion. It was a period of big hopes and great cultural movement in which intelligentsia (educated people) actively participated. My collage shows snowdrop flowers (symbol of Spring and new beginnings), significant cultural figures (poets, writers, singers and actors) of that time that disappears over the images of Moscow and VDNKh [the exhibition centers in former Soviet Republics], the place where Faina and Alexander used to live.



Sima

Sima arrived to the United States 15 years ago with a help of her niece. She is the oldest resident at Bethany (88 years old) at the moment. In the past she had a career in accounting.

Chestnuts of My Memory

Sima talked a lot about her first impressions of San Francisco, how much she had enjoyed the warm weather, the Ocean and beautiful Victorian architecture which was a great contrast from Kiev grey and monotonous buildings. Even though her impressions were so positive, she still liked to think back about Kiev and she often compares her native city to her new home. San Francisco Bay and Ocean reminds her of Dnieper (the largest river in Ukraine) and the Golden Gate Bridge reminds her about the Moskovsky Bridge in Kiev. Sima keeps going back to the vivid images of Springtime when all beautiful chestnut trees are in bloom all over the city. Chestnut trees are not only visual delight for locals and tourists, but also a symbol of Kiev itself. In my collage I've tried to reflect Sima's memories and to create a transparent collage that shows relationship between past and present. I've combined two bridges to build the connection between two continents, two cultures and different memories.



▲ Thaw



◀ Chestnuts of my memory



Amy Yang

Amy Yang is a great wife, mother, and grandmother, who is very passionate and talented in music and education. To give her daughters' a better education, she immigrated to the United States from China in 1998. As soon as Amy settled down, her journey towards education began. She began her career as a student taking English as a Second Language in City College of San Francisco. This led her to become a full-time student, which continues till now.



Yeni Chae

Life is a Supper

Life can be thought of like a supper; we move through stages and courses, from appetizers to entrees and finally on to desserts.

I consider her first step to the United States as the appetizer of her life. It was the start of a great journey, and it sparked her love of learning. After she arrived she was always hungry to learn.

Next we arrive at the main dishes. Amy's first job in the states gave her an opportunity to learn music again. She was a baby sitter for a pianist, and from her work, she started to learn to play piano. It had been a long time since she played music, and her heart was beating full of passion again. One day, Amy was invited to Family Recital at Community

Music Center. She met an old man playing an instrument very professionally, and he introduced her to the great program in Community Music Center. Shortly, Amy started taking Recital of Piano Music Theory, Ear Training, and Chamber Music Courses. As time passes by, her efforts start to appear like desserts of a supper menu.

After such a hardworking and satisfying life, it is only natural to end with something sweet. While Amy was pursuing her academics, her two daughters entered and graduated from University of California, Berkeley. With a degree, they entered good companies and now Amy is having a good time with her sweet little grand daughters.

Life Is a Supper

Yeni Chae



Starter

- Immigrate from China** September, 1998
Passion for good education and learning western instruments freely
- First Daughter Enters UCB** September, 2001
Graduates Highschool in China & Goes to Community College in SF
- Second Daughter Enters UCB** September, 2002
Enters UC Berkeley

Main Entree

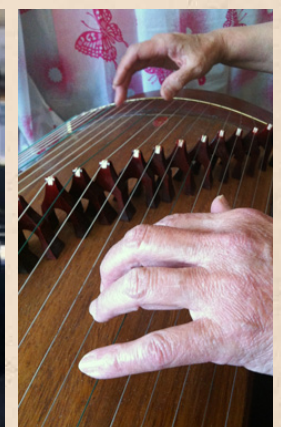
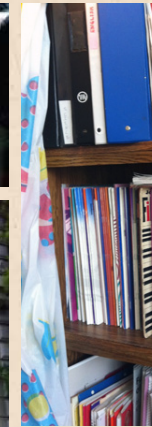
- Amy Becomes CCSF Student** January, 1999
Starts to take ESL classes for credit
- First Daughter Graduates** May, 2003
Bachelor of Computer Science
- Second Daughter Graduates** May, 2006
Bachelor of Computer Science
- Second Daughter Achieves Master's Degree** April, 2007
Majoring in Computer Science

Sides

- Amy Begins to Play Piano Again** October, 2004
Babysitting Pianist and Play Piano Again
- Amy Starts Learning Music at CMC** June, 2005
CMC stands for Community Music Center

Desserts

- Granddaughters** Priceless
Amy takes care of her grandchildren and teaches them Mandarin
- Adult Certificate Program at CMC** June, 2008
Recital of Piano Music Theory, Ear Training, and Chamber Music Courses





Tai Niu Yee

Tai Niu Yee grew up in Kai Ping China, but moved to San Francisco, California in 1988 with his wife. Before traveling to America, Tai Niu Yee lived in Hong Kong and Guang Zhou where he worked for the government as a highway inspector. Things were going well for him in Guang Zhou, but for his children to grow up successful, America seemed to be the best choice. Although, it wasn't until their arrival to the United States did the real struggle begin.



Carson Chiu

Carson Chiu and his wife just recently moved to San Francisco, California from Hong Kong. They love to be out and about here in San Francisco, where they are constantly traveling from here to there. Whether it is walking to the park or getting groceries, they are out discovering the world.

Peyton Leng

Camera

One of Carson's memories that he shared with me was when he lived in Hong Kong and sold electronics in a little shop everyday. It was during the Vietnam War and new and interesting electronic devices were introduced, especially 35mm SLR cameras. Today, Carson still owns a few of the SLR cameras from the 1950s, bringing back old memories from the past. The illustration of the vintage camera signifies a specific moment in time. The camera also represents hidden memories that were once experienced but are now hidden. Those who were a part of them will remember.

Car

This illustration of an old car represents Tai NiuYee's specific memory of growing up in Guang Zhou, China. His parents owned an import car company in the 1940s where he worked for and gained experienced in the automotive field.

Grocery Store

Next to import car company was a grocery store where a beautiful young woman worked. Tai Niu Yee's parents are friends with the owners of the grocery store which turns out to be the young woman's parents. After many encounters with each other, Tai NiuYee fell in love. The illustration of the grocery store represents Tai Niu Yee's first encounter of everlasting love.

Hong Kong

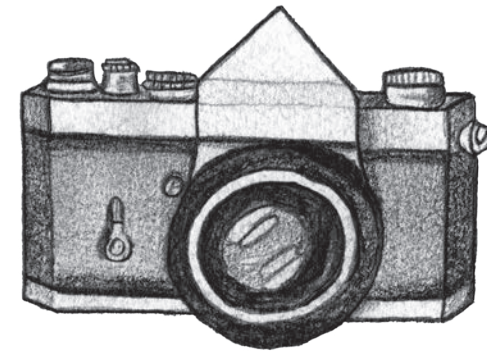
Soon, Tai NiuYee and this mysterious grocery store woman started dating and they quickly moved to Hong Kong and got married in 1949. The illustration of Hong Kong in Chinese characters represents Tai NiuYee's start for a new life and marriage.

American Flag

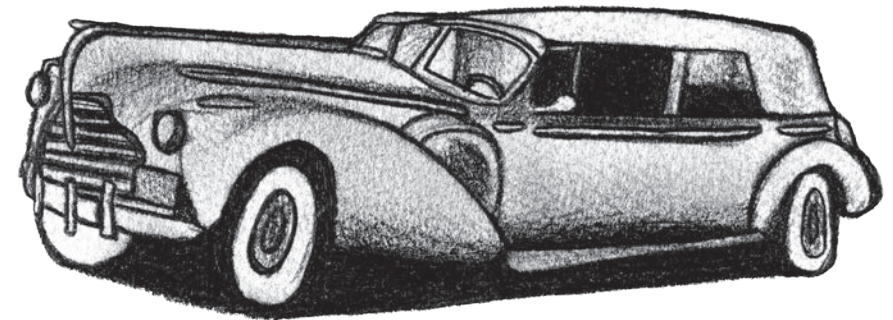
After getting married in Hong Kong, Tai NiuYee moved back to Guang Zhou, China where he dedicated most of his time working for the Chinese government as a highway inspector. He received great benefits with this job but, seeing his four children become successful and prosper in life was his main concern. In 1988, Tai NiuYee and his wife moved to the United States, and the illustration of the American flag represents their migration to better future.

Sewing Machine

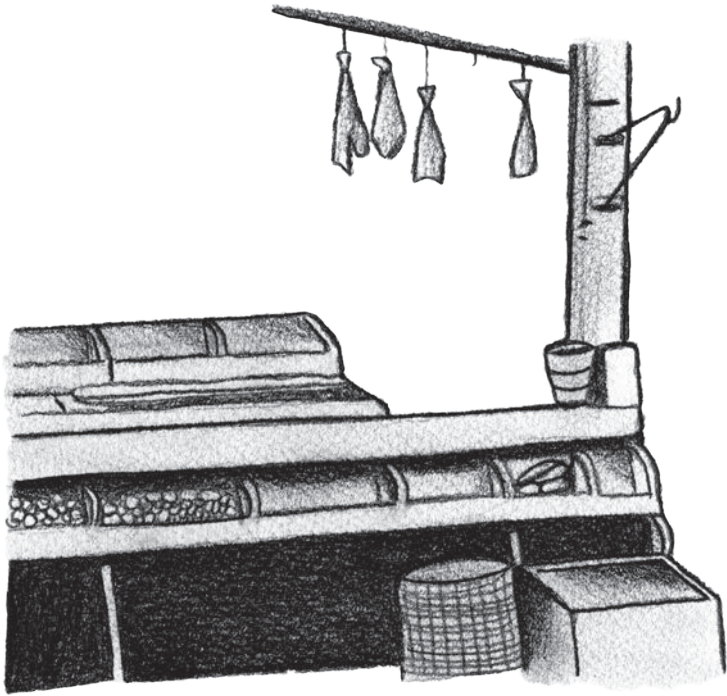
You would think that after immigrating to America, everything would be easy and perfect for Tai Niu Yee, but that was not the case. He worked countless hours working multiple jobs throughout his life in America. Tai NiuYee started off helping his brother at an auto repair shop in Stockton but the company soon ran out of business. After, he worked at different restaurants to support their food and rent at a small studio in San Francisco Chinatown. Eventually he worked with his wife at a factory during the day where he would put clothes together and she would sew them. The sewing machine illustration represents Tai NiuYee and his wife's struggle in America.



▲ Camera



▲ Car



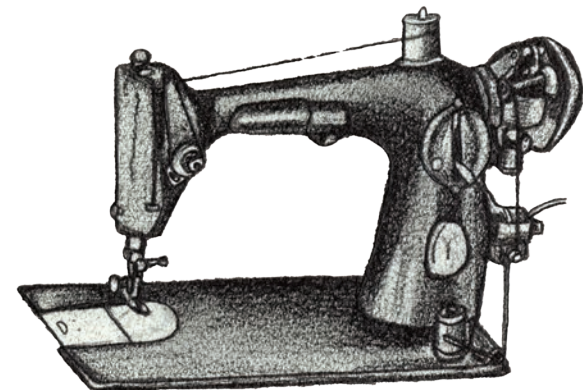
▲ Grocery Store

香港

▲ Hong Kong



▲ American Flag



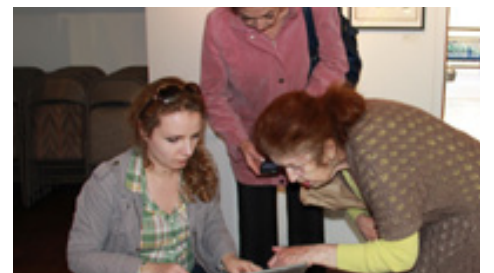
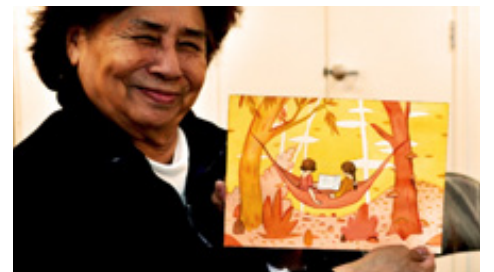
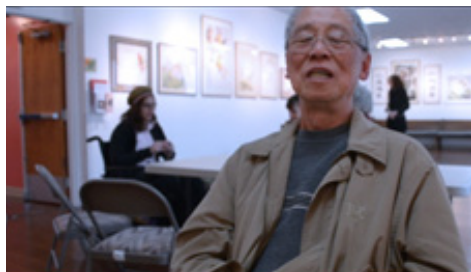
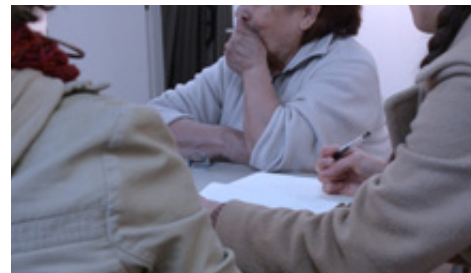
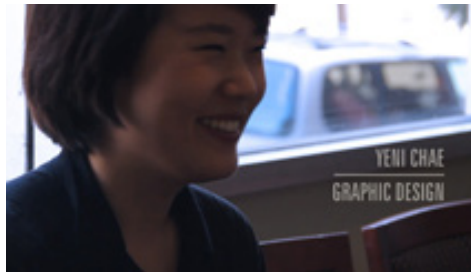
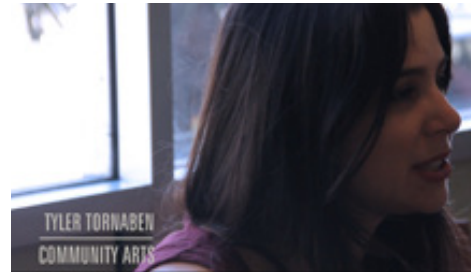
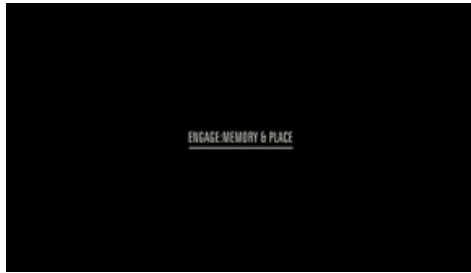
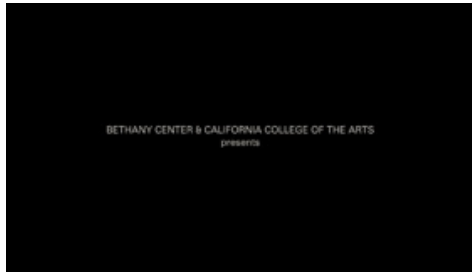
▲ Sewing Machine

Memory & Place



Class Photo at Bethany Center







Lola Fraknoi

Even though Memory & Place is our third project with CCA, seeing what'll happen is always a surprise, then that's the beauty of art. There are countless variables – who will enrol in the class, which residents will participate, will their interactions be open. But I was there in the beginning when a student asked Guadalupe, *Can you tell me a memory from your childhood?* And there was no prodding, no hesitance; it took a matter of seconds for Guadalupe to bring back a memory of she and her best friend swinging in a hammock, the two of them reading a song sheet while all the people around them busied about with practical matters – working, cleaning, prepping dinner. Their refuge in that hammock felt as blissful in the present as it sounded in the past. Several weeks later, there was a rehearsal presentation and the students debuted their work for the residents. Up until that point, all of what they'd been working on – the meetings, the dialogue, the storytelling – was

still very much an abstraction. But when the residents saw the students' work, their faces lit up. Students got it so perfectly, time and place stood still. There on screen was a piece of artwork and through it a memory – the present and the past – they were both intertwined. Memory & Place is really the best example of an intergenerational project, it's not where you stop and I start, it's all linked together through a single moment of looking back.

Many, many thanks to Mariella Poli, professor at CCA, the ENGAGE program, and the Memory & Place students, for transforming their vision into this beautiful realization.




Acknowledgments

I am indebted to Sanjit Sethi, Director of The Center For Art and Public Life for providing the connection with Bethany Center Senior Housing and giving us the opportunity to explore this valuable teaching and learning experience. I would also like to thank the Bethany Center Senior Housing's Director, Jerry W. Brown, and Lola Frankie Director of the community programs Ruth's Table, the arts and creativity arm of Bethany Center for her support and generosity in providing us a welcoming environment and making possible this collaborative project between the Engage: Memory & Place's students and the Bethany Center Senior Housing's Residents. Lastly I would like to thank the Residents at Bethany Center and my students from CCA for their valuable and dedicated participation and commitment to this journey. This catalogue would not have been possible without the generous grant from the Dean's Office at the California College Of The Arts, I am sincerely grateful.

Mariella Poli





**Memory... is the diary that
we all carry about with us.**

– Oscar Wilde