DIABLOS ROJOS

A WINDOW INTO PANAMANIAN IDENTITY
WHO WE ARE

LEAH KOLB
Architectural Engineering

ANNA CALLAGHAN
Biomedical Engineering

SAM OLLARI
Computer Science

SARAH SAEED
Civil Engineering

MICAH VARGAS
Computer Science
Interactive Media & Game Development
OUR SPONSOR

DR. GRANT BURRIER

Associate Professor of Teaching in the Social Science department at WPI.

A Latin American and Caribbean expert with peer-reviewed publications on many countries in the region.

We are incredibly thankful for his guidance throughout our this project!
WHAT ARE DIABLOS ROJOS?

A private and decentralized heritage bus system that ran in Panama from the 1960s until 2013. The buses are known for their loud music and extravagant paintings, which often represented their identity, origin, and bus routes.
PROJECT GOAL

To document the impact of Diablos Rojos on Panamanian cultural identity.
DIABLOS ROJOS REPUTATION

AMERICAN BLUEBIRDS
Buses imported from the U.S.

UNSAFE
Fast driving, door open, people standing

PRIVATE TRANSPORTATION
Owners have complete control.

PHASED OUT
Government introduces MetroBus & MiBus.

Credit: www.thepanamadigest.com
SHIFTING NATIONAL IDENTITIES

US IMPERIALISM
US in Panama to build canal, ignited immigration to Panama

CULTURE
Represent those who demand to be seen

IDENTITY
Representing the underserved communities of Panama
OUR METHODS

ARCHIVAL RESEARCH
Websites and news articles.

MAKE CONTACTS
People on the street, drivers of buses, mutual contacts.

CONDUCT INTERVIEWS
Asking the questions and getting answers.

ETHNOGRAPHY
Getting out in the field and seeing them first-hand

ATTEND EVENTS
Attending events where Diablos will be prominent.

DOCUMENT
Capturing our experiences through video and audio.
SECRE
Collect fare
Announce
AKA El Pavo

DRIVER
Owner
Serve
Commission

ARTIST
Apprentice
Paint
Air-brush
Express

MECHANIC
Fix
Maintain
Modify
“The secret is the driver’s third eye”

— Luis Carlos, 2023
“For me, the main thing is to provide good service to the community.”

— Mr. De Leon, 2023
“[Panama without Diablos Rojos] is like seeing a garden without roses. Or as you look at a sky without stars, it is the same”

— PIRI, 2023
"We have to do miracles out there to be able to continue transportation."

— Victor, 2023
Metrobus vs. Diablo Rojo

Credit: https://elcapitalfinanciero.com/metro-bus-requiere-una-ciudad-competitiva/
CAMPEONATO AUTOMOVILISMO TERPEL
Future Of Diablos Rojos

**New Uses**
- Art pieces
- Restaurants and businesses

**Integration**
- Possibility of Diablos integration into public transport
- Artists painting MetroBuses
Diablos Rojos Live On!
Scan this QR code to watch a collection of our footage!
THANKS!

DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?
gr-DiablosRojosA23@wpi.edu
+1 734 865 0309 on WhatsApp

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