

**My Vietnam, Your Vietnam: A Father Flees. A Daughter Returns. A Dual Memoir****Christina Vo****Nghia M. Vo**

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With chapters alternating between their two experiences with Vietnam, father-daughter duo Christina Vo and Nghia M. Vo's soul-stirring memoir *My Vietnam, Your Vietnam* covers transgenerational understandings of cultural roots.

In North Carolina in 2002, Christina, who was raised in the US, expressed a yearning to learn about her family's homeland—a place whose cultural presence in her life she long denied. After landing an internship in Hanoi, she began her years-long effort to define the nation for herself. She spent time living in both Hanoi and Saigon; she developed a deeper understanding of the context of the Vietnam War, its remnants, and the wounds that remained within her father.

Nghia's chapters go deeper into the past, beginning with the fall of Saigon, when he escaped to the US by boat in April of 1975. He ended up in Fort Indiantown Gap, a former refugee camp outside of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Transitioning from a war-ridden existence to one of freedom, he moved to New London, Connecticut, where he attempted to “find [his] footing on this new terrain” while preserving anchors to his homeland. Pursuing a medical career, he sought the tranquility and belonging he once associated with Southern Vietnam.

Though they were written in different time periods, Christina and Nghia's respective chapters are transitioned between in a seamless manner. Having rarely spoken about Vietnam to his children, Nghia's historical retelling fills in the holes of Christina's minimal understanding of the Vietnam her father mourned; in turn, her curiosity leads her to her lost heritage. And the father and daughter's individual stories help to reconcile pain in each other's tales across this beautiful, evocative book.

*My Vietnam, Your Vietnam* is a stunning, prismatic memoir about Vietnam's past and present as experienced by two generations.

BROOKE SHANNON (March / April 2024)

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