

HOME AGE TO QUAN THẾ ÂM BỒ TÁT

Maria Thúy Hiền Phan

HOTEL GENERATION 2023 / 24

the exhibition

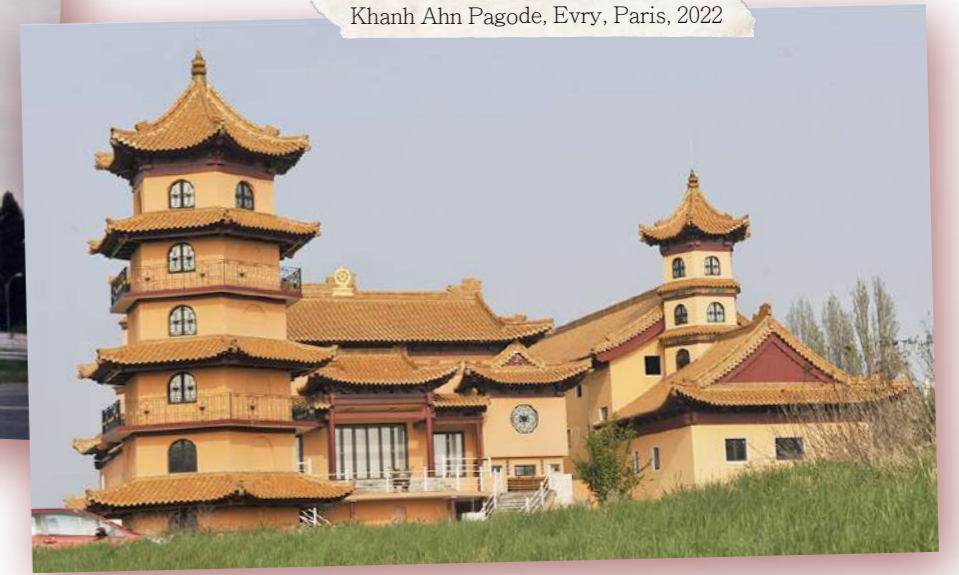
As a child, my mom used to make us pray for hours during the summer holidays, so my siblings and I would cheat and pretend to recite mantras really quickly, so that we could finally watch some telly before the day ended.

For a long time, the Khanh Anh pagode in Évry, Paris symbolised the isolation, deconstruction, and confusion I felt as a child. The pagode was under construction throughout my childhood, but the Viet Buddhist community covered the bare concrete walls with countless LEDs, plastic flowers, and gold Buddha statues. They ignored the building's dusty, desolate state and pretended everything was fine. As long as enough Paris-By-Night-style Tết events were hosted, visitors would overlook the twisted copper pipes peeking out between cheap printed tapestries.

When my French friends asked about my week-end at school the next day, I stayed silent, fearing that if my temple visits were exposed, I would never fit in my French Catholic school environment. I believed I was superior to my cultural roots. Facing external racism and casual discrimination, I denied my heritage and belittled my family and culture and internalised the racism. I attempted to present myself as a "whole, logical, clean" person. However, I never felt complete. Like many second-generation immigrants, my identity was fragmented and fractured. My Vietnamese identity became my own taboo.



Khanh Ahn Pagode in Evry, Paris, 2003



Khanh Ahn Pagode, Evry, Paris, 2022

As an adult, I discovered the Khanh Ahn pagode website, and saw that they finally completed the building. It looks beautiful. The Khanh Ahn monks and volunteers were not blind to the desolated state of the building, they made the best out of a complex situation and understood that environments were impermanent, and don't need to be whole in order to provide love, guidance and faith to a people who experienced far worse in their past. They understood that a displaced culture needs a home and that true comfort came from the community's determination to create a home, symbolised by sharing a bowl of rice behind improvised LED curtains in a dusty concrete room, a contrast I wish to recreate through Arebyte's concrete gallery walls. It took time for me to realise that my perspective, shaped by past discrimination, was naive and unjust. I wanted to assimilate in an unsupportive society, leading me to suppress and denigrate a part of myself for years. Though my knowledge of Vietnamese language and culture is limited, I am committed to continue my journey towards understanding, even if it remains incomplete.

In April 2022, I stumbled upon pixelated maximalist Vietnamese Buddhist art featuring Avalokiteśvara (*Quán Thế Âm Bồ Tát*), which evoked childhood memories as these images were present in my home. I realised they were ingrained in the collective mindset of Vietnamese immigrant children and despite being displayed on calendars, Tết posters, and restaurant menus, none of us actually knew where it came from. Through artistic and cultural research, and my passion for technology, I seek reconciliation and a deeper exploration of my suppressed childhood memories and aim to connect with the audience through themes of mortality and identity in an accessible and approachable way. I want to uncover a collective nostalgia, encompassing our community's love for bánh cuốn, the scent of incense, our parents' war-related traumas, and our own complex relationships with family and culture.

Khanh Ahn Pagode shrine in Evry, Paris, during construction



Khanh Ahn Pagode in Evry, Paris, playroom for kids, during construction



audience journey



- audience journey (soul)
- two potential paths
- - SHRINE 1
- - SHRINE 2
- - SHRINE 3

The visitor enters the room.

They are dead and my life is flashing before their eyes.
They have become a fragment of their soul which seeks to find my own and others.

There are three areas in which their souls float towards which represent three states:

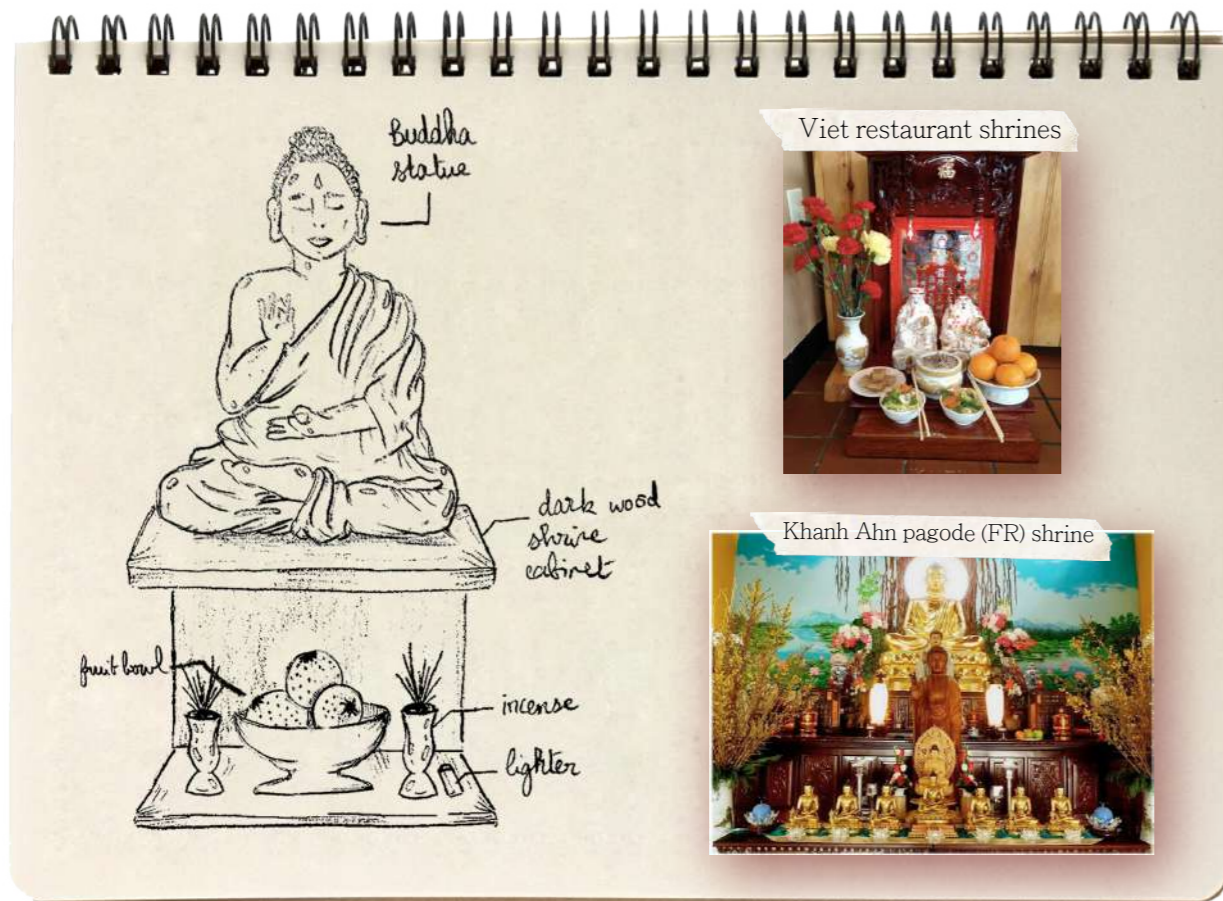
- Refusal
- Understanding
- Acceptance.

In the middle of the gallery there is a central installation composed of three shrines, each facing the three main areas.

As they navigate through the exhibition by following gradient decals representing the path for the soul, they reach the final shrine where the visitor is invited to take a small token home. This token is a lasting fragment of my soul which acts as a mirror for our collective circular experience.

shrines | The central piece of the home

Next time you visit a Viet Buddhist home or restaurant, pay close attention and you will spot a shrine. The shrine is often placed inside dark wood, can vary from very small to garish and elaborate, but no matter the size, it always consists of at least 3 main items: 1) a Buddha statue (usually A Di Đà Phat), 2) an offering bowl with fruits, 3) and an incense holder.



Viet restaurant shrines



Khanh Ahn pagode (FR) shrine



Part of our shrine in our Paris home



Second shrine on our balcony



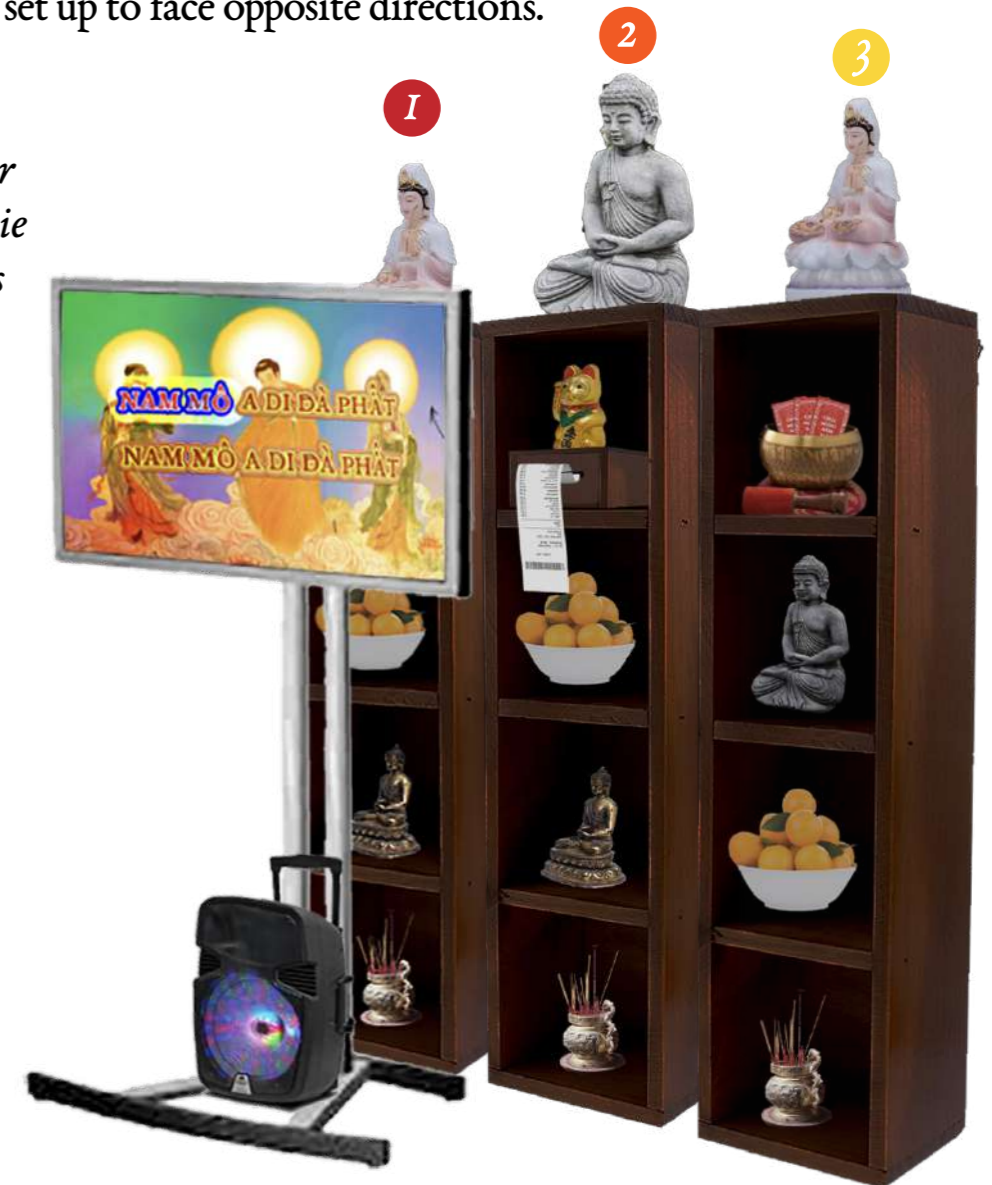
The central piece of the gallery is an installation composed of 3 shrines, each representing the state of the area it is facing (*Refusal, Understanding, Acceptance*). Each shrine has one of the 3 main Boddhisatvas statues in Mahayana Buddhism (*ref. Shrine 1*) and is titled in my 3 languages: English, Vietnamese and French. Each shrine also pays homage to myself, my brother Cu and my sister Ai-Nhan with whom I shared this cultural and religious experience.

Each shrine has an interactive element, **Shrine 1** is a karaoke installation, **Shrine 2** is a printing machine and **Shrine 3** is the final piece where visitors can take a red envelope home and hit the Tibetan bowl to mark the end of their experience.

Below, I present the shrines all facing in the same direction to clarify what they each look like and their differences, however as you will see in the proposal and gallery photos, each shrine will be set up to face opposite directions.

From left to right:

- Shrine 1:** *Living on a Prayer*
- Shrine 2:** *Tham Lam Cookie*
- Shrine 3:** *Ainsi sonne le glas*



The shrine is essential and highly symbolic in the eyes of the Buddhist community, it is the spiritual heart of the temple and the home, a place of prayer, offerings, reflection and prosperity. When my siblings and I had an exam coming up or we were in trouble, my mom prayed for hours at the shrine. Sometimes I would wake up at 2 AM and I would hear my mom murmuring mantras in the dead of night. On family holidays, my mom packed a box full of Buddhas and religious artefacts to improvise a small shrine in whichever room in the country side we stayed in. Our shrine at home in Paris is iconic, overfilled with decorations and a mix of Catholic, Viet and Tibetan Buddhist artefacts. I used to be ashamed of it when my Western friends came over, although now it has become a personal symbol of acceptance and I am beyond proud of my mom for creating such a beautiful place in our home.

refusal | Gallery image I

Smells like cheap room perfume my mom sprays around the shrine. Concrete walls contrasts with garish artworks and cheap decorations, reminiscent of the Khanh Ahn pagode.

Entrance has the Home Age 7 min video for context playing on a screen, watch [here](#).

Start with an overload of imagery, overwhelming features, TVs with shows from childhood, a wish to escape, to seek entertainment and avoid reflection, a lack of understanding for a deeper meaning, a refusal to connect with my mother's spiritual mindset.

Vibe: Superficiality, childlike wonder a ignorance, material over the substance,

Atmosphere: intense, busy, visually overwhelming + tacky, dark-lit room with the shrine lit, visible projection on the sheet, noisy and slightly uncomfortable. Contrast between the solemn prayer and the visual scream of karaoke, throwback to the contrast in Buddhist temples between the garish decorations, the solemn, rhythmic prayers, and the traditional dances suddenly happening in between meditation states.

Decorations: Paris By Night posters, cheap printed Pureland Buddhist images, Buddhist statues, fake tulips, LEDs, red lanterns



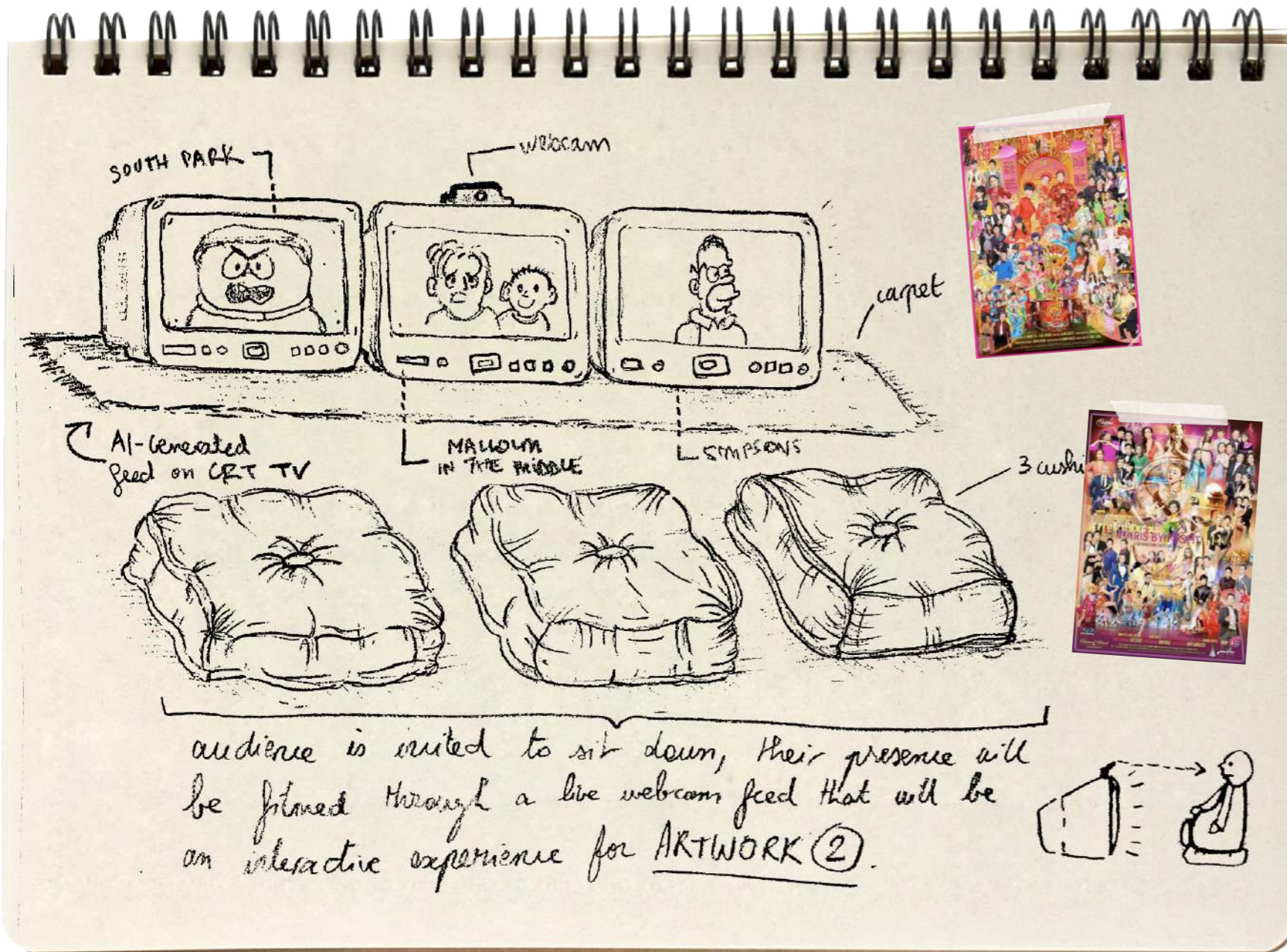
refusal | You wouldn't steal a TV

You wouldn't steal a TV', AI-generated videos, CRT TVs, dataset creation + curation with Caleb Sharpe

The audience is invited to sit down on cushions to watch AI-generated feeds of the *Simpsons*, *South Park* and *Malcolm in the Middle* on CRT TVs interspersed with flashing images of the Karaoke machine (see *Shrine 1*). The three shows re-generated with AI were me and my siblings' favourites.

However everytime we were done praying and finally got to watch TV, we had this looming feeling that the prayer never really stopped as we knew we would have to do it again and again the next few days. It was this inescapable chore we were doomed to repeat. This idea is reflected through the next artwork 'HOME AGE' where the audience is being watched by a webcam as they are watching the CRT TVs.

In this piece, you can hear a low grumbling audio of Vietnamese parents shouting at each other. The sound landscape of my home has been consistent my whole life, Vietnamese parents are known for yelling instead of talking, and I often wake up to their shouting as an alarm clock.



[Click here to watch the AI-generated Malcom in the Middle + Simpsons prototype \(please put volume on max.\)](#)

refusal | HOME AGE



*'HOME AGE', Interactive live
AV installation with Jasan Waldura,
Touch Designer, webcam,
AI-generated images*

Inspired by the parental saying *'Don't sit too close to the TVs, it will hurt your eyes!'*, the audience is invited to sit and watch TV on praying cushions which are placed a bit too close to the screens.

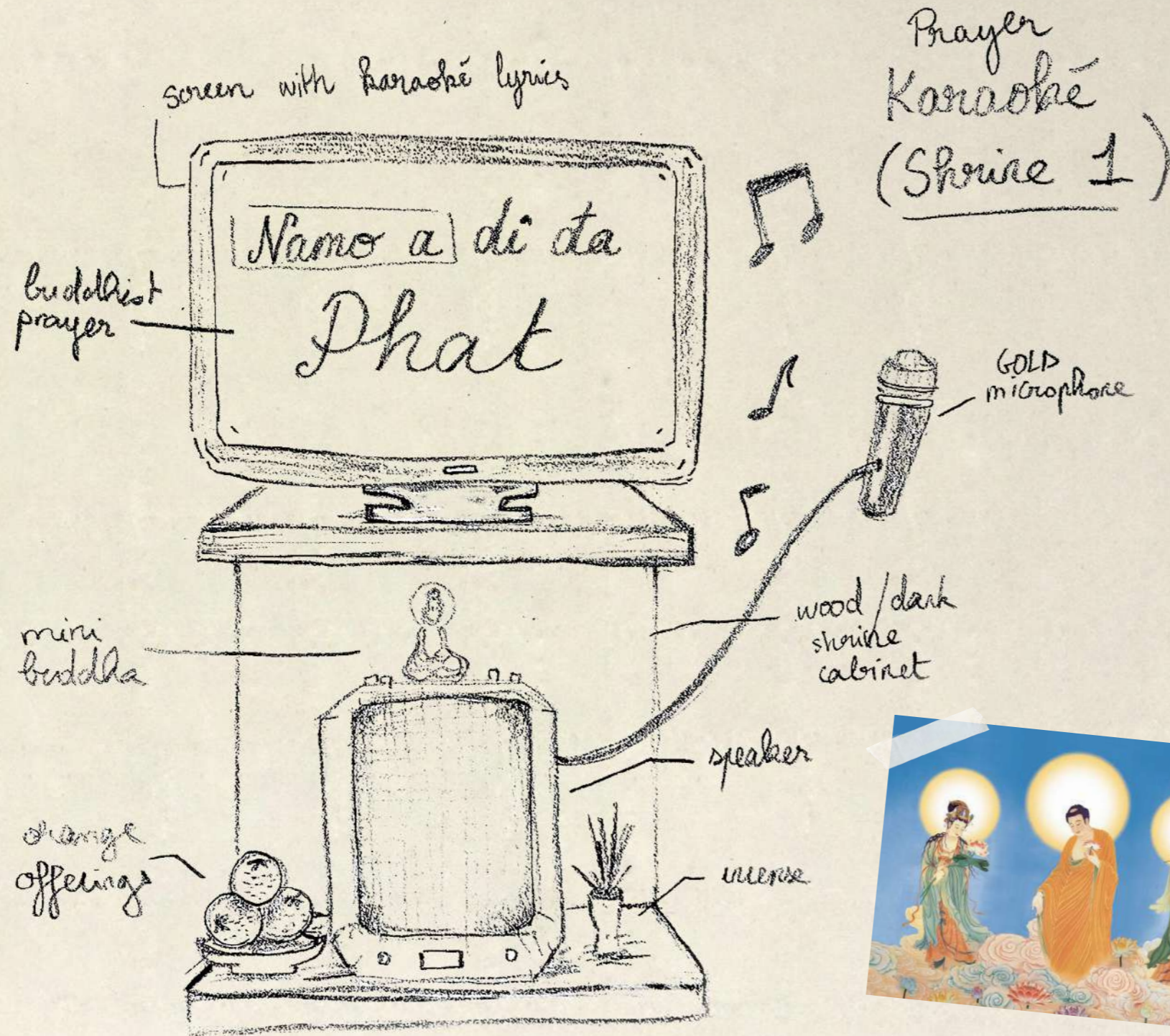
As they observe and intake the first artwork *'You wouldn't steal a TV'*, the CRT TVs stares back at the audience through a live webcam feed. The feed is projected against a sheet behind the TVs and every single pixel is replaced by AI-generated images of gods and goddesses from a variety of cultures and religions.

This art piece pays a homage to the never-ending praying chore which haunted every single moment of relaxation during our summer holidays.

Click here to watch the TouchDesigner AV prototype and here to view the live-feed working.

refusal

Shrine I: Living on a Prayer



'Living on a Prayer', Karaoke installation

On this side of the shrine, the audience is invited to join in the prayer session through karaoke. If I have to pray the same mantra over and over again, then so do you.

'*Nam mô A Di Đà Phật*' is a Vietnamese Buddhist chant that translates to 'homage to the Buddha Amitabha'. This chant is one of the main prayers that is sung repetitively in religious settings. It can be sung with background music (*view example here*), or simply chanted solemnly and rhythmically against the beat of a fish drum.

At night, I used to fall asleep to a tape recording of '*Nam mô A Di Đà Phật*' playing on repeat for hours. My mom recorded this tape during one of her temple visits.

When I was nine, I swore out-loud for the first time. I uttered the word 'fuck' in the playground during recess. I panicked and guilt took over. I must have chanted '*Nam mô A Di Đà Phật*' over a hundred times as a desperate attempt to cleanse my soul.

refusal

| Shrine 1: Living on a Prayer



Image depicting the 'Three Saints of the West', three Bodhisattvas often represented together as a trio in Pureland Mahayana Buddhism

(click here to watch prototype)



- 1) Viet: *A Di Đà* / Sanskrit: *Amitābha*
- 2) Viet: *Quán Thế Âm Bồ Tát* / Sanskrit: *Avalokiteśvara*,
- 3) Viet: *Đại Thế Chí Bồ Tát* / Sanskrit: *Mahāsthāmaprāpta*.

understanding

Gallery image 2

Growing and starting to understand the meaning behind, not fully, but a deep exploration of the why, a genuine appreciation of certain rituals which are not yet understood but embraced through innocence and superstition.

Vibe: Childlike wonder and curiosity, the material over the substance through innocence, a karmic fear of the belief yet a pondering of the after

Atmosphere: exciting, playful, gamified religion, surveillance of Buddhas / gods, reincarnation as a jackpot game /lottery of life. Continuity in the marketing of religion, low quality printed buddhas everywhere and the atmosphere feels more intriguing, more interactivity. Inviting the audience to connect with the pieces through different senses, more interrogation, the sound changes from the previous loud and confusing audio in 'Refusal' area to eclectic, playful sounds of 8bit, arcade-like. Lighting is stronger as the audience can see themselves on the video wall and there are LEDs fairy lights everywhere, more arcade-like environment. Still tacky.

Decorations: cheap printed Pureland Buddhist images, Buddhist statues, fake tulips, LEDs, red lanterns, incense holders, printed receipts from Shrine 2 'Tham Lam Cookie'.

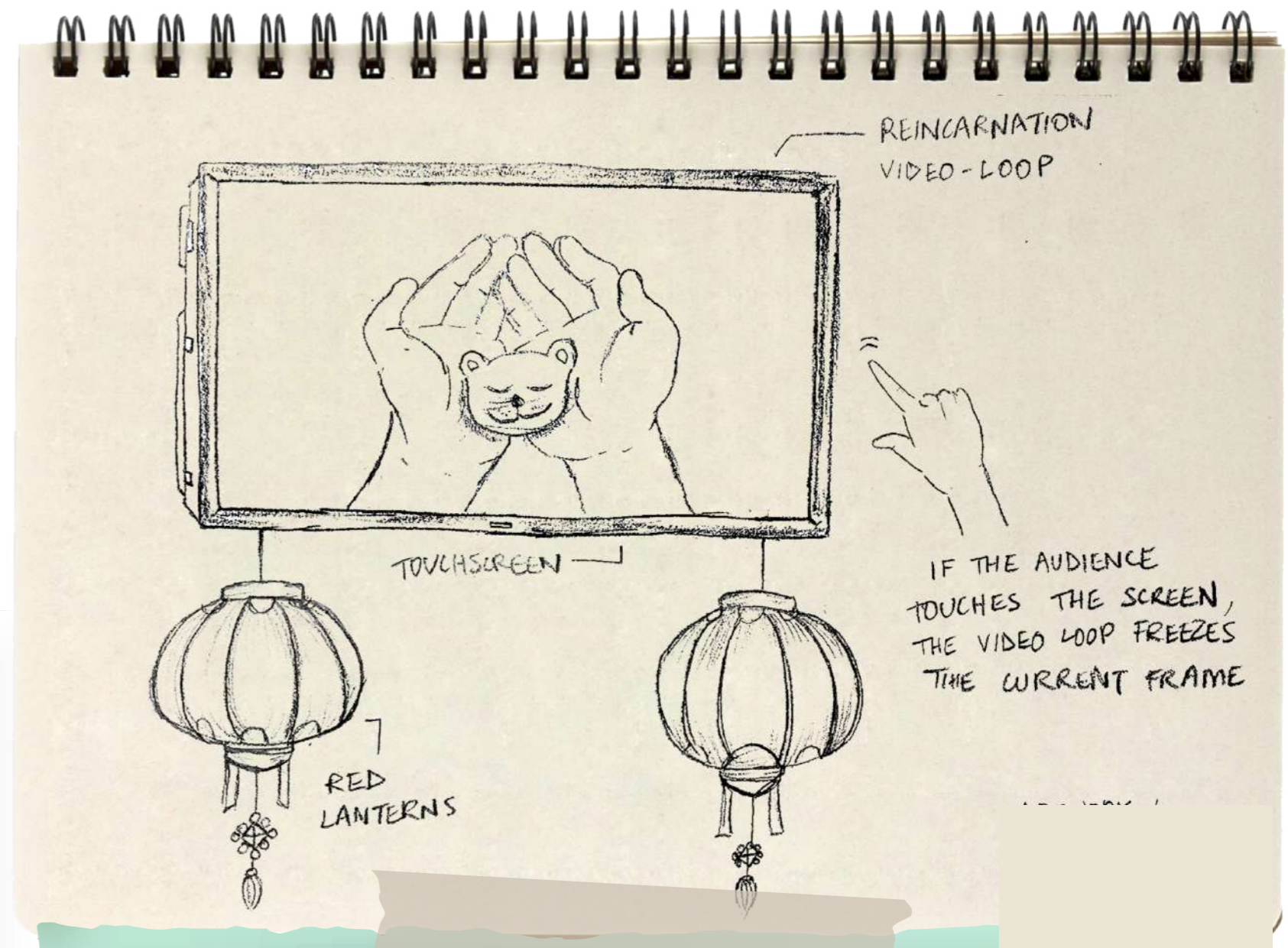
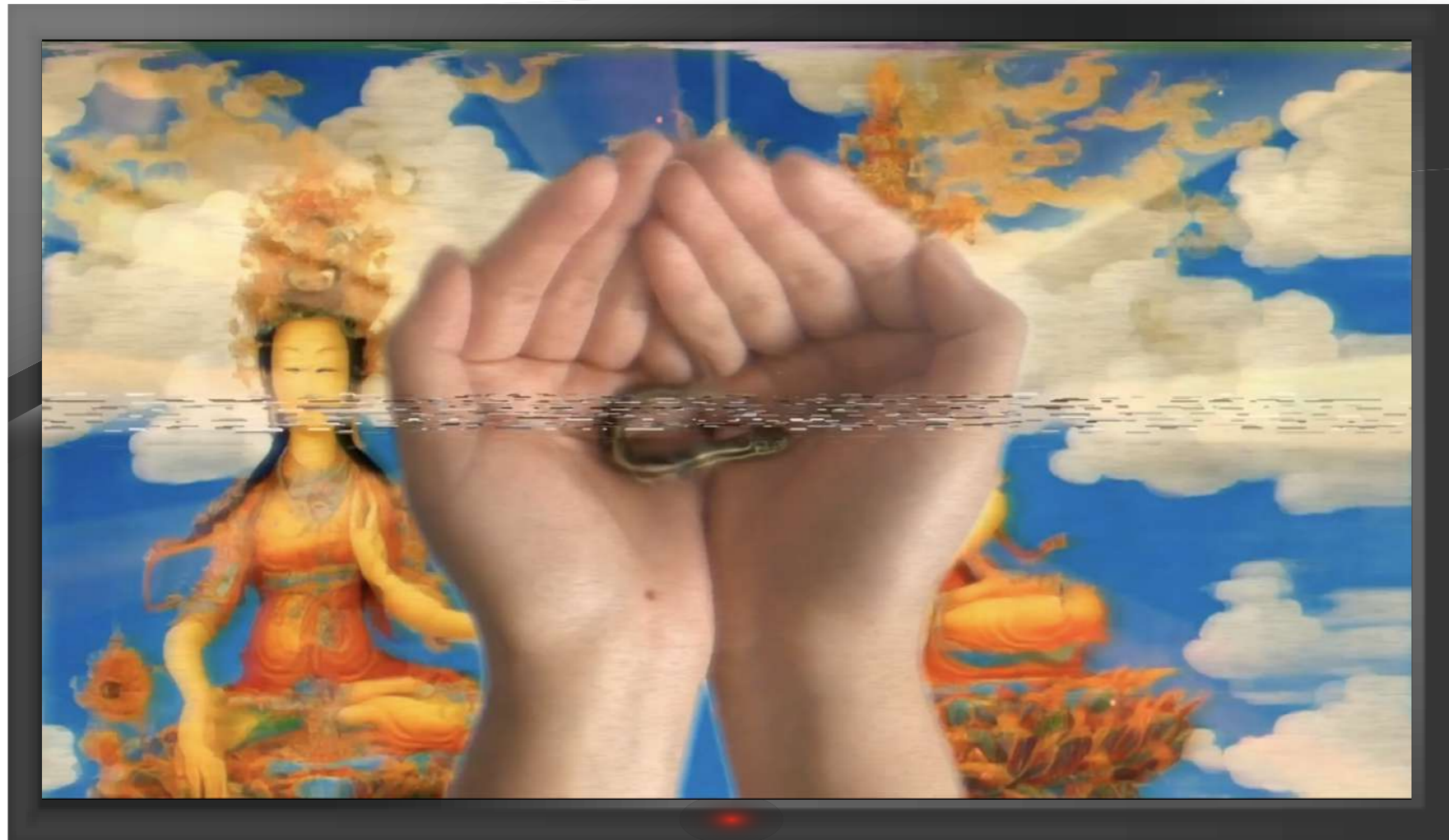


understanding | Buddha's Umbrella

'Buddha's Umbrella', Interactive video on touchscreen, Generative AI

Buddha's Umbrella is an interactive AI-video loop, a gamification of reincarnation. The artwork generates many lifetimes with an 8-bit audio. If the audience touches the screen, a jackpot sound triggers, the loop freezes and displays one particular lifetime that the audience can interpret as their past or future reincarnation. [Click here to watch the Video Loop.](#)

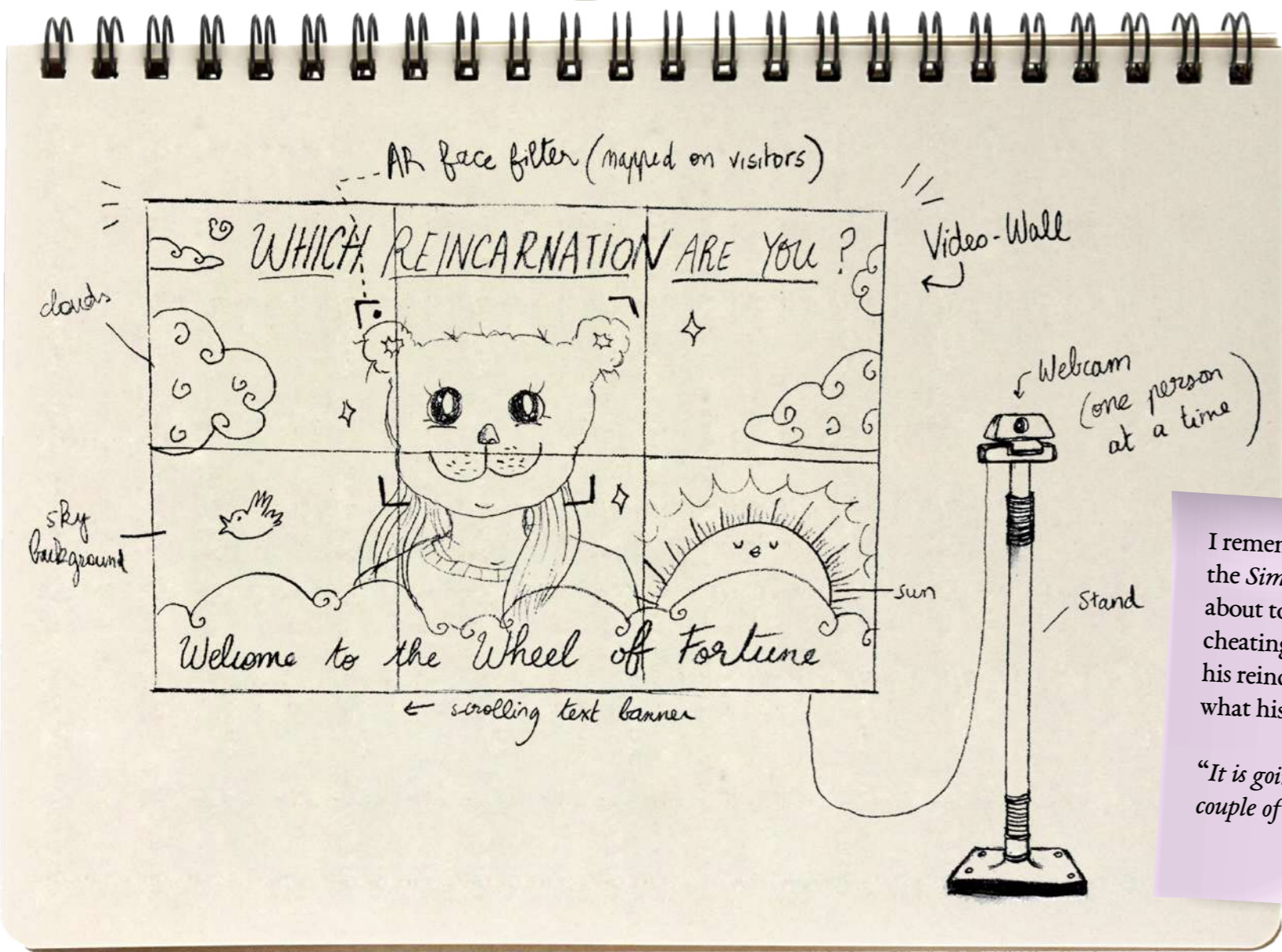
When I was eight, my mom asked a Tibetan Buddhist monk about my past and potential future lifetimes. He said that I used to be a 'Naga' snake. In Buddhist mythology, the Naga snake is one of Siddhartha Gautama's (*Thích-ca Mâu-ni Phật*) animal sidekicks and shielded him from the rain during meditation, like an umbrella. When asked about my future life, the monk said that if I maintain a strong karma, I would be reborn as a wealthy, intelligent, handsome white boy. I sighed in relief.



A dangerous side-effect of my superstitious understanding of the reincarnation process is that for a long time, *I perceived life and death as a video-game cycle.*

Everytime I made mistakes, I thought about how I could simply restart my life with a fresh slate, just like in *Pokemon* where you can save, load or start a new game. When the internalised racism got too intense, I would think about how I could interrupt my state and start a fresh game reincarnated as a new character. *I would get to walk the Earth as a rich, intelligent, handsome white boy.*

understanding | Wheel of Fortune



I remember an episode of the *Simpsons* where Apu is about to commit suicide after cheating on his wife. He looks at his reincarnation chart to see what his next life will be and sighs: "It is going to be a rough couple of lifetimes..."



'Wheel of Fortune', Live Augmented Reality installation (Meta Spark), Video-wall, Webcam

'Wheel of Fortune' is an interactive AR installation where the audience faces a webcam and a random lifetime is allocated to their next reincarnation. They can repeat the experience as many times as they want. This artwork is inspired by the surveillance aspect of religion. In Christianity and Vietnamese Buddhism, I was told that higher beings are constantly watching and measuring our actions into good and bad, and judge us based on our intentions and outcomes, akin to a holy social credit system. As our karma fluctuates throughout our lives, our next chosen reincarnation evolves too.

[Click here to watch the prototype.](#) Feasibility: I have 4+ years of experience with AR.

understanding

Shrine 2: Tham Lam Cookie

'Tham Lam Cookie', Interactive installation, Arduino, thermal printer, with the support of Anna Tsuda

Have you ever wondered what your life could have changed if you took a different route at the crossroads of your existence?

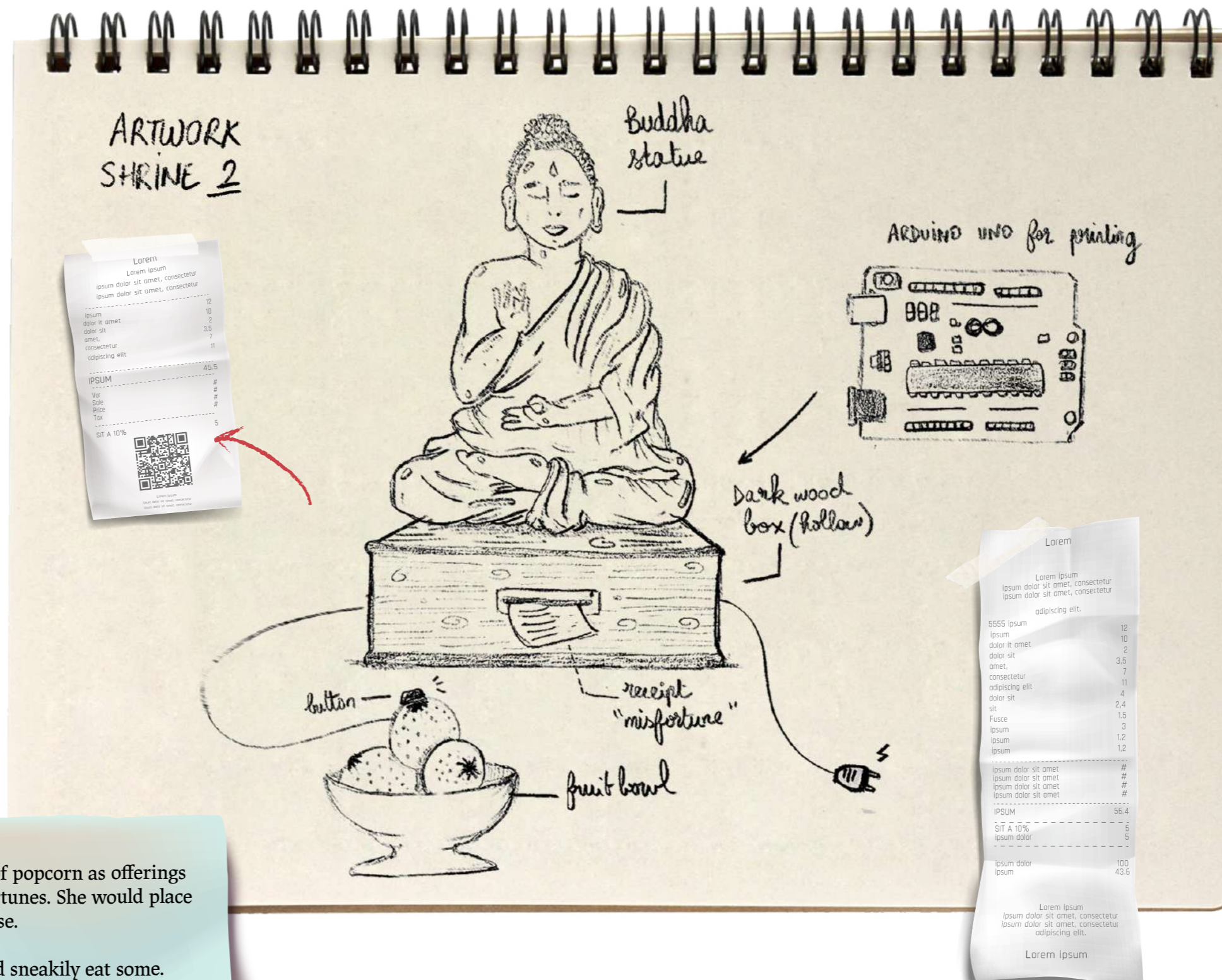
On this side of the shrine, 'Tham Lam Cookie' (greedy cookie) is an interactive installation where the audience gets offered a snapshot into the internal plague of the 'what-ifs'. By pressing on a button placed on top of the human offerings to Buddha, the audience gets an offering back in the shape of a misfortune. They can keep the misfortune or continue printing potential readings at their personal risk or reward.

One of Buddha's teachings tells us that these constant 'grass-is-greener' questionings are a source of pain, suffering and a barrier in truly living our lives, and that humans must thrive towards contentment and acceptance.

[Click here to watch a previous printing machine made in collaboration with Ricebox Studio](#)

Sometimes my mom would give large salad bowls full of popcorn as offerings to evil spirits to deter them from feeding on our misfortunes. She would place them on our balcony to lead the ghosts outside the house.

As a hungry 'tham lam' (greedy) eight year old, I would sneakily eat some. My mom once caught me and screamed at me, because of poor self-control, I accidentally internalised the evil deeds of the spirits by eating the popcorn.



acceptance

Gallery image 3

Accepting that this exhibition is my own personal shrine. Your soul has found me and others, we have shared this experience together. The overwhelming gratitude, the need to seek knowledge, the reappropriation of the bizarre, the acceptance of the unknown and the impermanence of all physical things.

Atmosphere: solemn, calmer and more reflective, still playful.

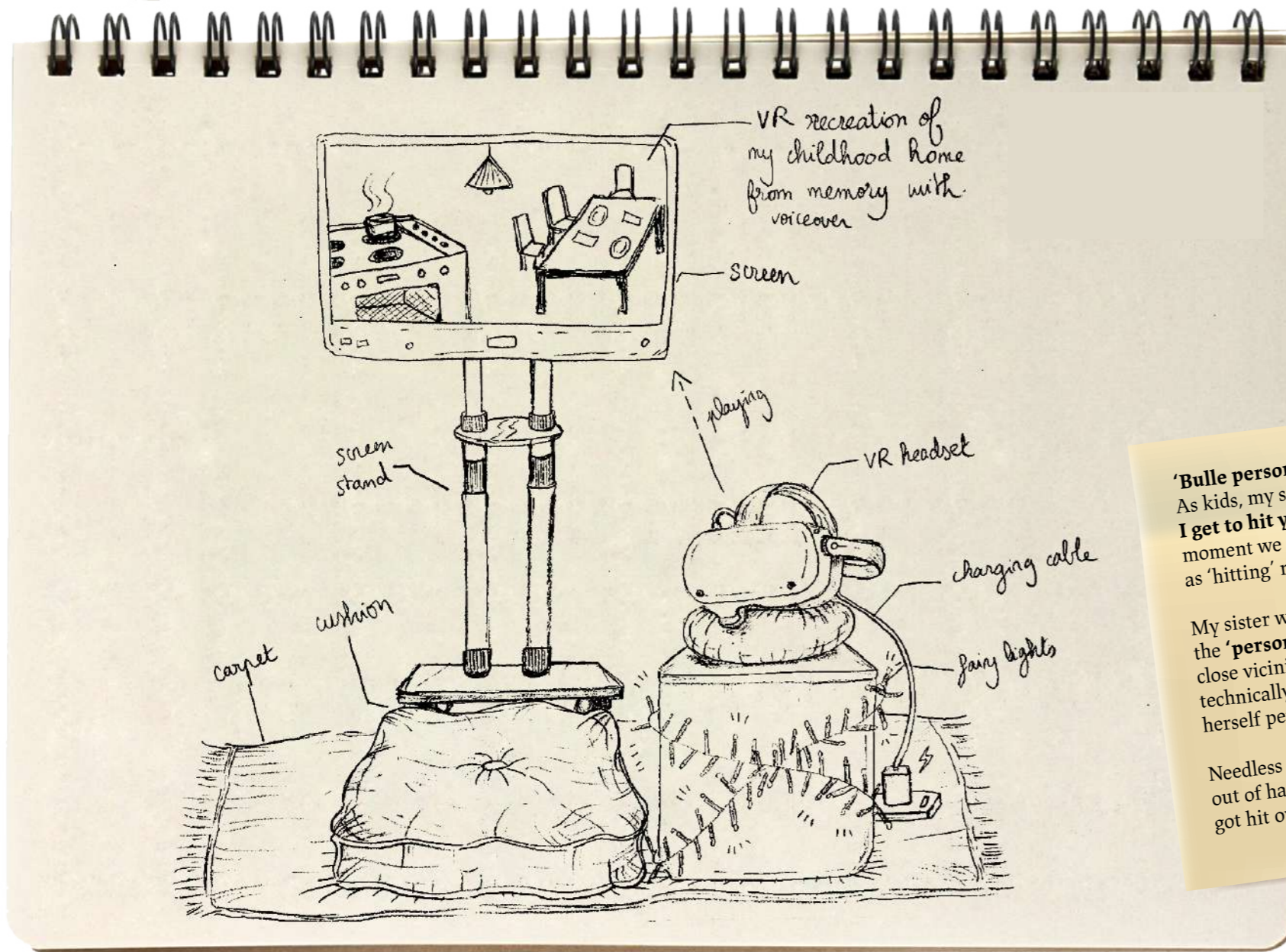
Vibe: Significantly less noise in this area, the soundscape is more abstract and relaxing, allowing reflection on their overall experience. A return to materiality, from style over substance in area 'Refusal' to a shift of substance over style in 'Acceptance'.

The visual representations in this area are more down-to-earth, taken from my reality, with the timelapse of the physical Buddha, the recreation of my personal home through VR, a projection against a pile of sand and a final goodbye in the format of a Buddhist ritual. The audience finds footing in the more analogous mediums which represent the fleeting, impermanence nature of life and death.

Decorations: cheap printed Pureland Buddhist images, Buddhist statues, red lanterns, incense holders.



acceptance | Bulle personelle



'Bulle personelle' means 'personal bubble' in French. As kids, my siblings and I used to have a 'hit me once, I get to hit you twice' rule. This rule got slippery the moment we decided that accidental 'touches' counted as 'hitting' resulting in the person getting punched twice.

My sister was so sick of my brother and I, she invented the 'personal bubble' rule where anyone who was in her close vicinity, would be inside her 'bubble' and therefore technically 'touching' her (it counts as hitting!). She gave herself permission to punch the person back twice.

Needless to say that the 'personal bubble' rule got a bit out of hand and we gradually stopped after a few of us got hit over 28 times.



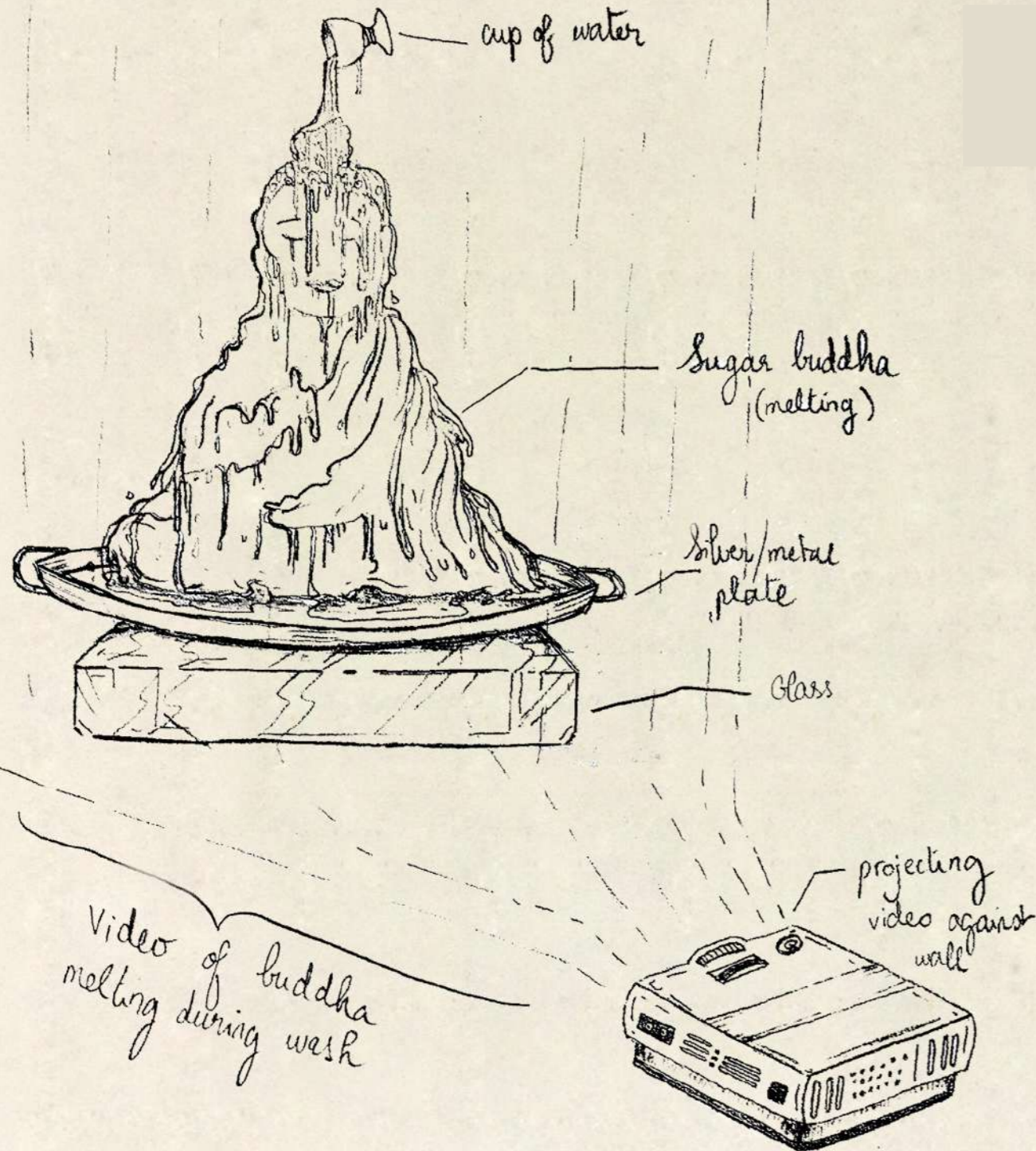
'Bulle personelle', VR Short Film (Oculus Quest), 3D modelling by Petter Scholander

When I was 15, our family moved flats in Paris and us kids got to stop their praying rituals in the new apartment. 'Bulle personelle' is a VR experience where I describe my own corrupted, fleeting memory of our past shrine room from when I was 10 years old to 3D designer Petter Scholander who attempts to fill the gaps of the puzzle in my mind.

A crucial aspect of understanding Buddhism is to come to terms with our own mortality. Everything is fleeting, life and death is an endless cycle, and so is happiness, pain, sadness and suffering. Memories are an embodiment of this concept, they are impermanent images of joy, sorrow, comfort and trauma which continuously evolve, transform, corrupt.

acceptance

Buddha's pinkie toe is the size of the Earth's sky



'Buddha's pinkie toe is the size of the Earth's sky',
timelapse video projected against a wall.

'Buddha's pinkie toe is the size of the Earth's sky' is a
timelapse video recording of me practicing the
famous 'Buddha Wash' ritual in a nature / park
environment. A sugar Buddha is placed on top
of a silver tray and gradually melts as I pour
water on its head and body.

The 'Buddha Wash' is a ritual often done in
pagodes, temples and at home on Buddha's
(Siddhartha Gautama's) birthday. My mom once
had the opportunity to cast her own set of Three
Saints Buddha statues and would proudly give
them a wash every year. She tried teaching me
how to wash the Buddha but I never actually
paid any attention.

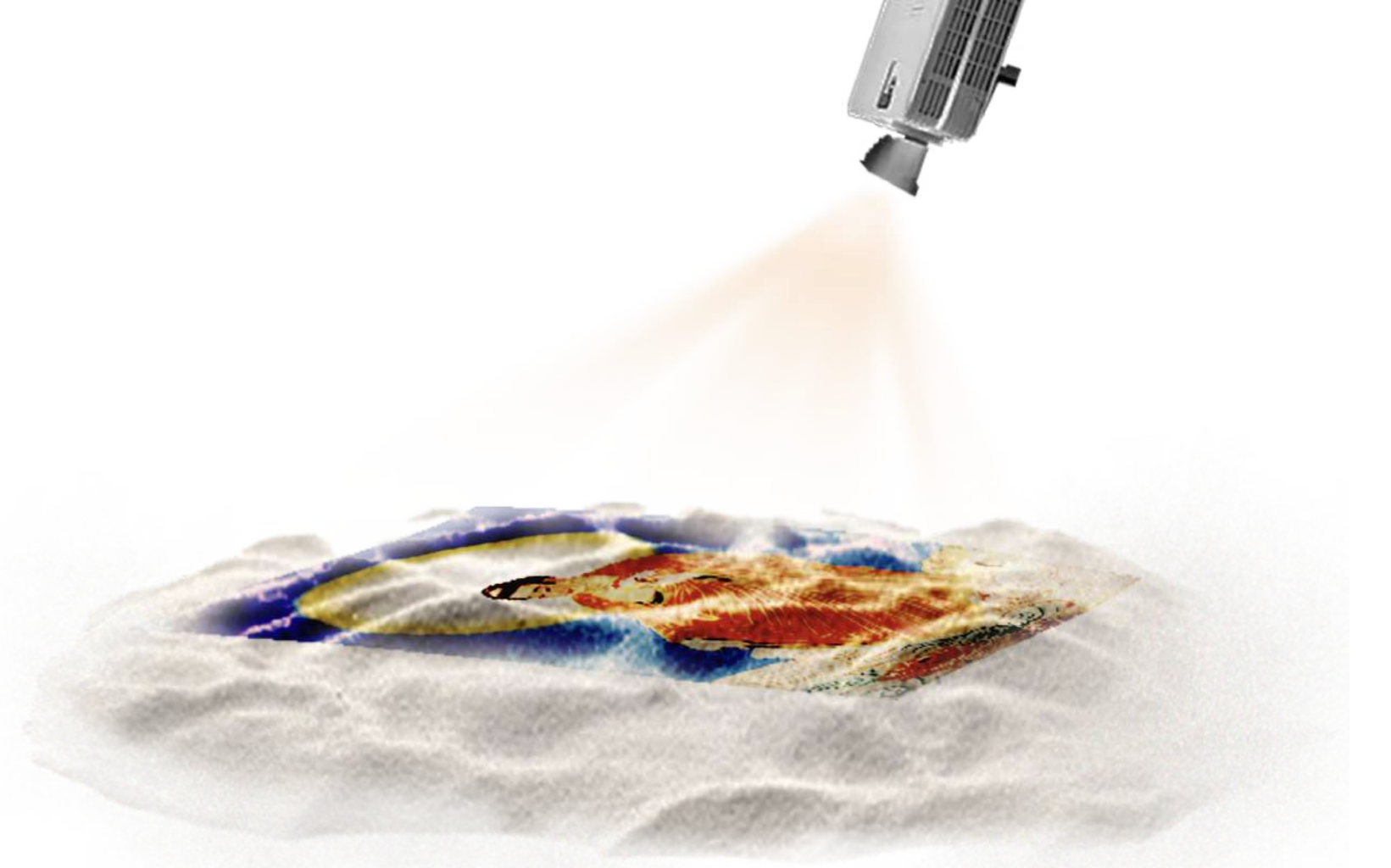
I washed my first Buddha in a pagode at the age
of 25 at Linh Son temple in London during the
Buddha's birthday celebrations.

Once I was walking home from
school and I asked my mom how big
Buddhas actually were. She replied
that Buddhas are so big, they are too
large for humans to comprehend,
that the entire sky is the size of
Amitabha Buddha's pinkie toe.

I was terrified because I thought it
meant that Buddhas could
accidentally step on us
and kill us all.



acceptance | *Un de perdu, dix de retrouvés*



'Un de perdu dix de retrouvés' is a French for 'plenty more fish in the sea'. Although death is a tragic loss in the physical world, I was taught that souls are eternally present in a cycle of reincarnation. During evening prayer, my mom told us to ask A Di Đà to help us find each others' souls after death during the reincarnation process. That way, we could always be with each other in the next life, and we will never be truly gone in our lives.

'Un de perdu, dix de retrouvés', Interactive sand projection, live webcam, TouchDesigner with Jasan Waldura, AI-generated image

'Un de perdu, dix de retrouvés' is an interactive sand installation where the audience can play with the sand to modify, corrupt and transform a projected AI-generated painting of the *'Three Saints of the West'*. The audience's hands are picked up by a live webcam feed connected to TouchDesigner where the image is transformed and reprojected onto the sand. This artwork is inspired by the Tibetan sand mandalas, a medium which embodies the impermanence of life and all physical things. Sand drawings are painstakingly detailed and complex and as you make your mark, you accept that the wind may dissipate your art at any point in time. Each grain of sand is the soul of loved ones we want to bind ourselves forever with in our next lifetime cycle, but as we interact with the fleeting nature of the sand, we learn to stop fighting fate and let go.

acceptance

Shrine 3: Ainsi sonne le glas



ARTWORK SHRINE 3

the participant is invited to take a red envelope in which I put some receipt inside.

Then they hit the Tibetan bowl before they leave.

FIN.

'Ainsi sonne le glas', Interactive installation, Vietnamese Tet red envelopes, Tibetan bowl and hitter.

On this side of the shrine, 'Ainsi sonne le glas' is the final goodbye before the audience's souls find peace in their next lifetime. As they reach this shrine, they are invited to take one of the red envelopes. Inside each envelope, I placed a Tham Lam misfortune cookie receipts from the Buddha printer (see Shrine 2). 'Ainsi sonne le glas' is French for 'and thus the bell tolls', an idiom used to announce the end or the death of something. It can refer to a literal, conceptual, social or political death.

Before they leave, I invite the visitor to hit the Tibetan bowl once, the last act performed at the end a prayer session in a variety of religions.

Vietnamese Tet red envelopes were blessed tokens given to us for good luck during the new year celebrations. They were offered alongside a blessed clementine.

When my parents felt generous, they would sometimes slip a 2 euro coin inside. When I misbehaved it simply contained a small prayer.



promotion + event set up

Promotion:

- As an Instagram AR creator with 4+ years of experience with a strong AR network, there is a lot of potential for the promotion on social media to be pushed with a themed AR face filter based on the 'Wheel of Fortune' artwork: 'Which Reincarnation Will You Be?'. It is interactive and uses one of the most favoured and popular formats of filters, the 'What ____ are you?' random filter.
 - *Watch the demo AR face filter here.*
- Use extracts from *the original Home Age video* which is a general summary of the whole exhibition as the intro video in the entrance and use snippets for social media for teasers which are consistent with the narrative of the show
- Printed flyers / posters can be put up in Vietnamese supermarket / grocery shops and restaurant boards + distribute them in nail salons to attract Viet diaspora

Launch event set-up:

- Serve vegan Chả Giò (Vietnamese fried spring rolls)
- Serve Viet and French snacks
- Host a Karaoke booth
- Free Paris by Night screenings
- Host a roundtable discussion on art, religion immigration and superstition?

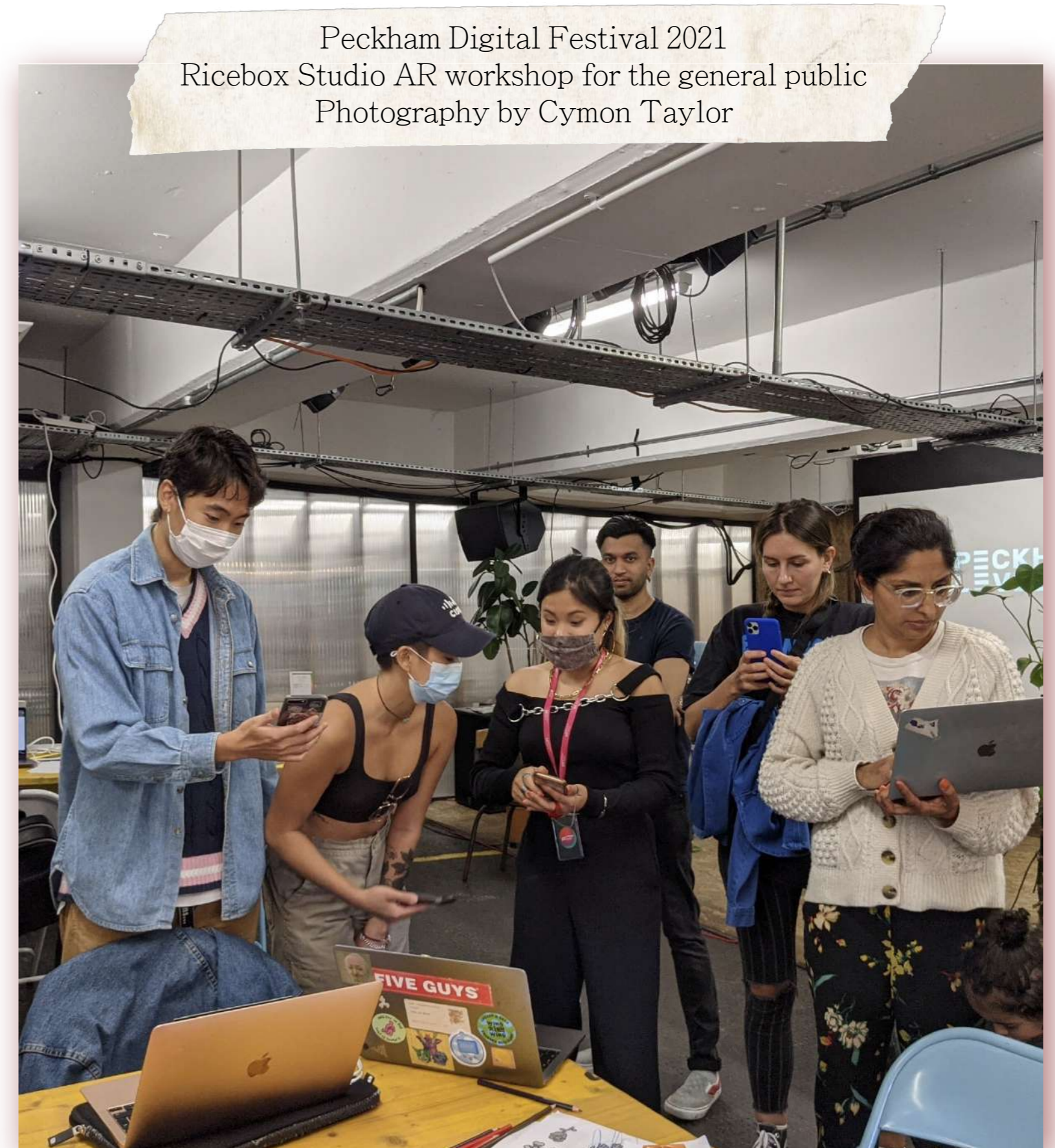


workshops

As part of the exhibition together with the help of workshop facilitators, I will devise and deliver a series of creative tech /skills workshops open to beginners. This is an opportunity to help audiences integrate mediums used in the exhibition artworks such as AR, VR and AI into their processes in an accessible and playful way.

- **AR workshop delivered by Ricebox Studio (2 hours):**
 - *Create your own AR reincarnation face filter with Meta Spark AR or Lens Studio*
- **VR Tilt Brush workshop delivered by Ella Richardson (2 hours):**
 - *Create your own immersive VR drawings with Tilt Brush*
- **Touch Designer with Youngjun Chang (3 hours):**
 - *Learn the basics of TouchDesigner to create a playful AV, audio-reactive experience*
- **AI generative workshop (RunwayML) with Maria Than (2 hours):**
 - *AI is the future, it's time to learn to integrate it in your process in a meaningful way!*

I have extensive workshop experience with both the children and adults, the general public and universities and high schools since 2018. I have been teaching AR, storytelling and activism from 1 hour sessions at events /in-class and full hackathons since 2019 with Ricebox Studio and have recently started teaching AI at UAL Creative Computing Institute.



timeline

	Q1					Q2					Q3					Q4																																							
	June 2023		July 2023			August 2023		Sept 2023			October 2023			November 2023		December 2023			January 2024		February 2024			March 2024		April 2024																													
	5	12	19	26	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28	4	11	18	25	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29							
Proposal Submission and results																																																							
Curatorial & Concept discussion																																																							
Production																																																							
Test days																																																							
Install onsite																																																							
Exhibition duration																																																							
Events																																																							

- For more detail on the timeline, please visit [this link](#) to view the detailed breakdown that includes the timeline for each project.
- [Click here](#) to view original timeline as summarised on this page.
- Multiple projects will be done in collaboration and technical help of designers and artists who have confirmed their participation and who have extensive expertise or experience in the various creative tech, digital and 3D mediums.

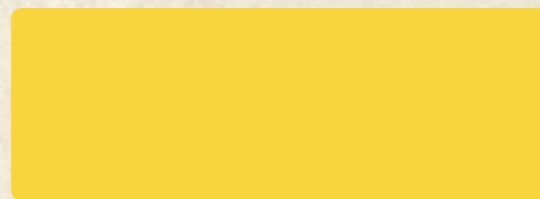
branding



Red #C1272D



Orange #F15A24



Yellow #F9D53D

Design elements: post-it, masking tape, pencil texture



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Heading 1: EB Garamond 12 Regular All SmallCaps, 3D Inflate
Three RGB colours: orange (#FBB03B), yellow (#FFFF00), red (#F15A24)

HOME AGE
TO QUAN THE AM BÔ TAT

Heading 2: EB Garamond, 3D Inflate
Two RGB colours: yellow bg (#FFFF00), red (#F15A24)

the exhibition

Heading 3: EB Garamond, 08 Italic

Heading 3

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research

visual references

super loaded images - buddhist
maximalist viet visuals are
everywhere, where are they from?

my theory: a Viet Buddhist auntie
or uncle in the 2000s discovered
Photoshop / MS Paint and in true
Viet style, improvised their own
collage to decorate the temple rather
than hiring a designer. Inspired by
Viet maximalism and Tibetan
Thangkas, Paris by Night posters,
existing Pureland Mahayana and
Theravada Buddhist paintings and in
the spirit of shines, they made their
own collages overfilled with realistic
photographs, halos and saturated
with garish colours. More is love.



Pureland Viet Buddhist art



Linh Son temple (UK)



Viet temple statues



Everything Everywhere all at once
- inside the laundromat



Inside UK seaside
amusement places



Tibetan Thangka



Paris by Night poster



Khanh Ahn pagode (FR)



home shrines



Music video - Didier Marouani & Space -
love the video editing - the cut-outs and use
of VHS style effect and overlays of saturat-
ed colours with noise and static



Cycle of death and life in
ENTER THE VOID by Gaspar Noe



Three Saints of the West



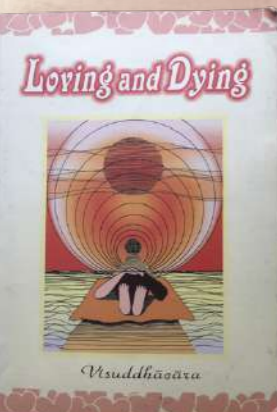
home shrines



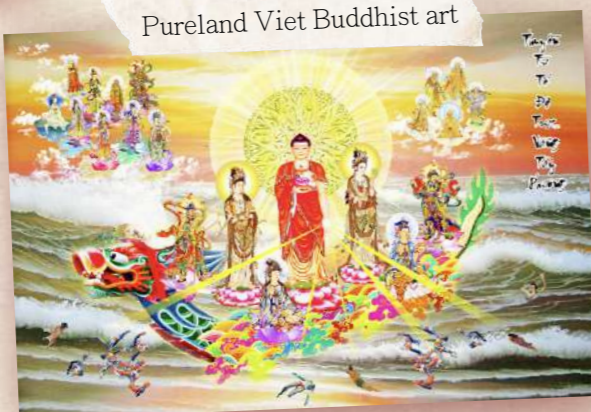
Lion-Turtle



Saturation, playful contrasts and
depiction of innocence and childhood
in ENTER THE VOID



Vietnamese book passed on from my mom, filled with teachings and stories
around letting go, grieving, understanding impermanence.
Book forbidden to be sold but passed on from person to person for free.



Pureland Viet Buddhist art



Generic prayer book

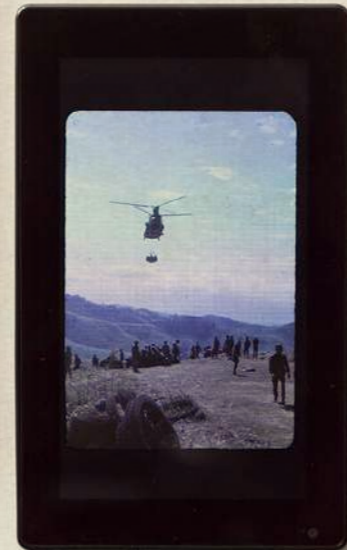
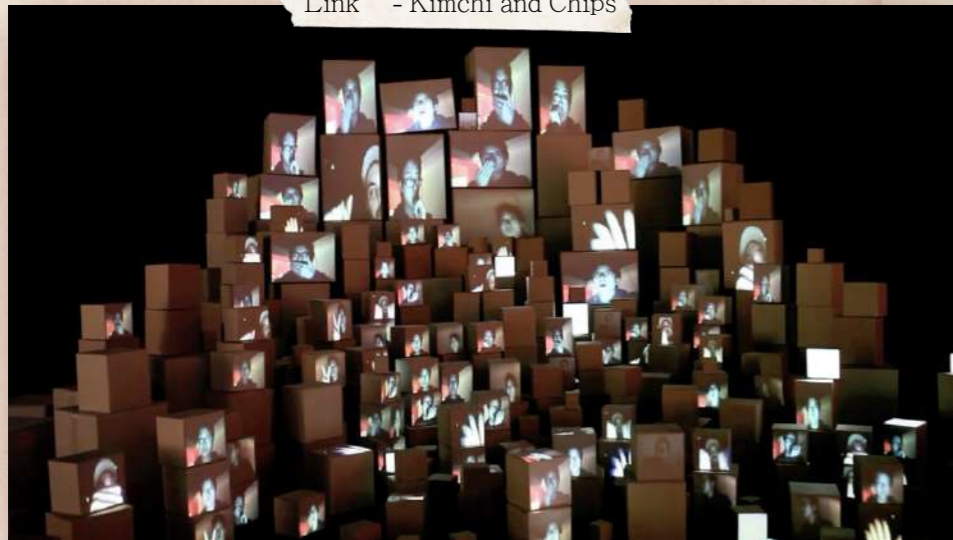
Avatar the Last Airbender
series has inspiring, fantastic
yet serious storytelling and
approach to Asian mythology
and culture that is entertaining,
approachable yet not preachy.
The Lion-Turtle depiction is
incredible, majestic



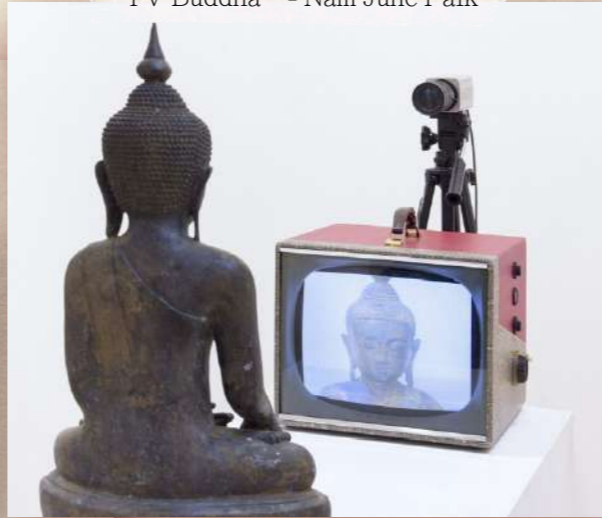
research

artworks references

"Link" - Kimchi and Chips



"TV Buddha" - Nam June Paik



"No Place Like Home (A Vietnamese Exhibition) Part II" - Museum of the Home



"Daughter of the Water God" - Thao Nguyen Phan



"AR sandbox" - Researchers at UC Davis W.M. Keck Center for Active Visualization in the Earth Sciences



"Auto-Encoded Buddha" - Jake Elwes



"Conflicted: Works from the Vietnam Archive Project" - Phuong Ngo



"Live Forever" - Lee Bul



"Lantern Stories" - Yu-Wen Wu



"The Flemish Scrollers" - Depoorter

bio

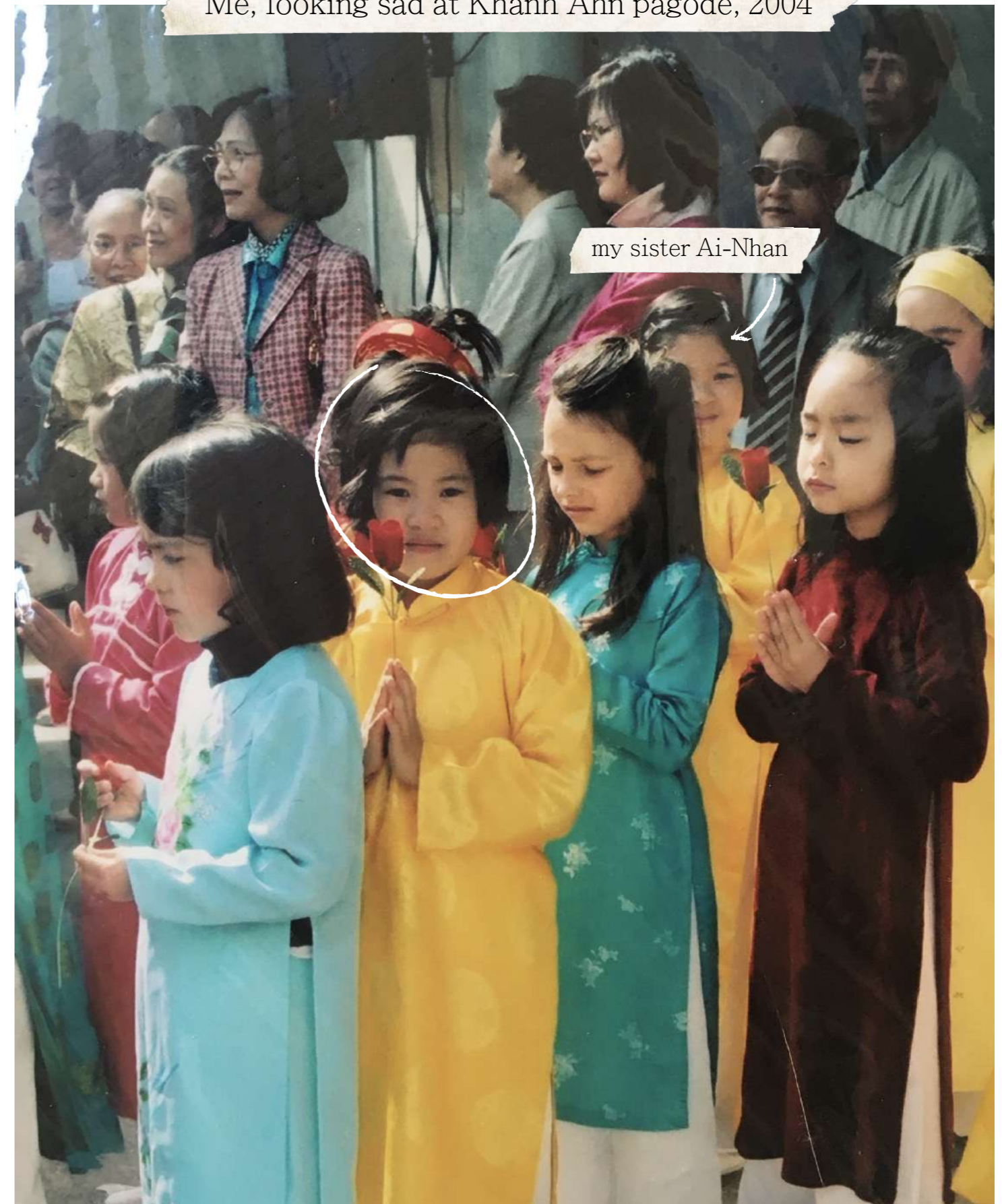
Maria Than (b.1996) is a Viet-British-French creative technologist, educator, activist & co-founder of design practice Ricebox Studio.

Her work is playful, interactive, & narrative-based with a strong focus on social good. She experiments mainly with Augmented Reality, illustration and AI-generated images & is currently working on a series of AI x AR artworks that explores her identity as a chronically online Asian woman who looks at themes of buddhism, over-productivity, anxiety, internalised racism, burn-outs & escapism. She graduated from UAL BA Graphic Design in 2019.

Her work has been showcased in London (Truman Brewery, Copeland Gallery, Tate Modern), in Paris (CADAF), in New York (Superchief Gallery NFT, Web3 Gallery) and in Toronto, Canada (BIA Junction). In 2021, she became a Fellow at the Royal Society of Arts, an award based on her recent work on period education and augmented reality.

She lectures part-time in BA Graphic Design at Sheffield Hallam University, and in the MSc Data Science and AI for the Creative Industries at UAL Creative Computing Institute, and works part-time at Child Rights International Network (CRIN) as a Digital Designer.

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Me, looking sad at Khanh Ahn pagode, 2004

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- *Thank you to the jury for their time and patience.*

Khanh Ahn Pagode in construction - Evry, Paris, 2003.

