

CRITICAL MAKING, VISUAL SYSTEMS  
AND TYPOGRAPHY | BAD6D

# Ingrained in Grains

VISUAL COMPEDIUM | CHRISTA 24211

Ingrained in Grains is a visual exploration of the cultural and social practices surrounding rice in Indonesia, grounded in fieldwork observations in Jakarta. This project investigates how people engage with rice not just as a staple food, but as a marker of memory, tradition, and connection.

From sourcing it in traditional markets to the rituals of cooking and eating, Ingrained in Grains traces how rice is held, wrapped, and shared in everyday life. Through surface such as the textures and symbolism found in rice sacks and through the grain itself, as it moves from field to table, it reveals the shifting identities and deep rooted meanings carried within each grain.



# Background

## CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE



Rice is deeply rooted in Indonesia's traditions and identity, symbolizing prosperity, fertility, and gratitude toward nature. It holds a sacred role in rituals and mythology. As both a daily staple and ceremonial offering, rice connects communities, reinforces respect for nature, and serves as a spiritual and cultural foundation across generations.

## SOCIAL DIVIDES



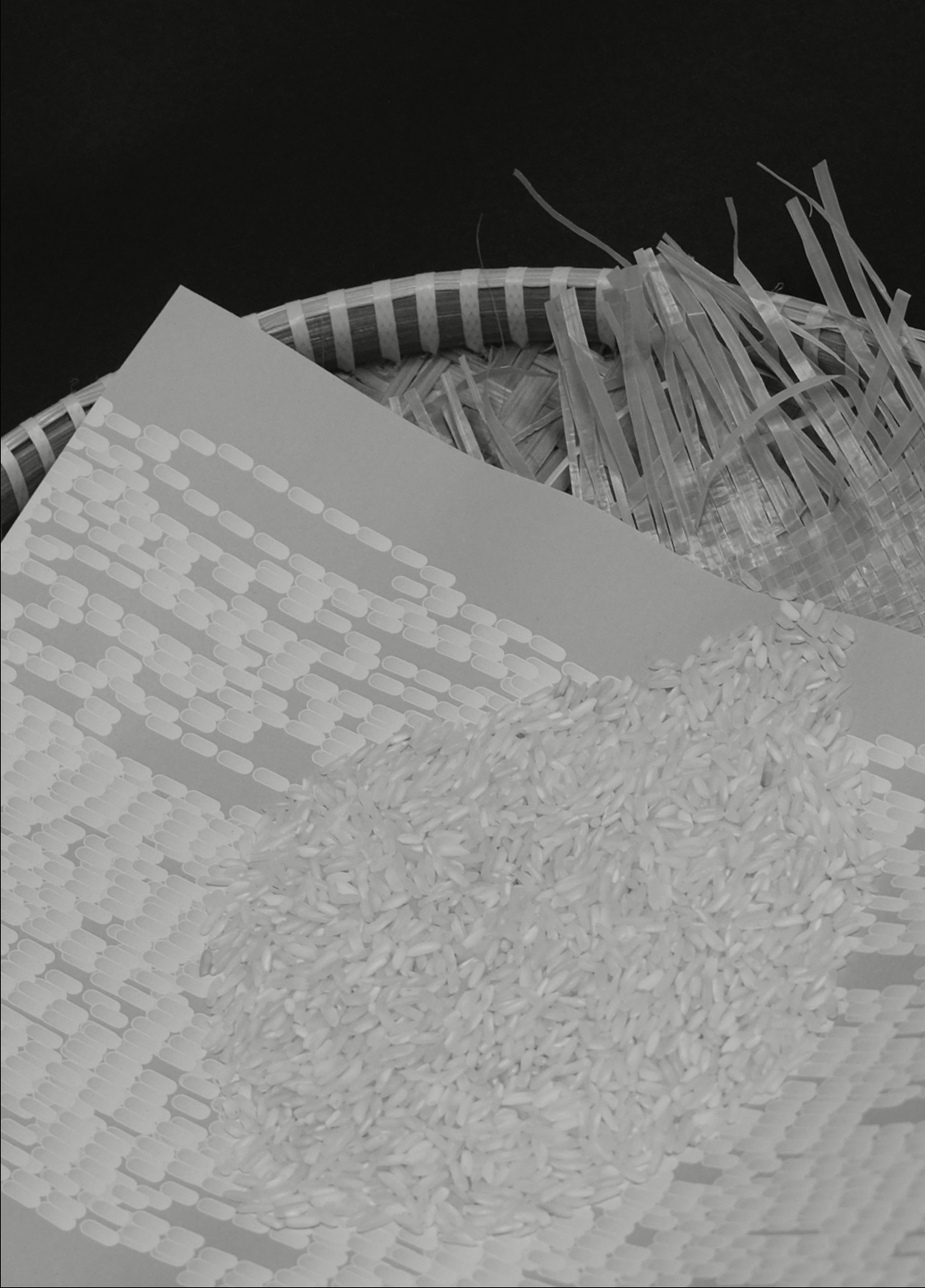
Rice consumption in Indonesia reflects clear socioeconomic patterns. Higher-income groups often purchase premium, imported, or specialty rice from supermarkets, while lower-income households rely on cheaper bulk grains from traditional markets. This consumption pattern highlights rice as not only a food source but also a symbol of wealth, status, and access, revealing deeper class divisions.

## UNIFYING SYMBOL



In a society with varying literacy levels, visual communication becomes essential. Rice's presence in public visuals strengthens its role as a unifying cultural symbol. Rice serves as a bridge across gaps in education, class, and tradition. Its visual and cultural significance continues to shape social dynamics in Indonesia, reflecting both unity and disparity within the nation.

# Framework of Explorations



Structured into three interconnected parts: Hold, Wrap, and Share. *Ingrained in Grains* traces different moment in rice's journey from the hands that harvest it to the rituals that bring people together around it.

By breaking down this journey, the project invites viewers to see rice not just as food, but as a medium of labor, identity, and belonging. It highlights how rice is woven into daily gestures, visual symbols, and communal traditions, deeply embedding it into the fabric of Indonesian life.

# Hold

Labor through  
Fieldwork Observation

# Wrap

Rice Sacks as  
Carriers of Culture

# Share

Rice as Belonging,  
Connection, and Care



A guide for each framework  
is provided to help the  
audience understand them  
in greater depth.



The complete approach including the full concept, intention, and development process is presented on the accompanying website for a deeper understanding.

[link](#)





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INGRAINED IN GRAINS

# Hold, Wrap, and Share: Lessons from the Field



## INGRAINED IN GRAINS

01 HOLD

02 WRAP

03 SHARE



### Labor through Fieldwork Observation

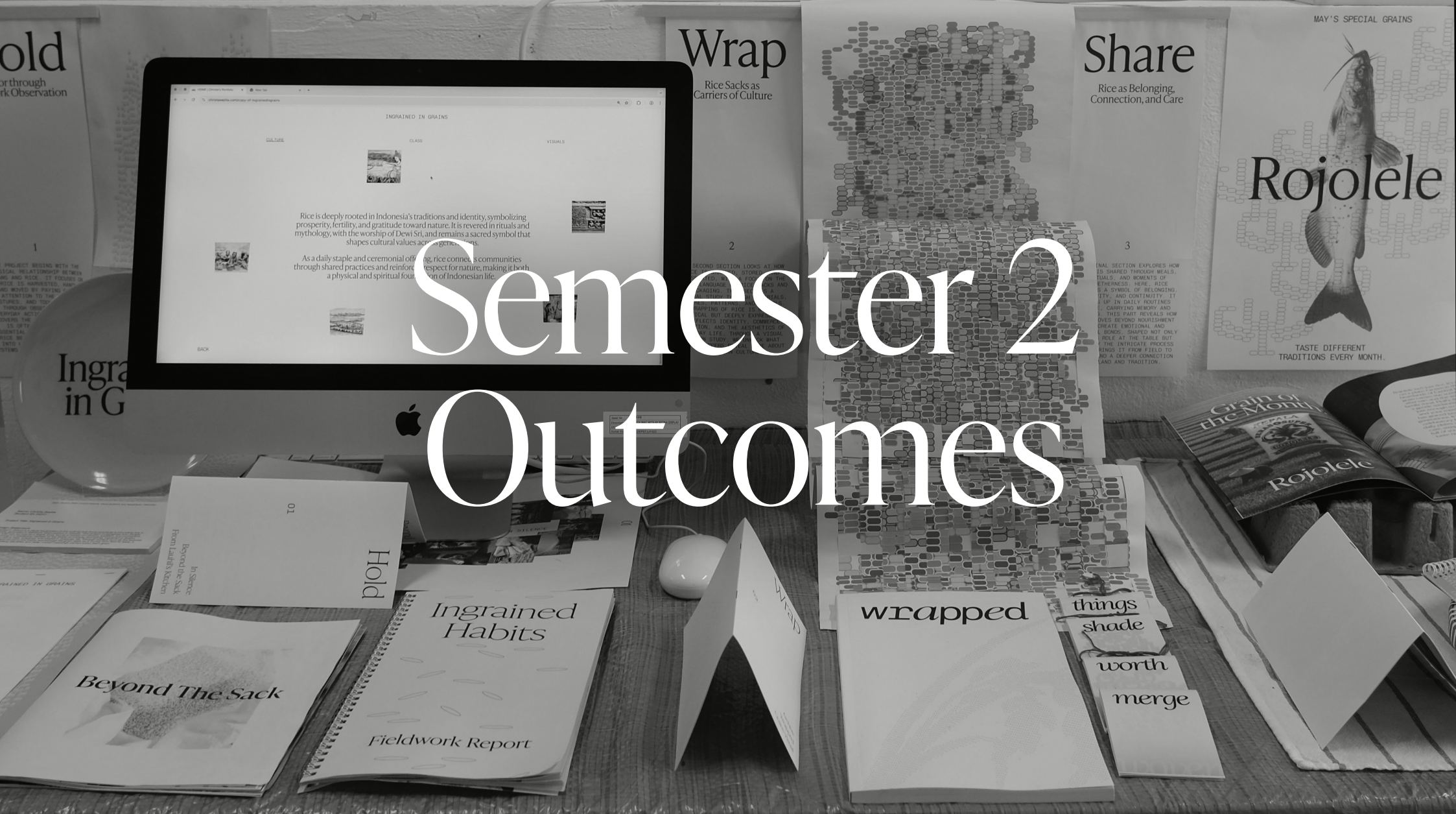
This section explores the physical relationship between humans and rice. How it's harvested, handled, and moved. Through close observation of gestures, tools, and processes, it highlights the value of everyday labor. Holding rice becomes a symbolic act, opening up broader discussions on production systems, care, and human connection to land.

BACK

NEXT



# Semester 2 Outcomes



old  
through  
Observation

Wrap  
Rice Sacks as  
Carriers of Culture

Share  
Rice as Belonging,  
Connection, and Care

MAY'S SPECIAL GRAINS

Rojolele

TASTE DIFFERENT  
TRADITIONS EVERY MONTH.

Ingrained  
in G

01

Hold

Ingrained  
Habits

Fieldwork Report

Beyond The Sack

wrapped

things  
shade  
worth  
merge



# Hold

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## Ingrained Habits

## Beyond The

Fi



HOLD

# Fieldwork Report

This book presents insights from my fieldwork, documenting how rice is deeply rooted in Indonesia's cultural and social fabric.

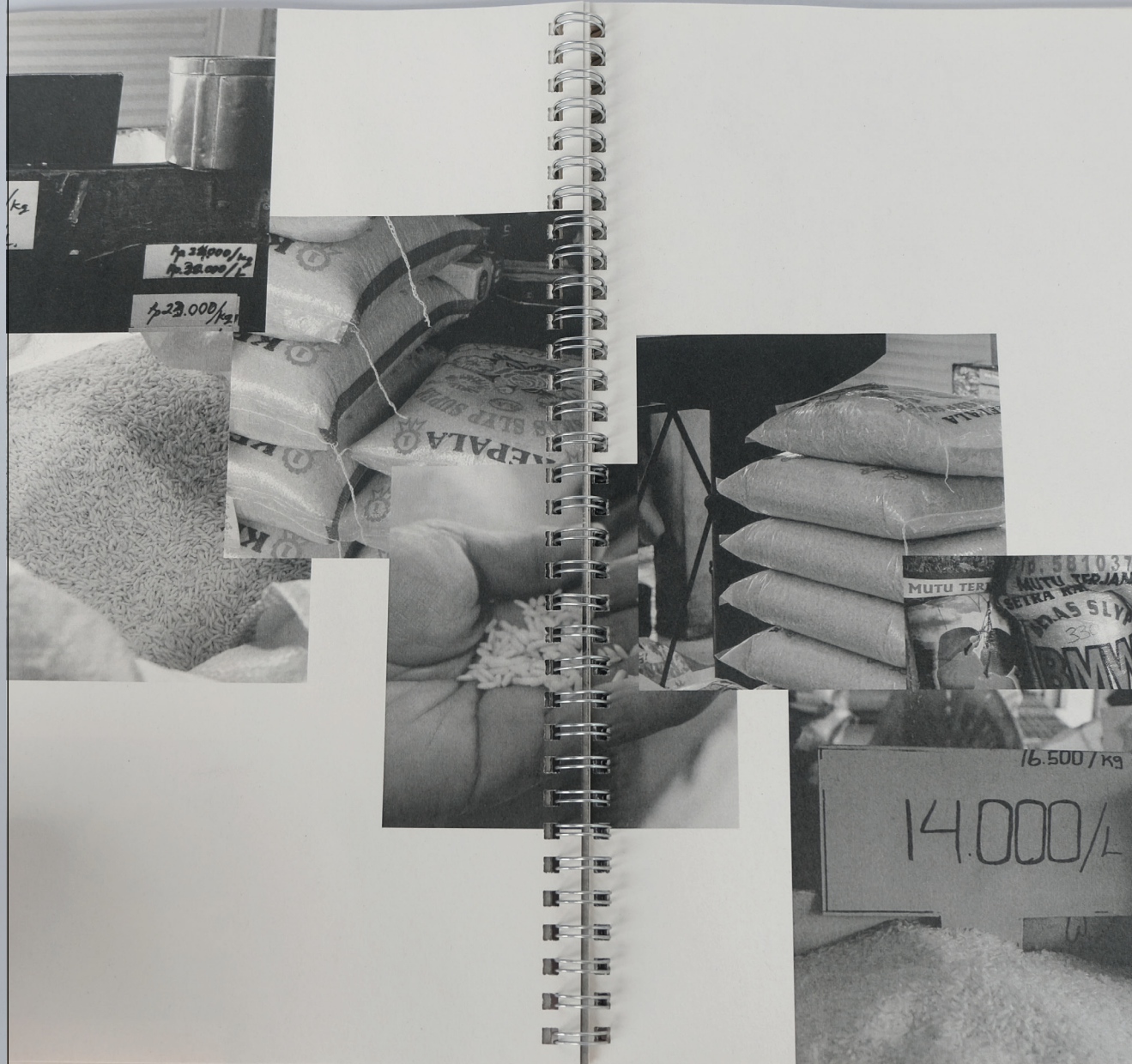
Through observation, photography, and conversations with vendors, cooks, and consumers, it captures the nuances of rice culture—from bustling markets to home kitchens. It explores the different ways rice is sourced, prepared, and eaten, the significance of various rice types, and the social and economic factors shaping its consumption. Ultimately, this book examines rice's evolving role in Indonesian society and its lasting presence in daily life.





# Ingrained Habits

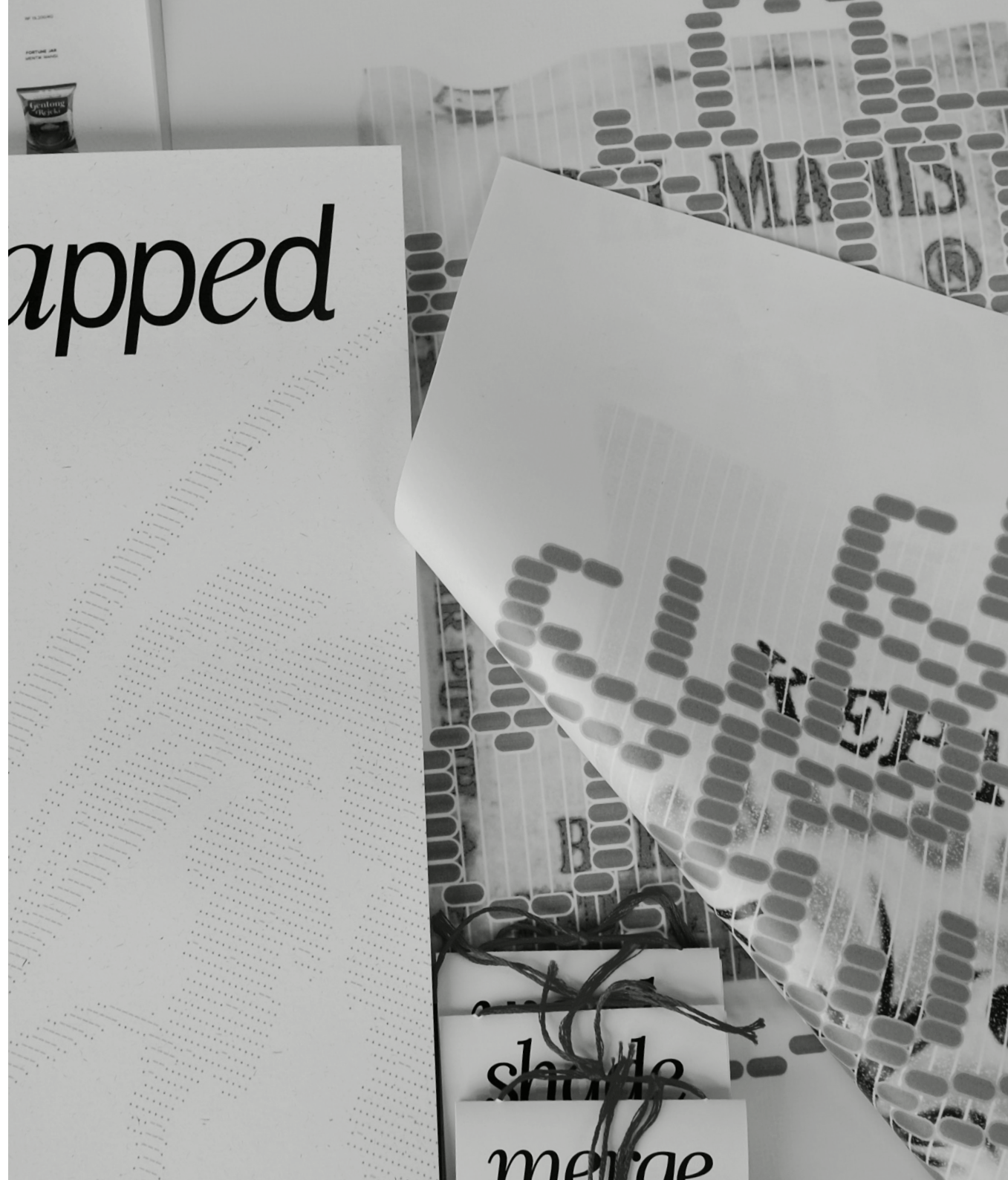
Fieldwork Report





# Wrap

This section shifts focus to the visual language of rice sacks, how rice is wrapped, stored, and transported. Through materials, textures, colors, and symbols, the packaging reveals cultural values, economic systems, and aesthetic traditions. It's a visual study of how commerce and culture merge in the everyday, showing what these designs say about Indonesia.



WRAP

# Wrapped Series

Building on the archive I have collected on the last semester, *Wrapped* focuses on 12 rice sacks found in traditional markets (pasar), highlighting their symbolic richness and aesthetic diversity. The work extracts intricate motifs and repurposes them into visual patterns. These patterns rooted in local design language and visual culture, become a tool to understand how rice sacks act as vessels of identity, commerce, and daily life.



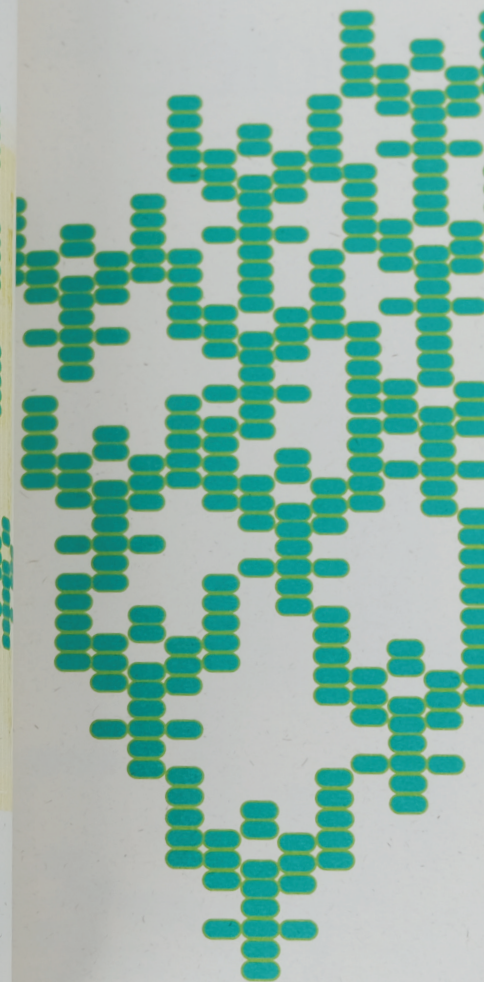
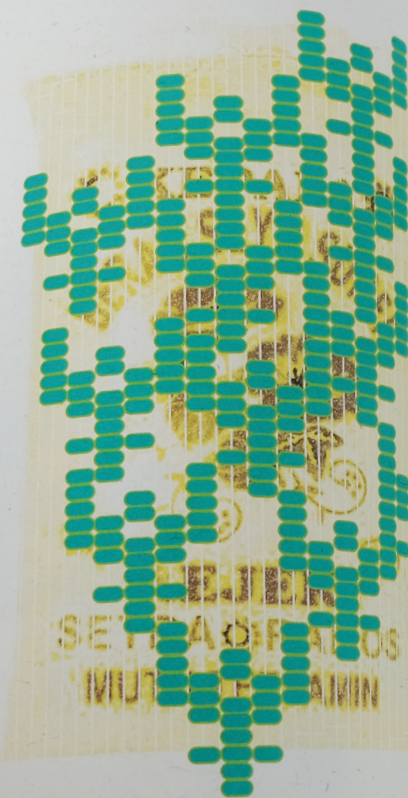


# Step



# One

## Unpacking Symbols: Understanding the Visual Elements of Rice Sacks







# Combining Making New Outcome Mixed Elements

## Things

organizes the sack designs based on symbolic categories such as Fruits, Social, Animals, and Flowers.

## Shade

ups them by dominant color tones such as Red, Yellow, Green, and Blue to study the emotional and visual impact of color.

## Worth

gorganizes the rice sack names by market value per kilogram, highlighting how value perception are visually communicated.

## Merge

all previous explorations together by combining and combining elements to create new compositions, showing how identity and symbolism can evolve through design.

In the final stage, I combine the elements I've created—layering, mixing, and seeing how they interact. The goal is to create visual outcomes: new compositions that retain the identity of the original rice sack visual stories. This process brings tradition and experimentation together, evolving visual language.

The project explores how the sack is rearranged and transformed, drawing vibrant colors and textures of rice in local markets. This section is divided into four parts: Things, Shade, Worth, and Merge, each a different lens to examine and reinterpret elements of traditional Indonesian



WRAP

# Grains: Visual Exploration

In the final stage of the exploration, the project transforms the visual language collected from rice sack designs into abstract compositions of grains. Drawing from the patterns, colors, and textures found in the Archive and Wrapped series, this piece reinterprets rice not just as sustenance, but as a vessel of stories, values, and collective identity.

Here, rice becomes a symbol of prosperity and tradition, and the sack becomes more than a wrapper. It becomes a canvas of social meaning.





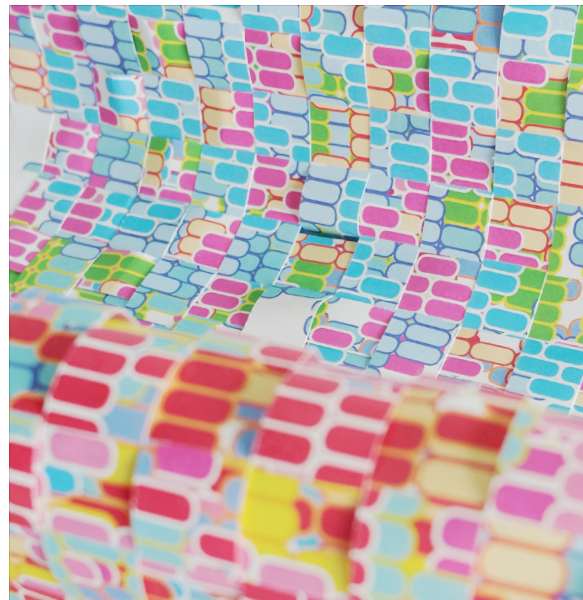
# Nasi Bungkus

I draw inspiration from the humble “nasi bungkus” an everyday economic rice meal, wrapped simply in brown paper, yet rich with layers of meaning. Through a folded poster format, I invite close observation of patterns and symbols that echo the textures of these wrappings. The folds and creases symbolize the intersections of food, identity, and social status, how something as simple as a packet of rice can quietly reveal stories of class, culture, and community. a canvas of social meaning.



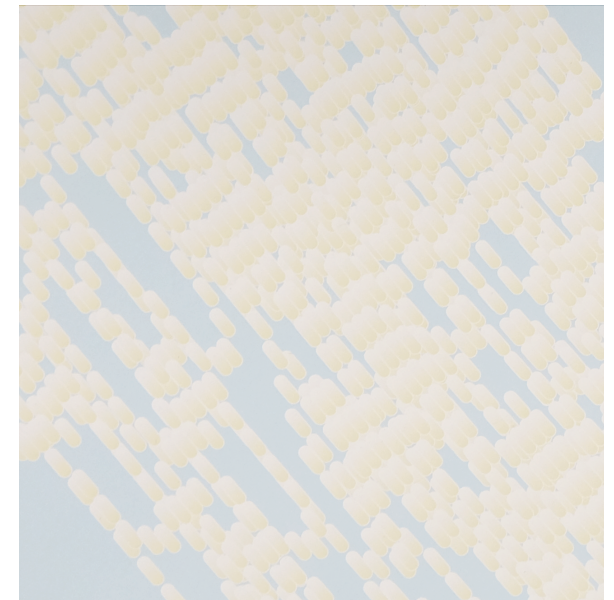
# Weaven

This work takes an abstract approach, using observation as a method to explore how rice can act as a unifying symbol. By visually weaving together different rice sack designs into a single folded poster, the project highlights the idea that despite differences in origin, branding, or quality, rice connects people across social classes. The act of combining these varied visuals strengthens the concept of unity through a shared cultural staple.

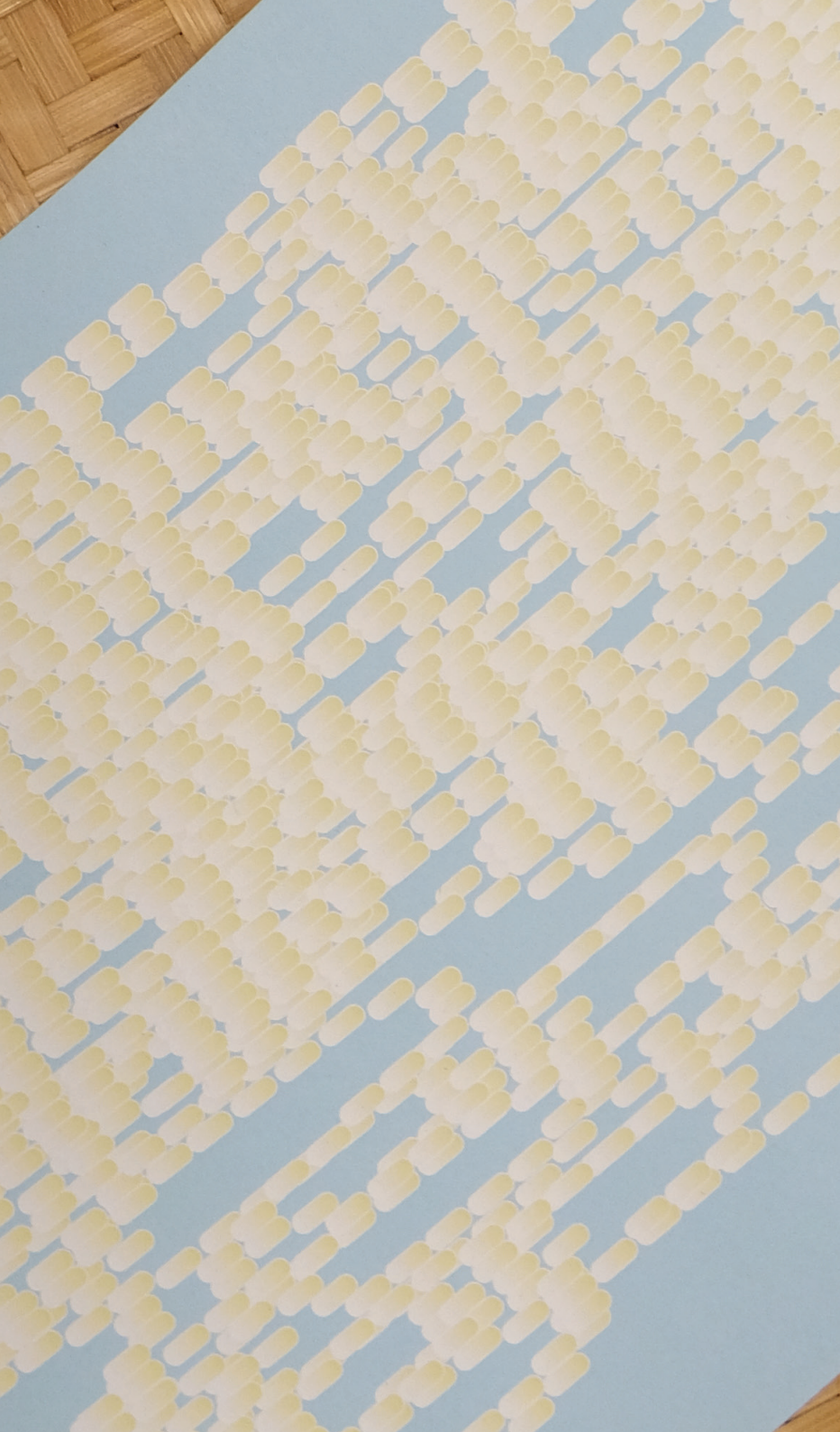


# Long Grain

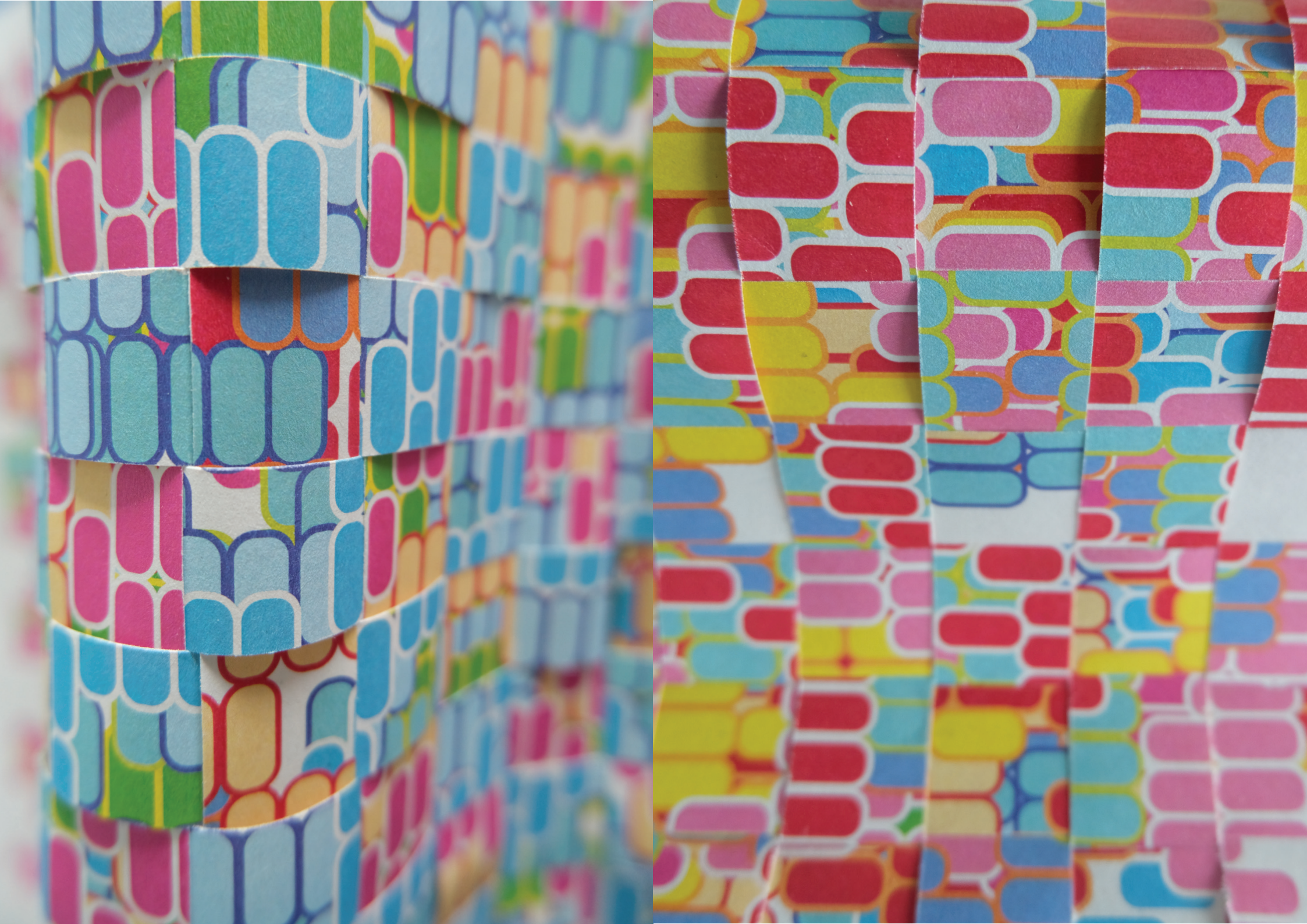
draws inspiration from the use of rice in Indonesia's national symbol, as seen in Pancasila—specifically the principle “Keadilan Sosial bagi Seluruh Rakyat Indonesia”, which translates to “Social justice for all the people of Indonesia.” The work portrays rice as an endless blessing from nature to the nation, symbolized by golden grains against a blue sky, prosperity descending from the heavens.













# Share

# Rojolele

This section explores how rice is shared not just consumed. By focusing on the moments where rice brings people together, it highlights how the grain carries emotional weight, acting as a connector between individuals, families, and generations. Whether served at the dinner table or offered in rituals, rice becomes a language of care, history, and identity.

TASTE DIFFERENT  
TRADITIONS EVERY

# Farm

May

# Grain

# Main

Grains & Mains / Ma



SHARE

# Grains & Mains

Grains & Mains is a monthly campaign and family kit that brings Indonesia's rich rice culture into the heart of the home. Each delivery features a distinct variety of locally grown rice, sourced from traditional markets and smallholder farmers across the archipelago. Designed to spark curiosity and deepen connection, the kit highlights rice not just as a staple, but as a story. Grains & Mains supports traditional vendors, celebrates regional diversity, and invites families to rediscover the joy of cooking with meaning: one grain, one story, one meal at a time.



# From Farm to Table, Magazine

Grains & Mains is a monthly campaign and family kit celebrating Indonesia's rich rice culture. In this debut issue, From Field to Table, discover the journey of rice from traditional markets to your home, meet the farmers behind each harvest, and explore recipes that bring heritage and everyday meals together. When we know the story behind our food, every meal means more.



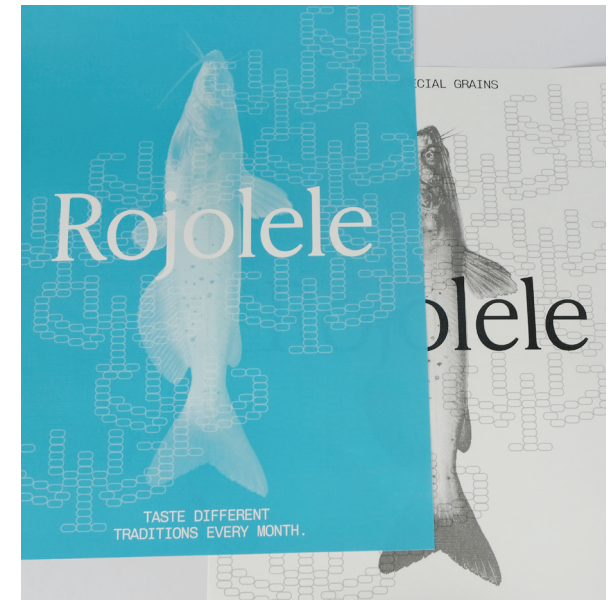
# Information Kits

Each month, the kit features a specific variety of rice, along with details about its origin and the farming community it comes from. It also includes a collection of recipes, cooking guides, and pairing ideas, all inspired by local traditions and community preferences.

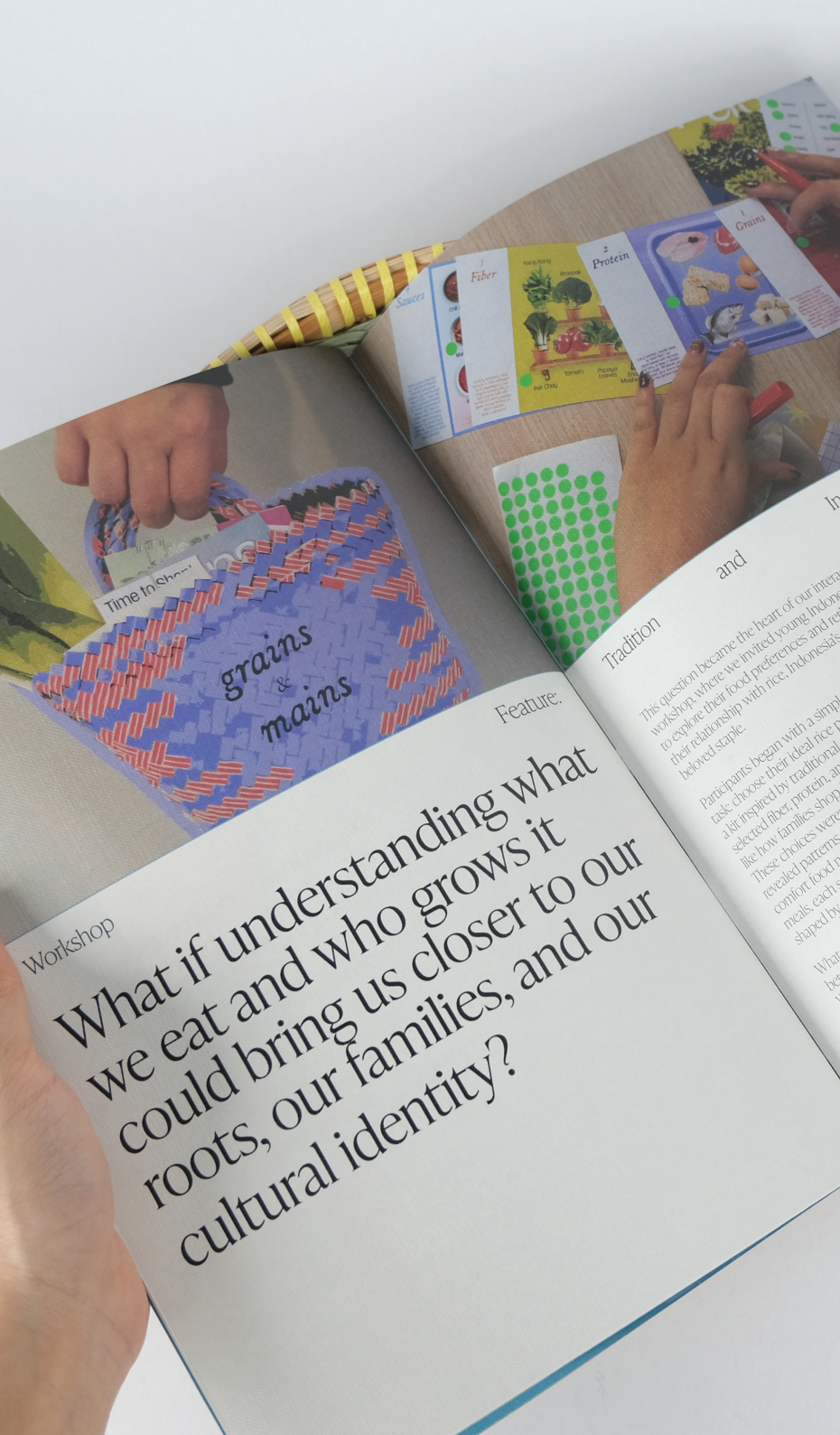


# Grain of the Month Poster

This poster highlights the month's featured rice, Rojo Lele, blending abstract symbols with a fish visual in the background. The layered design connects tradition and origin, creating a dynamic visual that invites closer observation of the rice's cultural story.









from  
muddy  
fields  
to polished  
grains,  
How does a  
seed  
become a  
symbol of  
culture and  
comfort?

Behind each grain is a farmer who believes that food means more when it's rooted in patience, place, and purpose. This month, we bring you the harvest from Wahyudi's farm in Klaten, rice with its sun-worn, woody patina.



Each month, Grains & Mains delivers a locally grown Indonesian rice variety straight from the pasar to your kitchen. We bring along culturally rich grains to your table along with origin stories, meal pairings, and a little rice wisdom to inspire your everyday cooking.