

Abstract

This project examines the social friction and misuse of public space resulting from intense urban tourism in an alleyway in Bangkok's Khaosan district, Thailand. The rapid stream of tourists often creates tension with long-standing local communities. This study employed a Design Thinking approach, utilizing mixed methods including “lifetime stories” and “geo-social mapping” from community tools, to understand and design a public art intervention. The project involved the co-creation and installation of a mural and posters, featuring spice-themed anthropomorphic designs and bilingual Roman and Thai lettering. Post-implementation observations and community interviews revealed significant positive outcomes: enhanced aesthetic appeal, increased positive tourist engagement, such as taking photos in the alley, and satisfied local community.

Keywords: mural, design thinking, Bangkok, community engagement, social friction

Introduction

Bangkok is the capital of the Kingdom of Thailand and one of the main tourist destinations in Southeast Asia. Pechpakdee et al. (2022) investigated the relationship between urban tourism, urban development, and Bangkok as a livable city for its residents. This study mentioned that Bangkok provides attractions and diverse accommodations for urban tourists. Bangkok has met the criteria of a livable city set by the United Nations. Those criteria are inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable aspects of the city. Khaosan Road area has a dual identity, there is a local community which close to tradition and this area also serves as a global tourist hub. The Khaosan district is part of the old city, which was divided into two parts, North and South of the Chao Phraya River. This design project builds upon such insights by focusing on micro-level conflicts arising from rapid tourism development within historically significant neighbourhoods, a phenomenon also observed by Kulachol (2003) in his historical accounts of the area. Kulachol (2003) noted that this area was allocated for the nobles, Muslim settlements, and a couple of Buddhist temples. This area is also known as Bang Lampoo, after Lam Phu trees, that were commonly grown here. The Khaosan (or uncooked rice in the Thai Language), the name was derived from numerous rice merchants in the area back then. According to Udomsap and lamtrakul (2011) this district has commercial, private sector, government affairs, restaurants, cafes, pubs, and guesthouses. These establishments are meant to cater to the locals and tourists. There are different sets of establishments and activities in the daytime and others at night.

Howard (2005) has discussed the locals who put great effort into reclaiming their area from the backpackers almost 2 decades ago. Yiamjanya (2013) stated that these tourists typically stay in the area for 2 to 7 days and use Khaosan Road as their transit before going to other areas in Thailand or neighboring countries. Their main reason was the affordable accommodations and food. The wide roads enable tourist buses to park. Every night, buses go to Pattaya, Chiang Mai, or other places. During the COVID-19 Pandemic, the locals only ran this area. After COVID-19 restrictions had been lifted, the backpacker started to

stay again in this area. Since then, this area has been filled again with tourists. The archetypes of backpacker visitors after the pandemic are still quite similar to those of twenty years ago. As long-time permanent residents of this area, the local community must share their living space and road with affordable tourist facilities again.

In addition to branding itself as a tourist hub, Bangkok has also put great effort into building its creative economy. Design has been generating economic value for the main developed countries in the world (Douglas, 2024). This project was part of Bangkok Design Week 2024, aligning with the theme: Livable Scape. Bangkok Design Week (BKDDW) is an annual program mainly organized by the Creative Economy Agency (CEA), a public organization with various private organizations, and creative business sectors from all over Thailand and internationally. CEA was started in 2018 as the expansion of TCDC (Thailand Creative & Design Centre) under the supervision of the Office of the Prime Minister. This project, conducted as part of Bangkok Design Week 2024, aims to examine the potential of design interventions, specifically a mural and poster installation, to foster improved social dynamics and a sense of shared space within a common alleyway of the Khaosan district. It seeks to explore how art can address issues of public space misuse and promote mutual respect between residents and tourists.

The first BKDDW was in 2018 with “The New-ist Vibes: Design for the Future”. Each year, this event has been expanding its area within this city. This event also collaborates with educational institutions, with Bangkok having the largest art schools (Bangkok Design Week.com, About). BKDDW is a multi-collaborative event to strengthen this city’s branding as a creative city. This event raised more awareness of design functions for the community and tourists. They are also encouraged to participate in this event. This project was undertaken by a participating designer and part of a doctoral study.

The designated area during BKDDW 2024 for this project was an alley in the Khaosan Road Area. Despite Bangkok’s efforts to brand itself as a creative city and tourist hub, the rapid influx of tourism, particularly in historic areas like Khaosan, creates significant social friction and challenges for long-standing local

communities. This project addresses the need for creative interventions to bridge the cultural and social divide between resident communities and transient tourist populations, specifically within the contested public spaces of the Khaosan district. The community has been following a particular social system they have been earning their living as merchants. This community had its particular social system before the massive growth of affordable hotels, pubs, and bars around this area created a different social system. Each social system has to adapt to become a new social system for the present time. The friction was a result of different point of view and cultural understanding between the community and tourists.

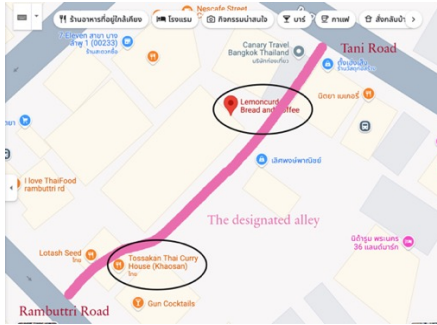
The specific alley is between Rambuttri and Tani Road, and has been used as a shortcut between those roads. Shophouses occupy the area with the owners living within the vicinity. There have been several problems that have arisen between the community and tourists. The alley has poor lighting conditions in the first place, so it has been dark during the night. The dark alley led to tourists urinating, drinking alcohol, and engaging in indecent activities due to intoxication. Another problem was the mobile food carts. Food cart sellers open their businesses at night along Rambuttri and Tani Road. They start selling around dawn and close around 3 AM. This nightly commute was quite noisy and bothered the neighborhood. Two shophouses in the alley rented out their first floor to the food cart sellers.

As mentioned before, the Khaosan area was full of rice shops; indeed, one of the shophouses in this alley is still selling rice and is run by the 3rd generation. Residents typically use their first level as a shop, café, food cart storage, kitchen for a nearby restaurant, or workshop, while the second level serves as their living quarter. However, they have been leasing the shophouses to The Crown Bureau, as the land is owned by them, as part of the government affairs, according to the interview with the habitant on November 27, 2023.

Data collection employed field observation and in-depth, contextual interviews with both community members and employees from local eateries. The initial phase of interviews focused on residents and daily workers, beginning with their needs for alley improvements. These conversations then evolved

Figure 1

Location of the alley, Tossakan Thai Curry House And Lemoncurd Bread and Coffee



into comprehensive life stories, revealing insights due to the interviewees' long-standing connection to the area; many have resided there their entire lives, with some having lived in the district even before its popularity with international backpackers, including second and third-generation occupants. The field observation and interviews allowed the project to identify particular problems and issues that needed to be addressed.

Figure 2

View of Tani Road with the planned wall to place the mural.



Figure 3

View of Rambuttri Road with the planned wall to place the mural



Only the cloth sellers and employees from the Lemoncurd Café who live in other area but come to this alley daily. In Fig.4 each shop house is identified by numbers. 2 middle-aged ladies reside in 217. They have been rescuing stray cats around the area and keeping them on their first floor while using the second floor as their living quarter. These ladies plan to renovate their shophouse into a cat café. In unit 209 resides an elderly lady on the second and third floor. In 2009 a retired elderly man used the first floor as his woodworking studio and lived on the second floor. A busy rice shop is in unit 205; the grandma runs the shop on the first floor with the help of her daughter, who lives nearby. In unit 207 lived a retired couple, the wife was a music lecturer, while her husband was a doctor. The husband has been opening a hardware store on Tani Road, as shown in the right corner of Fig.4. They keep their first floor empty while living on the second. The first floor of 199 is the Lemoncurd café, while the second and third are their bed and breakfast. The cloth seller lady opened her business in the early 90s, and has been coming to the alley ever since. Every weekday, she sells her flowery blouses with the help of her husband. She has quite a lot of clientele, who are mostly elderly ladies.

Objectives

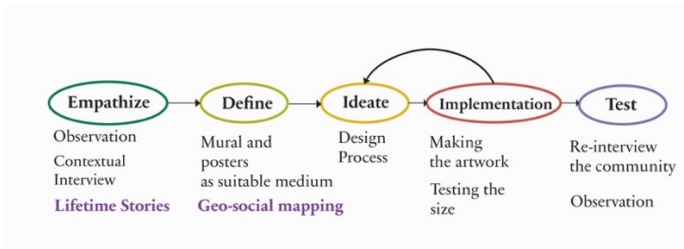
The objectives of this project are:

1. To use a hybrid approach, integrating design thinking methodologies and community engagement tools to identify potential solutions for problematic tourist behaviour within this specific location.
2. To develop a series of graphic art installations, specifically murals and posters, as an intervention addressing the issues.
3. To assess the impact and efficacy of the newly implemented graphic interventions in the area.

Methodology

Figure 4

Design Thinking and Community Tools Process Diagram



Various studies have applied design thinking to overcome community problems in large cities. Community involvement has been crucial, as design thinking. Both analytical and creative approaches focused on the intended user's concerns, interests, and values. In line with findings from Depine et al. (2017) the involvement of the community in design thinking process empowers them, as their input was taken in constructing the solution Urban revitalization

projects should consider the evolving demographics of rapidly growing cities and integrate various methodological tools, including systematic observation and walking tour assessments. Al-Mohannadi et al. (2019) used these methods to study the dynamics between the latest migrant residents and their old neighborhood, especially to analyze the spatial practices of communities. These methods can lead to a deeper understanding of community needs and aspirations.

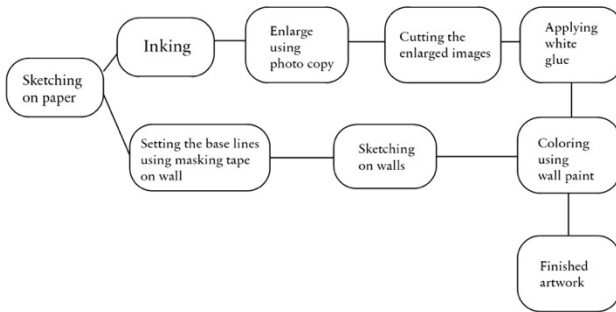
This project also used observation, taking photos of the alley and site visits, which were similar to a walking tour. The use of creative engagement with food can address social exclusion, and mitigate environmental degradation, connecting social and biophysical subsystems to improve quality of life as happened in Rekow's study in 2020. (Rekow, 2020). Food connects culture and nature, influencing culinary diversity through traditional practices, spices, and herbs (Situngkir et al., 2015). Thus, this project tried to apply food as inspiration in solving the friction problem. Creative engagement with food can help reshape the space in the alley, address social exclusion between the different social groups. In Rekow's study, the engagement could also mitigate environmental degradation, or in this case urban environment. In addition, this engagement is connecting social and biophysical (or in this project urban space) subsystems to improve quality of life (Rekow, 2020). Moreover, food connects culture and nature, influencing culinary diversity through traditional practices, spices, and herbs (Situngkir et al., 2015).

Consequently, this project applies food as inspiration in solving the friction problem. This approach, however, also necessitates a robust methodology. Thus, incorporating insights from the residents and design thinking tools fosters the orchestration of conflicting ideas, identification of singular needs and common goals, productive use of diverse backgrounds, and development of a shared vision. Ultimately, the essence of design thinking is to put learners into contexts that make them think and work like an expert designer, thereby fostering civic literacy, empathy, cultural awareness, and risk-taking. The residents, as one of the stakeholders, appreciate this inclusivity in the design thinking process. Such practices are vital for community-led design, where stakeholders collaborate to develop sustainable solutions for complex design and planning problems

(Hartley, 2009). Design thinking is an approach to problem-solving that prioritizes empathy and iterative solution development, making it particularly well-suited for tackling complex issues such as inclusive community design. Design thinking, which emphasizes collaboration to address challenges, fosters the use of skills like communication, creativity, and critical thinking to solve both simple and complex problems.

Figure 5

Design Process Diagram.



The ideation phase of the design thinking method was based on gathered information from spice images. The first step involved sketching the spices and lettering, with the chosen organic style intended to contrast with the alley walls. Subsequent phases differed slightly for the posters and lettering, though, as shown in the diagram both entered the same coloring phase. Examples of the sketches can be seen in Fig. 7. The sketches were then rendered in black ink for better contrast with the paper, photocopied, and enlarged by 400%. The poster placement linked the main roads, as shown in Fig. 11. According to Harland, graphic objects can be placed vertically or horizontally. In this project, however, each graphic object was strategically placed in specific locations within the alley. Moreover, these placements were determined by the particular section of the wall. They can be placed at flat wall, corners or pavement.

Consequently, the poster arrangements created rhythm in the alley, emphasizing the connection between images and their visibility.

After the comprehensive design phase, this project developed variations of poster prototypes, demonstrating an approach important for impactful urban interventions. Similarly, the lettering art commenced with detailed sketches, as depicted in Fig. 10, employing foundational base lines and construction lines to ensure precision. Consequently, the lettering within this project definitively aligns with artistic typography, specifically classified as commissioned artistic lettering, thereby emphasizing its bespoke and intentional design, unique for this alley. Furthermore, the core form was derived from Roman lettering style; it ingeniously integrated a 45° bevel or shadow to the right for the road name. As noted by Carter and Rickard, (2020), this strategic application of shadow is crucial for imbuing lettering with vitality and depth, a principle meticulously followed to enhance the visual prominence of both Roman and Thai alphabets. The Roman alphabet was intentionally rendered in a larger size, a deliberate choice aimed at ensuring maximum legibility and appeal for international tourists, directly addressing the project's goal of engaging diverse users in the alley. Crucially, the local community actively participated, providing invaluable assistance in accurately rendering the Thai alphabet, which underscores the project's commitment to participatory design and cultural authenticity. Ultimately, the choice of vibrant yellow shades for the letters was made to ensure high visibility and contrast, making the signage brighter and more engaging within the alley's environment.

From a graphic design perspective, this project could explore a graphic-based solution: an urban graphic series focusing on local spices, created with the aid of local inhabitants. The use of local food as inspiration aligns with the findings of Henkel, who identified food as a primary criterion for attracting tourists. In his article, Harland (2019) explained the reciprocal relationship between graphic design and urban design, noting that both contribute significantly to the urban environment. A study by Susanto et al. (2017) used a participatory approach with residents of Palsi Village in Depok, on the outskirts of Jakarta, Indonesia's bustling capital, to co-create a mural. They transformed neglected alley walls

into an interactive public space, addressing the decline of free space due to the metropolis's rapid growth. During this process, the research team co-designed the mural with local children. Petroniene and Juzeleniene (2022) also highlighted the significance of community engagement in the Murals for Communities Project, a large mural initiative held in Waterford, Heerlen, and Kaunas. This was particularly crucial in their case for supporting a sustainable urban environment. Similar to the Khaosan Area, these three cities faced problems of social disconnection.

The primary graphic element in this project was sign lettering, along with two murals and posters serving as supplementary graphics. Shahid and Kumar (2017) studied a variety of lettering used for movie titles, finding a connection between this art form and the urban street graphic landscape. Sign writing art has been recorded since the mid-18th century (Lewery, 1989). The earliest evidence of written signs emerged in Puritan churches after the British government banned elaborate frescoes, leading churches to replace biblical frescoes with letters inside. Further evidence can be found on tombstones, which stonemasons carved for wealthy church congregations. The quality of the sign writing on these gravestones showed stark improvement by the 1750s (Lewery, 1989). Carter and Rickard (2020) also documented the history of signwriting, particularly its use in funfairs; both studies considered signwriting to be a folk art.

Food around the vicinity is the main inspiration for this project. To effectively integrate this theme, the project draws on principles such as those explored by Hosni (2021), who studied Hegel's theory on The Unity of Contradictions in mural painting on architectural surfaces. In his argument, Hosni noted that design elements are plastic elements that can be customized for certain architectural fixtures. He posited that the contrast between these plastic elements and the architecture creates harmony and beauty. In line with this, the organic lines of the lettering and the spice drawings in this project were intentionally placed in contrast with the 19th-century walls in the alley.

This approach is also informed by research on what attracts tourists; for example, studied local Thai residents and international tourists about their top three attractive images of Thailand. They found that residents prioritized cultural

activities, beaches, and historic architecture, whereas international respondents' third most frequently mentioned attraction was food, after culture and beaches. Supporting this focus on food, there are two eateries in the vicinity: a cafe in the alley, close to Tani Road, and a curry restaurant just outside, on the Ram Buttri Roadside. The cafe is named Lemoncurd Bread and Coffee, while the curry restaurant is one of Tossakan Thai Curry House's branches. Significantly, the spices they have been using for their dishes are a direct source of inspiration for this project. Furthermore, information gathered from the Bang Lamphu Museum reveals that this area was historically full of canals, with boats used to carry rice, vegetables, and spices for trade.

There are several proven benefits of a mural project for a community. Riyanto et al. (2023) have proven the benefit of murals in Indonesia, especially the mural boom phenomenon in several regions of Indonesia after the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021. Especially along Gatot Subroto Street in Solo, Central Java, Indonesia. The area was designated as a street art gallery in 2017. Since the open-air nature of this gallery, it became more popular after the pandemic for tourists. Dyomin and Ivashko, (2020) in their study also stated the benefit of the mural as an artistic expression as part of street art, with easy access for the public to see. Their study emphasized the difference between graffiti and mural as street art in New York post the Second World War. Greaney (2002) studied the mural movement in 3 US cities: Boston, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles. Greaney found out that municipal mural projects could initiate communal bonds in urban settings. Moreover, mural painting can also enhance the perception and quality of urban neighborhoods, thus promoting economic development. Greaney also discussed the impact of community-based mural projects done in abstract or decorative style, thus this project, which used a decorative style is quite effective to communicate with both social groups (Greaney, 2002).

One of the definitions of design thinking, which is used for this project, is a practice-based activity, in line with one of Johansson-Sköldberg et al. (2013) definition: to see a wicked problem and find the solution using a designer way of thinking creatively. Another definition of design thinking is an analytical and creative approach that involves a person in the opportunity to explore, experiment,

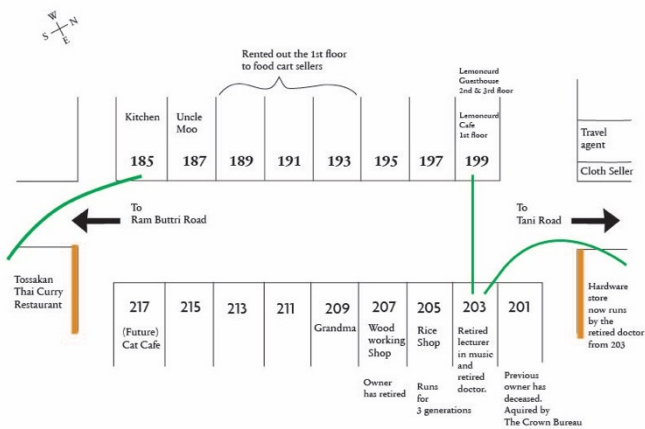
create, and prototype (Delphine et al., 2017) The process focuses on the concerns, interests, and values of the user, because they have taken part in the process. Their study applied design thinking to build a smart city in Brazil. Their main objective was sustainability. Thus, they gained insights from the inhabitants by using interviews and observations. Another example of closer proximity is a study done by Gozzoli, who utilize design thinking methods to solve social issues. Gozzoli have applied this method to co-create a solution for elderly residents in the Ban Bu community in Bangkok Noi District. They used observation and interviews, analyzed the outcomes using the SWOT method, and then conducted a workshop to discuss their ideas and insights from the community. Since there are significant historic sites in the vicinity, such as The One-Hundred-Year-Old Market and Bangkok Noi Community Floating Market, the elderly have ample experience in this area. Therefore, their insight during the development of this project is crucial. Another method used for this project was seven community tools developed by Dr. Komatra (2002). These interchangeable tools were originally intended for anthropological studies; however, they can also be applied to human-centered design. The seven tools are geo-social mapping, lifetime stories, genogram, community organization, local health systems, community calendar, local history, and biographies/life stories. For this project, lifetime stories and geo-social mapping were the most applicable and utilized.

Data were collected through field observation and contextual interviews. These interviews engaged local community members and employees from the two eateries. Initial discussions with daily inhabitants and workers in the area began by exploring their perspectives on improving the alley's condition, naturally progressing into their life stories. This approach was particularly relevant as many participants had lived in the area for their entire lives, with some representing second or third generations of residents, predating the district's popularity among international backpackers. The insights gained from both field observation and these interviews were crucial for identifying specific problems and issues that required addressing.

Shophouse residents, identified by numbers as shown in Fig. 6, include two middle-aged ladies in 217. They rescue stray cats, housing them on their

first floor while using the second floor as their living quarters. These ladies plan to renovate their shophouse into a cat café. An elderly lady lives in 209, occupying the second and third floors. In 2009, a retired elderly man used the first floor of his shophouse as a woodworking studio and lived on the second floor. A busy rice shop operates in 205, run by a grandmother on the first floor with the help of her nearby daughter. In 207 lives a retired couple: the wife, a music lecturer, and her husband, a doctor who operates a hardware store on Tani Road (visible in the right corner of Fig. 6). They keep their first floor empty and reside on the second. Shophouse 199 houses the Lemoncurd Café on its first floor, with the second and third floors serving as a bed and breakfast. The cloth seller lady, who does not live in the alley, opened her business in the early 90s and has been commuting here ever since. Every weekday, she and her husband sell flowery blouses to their clientele, who are mostly elderly ladies. Most residents have witnessed the alley transform from a quiet neighborhood into a busy shortcut for tourists, as the alley is located between 2 bustling roads full with backpacker tourist attractions.

Figure 6
Geo-social Mapping of the Alley



Note. From data collection, several problems emerged. Firstly, trash and sanitation concerns were frequently mentioned by respondents, specifically regarding trash in the alley and the pungent smell of urine. Secondly, residents complained about the noise generated by food carts operating during the night. Furthermore, these food carts were often parked recklessly in the alley during the day, despite their owners having paid to park them inside two of the shophouses. Moreover, the presence of drunken tourists, who were loud, urinated publicly, and engaged in indecent activities, contributed to making the alley dirty and unsafe. Additionally, residents expressed concerns about motorbikes passing through the alley or parking in front of their shophouses. Consequently, they specifically requested this project to make the alley brighter and safer.

This project then utilized geo-social mapping to illustrate the relationships among the neighborhood's occupants and their positions within the alley. As the occupants knew each other quite well, for example, the owner of the Lemoncurd Cafe is the nephew of the couple residing at 203, directly across from the café. Additionally, an employee from the Tossakan Curry House was informally interviewed to inquire about the spices used in their dishes. However, they could not disclose their recipe and could only show the dishes from their menu. Their offerings included Thai Green and Yellow Curry, both containing chili, lemongrass, galangal, coriander, garlic, and shallot, with turmeric added to the yellow curry. Furthermore, according to the owner of Lemoncurd Café, they use rosemary, thyme, and vanilla as spices for their cakes.

In a broader context, various studies have applied design thinking to overcome community problems in large cities. Community involvement has been crucial, as design thinking employs both analytical and creative approaches focused on the intended user's concerns, interests, and values. Consequently, the involvement of design thinking also empowers the community, as their input was integral to constructing the solution. Urban revitalization projects should consider the evolving demographics of rapidly growing cities and integrate various methodological tools, including systematic observation and walking tour assessments. Al-Mohannadi et.al. (2019) utilized these methods to study the dynamics between recent migrant residents and their old neighborhood, particularly to analyze the spatial practices of communities (Al-Mohannadi et al., 2019). Such methods can lead to a deeper understanding of community needs and aspirations. Similarly, this project employed observation, including taking

Subsequently, the project involved the acquisition of photographic documentation of various spices. These photographs then served as the basis for the creation of early stage sketches, which were then developed into designs for wheat paste posters with significant community input regarding their placement. As people who live there for decades, they know the traffic well and which places are suitable for the posters.

Figure 8

Posters placement in the alley



The local community actively participated in the project, offering valuable input on the optimal placement for the wheat paste posters. Throughout the mural creation process, residents consistently observed the progress, assisting with rendering road names in Thai script and offering constructive critiques on the accuracy of the lettering. Notably, one resident, a fellow illustrator, directly contributed to the painting phase. This painting process spanned one week, involving daily interactions with the community throughout both the sketching and painting stages, despite a language barrier. The community recognized that the project’s primary objective was to address local concerns or, at a minimum, enhance the area’s aesthetic appeal. Similarly, community members of Simpay Asih Kindergarten were actively involved in a mural project designed to improve the educational environment for children (Halim et al., 2021). The primary murals are strategically positioned on walls parallel to Ram Buttri Road and Tani Road. The design features lettering at the upper section and spice-themed posters positioned below. Roman lettering was employed for the road names. To align with standard road signage conventions, the Thai word “thanon” (road) was

incorporated into the design, a choice also applied to the Thai script lettering. Shahid and Kumar have highlighted the effectiveness of juxtaposing text and imagery in urban graphics to engage audiences, citing its successful application in Bombay. This project similarly adopted this strategy, and the contrast proved effective in captivating passersby due to its strategic placement, ensuring high visibility from a distance within the alley.

Figure 9

Lettering mural and vanilla poster on Thanon Tani side



Figure 10

Lettering mural on Thanon Ram Buttrii side

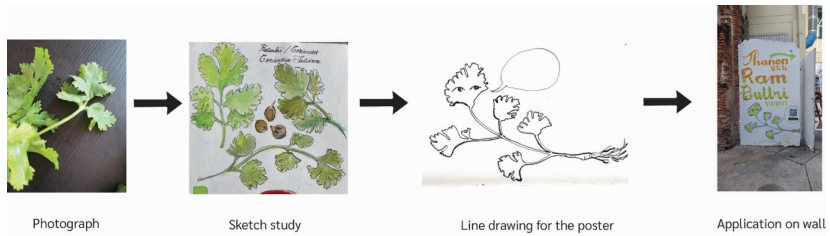


This design incorporates both Roman and Thai lettering and combines them with illustrated hom, drawing inspiration from the principles of bilingual wayfinding systems in their article have shown this system improves the effectiveness and inclusivity of signage. This project incorporated distinct lettering for each road name and elevated these with posters depicting nearby dining establishments. The typographic elements were directly applied to the walls utilizing paint. For the mural section leading to Ram Buttri Road, a design featuring anthropomorphic coriander was selected, while the opposing end, corresponding to Tani Road, depicted coffee in a similar humanoid representation. These illustrations were produced using a poster technique, though PVA glue was utilized as the adhesive agent instead of traditional wheat paste. The PVA adhesive was diluted with water in a 1:1 ratio to facilitate its application to the wall and concrete surfaces. Consistent with the findings of Shahid and Kumar (2017), the application of a drop shadow effect significantly enhanced the contrast of the lettering against the white wall. For the Ram Buttri Road lettering, the design employed green, derived from coriander leaves, along with a yellow or lighter drop shadow. Conversely, for the Tani Road lettering, green from coffee leaves and red were used. The darker shadow subsequently proved to yield greater contrast and higher visibility.

Complementing the enhanced contrast and visibility achieved through the lettering techniques, the overall design, characterized by the organic shapes of the mural and posters, seamlessly integrates with the alley's architecture. These adaptable shapes, particularly in the posters, can be manipulated to follow the contours of corners and walls. Furthermore, the spice color palette introduces a contrasting element against the alley's existing wall colors. The deliberate incorporation of organic forms was intended to imbue the posters with a more humanistic appeal.

Figure 11

Drawing Process Diagram.



Results

A month following the completion of the installations, the project team did a follow-up interview with the alley's residents. Community members actively contributed to the design and implementation, expressing a strong preference for durable murals due to their lasting impact. Post-project interviews show more harmonious daily lives between tourists and inhabitants. The tourists were taking pictures with the artworks and were more cautious and respectful with their behaviour. The inhabitants were pleased because their alley was cleaner and less rowdy.

These post-implementation interviews yielded significant insights, notably the community's strong preference for mural paintings over temporary posters, attributed to murals' enhanced durability and resilience to environmental elements. Residents articulated satisfaction regarding the rise in tourist engagement and photographic activity near the murals, observing that this increased visibility and positive attention had concurrently led to a decrease in public urination incidents in the vicinity of the artworks. Additionally, the Crown Bureau implemented additional lighting and physical barriers, effectively restricting the ingress of food vendors into the alley. Consequently, this graphic art intervention not only augmented the aesthetic value of the space but also fostered a safer and more comfortable environment for residents by promoting more considerate tourist conduct. Ultimately, within this confined urban space, the mural project

cultivated a sense of connection and more harmonious daily lives among the social groups in the alley.

Conclusion

As community engagement is the first objective, fostering dialogue between the two community groups was important. By integrating public art, such as murals and installations, cities can enhance their aesthetic appeal and cultivate spaces that encourage social interaction. Murals, in particular, present a unique opportunity for the radical transformation of architectural spaces through graphic and pictorial techniques, with more affordable building materials. The findings from this design project will contribute to a broader understanding of how art and design can mediate social conflicts in rapidly gentrifying tourist areas and offer practical models for fostering more harmonious urban cohabitation, particularly in the context of creative economy initiatives. This project underscores how strategically implemented public art, especially when community-engaged, can serve as a potent tool for placemaking and the development of sustainable urban environments.

Further studies can be done using this combined method in other locations with similar problems. Although several adjustments may have to be made according to the designated location. Other locations may have different lifestyle patterns, history, and cultural backgrounds, which can be used as a source of inspiration to create mural art. Another possibility is to use other methods from the 7 tools, such as genogram, community organization, local health systems, community calendar, local history, and biographies/life stories.

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