



SCHOOL OF
DESIGN
创新创意设计学院

Future Archeology: Experiencing, Discussing, and Testing the Living Archive on the example of Hakka Culture

part of the project “Future Archeology: Boosting Cultural Vibrancy through AI Regenerated Materialities in Co-Designed Virtual Spaces”

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Project introduction

Shenzhen, a high-density, dynamic city in southern China, showcases the swift transformation and developing character of urban areas. Since its emergence in the 1980s, it has not formed a collective memory but rather reflects individual narratives from people across the country in search of opportunities.

The research project “Future Archaeology,” conducted by the *Materialities Research Group* at SUSTech School of Design, assumes the city is a future archaeological site. This raises questions about the effectiveness of conventional historical reconstruction methods in our rapidly changing, interconnected society. The research encompasses realistic and fictional reconstructions through digital tools and artificial intelligence based on community involvement and co-design.

We suggest a speculative archive, which we call “Living Archive,” to challenge and reimagine the investigation and accessibility of cultural heritage, ultimately contributing to a participatory approach to urban archaeology. We challenge conventional narratives and reject a singular viewpoint by engaging with tangible, authentic materials and digital technologies. We utilize open-source APIs and web technologies to develop a virtual realm that interlinks fragmented, collected materials and stories, encapsulating regenerative data.

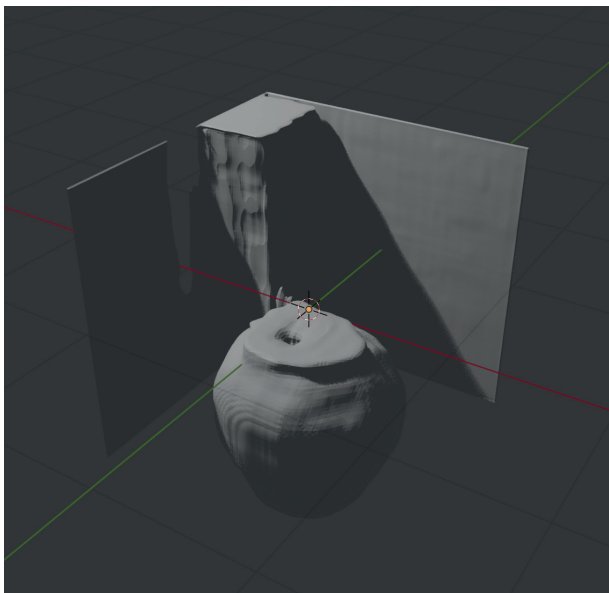
Focusing on the Hakka culture in Shenzhen's Pingshan community, we aim to uncover hidden narratives and material aspects through technological integration. We aim to offer new insights into interaction design, ethnographic studies, applied computing, and HCI, employing collaborative and speculative strategies to connect history with contemporary and future identities and actions.

Workshop Description and Objectives

As part of the broad project "Future Archeology," we designed a web platform to become a Living Archive of Hakka culture where the public can explore material through a personal, non-imposed narrative navigating a fictional historic space rebuilt with authentic remains, collected stories, and ideas from the community, and AI tools of text, 2D images, and 3D objects generation. The further implementation of the archive includes integrating comments, feedback, knowledge and stories from the public to become part of the "never fixed," evolving cultural heritage.

We invite the participants to:

- * navigate and interact with the virtual space;
- * contribute to the participative archive improvement with ideas and feedback;
- * experience the feeling of being an active agent of a cultural and material transformation;
- * engage in a creative conversation about the future of technology, cultural heritage, and materials;
- * learn about Hakka culture.



Participants:

3 to 15 participants

Equipment needed:

Participants are encouraged to bring their own pc for a smooth and effective working session; if unavailable, they can work in groups on a few laptops provided by the organizers.

Equipment provided:

Projector and big screen for the project introduction, instructions and collective navigation;

2/3 laptops as a backup;

Paper, pens, pencils, and markers for notes, drawings, brainstorming;

Tangible objects from the Future Archeology collection;

Selected Data and Material from the archive for users to explore and experiment;

Workshop duration:

9:00 - 12:00 (estimated)

Workshop location:

School of Design, Sustech, Nanshan IPark, Building C1

Target Audience:

Researchers, practitioners, and students in design, media art, cultural heritage, social computing, AI and technology, and anyone interested in material culture, urban studies, community engagement, and narrative methods and practice.

Schedule and Activities**9:00 - 9:45**

Project Introduction, hand out questionnaires and prompts

9:45 - 10:30

Quick warming-up with data and materials: interacts with tangible objects and selected images, videos, scans, etc., from the Future Archeology collection. While interacting with these tangible materials, participants produce free drawings, writings, notes and brainstorming based on their personal experience and memories.

coffe break**10:30 - 11:00**

Short instruction on the web-platform, and other user interaction package

11:00 - 11:30

Participants interact with the web platform, they can input their comments directly to the prototype (annotations in interactive space). They input their previous notes and writings into the text topology generation.

11:30 - 12:00

Collect notes, drawings, answers, etc. from the participants. Free sharing and discussions

Wrapping up and Concluding