after death
a multidimensional peace of mind
Death is still, quite often, a taboo in Hong Kong, where most death architecture and landscape are unpleasant and frightening spaces commonly situated at urban fringes.

The existing funerary facilities are highly functional and not emotive, that the bereaved and the mourners have no space for reflection, relief, catharsis or even a chat.

This project is the first burial ground applying a “cemetery-park” concept in an urban area of Hong Kong, providing emotive spaces for the relief of mourners and encouraging locals to use daily for leisure.
Context and Problematics

1. TRADITION | TABOO
2. FEAR OF DEATH
3. DENSE | LIFELESS | SCARCITY OF SPACE
4. REMOTENESS OF FUNERARY FACILITIES
5. POPULATION SUFFERING FROM DEPRESSION

CONTEXT AND PROBLEMATICS

DESIGN CONCEPT
SITE SELECTION
DESIGN STRATEGIES
THE DESIGN & PROCESS
PROJECT VISION
死
dead

如前所述的前
46,100 deaths in 2016, estimated 55,000 deaths in average in coming 20 years

in 2016 9% burial and 91% cremation
estimated 5% burial and 95% cremation,
meaning 52,000 cases of cremation in coming 20 years

6 crematoria
214,332 niches (9,115 vacant niches as at June 2015) in 8*+140** columbaria
4*+23** cemeteries for coffin burial (3 for indigenous villagers),
a total of 23,728* coffin burial spaces (8,178 spaces vacant as at June 2015)
exhumation after 6 years and re-burial or cremated
217,411* urn burial spaces (38,052 spaces vacant as at June 2015)

3 designated waters for sea scattering
11*+2*** gardens of remembrance for scattering of cremated ashes

note: *public  **private

55% No religion
14% Buddhism
14% Taoism
7% Protestant
5% Catholics
4% Muslim
1% vHinduism

note: figure of 2014 by Government of HK
Hong Kong
7,346,700
1,105.7km²
6,644 / km²
57,360 / km²
4.75 times

Oslo
658,390
480km²
1,400 / km²
1,400 / km²

46,100 deaths per year
126 deaths per day
5 deaths per hour

59,000 persons suffer from depression
55,320 persons suffer from depression

9,220 of the bereaved still suffer from depression 1.5 years after the death of the loved ones

60800 4.2%
46000 6.4%

birth
(Norway)
59,000 5.1%
40,700 7.3%

death

20%

affecting 6 persons

126
deaths per day

1000
100
5

5
deaths per hour

126
deaths per day

5
deaths per hour

46,100
deaths per year

Hong Kong
7,346,700
1,105.7km²
6,644 / km²
57,360 / km²

Oslo
658,390
480km²
1,400 / km²
Design Concept

THE CEMETERY-PARK CONCEPT
URBAN AREA
FREQUENT VISITS
Kai Tak

site selection for the first “cemetery-park” in urban area of Hong Kong

a rare supply of land in metropolitan area of Hong Kong
landmarks in neighbouring districts

500m

disconnects
site within a network of landmarks

synergy of landmarks bringing liveliness
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cemetery</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gamle Aker kirkegård</td>
<td>Oslo</td>
<td>28,168 m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Igualada Cementery</td>
<td>Barcelona</td>
<td>44,560 m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kai Tak Project</td>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>approx. 80,000 m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vår Frelsers gravlund</td>
<td>Oslo</td>
<td>84,856 m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isola di San Michele</td>
<td>Venice</td>
<td>168,680 m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vestre Cementery</td>
<td>Copenhagen</td>
<td>540,000 m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vår Frelsers gravlund</td>
<td>Oslo</td>
<td>84,856 m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodland Cementery</td>
<td>Stockholm</td>
<td>1,186,424 m²</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Design Strategies

- Natural Burial
- Journeys
- Openness
- Site Character
- Scarcity of Space
- Lifeless
- Fear of Death
- Disconnection
first time visitor
the bereaved

revisiting mourners

local residents

tourist
one-time visitor

JOURNEYS | ROUTES
SITE CHARACTERISTICS

- Link disconnections
- Accessibility from mass transit railway and proposed monorail
- Lines of sight best view points
- Path of sun and wind monsoon-influenced humid subtropical climate
The Design & Process

MOOD PAINTINGS
JOURNEYS
HUMAN PERSPECTIVES

CONTEXT AND PROBLEMATICS
DESIGN CONCEPT
SITE SELECTION
DESIGN STRATEGIES
THE DESIGN & PROCESS
PROJECT VISION
loss
chaotic
noisy
directional
reduce
confusion
mark a passing
symbol of
hope
peaceful
embrace
sadness
solace | private
honour the
death
soothing
landscape
dialogue
interactions
escape
remember | reflection
reconnect
strength
regain focus

JOURNEY OF THE BEREAVED’S FIRST VISIT - TREE BURIAL
CONCEPTUAL SECTION

- ENTRANCE PORTAL: loss, chaotic, noisy
- FRANGIPANI POND: directional, reduce confusion, mark a passing, symbol of hope, peaceful
- TRANQUIL PATH LEADING TO BURIAL FOREST: embrace sadness, solace, private, honour the death
- LAWN: soothing landscape, dialogue, interactions
- OBSERVATION TOWER: escape, remember, reflection
- PROMENADE

WORDS
- SOOTHING LANDSCAPE
- DIALOGUE
- INTERACTIONS
- ESCAPE
- REMEMBER
- REFLECTION
- HONOUR THE DEATH
- SYMBOL OF HOPE
- PEACEFUL
- CHAOTIC
- NOISY
- DIRECTIONAL
- REDUCE CONFUSION
- MARK A PASSING
- LOSS

PLACES
- FRANGIPANI POND
- TRANQUIL PATH LEADING TO BURIAL FOREST
- LAWN
- OBSERVATION TOWER
- PROMENADE
- FOREST
- LAWN OBSERVATION TOWER
- PROMENADE
journey1
FIRST TIME VISITOR
TREE BURIAL

journey2
FIRST TIME VISITOR
SEA BURIAL

journey3
LOCALS
JOURNEY OF THE BEREAVED'S FIRST VISIT - SEA BURIAL
chaotic
noisy
gorgeous harbourfront
enjoy sea breeze
embrace the nature
adorable
flowers
strength
encouraging
lush greenery
relaxing landscape
trees and shades
lawns and activities
JOURNEY OF THE LOCALS
BRIDGE OF REMEMBRANCE
PIER
[SEA BURIAL]
Brother said that we wait at the tree burial entrance... so here it is...

What a busy city... so much noise and chaos...
Brother said that we wait at the tree burial entrance... so here it is...
Let's get some flowers for Dad. He may like this chrysanthemum...
Yes, it will have flowers soon, in summer. I remember it has a symbolic meaning of HOPE...

Hope... that's poetic. Does it lose leaves in winter?

Yes, it's deciduous. Like a cycle... Like life...

What a beautiful Frangipani!
Yes.
Nice to return to nature.
So this is where father's ashes will stay.
Goodbye Dad...

TREE BURIAL
Cremated ashes are sent to the roots of the trees through pre-cast tubes embedded around the designated trees. Cover plates of the tubes are marked with index numbers.
I don't know...

Maybe it's good to lie down here...
together with other people.

Yes, because the ashes are deep in the soil. Nothing can be dug out. This makes the park 24-7 too.

What do you prefer, sit under tree shade or lie down, or keep walking?

I don't know...
Maybe it's good to lie down here... together with other people.

I couldn't imagine we can bring our dog to a "cemetery".

How do you find this park? I told you it doesn't look like a cemetery. See?

Yes, it's just like a park. Any park. No scary dark corners, unlike traditional columbariums...

What do you prefer, sit under tree shade or lie down, or keep walking?
What a busy city... so much noise and chaos...
After some decades, my grandchildren will still know about how life was in the good old days from these projections.

What a nice promenade walk!

Some of the epitaphs are beautiful stories of the departed...

Some of the epitaphs are beautiful stories of the departed...

Gravestones are made from transparent plates with epitaphs engraved in paint. Strong overhead sunlight in Hong Kong will occasionally project the epitaph onto the ground.
SEA BURIAL
Ferries take mourners to the outskirts of Hong Kong, where the cremated ashes are scattered at designated seas.
Goodbye Dad!
You’ll be missed...
It's a cemetery over there! Let's walk another route.

Hey why do we make a turn here?

In the cemetery-park? Haha. Why not?

Really? Not scary? um... ok, let's have a look.

No no... it looks purely like a park. Don't panic.

Did you bring packed lunch today? Fancy a "picnic"?

Oh... We are late. The water taxi has left!

Nevermind. Let's sit down for a cup of tea or coffee.

Finally we have a continuous promenade!

Yeah :) No need to jog between industrial buildings.

Hey do you know that is both a cemetery and a park?

Yes... a typical example of multi-purpose use in this tiny city!

Did you bring packed lunch today? Fancy a "picnic"?

No no... it looks purely like a park. Don't panic.

Hey why do we make a turn here?
Um, shall we sit down over there for a while?

Let's walk along the promenade. Which way do you want to go, ground or up on the bridge?
Yea... It's always rainy in Ching Ming Festival... Spring shower in the grave sweeping festival...

Oh what a sudden rain!
Good to have a shelter here.
Yes. There's quite a fresh breeze today. What a nice view on the hillock!

Yes. Nice to return to nature. So this is where father's ashes will stay. After some decades, my grandchildren will still know about how life was in the good old days from these projections. What a nice promenade walk!

Some of the epitaphs are beautiful stories of the departed... Bard of Bridge of Remembrance

Gravestones are made from transparent plates with epitaph engraved in paint. Strong overhead sunlight in Hong Kong will occasionally project the epitaph onto the ground.

I don't know... Maybe it's good to lie down here... together with other people. Yes, because the ashes are deep in the soil. Nothing can be dug out. This makes the park 24-7 too.

What do you prefer, sit under tree shade or lie down, or keep walking? I couldn't imagine we can bring our dog to a "cemetery". How do you find this park? I told you it doesn't look like a cemetery. See? Yes, it's just like a park. Any park. No scary dark corners, unlike traditional columbariums...
life  death
east  west
intimate resting forest  park of openness
mourners  locals
notable burials  memories of an era
Year 0

the first
cemetery-park in
hong kong

M|F 80|86
B  ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   ||   |
Year 10

public acceptance

M|F 85|90
B | | | | | |
M | | | | | | |
L | | | | | | |

M|F Life expectancy [Male|Female]
B Burial
M Mourners
L Locals
E Education
Year 20

gravestones fully occupied

M|F 100|105
B |||||
M |||||
L |||||
Year 50

burial function diminishing

M|F 130
B
M
L

M|F Life expectancy [Male|Female]
B Burial
M Mourners
L Locals
E Education
Year 100+
nobody dies as technology advances

M|F indefinite
B
M
L ||||| |||||
E ||||

M|F Life expectancy [Male|Female]
B Burial
M Mourners
L Locals
E Education
after death
a multidimensional peace of mind

I would like to dedicate this thesis to The Hungs.

Vicky