

TAXI TALE

Design 3 : HOME is not a HOUSE

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In Bangkok, one of the mundane and ignored participants is a taxi driver. People did not notice them, what they do, what they eat, or even where they live. Taxi drivers are living a difficult life with long hours of driving but only gain little money. Because of these factors some taxi drivers sold their house or had to leave their family back home and began to live in their taxi car to drive around the city to find a decent place for a night. One of the particular areas where most taxis come to park at night to take a break is under the highway area. It started with a few cars and then grew into one community where they shared belongings like fixing tools, cooking stove, and cloth hangers. Those personal belongings are stored under the highway pillars unpleasantly. They even use the green bush area across the street for their personal business—discharging. These activities made them domesticated and conquered the area without no one disturbing them. Because of the long hours of driving, taxi drivers are tired. As a matter of fact, finding an area for a break is becoming necessary for this career.

So what is the meaning of having home, when the taxi drivers just could live here under the highway.

Having home, in this narrative, is having memories, especially the memories that were formed with people one loves, such as family members. Memories in individuals make each life meaningful, without the story of oneself one might not have purpose in life. Memories are where you can go back any time. Memories keep what is important, emotionally. Memories impact life. And memories make people feel like home and comfort.

To illustrate the agenda of 'Memories as Home,' a fictional story has to be told.

Somchai, a humble farmer from the countryside, came to Bangkok to drive a taxi. After long shifts, he discovered an empty space under the highway, where he would rest. This quiet refuge became his regular stop, and it marked the beginning of something special. Somchai wanted to document his life and how far he had come, but he couldn't read or write. Instead, he scribbled simple drawings—images of cooking, resting, and his daily routine. These scribbles became his way of recording his life for future generations.

Prasit, Somchai's son, continued the family legacy by becoming a taxi driver himself. He earned the family's first metered taxi, a symbol of pride and success, marking their deeper entry into Bangkok's taxi industry. The number 35, the starting fare, became an important symbol in their family. But despite this success, the life of a taxi driver was never easy—long hours, minimal pay, and constant exhaustion.

In the third generation, tragedy struck. Yot, Prasit's son, was in a serious accident that left him unable to drive. Though he could no longer work, Yot often returned to the highway area where he had spent his

life. This space, rich with memories, held the stories of his father and grandfather. His presence there was a reminder of the risks involved in their work and the sense of belonging that came with this place.

It was Yot's daughter, Lek, who found inspiration in her family's past. She often sat in the back of her father's taxi, learning the streets of Bangkok and visiting the community of drivers under the highway. She discovered her great-grandfather's scribbled diary and felt deeply connected to the sacrifices and hard work of the previous generations. Her mother and grandmother were skilled weavers, and Lek saw the potential to capture these memories in woven patterns. She began creating tapestries that illustrated her family's legacy—the stove her great-grandfather used to cook, the number 35 from their first taxi meter, and a broken side mirror symbolizing her father's accident.

As Lek married a young taxi driver and had children, she taught them about their heritage. The tapestries became a visual history of the taxi drivers' community, and her weaving passed through the generations.

By the fifth generation, the family had been there for over five decades. Inspired by their mother's dedication to preserving the stories of the past, the children decided to build a makeshift home for the taxi drivers' community. Using leftover wood and construction materials, they expanded the area under the highway. They first built space for a larger weaving machine, as the tapestries continued to grow, representing the evolving stories of their community.

The tapestries themselves became an integral part of this new structure. Long fabrics were used to create walls, forming private spaces, and some were hung overhead to create swings, where the drivers could relax and hang out. The entire area was a living tribute to their family's legacy. Every piece of fabric, every woven panel, was a reminder of the community they had built—starting from Somchai's quiet naps under the highway to the expansive, makeshift home they had created decades later.

Through the generations, the family's story transformed from one of hardship and survival to one of pride, resilience, and community. The tapestries, woven by Lek and her descendants, captured the memories of each generation, ensuring that the legacy of the taxi drivers under the highway would never be forgotten.

To conclude, what the taxi driver family and community did together throughout the last half century, the community preserved their memories into physical form in which these memories that they have together established a greater outcome of a domestic space that belonged to them ,and also helped make a happier and meaningful life for the taxi career.