



**NHAN DUC NGUYEN**

**Calling for Ba Ba (Mrs. Ba)  
sound & altar installation**

**ZeroOne San Jose, CA**

**Aug. 7 - 13, 2006.**

**Out of 150 artists, Nguyen is “one of the 5 artists not to miss at ZeroOne”**

*San Jose Mercury News*

**Nhan Nguyen** will present new work at **ZeroOne San Jose: A Global Festival of Art on the Edge** in San Jose as part of the **International Symposium of Electronic Arts 2006** - the largest art and digital media cultural event to ever take place in North America.

His is a delightfully simple work with its lyrical tales from home, in this case Vietnam, and a surprising placement in a festival that focuses on high-tech wizardry.

Nguyen's installation will be in three local restaurants that serve Vietnamese dishes or use Vietnamese ingredients. The audio component of the wall-mounted altars plays interviews of restaurant workers in Vancouver. They play back at whisper-quiet levels so that the listener will have to strain to hear, as if eavesdropping on a conversation. A leitmotif throughout these interviews is the search for Ba Ba (Mrs. Ba), a woman of misfortune and extraordinary resolve.

"Ba Ba sells noodle soup at Bai Sau Beach in Qui Nhon, the town in Vietnam where I was born. Many tragedies befell Ba Ba including the suicide drowning in 1971 of her son who had refused to enlist. In 1972 she was gunned down when Bai Sau Beach became a battlefield; while operating on her wounds, the surgeon notes that she was shot by an AK 47, the Soviet-made gun of the advancing North Vietnamese Army - and as well as by an M-16 supplied to the retreating South Vietnamese Armies by the Americans.

Betrayed by her two daughters, who had married American soldiers, she was left outside the American embassy in Saigon on that fateful day in June of 1975. Ba Ba returned to Bai Sau

Beach, and amid accusations from her friends and neighbours of working for the enemy, she planned her escape and left Vietnam by boat in the fall of 1976 in search of her daughters. She was never seen again.

These tales of Ba Ba's indomitable spirit were invoked by many Vietnamese boat people during the exodus by sea throughout the eighties and early nineties. These stories of Ba Ba resonate with many Vietnamese restaurant workers whose struggles mirror her own. Although it is an important and relevant tale, it is gradually fading. The last known shrine to Ba Ba in Vancouver was at Little Saigon Restaurant, which closed in 2003." **Nhan Duc Nguyen**

**Locations:**

Good Karma Vegan Restaurant, 37 South First St., San Jose (408) 294-2694

Dakao, 98 E. San Salvador St., San Jose (408) 286-7260

City Restaurant, 301 E. Santa Clara St., Suite A, San Jose (408) 920-9662

info: [www.onedge.tv/html/06\\_baba.html](http://www.onedge.tv/html/06_baba.html)  
[www.01sj.org/](http://www.01sj.org/)

**Produced by: On Edge (Vancouver)**

**Funding: The Canada Council**