

Memory Machine: Architectural Reflections In Dementia Care Environments



Dr. Yanisa Niennattrakul, Ratchasuda Institute, Faculty of Medicine Ramathibodi Hospital, Mahidol University, Thailand

Email: yanisa.nien@gmail.com

Memory Machine is an interdisciplinary art–design research project that explores memory, perception, and dementia through experiential and creative approaches. The project investigates how memory shapes identity, personhood, and our relationships with people, places, and the built environment. By translating complex neurological and social issues into accessible experiences, it seeks to foster empathy, reflection, and public understanding.

The project responds to the growing global impact of dementia and the stigma often associated with memory loss. While dementia is rooted in neurodegenerative processes, the experience of the condition is also influenced by cultural expectations, social attitudes, and public perceptions. Memory Machine challenges the dominant assumption that dementia care should focus primarily on preserving a fixed individual identity, proposing instead that cognitive change can be understood as a natural and socially mediated part of human life.

By integrating architecture, art, design, and therapeutic principles, Memory Machine creates immersive and multisensory environments that encourage self-reflection and emotional engagement. The project employs cyanotype photography as both an artistic medium and a metaphor for memory, using processes of exposure, fading, and transformation to represent the dynamic nature of remembering and forgetting.

