



I did not see much of the Philippines unfortunately, having a busy planning. But we had a 6 hours transit in Manila, so we could visit a bit. Manila is the capital city. It is, probably like Jakarta, a weird mix between high new buildings (we walked through a modern bay with attraction parks and bars, very empty at noon, then some touristic area with small museums, in the middle of big street for car, it was like a gosh city) and lively, man-levelled shops and houses on the streets , creating a city in the city (I wonder how mapping works in those cases).

Jeeps are the public transport, and very cheap. (Philippines was first colonised by Spain then USA, and the last one still has a lot of influence on the country). The jeeps are decorated. All the information is written with manuscript font, it look very good. People sit in the back on two long benches facing each other and hand the money towards the driver, who manages to follow up with how much to give back and who came in while keeping driving. It is a very nice flow of money from hands to hands.





The other common way of transport is side cars. There is quite a lot of possibilities of what they attach next to their scooter, but in Roxas most of

them looked like a space ship ready to go to mars. So funny, also each of them in a different colour, makes you think you are in an attraction park.

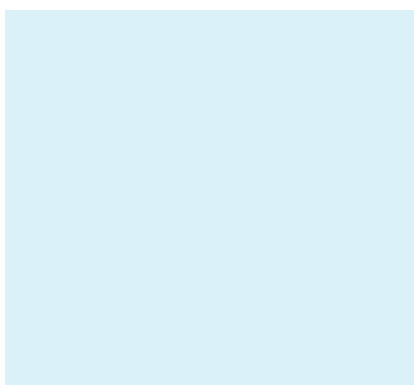




Manila was transit only, our final destination being Roxas City. We arrived in the tiniest airport I had seen (I think it can host only one plane at the time). My impression was that Philippines is more humid. In the night we would see lightning

but not hear the thunder, it was very strange and dramatic. However I have been told that the climat is really an issue, with children being killed at the beach while barbecuing because of sudden huge wave coming where never before.

The landscape is beautiful, between sea and volcanos. In Roxas the sea fruit farms stand in for the rice-fields. The feeling is similar though, because both are mostly water, cutting the landscape in rectangles, with small path in between.

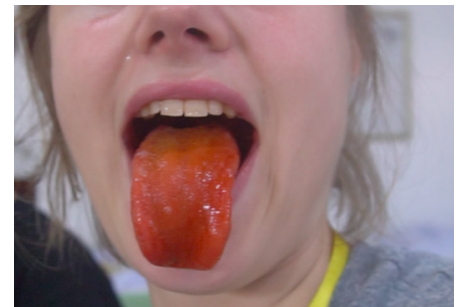




The food there is great. They have a lot of seafood (Roxas city is Philippines' capital of sea fruits, they export a lot, to Japan etc...) and use the coconut a lot. Contrary to Indonesia it is not spicy nor fried! I have the feeling it is more soups, and marinated or oven-cooked. In a way it is more simple and looking for the inner value of the ingredients (like high cuisine do). It seems more healthy, and was very easy food for me to

eat. Though I need to take in consideration that I was not eating street-food, rather luxurious tourist or business man food. But people seems to have knowledge and taste for food, they seem to care more. Christian is the main religion : one can find very kitschy churches and sculpture. It is very funny see a christianism that is not stern, austere. But full of fake hair, shiny, and TV screens. They build a huge

Jesus up a mountain (referencing to the Christ Redentor in Brazil). I think that this is the reason was the society seems more open. People can dress the way they like, and you can see couple in the street. I miss this freedom in Indonesia (most women wears the hijab, I say in pants and covering tee-shirt all the time, they have night watches to avoid sexual acts in the public area).



Philippines and Indonesia are nations built from many ethnies , each having their language and culture. Discussing with people I learn some traditional habits. Someone told me the society used to be matriarcal. The family house was built according to the wife's body : the main room being a square of 7 times the distance between hands, for example. Men were not allowed some

part of the house, especially the kitchen, that was sort of a negotiating room. Women would cook for the daily, but in case of big event, then the man would cook. But they have a chewing something made from leaves, nut something and white powder, that makes the mouth very red. When a man comes to a community, the prettiest girl is to offer him some.



The reason I went to Philippines :

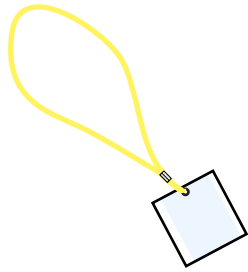
There was a meeting of the people/collectives/institutions hosting or relating to artist in residencies program in South East Asia. It was the second one of the type, the first had happened in 2016 in Malaysia, with a smaller committee. They plan to continue meeting every year or 2 years. The main aim being to strengthen links and learn from each others visions and strategies for sustaining the programs. This year were people from Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Hong-Kong, Vietnam, Malaysia, Philippines and Indonesia.

It was of course a big opportunity for me to :

- >learn about the different countries
- >have the point of view of the hosts and not the artist, sort of the other side of the mirror
- >learn about the different types of artists in residency project around this part of the globe
- >meet a lot of interesting people.
- >and also relate back to what I am experiencing in Jaf.

(I don't know what I did to deserve such good karma?!)





It all started quite formal. There was this awkward moment because I was not on the list (since like Indonesian people do, Arie just told me to join, without thinking too much of the organisation team -though he did write them an e-mail). But I got a bed, and hand-written name card and everything was very fine. I even got in time to watch the opening videos : a bunch of company-like featuring the city under the sun, children smiling and ALL the facilities the Gerrit Roxas convention center possess. Very strange.

But it soon became more interesting with people presenting themselves.

The 3 days were mainly made of presentation of each participant's situation and project for the residency. The organising team had grouped the participant into panels with a specific topic. It worked quite good! At the end of the day were small group discussions. What made this meeting work so good may also be that we were living together, sleeping in dorms. A lot of the discussions happened outside of the official moment.



Which brings me the first realisation : most of the things happen when friends come together and start doing something together. There is no need for institution, or official demands. Those can come after. This empowerment also changed my ideas of success : maybe my dream is not to be shown in whatever famous museum, but just having some small project that works and is implicated in its surroundings.

Second : there is a lot of different vision on artist in residencies goals. Some are more focused on the artist and his or her career. Other ask the artist to do something for the community (often by means of artist talks or workshops). Some see themselves only as facilitators (with sometime the coldness of hotel administration!), while most of the other think of a collaboration or a coaching.

Places and people I remember I want to visit :

Saeko Oyama > art space tetra, Fukuoka in **Japan** for the small scale, local good. Because it seems very honest research of self expression and very free.

Martha Atienza/ Jinri Layese > DAKOgamay, Bantayan in the **Philippines**. Because they are fighting part of the community. They are using art to fight for their environment and changes some societal idea of success. They are very engaged. And maybe I can help on some practical things.

Elise Luong > Undecided Productions, Brussels/Hanoi in **Vietnam** for the pleasure of crafts and making.

Jiradat Meemalai > Baan Noorg Collaborative Arts and Culture, Ratchaburi, in **Thailand**. Because they work with migrants. Because they work with school, very hands on. (They make soap for example). Also they are part of their community.

Sui Fong Yim > Rooftop Institute, **Hong Kong** for the educational project.

Tomoyo Mizuya > Koganecho Bazaar in **Japan**. because they also seems quite honest in the way they relate to the community which they don't really belong to..and having fun. while still on a more contemporary art part.

Mizuho Ishii > ARCUS Project in **Japan** because it is an older, institutionalised residency. So for a change. and their experience. and also because they provide money! And of course, and that is true for all I think, because I appreciated the person who presented .

where to get the moneyyy -->



I think this depends on whether the residency is run by artists. There is also difference in the type of work, and consideration of what is art. Some stay more 'classic' as in studio based fine artist or performer, other are more community based, almost social workers. And here again, there is a big difference when people speak about engaging with the community : most of the people actually speaking of the « communi-

ty » have a distance towards it. They think a lot about their ethic of action, about how to make people with less education relate to art...while for other, such as Jaf : the community is simply their hometown. They do things with their neighbours and try to improve everybody's life, making them think more freely or having the guts and place to express their ideas. (so I am happy to be where I am)



On arrival...

Topic that came back and again were :

>how to engage with the community . where are the ethical borders. what is exploitation. should we even take action. but who is the community anyway

>how to preserve yourself and keep the spirit up

>how to evaluate (for the funding people, for the artist, for the host, for the community) when the influence is often seen many years after

>what is the priority, what is a artwork that works (when can be part of the artists' career. when met the local people, when manage to collaborate)

>what is artistic freedom (in states where there is censorship, or when you are not self funded)

better insights in here : <https://culture360.asef.org/magazine/key-insights-southeast-asian-art-residencies-meeting-2018>



On departure!

I think the meeting was successful : even though people had very different visions and opinions, we got along very well, had good time and kept talking till the last bit of being together. There is also a lot of common experiences I guess. And we all planned to visit each other.



There is one thing, though, that I found very paradoxical : we acted like pure tourist and did not, at all, « engage with the community ». We were sleeping and eating and working in the convention center. Night had already fallen when we would finish the program. Then they would bring us with a large car to some expensive resort or restaurant where we would drink and chat.

The only way to even see a little Philippines and Philippines people was to wake up early and walk or take a taxi. This way I went quickly to a market, with amazing amount of fish and candle on the meat stores to keep the flies away, that made a very weird religious image.

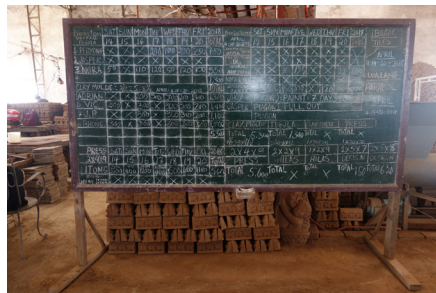
This touristic experience continues 2 days after the end of the official meeting, as a tour had been organised. We actually went to Las Casas Filipinas, a place out of the moon. A mixture between Disney Land and open air museum, that also have an residency program. To get a picture : take a very beautiful bay surrounded by mountains (actually very strategic position in terms of war). Then takes existing old houses from the Spanish occupation, and bring them there. Create workshops and invite local craftsmen to work on remaking the interior design, in the fashion of the past (but with TV in the bathroom). Add costumes for the staff, means of transportation varying from horse car to jeeps and cross bicycles. Add shops and bars. You more or less have it. So as much as it felt ethically very wrong (also considering that the Spanish colonisation was more of less slavery time) and somewhat ridiculous , it was also very

nice, quiet, beautiful. I went swimming and hiking. We had delicious food again, far too much. Holding a coconut in my hand, I could not help thinking about my graduating friends and enjoy my luck the best I could. What was actually interesting, was to visit the workshops, or less say factories, in which the people a producing the interior. Those are the ones the artist in residence can to interact with. In regards to the ideas we had talked about in the meeting, in term of exchange and co-ownership it is really bad. And the difference of wealth is striking, (the workshops are just outside of the resort). But still I enjoyed it, it is a work like other, maybe slightly more nice and creative. There is no stress. And I love the hand work and the material. I made bricks and roof tiles with them. Some of them spoke english so we could discuss.



I also liked their exhibition, I liked what the artists have done here. It is contemporary art and research. The one I liked the most had worked with indigenous people and the way the not indigenous people relates to them. Also showing the changes happening because of globalisation. He had an amazing collection of books on the topic. Bella Artes (since that is the name of the residency) also

have a gallery in Manilla rich neighbourhood. Listening to the organisatrice I came to understand they also engage with a community : only it is a community of very rich people (who are not more easy to relate to art than 'poor, not educated' people). So it is only a very different context. Maybe that is needed too. But it looks depressing to work in those conditions, so no , thanks :)



BYE BYE PILIPINOS

We took the side car that
would go straight to the moon
out of earth in a fake museum
fake houses, fake people but
great
real montains, salty water, real
food, real, mixed, feelings
sometimes
and here we are, in this bubble
effortlessly living
people feed us, cleans us so we
can keep talking talking
watermelon chat
how do you manage money
how do you keep up spirit
how to start, where to stop
does it even makes sense?
success stories needs to be
revisited.
lightnings in the sky
the context is the program,
don't worry baby
not thunder can be heard
because I am undecided.
(because wild cat pooh coffee.
mahal!)

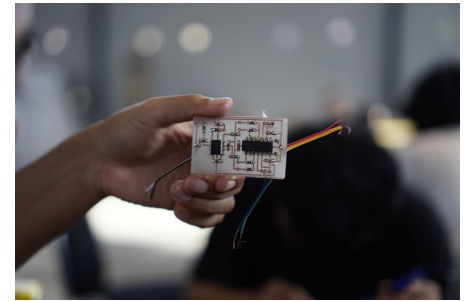
what is engaging with the
community engaging with the
community engaging with the
community
how to preserve myself?

yuhuuuu the times goes by
empty glasses belly full
when do you come visit
when can I come visit
let's go mas ! po ! cuya !

selamat po filipinos!

money money money
fondation, or friends, or you
sleep in my room
what's the futur of all this
what is good and for whom,
how to evaluate?
should keep traces of all of this
but art is action, report is bor-
ing
let's make a song!

Just came back
and already workshop!



After a long trip back (one night) we arrived in a buzzing Jaf : they were hosting a 3day program on new media art and farming. I had missed a presentation on permaculture from Krisna, based in Bali and Yogyakarta. And another one on traditional astronomical farming techniques, from Yoyo (who I had met in a previous DDW, age of wonderland). The day we arrived was people from LifePatch in Yogyakarta's presentation and workshop. They remind me of DAE , doing a lot of hands on workshops, from recycling plastic to building electronics devices (they even found a way to print their own circuit!). For this workshop they had designed a rat repellent sound making device and helped the people solder it. And a low tech tool for making plastic bottle rope.

For my part, I talked about the farming situation in Europe, pointing out the downsides of massive industrialisation and hinting at the new scientific development (plant lab...). My point was that we use machines and robots in order to save time and effort. But maybe effort is good, makes us feel alive, get notion of times, keeping the knowledge on this. And what do the farmer do with the time they gain on the machines, they get more cattle, or more land, and produce more. And as they produce more, the cost goes down... Machines are not flexible, and made the agriculture the work of a single man, in a noisy environment. In the rice harvest I have seen, it is a team work, there is music, it is relax...All in all what I tried to share is that when

planning for improving in the future, we should be careful not to loose the good things that we have now. And for this we need to recognise the value of what we have now. So to try and make it more tangible I tried make a sort of banana tasting. Focusing on their diversity, their appearance, the story people have about them .I showed them my experiments with the banana leather. My aims was to make a banana peeling session : peeling them in different way, looking closely at the skin, the texture... But I did not manage to go that far. Maybe I should have been more assertive or self confident. What I manage to do is have the share some of the knowledge them have about banana, since they grew up with bananas.



Thinking about this workshop has been stressful for me because I felt the organisers wanted me to share a practical experience, how to do urban farming or something. But though I can speak about those practices, and argument how good they are : I don't do it myself. I don't feel legitimate. This is not what I can be the best. So I am happy I could share my thoughts and at least try to be closer to my passion.