

The Vietnam War and Music

A Personal Experience



The Music of the Vietnam War

There is a powerful relationship between music and memory, and how songs can transport you back to particular events in your life. The complex nature of the Vietnam War gave birth to a range of evocative a powerful music that is intrinsically linked to the era.

From a Western perspective, the American government was encouraging youth to enlist in the army with nationalistic songs, while comforting the soldiers already abroad with a specially curated radio broadcasts through the American Forces Vietnam Network.



The Music of the Vietnam War

As the mood of the United States began to shift, and people began to openly question the purpose of the conflict, music gave a powerful means of expression, dissatisfaction and rebellion to those opposed to the war.

Music also played a significant role in North Vietnam and among the Communist forces. The communist party censored any music that stirred any emotion other than pride for one's country, and the beauty of the land.

A grayscale photograph of soldiers in a field, overlaid with a semi-transparent dark gray rectangle containing text. The soldiers are wearing helmets and carrying equipment, with one soldier in the foreground looking towards the camera.

The Exhibition Narrative

When entering the exhibition room the visitor will see an array of American and North Vietnamese type helmets. Each helmet contains a panoramic display system and stereo sound.

The immersive experience begins once the visitor puts on a helmet.

The project is introduced on the video screen with the user prompted to select one of three languages; English, French or Vietnamese.



The Exhibition Narrative

The visitor can choose one of four stories based on the nationality of the helmet. Each story would be based on a retelling of a personal moment, directly linked to a specific song from that time.

Four people from Vietnam and four people from the United States would have their personal stories retold through an actor's reenactment.

A black and white photograph of soldiers in Vietnam, overlaid with a semi-transparent dark grey rectangle containing text. The soldiers are wearing helmets and carrying equipment, with one soldier in the foreground looking towards the camera.

The Exhibition Narrative

American If wearing an American or a South Vietnamese helmet, the visitor will be able to choose one of four stories from four individuals who directly experienced the war.

The type of stories could include a young man about to start his military training in 1966, a medical nurse horrified by the wounded in 1968, a dismayed Marine at a firebase in 1970, and a veteran's reaction to the protesters in his city in 1975.

A grayscale photograph of soldiers in a field, likely during the Vietnam War. In the foreground, a soldier in a dark uniform looks towards the camera. Behind him, several other soldiers in helmets and combat gear are visible, some holding rifles. The ground is covered in dry grass and brush. The image is semi-transparent, allowing text to be overlaid.

The Exhibition Narrative

Vietnamese If wearing a North Vietnamese helmet, the visitor will be able to choose one of four individual stories from the Communist Vietnamese perspective.

These stories could range from an ex-South Vietnamese soldier joining the Communist forces, a young patriotic female soldier wanting to join the army to support her government, a soldier preparing for the Tet Offensive in 1968, and an ex-soldier returning to rebuild his village after the war.

A grayscale photograph of soldiers in a field, overlaid with a semi-transparent dark gray rectangle containing text. The soldiers are wearing helmets and carrying equipment, with some holding rifles. The background is a dense field of tall grass or reeds.

United States

Annie Graham

William Francis

David Banks

Ronald Kegovitz

1966

1968

1970

1975

Vietnam

Tran Do Lam

Nguy Bang Than

Pham An Ly

Nguyen The Thai



United States

Annie Graham

William Francis

David Banks

Ronald Kegovitz

1966

1968

1970

1975

Vietnam

Tran Do Lam

Nguy Bang Than

Pham An Ly

Nguyen The Thai



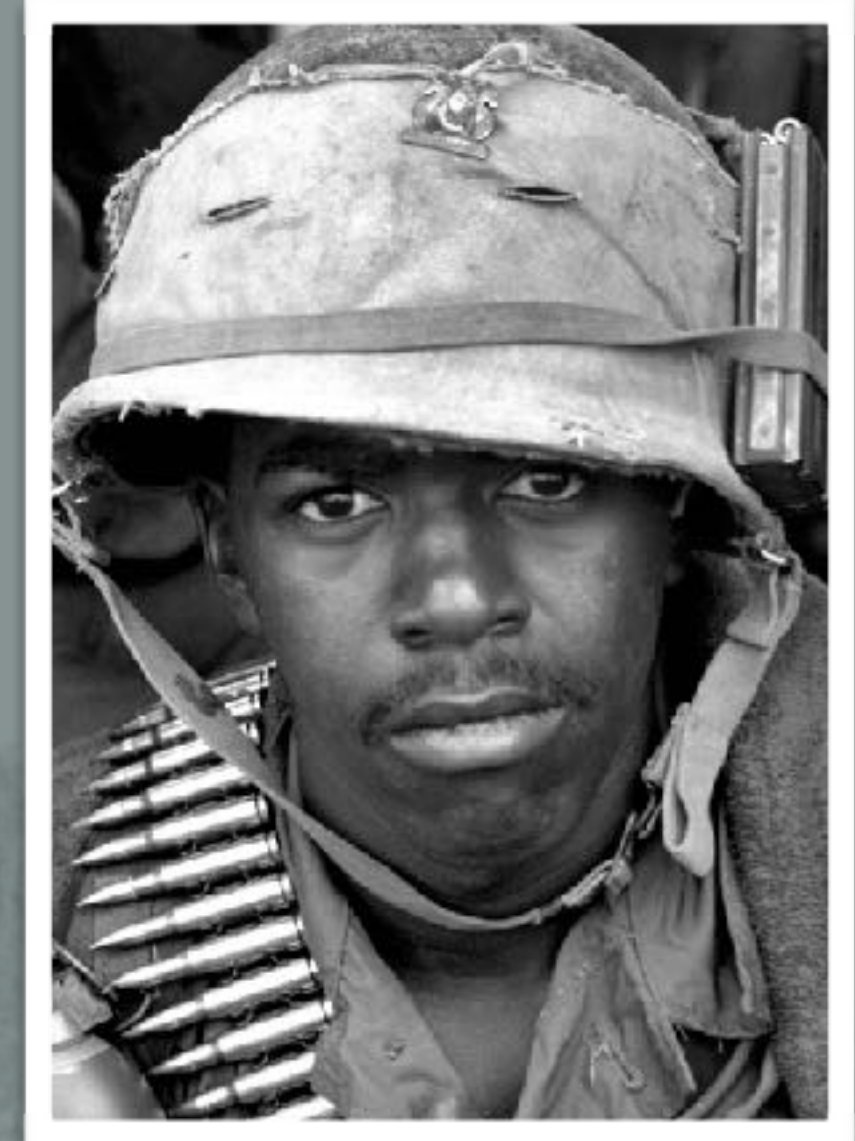
Annie
Graham



William
Francis



Ronald
Kegovitz



David
Banks



Tran Do
Lam



Pham An
Ly



Nguy Bang
Chau



Nguyen The
Thai

A grayscale photograph of soldiers in a field, overlaid with a semi-transparent dark gray rectangle containing text. The soldiers are wearing helmets and carrying equipment. One soldier in the foreground is looking towards the camera.

The Installation

The room contains eight military helmets suspended from the ceiling. The four American military helmets and four Vietnamese military helmets have interactive/real-time 360-degree video display and audio.

The American helmets are able to tell the four American stories.

The Communist Vietnamese helmets are able to tell the four Vietnamese stories.

A grayscale photograph of soldiers in a field, with a semi-transparent text box overlaid. The soldiers are wearing helmets and carrying equipment. The text box contains the title 'The Installation' and three paragraphs of text.

The Installation

The video will depict a 45-second, 360 video of an individual experience based on a specific song. It would be a song that emotive, powerful and representative of their experience at that time.

These experiences and music selection are from real people, from their personal perspective, told through an actor.

The exhibition visitor will view the 360 degree video from the character's perspective.



