

# DIABLOS ROJOS

A WINDOW INTO PANAMANIAN IDENTITY

EXCEL

EXCEL

WARNING

WARNING

WARNING

# WHO WE ARE

**LEAH KOLB**

Architectural Engineering



**SAM OLLARI**

Computer Science

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Civil Engineering

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Computer Science  
Interactive Media & Game Development



**WPI**

# 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.



# SHIFTING NATIONAL IDENTITIES

## US IMPERIALISM

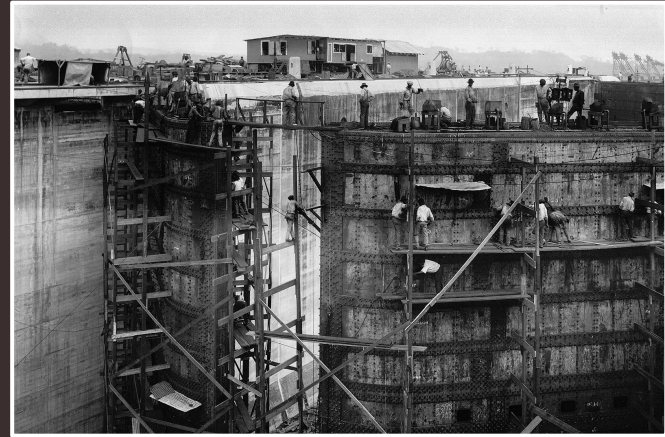
US in Panama to build canal, ignited immigration to Panama

## CULTURE

Represent those who demand to be seen

## IDENTITY

Representing the underserved communities of Panama



Credit: Britannica



Credit: Innovatrics

# 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 secre 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

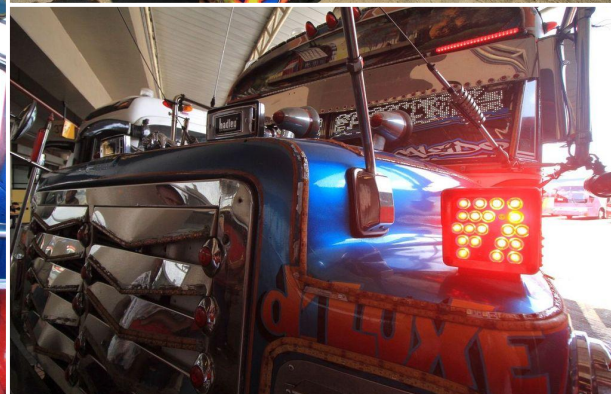
## Integration

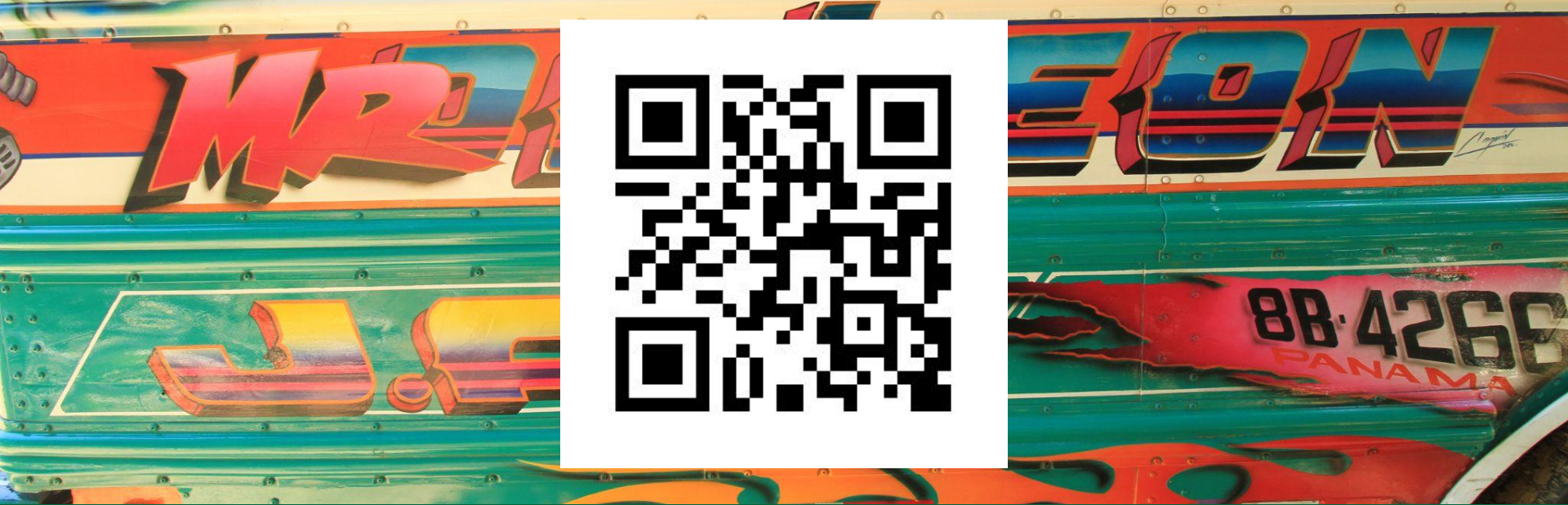
- Possibility of Diablos integration into public transport
- Artists painting MetroBuses





# Diablos Rojos Live On!





Scan this QR code to watch a collection of our footage!

# THANKS!

**DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?**

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# References

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