

# **MEANING MAKING PROCESS THROUGH IMAGES AND SOUNDSCAPE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

With the continuous expansion of urban areas in the country, it is undeniable that what was used to be the original heart of the city is neglected as development in almost all sectors including education, health, and commerce are sprawling away from the city center. As time passes, physical changes happen. With these changes, the narratives of the people who frequent the place also change.

Various efforts have been made to document the street using photographs. With great details and vivid colors, photographers have produced outputs that are published and exhibited. But with technology and the continuous desire of people to visualize almost anything, the level of appreciation and depreciation changes specially with the advent of 3D, 4D, and virtual reality.

With this, a multi-sensory exhibit was created to document the changes, its physical changes and its narrative, in what is used to be the heart of Davao City – San Pedro Street.

One of the purposes of the exhibit was to highlight the street in Davao City that cradles several landmarks. We have San Pedro Church as center of faith, the Sangguniang Panlungsod and the Davao City Hall as seats of power, and the commercial establishments owned by old and new families residing in the city.

Furthermore, the photographs and soundscape was used as stimuli to trigger the lookers' experiences in that area. These visual and aural stimuli culled through the various stories embedded in the mind of the lookers. They recall their childhood experiences in that area or their first time to join a political rally. This recollection of memories helped in the meaning-making process of San Pedro Street.

The visual and aural stimuli helped gather the stories of the people and how people define the area through posting their stories in a freedom wall provided in the exhibit area. Furthermore, their stories created a chronological meaning of the place – from center of commerce, religion, and government to sad stories ranging from flooding and bombing of that particular era.

## INTRODUCTION

With the continuous expansion of urban areas in the Philippines it is undeniable that what was used to be the original heart of the city or the central business district is neglected. (Alabado, 2005) Such is the case of Davao City, Philippines. With the various infrastructure developments and plans to provide better public transportation, it can be observed that the overall development of the city is moving away from its center.

What is the city's center?

Local historians and other residents consider San Pedro Street as the city's center for several reasons. According to Delgado (2005), the street is home to several social landmarks in the city aside from it being the central business district. These are the San Pedro Cathedral, Davao City Hall, and several parks that provided a busy atmosphere. The design of the whole area was patterned after Spanish Town Plazas since most of the sociocivic institutions were built in this area. (Delgado, 2005)

Today, we still have San Pedro Cathedral as center of faith, the Sangguniang Panglungsod and the Davao City Hall as seats of power, the commercial establishments owned by old and new families residing in the city, Osmena Park, and Rizal Park. The Museo Dabawenyo, a government managed venue for art exhibitions, is also located near San Pedro Street.



Image 1: Google Map photo of the area covered by the exhibition.

Aside from that, San Pedro Street is full of irony as well. Despite the presence of religion and government in the area, it has become a melting pot for legal and illegal trade, as well as moral and immoral acts. Businesses are sprawling away from this area and infrastructures looked old as well. The younger generation somehow forgot what

this area was and the adults seemed to accept the fact that what remains relevant in this area is the landmark that either carries the seat of power or religion.

Given this scenario, a creative work project was mounted to know the relevance of this area to the community. It showcased several photographs with an accompanying soundscape to recreate the area. Together with the lookers of the exhibition, the photographer conducted a simultaneous meaning-making activity.

## **CREATIVE METHODOLOGY / PROCESS**

A multi-sensory exhibit was conducted to document the changes in what is used to be the heart of Davao City – San Pedro Street. It was a kind of exhibit that lets the looker SEE, HEAR, and FEEL San Pedro Street as they walk through it.

One of the goals of this exhibit was to highlight the street in Davao City that cradles several landmarks – the San Pedro Street. By highlighting it in still photographs, lookers may be able to re-examine the details of the place and experience it in a different perspective. By using visual images, this exhibit showed the culture of the people of Davao City and further defined San Pedro Street with the help of the lookers.

Defining San Pedro Street through meaning-making activity was the second goal of this exhibition. It was done because almost always the photographer has the tendency to present a subject according to the photographer's point of view, moral judgments, and experience forgetting that the lookers carry their own point of view, moral judgments, and experiences as they view an image.

With these goals in mind and with the nature of the exhibition being multi-sensorial, the photographer planned several memory triggers to help in the meaning-making process. These are images, sounds, and the celebration of *Araw ng Dabaw* that commemorates the city's charterhood.

The exhibition billed "*Urban Sights and Sounds: The Stories of San Pedro Street*" (USAS) was held at Abreeza Mall last 16-23 March 2012 making it more accessible to the public. It was co-presented by the local government of Davao, Davao City Tourism Council, University of the Philippines Mindanao, Abreeza Mall, and Photoline.

## **ON PHOTOGRAPHY**

Photography has been used in documenting many aspects of our life. As Sontag (1973-77) posits, families with children almost always own a camera.

Today, the same methodology has been used to document the life in the city. Naegele and Baur (2004) documented big and small cities' public spaces, which are often thought of as mundane and often neglected. This "pictorial archive" tried to capture the "elusive smells and flavours in order to hand them back to the people of the cities and their world." Kugler (2009), who documented New York City as part of the Megapolis Tour series, presented New York's "landscape – its architecture, its youth, its feel, its

trends and movement” from his own perspective, personal view, and style including blurry images of the Upper and Lower East Side, Grand Central Station, and West Broadway to name a few while Coughlin (1998) documented the same city using sepia-toned images for elegance. Baechtold (2006) took on a new concept of creating a completely visual travel guide of Afghanistan by using maps and photographs. Baechtold’s creative premise lies on his idea that “one good photograph and an address are enough to point the intrepid traveller in the right direction.” (2006)

The same idea was used to document San Pedro Street of Davao City, Philippines. The project tried to document the then center of the city as Davao continues to grow outwards. It tried to use visual cues (photographs) as stimulus to capture the lookers’ experiences; their personal stories in the once center of the city. This part of the multi-sensorial exhibition provided the seeing component of USAS. Furthermore, the photographs used in USAS also coincides with Nagar’s (2012) argument that “street is a unique genre of photography” that looks for “expression, beauty, and social interaction in seemingly banal surroundings”.Szarkowski’s five characteristics were considered. Szarkowski (1966) as mentioned in Barrett (1990) considered the thing itself, the detail, the frame, time, and vantage point that makes photography unique. To achieve this, 22 Descriptive–Interpretive photographs were used depicting the LANDMARKS, PEOPLE, and TRADE of the street. Descriptive photographs, as defined by Barrett, offers “descriptive, visual information, with greater or lesser detail and clarity,” while Interpretive photographs try to explain phenomenon in a “personal and subjective” manner. (Barrett, 1990, p. 53 and p.59)

With these characteristics, photograph type, and categorization, the table below summarizes the shot list and actual number of photographs used in USAS, and its general characteristics.

CATEGORY	PHOTOGRAPH TYPE	NUMBER OF PHOTOS	CHARACTERISTICS
Landmarks	Descriptive Photographs	3	The photos were taken at low-angle to show implied height of landmarks. Moreover, since lines as a visual element have expressive values vertical, horizontal, and oblique lines were utilized to show strength, balance, power, and stability. The photos in this category showcase the San Pedro Cathedral, the Sangguniang Panlungsod, and the City Hall of Davao.
Trade	Interpretive Photographs	11	This category is depicted both with and without human subjects. An empty space was important to highlight a certain kind of human interaction. It also shows the

			<p>unusual way of peddling products. In these photographs you will see both the product and the way sellers peddle these products. (Nagar, 2012)</p> <p>The photos in this category include food vendors, outdoor flower shops, religious products, second hand stores, and even those who sell shade for their motorcycles, the iconic jeepney, and illegal items such as knock-off movies and music, and other items.</p>
People	Descriptive-Interpretive Photographs	8	<p>This category also shows the kind of people who frequents the area. This includes local government officials during work, kids at the park, and passersby. The photographer utilized both close-up and long shots, balanced and asymmetrical subject matters, in mostly high-key lighting to define the spatial relationship between the looker and the subject matter. We tend to stand closer to children therefore using close-up shots and we stay far from people who holds position therefore using long shots for the city officials.</p>

Table 1: Shot list and photo description.

This process of categorization of photographs follows the tenets of visual narrative theory posited by Gretchen Barbatsis. (2005) According to Barbatsis, a visual narrative follows two structures. These are descriptive and literal or discursive structures. Under the descriptive structure, the visual narrative introduces the characters, settings, and actions of the images made while the literal structure is more focused on the compositional patterns of spatial relations or the rules and conventions of making images that dictates how an image can be used as a language to communicate.

Using the shower-showee dichotomy of the theory, the shower organizes different visual and pictorial elements (literal structure) into a coherent story so that the showee would be able to come up with a meaning similar or related to the original intention of the shower. One way to achieve this is to use a certain pictorial point of view.

In Table 1, Landmarks and Trade were taken with an observing point of view. The composition of each scene indicates that the shower is “somewhat omniscient” looking at the subject from the outside. The category on people used a participating point of

view that shows a shift of position of the shower from looking at to looking in. (Barbatsis, 2005) The shift of position was very literal since most of the photographs under the category people were tightly composed trying to decrease the distance between the shower and the subject leading to a certain level of visual intimacy between the two.

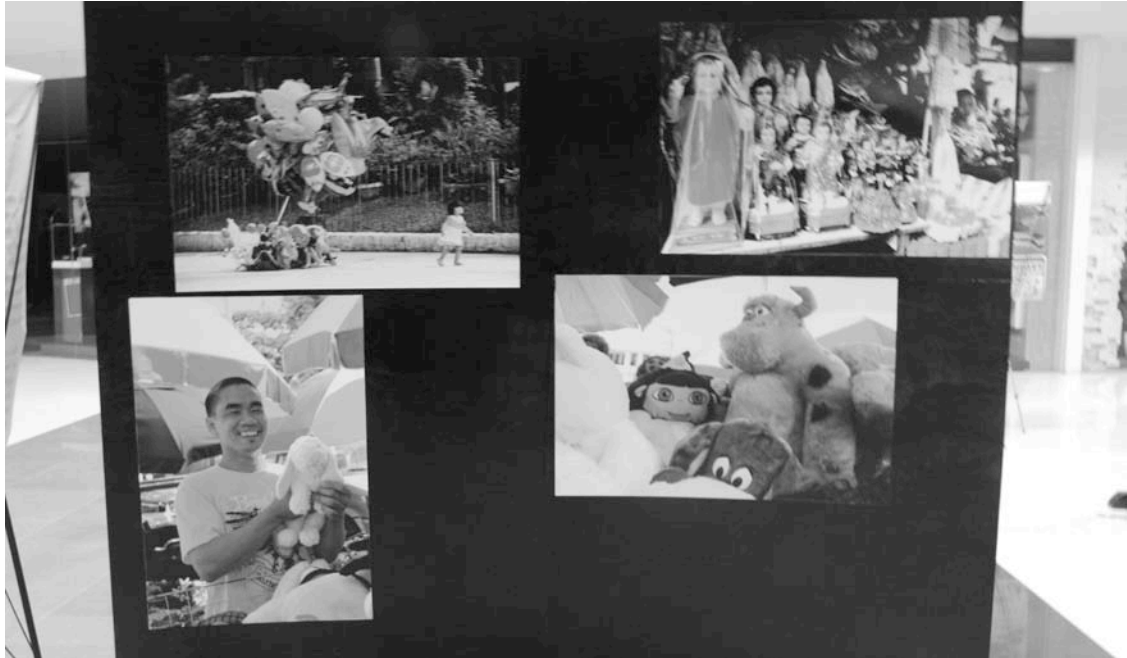


Image 2: Trade



Image 3: Landmarks and People

## ON SOUNDSCAPE

Using two of Schafer's terminologies, the soundscape of USAS features both sound signals and soundmarks. Sound signals are "foreground sounds intended to attract attention" while the term soundmark is used as an analogy for landmark. (Wrightson, 2000)

Wrightson (2000) further discussed that the terminologies coined by Schafer expresses the identity of a certain community. It does not only showcase its architecture, people, and culture. These three are also packaged in the form of soundscapes. Therefore, soundscapes as described by Truax (1984) as cited in Wrightson (2000) acts as "mediator between listener and the environment."

In the context of USAS, the soundscape created to accompany the photographs tried to stay true to the sound of the old city center without major alterations except adding fade-in and fade-out and a little manipulation on the volume per section. The increase and decrease of volume levels of certain parts in the soundscape can act as a way to attract lookers and at the same time be an unobtrusive background as lookers scan the photographs.

In the creation of the accompanying soundscape of USAS, the goal was to gather different actual soundscapes then mix them together to create aural chaos during the exhibition. The recreation of the actual chaos followed a careful planned recording that allowed the lookers to retrace his/her steps as he/she walked around the exhibition area as if he/she was actually walking along San Pedro Street.

To achieve this, certain sounds were removed and highlighted through varying lengths and volume to give an aural cue to the looker where he/she was at that moment in San Pedro Street. The noise of traffic was also reduced in the soundscape since it is the most obvious auditory signal you get when you are in the area. Moreover, the curved design of the panel boards representing the street and the low ceiling of the exhibition area also functioned as external resonators of the soundscape. These external resonators amplified the soundscape, which functioned both as sound signals and soundmarks. The sound system used was an assembled speaker sold in the area and it was placed near the panel board intended for the stories gathered. This literal reproduction of existing urban sounds provided the aural context of USAS.

This aural context can be described using Mermoz (2004) concept of sonic layering. In Mermoz's *Istanbul Sound Diary*, sonic layering was accidental of his own "dialogue with an interviewee with that of other voices, street sounds, and call to prayer." However, in USAS, its sonic layering was intentional. The actual recording happened on the street and within the halls of the landmarks mentioned. Conversation with people and clips of conversation of other people were included. A session of the local officials and a celebration of a catholic mass were also part of the soundscape. Details of the content of the soundscape are presented in Table 2 and the succeeding discussions.

LANDMARK PEDRO	IN SAN STREET	DURATION		INTENTION
		Minutes	Seconds	

DESCRIBE THROUGH AURAL CUES			
Sangguniang Panlungsod	00:00	09:28	Soundmark
Catholic Mass Celebration	09:29	11:23	Soundmark
Food Stalls and other Vendors	11:24	59:59	Soundmark and Sound Signals

Table 2: Content of Soundscape Used in USAS

The intention of the first 9 minutes was to introduce the city aurally through the voice of then Vice Mayor of Davao City, Rodrigo R. Duterte. Several details of the City Council session were included in this part of the soundscape. After the usual pleasantries of the Vice Mayor, the session started with a prayer. In the soundscape, three different types of prayers were included. These are ecumenical prayer, Muslim prayer, and Lumad (Indigenous Peoples) prayer. The singing of the City Hymn immediately followed and the presiding officer of the city council called the session to order after the secretary announced that there was a quorum. After the call to order, the Official Exit Call of the head of Task Force Davao followed. The breakdown of the first 9 minutes is as follows:

Pleasantries of the Vice Mayor	00:00 – 00:17
Prayer	
Ecumenical Prayer	00:18 – 02:17
Muslim Prayer	02:18 – 02:35
Lumad Prayer (Indigenous Peoples)	02:36 – 03:40
Singing of City Hymn	03:41 – 05:42
Call to Order	05:43 – 06:34
Task Force Davao Exit Call	06:35 – 09:28

These were given importance since these are the things that make Davao City one of the safest places to live in the world. The City also protects its culture and its tri-people making sure that they are represented in the highest governing body of the city.

After the first 9 minutes, a recording of an ongoing celebration of catholic mass immediately followed. The duration of the introduction of the second landmark – San Pedro Cathedral, was within the timeframe 09:29 – 11:21. Afterwhich, the photographer started introducing the vendors outside the church to “show” through aural cues the trade aspect of the area. Recordings of conversations between vendors and customers were also included. However, in this part of the soundscape, the volume for the catholic mass and the volume of the vendors were made sure to be at the same level to “show” how close they are to each other.

The photographer also included sounds of footsteps in the soundscape and the increasing and decreasing volume of certain elements to “show” movement. For instance, in 21:55, the sound of the catholic mass acted as bed music in low volume while the conversation of food and *Ukay-ukay* vendors was presented in high volume. A series of footsteps were introduced further diminishing the sound of the catholic mass and the food and *ukay-ukay* vendors but introducing a new product in the area – massage, pedicure, and manicure. With these highlighted soundscape, it brings the looker to another area in San Pedro Street which is Rizal Park. Going deeper into the



park, the previous sounds then became bed for another product of San Pedro Street – bamboo flute. This time, the sound of the bamboo flute was used as sound signals to get the attention of possible lookers in the exhibit area. This was intentionally done at the high notes of each excerpt of a music piece played.

Furthermore, the photographer’s movement, signified by the sound of footsteps and by decreasing the volume of all previously described soundscapes, introduced a new recreation. At the farthest area of Rizal Park was a kiosk with chessboards. This new sound was introduced at 55:15 up to the end of the entire soundscape.

Lastly, another relevant information the sonic layering of soundscapes intended to convey was the varying age bracket of the speakers presented in the audio material. From the San Pedro Cathedral up to the entrance of Rizal Park, you can hear voices of millennials. When you go deeper into the park, you can listen to voices of retirees and senior citizens.

In general, the soundscape used in USAS gave further characterization of San Pedro Street initially provided by the photographs.

## ON MEANING-MAKING

The FEEL part of the exhibition started with how the photos were arranged, the shape of the panel boards used, the ambiance provided by street vendors, the noise you hear, the provision of an actual street sign, and the celebration of the city’s charterhood which elevated the sense of pride of the lookers during the exhibition.

Meaning-making was done by making the exhibition interactive. Two panel boards were used for this purpose in the exhibit area. Lookers were encouraged to post their experiences on the walls provided. Pens, colored papers, pins, and a writing table were also provided for this purpose. Colored papers were intentionally used to make the exhibition visible from afar aside from the soundscape that captures attention of lookers.

The guide question, “*Ano ang kwento mo sa daang San Pedro?*” (Trans. *What is your story in San Pedro Street?*), was also provided for the lookers to answer.



Images 4-5. The Panel Boards intended for gathering stories from lookers of the exhibition. Sound system was also placed near the panel board to attract more lookers (Image 4).

In the process of gathering stories, lookers were able to read other lookers' stories and somehow that brought back memories and the urge to participate in the story sharing. Before the closing date of the exhibition, lookers decided to post their stories directly on the photos.



Image 6: Example of lookers posting stories ON the photograph.



Image 7: Size of Photographs

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

With men as visual thinkers and women as aural thinkers, the following stories were gathered during the USAS multi-sensorial exhibition. The stories were categorized into

three – positive and humor, tragedy, and drama (love) all in the context of the three general categories already discussed.

CATEGORY	TYPE OF STORIES		
	POSITIVE and HUMOR	NEGATIVE or TRAGEDY	DRAMA and LOVE
Trade	<p>“UNITOP (n.) – budget store sa San Pedro. Didto namo nakita ang prom dress (gown) sa akong classmate.” <i>Trans. “UNITOP (n.) – budget store at San Pedro where we bought my classmate’s prom dress.</i></p> <p>What I love in San Pedro Street is the Pink Cloud Inn.</p> <p>I love Unitop. Daghan barato. <i>Trans. I love Unitop. (They sell) a lot of cheap items.</i></p> <p>San Pedro Main Attraction – UNITOP.</p> <p>Ilang beses na akong napadpad sa San Pedro para lang kumain ng kwek-kwek at saging. <i>Trans. I’ve been to San Pedro several times just to eat kwek-kwek (hard boiled egg covered in flour) and (fried) banana.</i></p> <p>Diri mi nagpaayog sapatos sa akong</p>	<p>Diri mi gapalit ug DVD sa akong pinsan. Diri sab mi nakapalit ug DVD player ug labaw sa tanan, diri natagakan ug til-as ni Lenin. <i>Trans. This is where I buy (pirated) DVD with my cousin. This is also where I bought a DVD player. And most important is, this is where a worm’s larva from a tree fell on Lenin.</i></p>	<p>Maraming beses na akong nakapunta sa UNITOP at di ko malilimutan yung sandaling nakita ko ang childhood crush ko. <i>Trans. I have been to UNITOP several times already but I will never forget the time I saw my childhood crush.</i></p> <p>This is where my boyfriend and I go for a date eating street foods and attend mass at San Pedro Cathedral.</p> <p>Sa San Pedro mi nakapalit atung bracelet na tag P20 na gihatag nako sa akong uyab. <i>Trans. I bought a P20 bracelet here at San Pedro and gave it to my lover.</i></p> <p>Sa San Pedro nasakpan nako ang among yaya nakipagdate. <i>Trans. I once saw my nanny on a date at San Pedro.</i></p> <p>Sa San Pedro ako unang na inlove sa bakla. <i>Trans. I fell</i></p>

	<p><i>lolo. Trans. This is where lolo and I went to have my shoes fixed.</i></p> <p><i>Dula arcade sa taas sa Datu Complex. 90s rule! Trans. Play games at the arcade of Datu Complex. 90s Rule!</i></p> <p><i>Lugawan sa Datu Complex. Trans. Porridge store at Datu Complex.</i></p> <p><i>Mag grocery sa MANTEX dayon diretso sa COCO COLLECTION palit ug soft ice cream. Pag Sabado night, MADMAXX dayun. San Pedro Street dekada 90! Yahoo!!! Trans. We buy grocery at MANTEX then go to COCO COLLECTION for some soft ice cream. During Saturday night we go to MADMAXX. (Decade) 90s! Yahoo!!!</i></p> <p><i>Ang akong anak na si Janzen sige buy ice cream sa Coco Collection sa San Pedro St. atbang sa sinehan. Dinha mi pirmi nagasuroy year 1998. Trans. My child Janzen always buys ice cream at Coco</i></p>		<p><i>in love with a gay man in San Pedro.</i></p>
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	<p><i>Collection in San Pedro St. in front of the movie house. We frequent this place in 1998.</i></p> <p>Naging parte ng aming buhay estudyante ang San Pedro St. Dito kami kumukuha ng mga photographs at videos para sa aming proyekto. <i>Trans. San Pedro St. has become part of our students life. We shoot our videos and photos for our project here.</i></p> <p>Diri ko nakapalit ug TV kay barato ra. <i>Trans. I bought my TV here because it's cheaper (here).</i></p> <p>Ang mamaligya ug haplas na nay mugawas na bitin. <i>Trans. (The memorable person in San Pedro is) the liniment vendor who bring with him his snake.</i></p> <p>Sa San Pedro ko nagbaktas paadto KWORLD. <i>Trans. I pass by San Pedro everytime I go to KWORLD.</i></p> <p>Sa San Pedro mi nagakaon ug durian sa akong friends. <i>Trans. My friends</i></p>		
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	<p><i>and I eat durian in San Pedro.</i></p> <p>Nakabuy ug bestfriends watch during New Year's eve. <i>Trans. (This is where) I bought (a set of) bestfriends watch during New Year's eve.</i></p> <p>Dito ako kain barbeque sa may San Pedro pag mignight. <i>Trans. I usually eat barbeque in San Pedro at midnight.</i></p> <p><b>KUSINA DAVAO</b> <i>(name of restaurant)</i> <b>FOREVER!</b></p> <p>Agfa Color – Dito kami nagpaprogram for yearbook noong elementary kami. Miss those days. <i>Trans. Agfa Color – We had our picture taken here for our yearbook when I was in elementary. (I) miss those days.</i></p> <p><b>KER SHOE</b> anyone?</p>		
Landmarks	<p>Sa San Pedro mi naga-rally paghuman lupad dayon sa UKAY-UKAYAN. <i>Trans. We attend mass mobilization (rally) in San Pedro then go to a second hand store after.</i></p>	<p>Sa San Pedro church hapit mi nasabugan ug Granada in the year 1996 Dec. 26. <i>Trans. It was at San Pedro church where we almost got hit by a grenade 1996 December 26.</i></p>	

	<p>Ang San Pedro St. ang Abreeza naming noong 19...(He! He! He!) Ito ang shopping area dati. <i>Trans. San Pedro St. was our Abreeza in 19...(hehehe) This was the shopping area before.</i></p> <p>San Pedro circa ochenta: simba sa San Pedro Cathedral, family dinner sa Kusina Dabaw, ug papiktyur sa Cesar's Portraits. <i>Trans. San Pedro in the 80s: attend mass at San Pedro Cathedral, family dinner at Kusina Davao, and studio photo at Cesar's Portraits.</i></p> <p>Magsimba sa Cathedral ug panahon sa exam. <i>Trans. Attends mass at the Cathedral during exam period.</i></p> <p>Sa SP ang una kong assignment as intern ng The Mindanao Times. <i>Trans. Sanguniang Panlungsod was my first assignment as intern of The Mindanao Times.</i></p> <p>Diri mi nagpahula sa among kapalaran. <i>Trans. This is where</i></p>	<p>Traffic taga ulian. <i>Trans. Traffic is always heavy during rush hours.</i></p> <p>Sa may Chowking banda ako na stranded noong bumaha ng sobra sa Davao at walang masakyan. <i>Trans. I was stranded near Chowking when it rained hard and the streets were flooded there was no public transport available.</i></p> <p>Dira ko nakatuon ug disco sa MADMAX. Human ug sayaw kay nay RIOT. Kulata nasad. <i>Trans. I learned how to disco at MADMAX. After dancing there was a riot outside and I was beaten.</i></p> <p>San Pedro St. Diri pirmi traffic mao pirmi ko ma late sa klase. <i>Trans. San Pedro St. Traffic is always heavy which causes all my tardiness in class.</i></p> <p>Nasakpan mi sa Jeep wala mi namayad at San Pedro. <i>Trans. We were caught not paying for our jeepney ride here at</i></p>	
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	<p><i>we had our fortune told.</i></p> <p>Dito kami namasyal ng aking Papa noong siya ay umuwi. <i>Trans. This is where we went (to shop and relax) when my father went home.</i></p> <p>Masarap makakita ng artista kagaya ni Juris at Sarah. <i>Trans. (This is where) I see local celebrities like Juris and Sarah (during Kadayawan).</i></p> <p>San Pedro: ang kalye na walang tulog. <i>Trans. San Pedro: the street that never sleeps.</i></p> <p>Diri mi nagasimba with my officemates then kaon sa Kusina Davao. The BEST bonding EVER! <i>Trans. My officemates and I attend mass here then we eat at Kusina Davao. The BEST bonding EVER!</i></p> <p>Lami kaayo ang simoy ng hangin sa San Pedro. Hayahay kaayo. <i>Trans. The air in San Pedro is very refreshing.</i></p> <p>Sa dalang San Pedro</p>	<p><i>San Pedro.</i></p> <p>Kada adto nako diri kay mag-ulan. <i>Trans. Everytime I go here, it rains.</i></p> <p>Alingasa ang UNITOP. <i>Trans. UNITOP is crowded and humid.</i></p>	
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	<p>naluwas akong kalag. <i>Trans. My soul was saved in San Pedro.</i></p> <p>Simbang gabi sa church. <i>Trans. Misa de Gallo (dawn mass) at (San Pedro) church.</i></p> <p>Sa San Pedro kay dako ang simbahan tapos maki alimuot ug daghan tao musimba gihapon mi. <i>Trans. San Pedro Cathedral is huge but even if it is crowded and humid, we still attend mass here.</i></p> <p>Sunday is family day at San Pedro.</p> <p>San Pedro. Diri mi nagatan-aw ug Araw ng Dabaw ug Kadayawan. <i>Trans. San Pedro. This is where we watch the Araw ng Davao and Kadayawan (parades).</i></p> <p>San Pedro Street akong topic sa paper para sa Philippine History class nako. <i>Trans. San Pedro Street was my topic for my Philippine History class (paper).</i></p>		
People	After the result of November 2009 PNLE, my friends	Didto ko kakita ug riot. <i>Trans. This is where I witnessed a</i>	Sa San Pedro Cathedral mi nagkaila sa akong

	<p>and I went to San Pedro Church to pray.</p> <p>I attended mass in San Pedro Church when I got my job and when I received my first salary in 1974.</p> <p>Nakasimba na ko sa San Pedro church. Okay akong nafeel pagkatapos ng mass. <i>Trans. I have attended mass at San Pedro church and I felt okay after.</i></p> <p>Diri mi nag fancy drill sa rover scouts. <i>Trans. This is where we had our fancy drill for rover scouts.</i></p> <p>Sa San Pedro ko church ko nag-ampo para makapasa sa board exam and geh kaluy-an nakapasa! <i>Trans. I prayed at San Pedro church for guidance when I took the board exam and God took pity, I passed.</i></p> <p>Sa San Pedro ako nag pray para sa board exam ni Yang Mark. <i>Trans. I prayed at San Pedro for Yang Mark's board exam.</i></p> <p>Doon kami</p>	<p><i>riot (between gangs).</i></p> <p>Doon ako nawawala tuwing merong events like Kadayawan at Araw ng Davao noong bata pa ako. <i>Trans. This is where I always get lost during city events like Kadayawan and Araw ng Davao when I was still a child.</i></p> <p>Sa may Lachmi sa atubangan sa may Jollibee diha ko dapit hapit nakuyapan. Nakalimot ko ug pamahaw. Maayo na lang nikuyog akong uyab. Dili jud nako ni makalimtan na lugar. <i>Trans. It was at Lachmi near Jollibee when I almost collapsed. I forgot to eat breakfast. Good thing my boyfriend was with me. I will never forget this place.</i></p> <p>Sa daang San Pedro gigukod akong tita ug iro. <i>Trans. My aunt was chased by a dog in San Pedro Street.</i></p>	<p>hubby ug nagpakasal. <i>Trans. My hubby and I met and got married at San Pedro Cathedral.</i></p> <p>Didto mi gikasal sa San Pedro Church. <i>Trans. We were married at San Pedro Church.</i></p> <p>Didto ko gibunyagan sa San Pedro church. <i>Trans. I was baptized in San Pedro church.</i></p> <p>Diri mi nag celebrate ug 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary sa akong uyab. <i>Trans. This is where we celebrated our first anniversary.</i></p> <p>Sa San Pedro Cathedral mi first nag meet ni GIGI. <i>Trans. I first met GIGI at San Pedro Cathedral</i></p> <p>Flowers for Sale! Every Valentines day I always stop by one of the flower shops to buy long stem rose for my dearest mother.</p> <p>Gigokod nako ang akong uyab kay nanluod. Pakyas kaayo. <i>Trans. I chased my</i></p>
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	<p>nagsisimba ng pamilya ko. <i>Trans. My family attends mass (in San Pedro).</i></p> <p>Nagcelebrate kami sa San Pedro kasama kapatid ko at kaibigan. Ang saya-saya ng gabing yon kahit puyat sa trabaho. Maligayang kaarawan! <i>Trans. We celebrated my sibling's birthday at San Pedro with some friends. It was a happy night even if we were all tired from work. Happy Birthday!</i></p> <p>Sa San Pedro Bata: Ate, akoa ma lang ng coke. Me: Dara oh. Bata: Ate apila akong mg aka"kompanya" <i>Trans. At San Pedro</i> Kid: Miss, can I have your coke? Me: Here. It's yours. Kid: Miss, can you include my other friends?</p>		<p><i>girlfriend around San Pedro because she was sulking. It was a failure.</i></p> <p>Diri nako ginadate akong uyab na si Rica Dela Cerna. <i>Trans. This is where I take my girlfriend Rica Dela Cerna for a date.</i></p> <p>Dinhi mi nag meet sa akong ka text mate. <i>Trans. This is where my text mate and I met.</i></p> <p>Sinagot ako ni Jackie sa San Pedro. <i>Trans. This is where Jackie said "yes".</i></p> <p>Sa Rizal Park mi nagdate sa akong uyab. <i>Trans. I took my girlfriend on a date here (at San Pedro).</i></p> <p>Sa San Pedro church nako na realize na gusto ko pala si Kae. <i>Trans. I realized that I like Kae when I was at San Pedro church.</i></p>
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Table 3: Stories Gathered from the Lookers of USAS

The stories gathered were varied but there were certain overlaps between trade, landmark, and people. For the purpose of categorization, all stories focusing on the storyteller fall under PEOPLE while stories focusing on the place rather than the doer of the action fall under LANDMARK. Stories under TRADE talked about the business rather than the landmark.

Moreover, positive and humorous stories talk more on the positive things San Pedro Street offered them while the negative or tragic stories range from funny embarrassing moments, buying of knock-off goods and pirated movies, to life threatening situations. Drama and love talk about interpersonal relationships started and developed within the area.

In this whole exercise of meaning making through images (and sound), San Pedro Street was used as a common setting. It becomes the connection of all plots – happy, hopeful, and sad. These are stories often told from the point of view of the lawmakers and those who disobey the law, the merchants who peddle their goods, and the lost that turn to religion for guidance. In the case of USAS, the recurring storylines were not that relevant. What is relevant is the place where the story happens rather than focusing on what narrative theories dictate as essential in storytelling – beginning, middle, and end.

Furthermore, if you look at the gathered stories, you can also see that the interpretations of the lookers are almost the same as that of the photographer. That said, we can say that the images can be treated as a language aside from being an expressive art form. Like symbols, image needs interpretation and re-interpretation from the looker resulting to an inductive exploration of the images focusing on its features, feelings, knowledge, and function. By interpreting and re-interpreting the content of the images, the lookers were able to dissect the presented elements (space, shapes, etc.) from suggested elements (concepts, themes, allusions, etc.). (Foss, 2005)

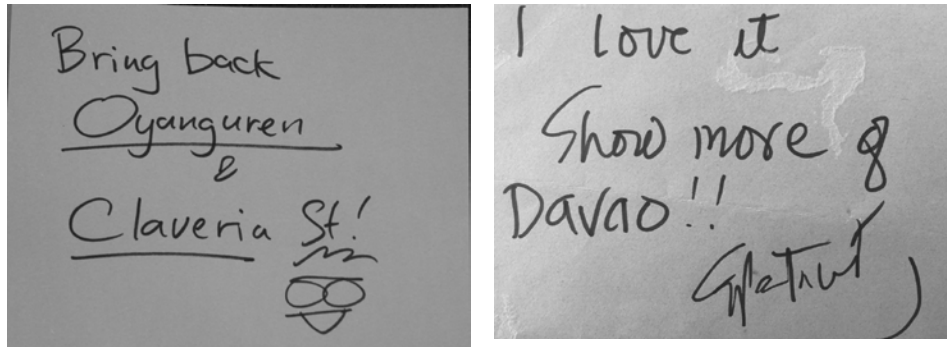
Take for example the openness of the lookers in sharing a negative story (including buying knock-off goods and pirated DVDs) in public can be used as an allusion to the blatant presence of vendors selling knock-off goods and pirated DVDs within the presence of the City Hall, the Sangguniang Panlungsod, and the church. These three institutions defined piracy as stealing and that stealing is against the law of man and God. Yet, it is present. This use of visual imagery, in the context of visual rhetoric, as a way of illustrating, explaining, and investigating the stories told in San Pedro Street, again, does not complete the beginning, middle, and end posited by Barbatsis. It only provides the setting.

In general, the visual and aural messages served as “fundamental carrier of sense” as what sense-making structure or narrative structure posits. The visual and aural messages even made the lookers act as if they are really in San Pedro Street. This can be seen in the way the lookers interacted with the photographs. The actual damage caused by pinning the stories directly in the photo is an example of an act that defies both laws of man and God as seen in the trade and activities in the featured street.

The visual-aural overlap then became a channel that is important in the process of storytelling. As the Theory of Visual Rhetoric points out, the perspective of the lookers will always be independent from its creator. Even if it reaches the same interpretation, the process of interpreting it will be different. Simply put, Jordan et al as cited in Hochmair (2004) said “To capture the meaning of a place, the place must, besides its location, also be seen in the context of human action and sensing.”

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Other stories does not necessarily fall under the three types of stories mentioned but these are worth mentioning since it tackles comments on specific photos and at the same time comments on the whole exhibition which the photographer believes to be a call from the lookers to re-look at the city and its expansion. The photographer also considers this as recommendation for future creative work exploring other iconic areas of Davao City.



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