



kanto

CREATIVE CORNERS / Nº THREE 2016

Art Works

THE ART AND DESIGN SPECIAL

ANGLES *Timothy Percival's meditative minimalism* **LENS** *Stories live from the front, by photojournalist Michael Chan*
COMPASS *A dose of art and coffee in Bangkok and Hanoi, with a summer escape to the natural wonders of Dumaguete and Siquijor*
CANVAS *Alfred Marasigan's art explores the concept of transition and sense of place* **QUILL** *Apple Noda's short story, Ang Huling Habilin*



City from above
By Pham An Hai

Cover art taken by
Danielle Austria
@awsomchos

kanto

*[kánto] A Filipino word for corner,
cornerstone, angle.*

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Timothy Percival
Mikhail Plata
Serious Studio
Kit Singson
Charmaine Wright
Cy Yambao

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A F E W
W O R D S

What is essential is invisible to the eye.

You might find it rather surprising that I chose to cite this oft-quoted line from Antoine de Saint Exupery's *The Little Prince* to open Kanto's first Art and Design special, but for me, this perfectly sums up the significant impact Art and Design has in our lives in a way that we may not always see.

We so often make the mistake of hastily labeling objects of physical beauty as exquisite examples of 'art' or a marvel of 'design,' and dismiss anything that does not conform to society's present status quo or 'taste' as to what good art or design is. Truth of the matter is, the value of good Art and Design is based not solely on the visual realm, its most accessible manifestation. Good Art and Design owes itself, first and foremost, to artistic thought: be it a moment of sudden inspiration or one shaped by a personal philosophy or belief. There's always a story or a rationale behind every art or design work, and oftentimes, these are what makes particularly polarizing art work. Jackson Pollock finally found acclaim when his viewers and critics saw the process and the story behind his artwork through photos and video, understanding and appreciating the thought that gave birth to the artwork. The genius of Van Gogh's body of work lay both in his fascinating use of vivid color and vigorous brushstrokes, and with his expressionistic take on depicting objects and Nature in a manner that went beyond objective form—one that prioritized personal and emotional interpretation.

While there are indeed rules and standards in place to keep these fields in check, ultimately, no establishment can truly dictate good Art or Design but us, the creative thinkers, the viewers, and the users. Our individual stories and experiences shape our perception and appreciation of these creative fields. Beauty is indeed in the eye of the beholder.

On that note, this issue is more than just a collection of beautiful Art and Design; it is a celebration of craft and creative thinking. We revel in the many different stories and experiences that pushed and challenged these creative individuals to dare to create. I am extremely proud of this issue's collaborators, the most we've had so far, and the sheer amount of exemplary work in our thickest issue yet is something that I believe is worth celebrating and being optimistic about.


I would like to once again thank all my creative collaborators for making this almost-herculean endeavor possible, and you, dear readers, for accompanying Kanto in yet another journey of creativity. Cheers and hope you enjoy this issue! ●

Patrick
@patrick_kasingsing





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Nº THREE 2016

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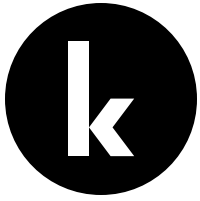
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PARTING SHOT

A visual endnote by Joy Merryl Ngo



Awesome People

WHO MADE THIS
JOURNAL POSSIBLE



CARLOS ALMEIDA

Favorite childhood TV show? I loved *Sesame Street* and a German animated series, *Vicky the Viking*. It told the amusing story of a warrior chief's son who always came up with great ideas.

Portuguese-American architect Carlos Almeida loves photography and sketching. For him, freehand sketching opens up new perspectives and a better understanding of architecture, as well as serving as a form of relaxation from the stresses of the profession.



ANNA LACSON

Favorite childhood TV show? *Hey Arnold!* was my favorite and one of the classiest shows on Nickelodeon when I was a kid.

Anna Lacson is a visual artist and illustrator from the Philippines. She currently designs accessories and prints for Studio Manhattan and Mulberry & Grand, NY.



SIBYL LAYAG

Favorite childhood TV show? *Dexter's Laboratory!* I was a huge science geek as a kid, and having a secret lab was the stuff of dreams for me back then.

Sibyl Layag is a bookworm and a traveler, an animal lover and a beach enthusiast. Although now a straight-edge business news reporter, her first love is writing features, and so sometimes her verbosity cannot be helped. She was formerly the assistant editor of *BluPrint* magazine, an architecture and design magazine.



TIMOTHY PERCIVAL

Favorite childhood TV show? *Morph!* He saw the world with such an exploratory mind!

Timothy Percival is a London-based photographer, writer, and architecture lover. He works primarily with medium format film, and the occasional Polaroid.



KEN MCKENZIE

Favorite childhood TV show? As a child, I was always drawn to American sitcoms such as *The Brady Bunch* and *The Partridge Family*.

Ken McKenzie is a Toronto-based photographer who focuses on the basic geometrical elements of architectural structures. His mostly monochromatic pictures have gained an impressive following within the Instagram community.



CHARMAINE WRIGHT

Favorite childhood TV show? *CHiPs – California Highway Patrol*, a 70s US TV series that I religiously followed.

Graduated with a fashion degree in the early 90s, Charmaine has practiced multi-disciplinary fashion, from design to media. Currently residing in Hong Kong, she is fanatically addicted to shooting architecture with her iPhone wherever she goes.



ALFRED MARASIGAN

Favorite childhood TV show?

I liked a lot of TV shows when I was kid (#indecisive) but *Cowboy Bebop* stands out the most.

Alfred Marasigan's artworks have been exhibited and published in Tokyo, Paris, Bangkok, New York, and Manila. He is currently having his first solo show in the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP).



ELDRY JOHN INFANTE

Favorite childhood TV show?

Avatar: The Legend of Aang

Eldry John Infante is an architecture student from Pampanga, Philippines. He is currently publishing his sketches and photos on Instagram and is a fan of all things Japanese.



KIT SINGSON

Favorite childhood TV show?

Weren't you mind-effed by *Rocko's Modern Life* as a ten-year-old? I loved it!

Kit Singson's stories have been published in *Mega* magazine and *Travel Now* magazine as well as on various online sites. She graduated magna cum laude from the UP Diliman College of Fine Arts. A marketing creative on weekdays, she can be found in the ocean (and at the mountains, or in cafés) on other days.



APPLE NODA

Favorite childhood TV show?

It must have been *Yu Yu Hakusho* (*Ghost Fighter*) at some point.

Apple Noda is a lost writer who still has to decide what that means. She figures out the world by travelling, eating, watching K-dramas and hoarding information in the guise of countless browser tabs.



BENJAMIN HÖSEL

Favorite childhood TV show?

Rocko's Modern Life

Benjamin Hösel is a 27 year-old graphic designer and art director from Austria, and the founder of die Agentur Lux, a design studio specializing in branding and identity. He is fascinated with all things minimalist, typography, shapes and forms. When he's not in front of his Mac, he strives to capture in photos things which inspire him.



SERIOUS STUDIO

Favorite childhood TV show?

If nautical nonsense be something you wish... *Spongebob SquarePants!*

Serious Studio is a brand design group dedicated to turning good ideas into great experiences. We design and build brands that make sense and look good.



CY YAMBAO

Favorite childhood TV show?

I wasn't a big fan of cartoon shows as I child, but I spent many afternoons watching *Rugrats* on Nickelodeon.

Cy Yambao is a Journalism graduate from the University of the Philippines Diliman, who spent her first three working years as *MyHome* magazine's assistant editor. This traveler and K-Pop fangirl at heart often daydreams about her happy place, Seoul, and the other destinations she has yet to tick off her bucket list.



MONICA ESQUIVEL

Favorite childhood TV show?

Powerpuff Girls and a ton of animé titles falling under the magical girl genre.

Monica Esquivel has illustrated for a number of local publications such as *Rogue* magazine, *Team, Scout*, and *The Philippine Star*. She also participated in art shows curated by Light Grey Art Lab and Gallery Nucleus. She thinks that she was probably a housecat in her past life.



RACHEL ANG

Favorite childhood TV show?
Are You Afraid of the Dark?

Rachel Ang is a freelance social media manager with a knack for travel and the arts. She enjoys writing, exploring, and singing during her spare time.



11 FIFTY-NINE

Favorite childhood TV show?
Patricia: *Hey Arnold!* and *Rugrats* all the way!
Heleina: *Dexter's Laboratory*.

11FiftyNine (Patricia Herbolario and Heleina Enrique) is our very tiny, microscopic agency but that's okay because the world is made up of atoms, which are small and microscopic too!



KELLY HUANG

Favorite childhood TV show?
Beakman's World

Kelly Huang is a communication design major, recently graduating from Fu Jen Catholic University, Taiwan.



LYDIA HANSEN

Favorite childhood TV show?
I used to watch *NCIS* a lot.

Lydia is a 17 year-old photographer living in the Pacific Northwest. Her photography often focuses on natural subjects in black and white. She plans to study architecture in college.



MIKHAIL PLATA

Mikhail Plata is, by profession, a graphic designer & animator – particularly a visual effects artist – based in Manila, Philippines. He graduated from the Ateneo de Manila University with a Fine Arts degree in Information Design.



MICHAEL CHAN

Favorite childhood TV show?
The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

Eat, sleep, shoot, repeat. Except the shooting part is so varied and exciting! Light is the bargaining chip of photographers, so use it wisely.



JOY MERYLL NGO

Favorite childhood TV show?
I loved watching *Bayani*. I've always loved History, and the show piqued my imagination as a child by revisiting historical people, events and places.

Joy is an interior designer by profession and a traveler by passion. Her love for history and architecture lead her to join the first batch of volunteer scholars for Wikipedia's Philippine Cultural Heritage Mapping Project in 2014. A former faculty member of SoFA Institute, she is currently pursuing further design studies at the Instituto Marangoni in Milan, Italy



DANIELLE AUSTRIA

Favorite childhood TV show?
Rugrats!

Danielle Austria is a community manager at Publicis Manila. The Internet has given her delusions grandeur that she can do the world so much good *_* by sharing what she had for lunch.

Your creative corner is now on Instagram.

Follow us at [@kanto.journal](#) as we deliver your weekly dose of creative inspiration from the fields of architecture, photography, art, literature and travel.

Share your creativity and use our hashtags [#kanto_photography](#), [#kanto_architecture](#), [#kanto_art](#), [#kanto_literature](#), and [#kanto_travel](#) and get the chance to be featured on our feed or in the quarterly journal.

Creativity is just around the corner.

kanto
CREATIVE CORNERS





Image from unsplash.com (Anthony Delanoix)

Come Together

What is it about our humanity that compels us to 'collect'?

Written by Anna Lacson

The word 'gather' seems to echo a more biblical time. It is a word that is heavily used in religious writing, on the histories and texts of early societies; it would seem that 'gathering' serves as the underlying premise as to what defines our particular humanity, that no man is an island.

There is a lot to achieve from gathering with one another; the burdens of labor are lessened and spread out. The discoveries of one can become the discoveries of all, otherwise, challenged, or developed further. There was a stage when humans were living primarily as hunter-gatherers. They gathered together as persons and also, they gathered things, objects, ideas. They collected, constantly, as we all do today.

Collecting is an action with a boomerang curve. A person extends an outward movement towards some object or idea, and this object or idea loops back from A to B and back to A. But somewhere in the process, B can change A, in increments or big ways, and likewise A, can change B, transforming A to A.1, or B to B.3. Or maybe the act of A collecting Bs, can create a C, a collection. A completely different body made up of existing bodies, but in some form or order. A person can be called to gaze at or take interest in something, and from inside of that person is an inward pull to collect. The material of interest is possibly placed in a position that makes certain sense to the collector.

We live by these verbs: to gather and to collect, and we share what we can and/or choose to. We love taking special things home to keep, or holding on to special memories. There is a certain value to mediums that can hold and host entire collections formed by one or many, like journals, anthologies, museum exhibitions, Instagram and Twitter feeds. The sum of all of our collecting and gathering is ebbing and flowing, from self to community and back to self. It is a social action as much as it is a personal action. A social action because one takes from outside and the collection becomes the output, and in a way gains a new body and form at the hands of new collectors. Meanings over meanings over meanings. By collecting we restructure thoughts, re-order order, and redefine the world we live in. By gathering these individual and shared collections we make up our community, from our art fairs and exhibitions, to markets, malls and magazines. From cities to churches, from books to beliefs.

We redefine the meaning of 'body'; we create maps upon maps upon maps, and languages within languages within languages. Try to draw this idea. Try to write down how something goes from point to point, sometimes in multiple ways or towards a singular whole as if drawn by gravity. Perhaps our magazines, art fairs, and exhibitions are all attempting to do this: to turn silence into order, or arrange into song, sections of our experiences derived from chaos.

Enjoy this collection, and feel free to takeaway some part of Kanto and place it into a collection of your own. ●

Follow Anna through her travels and artworks @icklambkin on instagram, or visit her website at annalacson.myportfolio.com

Got all the right angles?

We'd love to share them! Send us your story
and photography at kanto.journal@gmail.com

Join us in our celebration of creativity.

kanto
CREATIVE CORNERS



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PROFILE

MASTER STROKE

Eldry Infante engages in conversation with master architects through his drawings

PHOTOGRAPHED BY KEN MCKENZIE







A N G L E S
P R O F I L E

Poetry and Space

*Verses in light and architecture,
as captured by Timothy Percival*

Photography

Timothy Percival

Interview

Patrick Kasingsing





Kindly introduce yourself.

Good day. Please, call me Timothy.

What sparked your interest in the photography of architecture? When, and how did this fascination start?

I've been fascinated with architecture from a young age. It embraces the utopian, and allows for people to be idealists. It takes an architect's dreams, manifesting them in the real world with great honesty and truth. Rem Koolhaas, in his manifesto on Manhattanism, said it beautifully. "To exist in a world totally fabricated by man, i.e. to live inside fantasy..."

Your photos have a very calming, introspective quality to them, with soothing colors, beautiful lighting, and an abundance of space. What inspired you to pursue such an aesthetic?

Thank you. All these elements are very important to me. It comes from Respect. There's a lot of work and beauty that can go overlooked. All these elements are the work of the architect. We as consumers of architecture need to make sure we don't see ourselves as the artist. These wonderful spaces have been built for us to interact with, and I think it's valuable to pay homage to the work on display.

You write poetry as well. How does being a poet influence and inspire the creation of the images in your photography?

It's an interesting union. It has helped me appreciate the symbolic, even in something we hold to be so tangible, so literal. Architecture manifests itself in such a solid form, that it's sometimes difficult to see the ideas and concepts underpinning it.





Shadows play a prominent role in your photography. What is it about them that fascinates you?

Emergence plays a strong part in my fascination with architecture. The idea that from a simple design, complexities can develop. Shadows, reflections, juxtapositions; Light ultimately becomes an inseparable component of the architecture.

What grabs you first before you push the shutter? Beauty? Or story?

It will always stem from Beauty. Though when one peers through the viewfinder, one first glimpses Honesty. Is what I've witnessed being communicated accurately onto the film? This can be exceptionally difficult to achieve without ambiguity so maybe that's why I'm still working with quite simple ideas.

What is your imaging device of choice, and why do you prefer using it?

Though I'm primarily a film photographer, for architecture, I like to use the iPhone. It's a great tool for sketching, for exploring ideas, and getting to understand the intricacies of a space. I've always felt we need to be careful with high-spec cameras so that we don't fall into their delusion; we need to be careful not to start believing that a photograph, however accurate, is the thing itself.



I'm a strong believer that utopias are achievable. Architects demonstrate this every day. They build models, in their heads, in their studios, then they offer them to us full scale.



Your shots are often minimalist in aesthetic but with a lot of story to tell. How does showing less actually say more to viewers?

It's about trying to communicate a single idea, a single aesthetic, but done with such focus that it leaves little ambiguity. There are of course, many layers to every photograph, so it's about making sure that they all point to the same message, and that they're all working in unison.

You currently live in London. How does living in one of the most beautiful cities in the world fuel your creative pursuits?

I've found London very supportive. There's an interesting balance present in the city. Vanity, arrogance, and ego, versus a truly dignified pride. I feel we'll forever be exploiting this city, photographically, architecturally... but in the end, London will remain standing.

Ultimately, what message do you wish to share with your brand of photography?

I'm a strong believer that utopias are achievable. Architects demonstrate this every day. They build models, in their heads, in their studios, then they offer them to us full scale. It's only ever a simulation, but we find it beautiful. Elsewhere we strive so fiercely for authenticity that we forget to consider whether it's beautiful regardless. ●

You can find snippets of Timothy's work on his Instagram account [@percivalpercival](#).





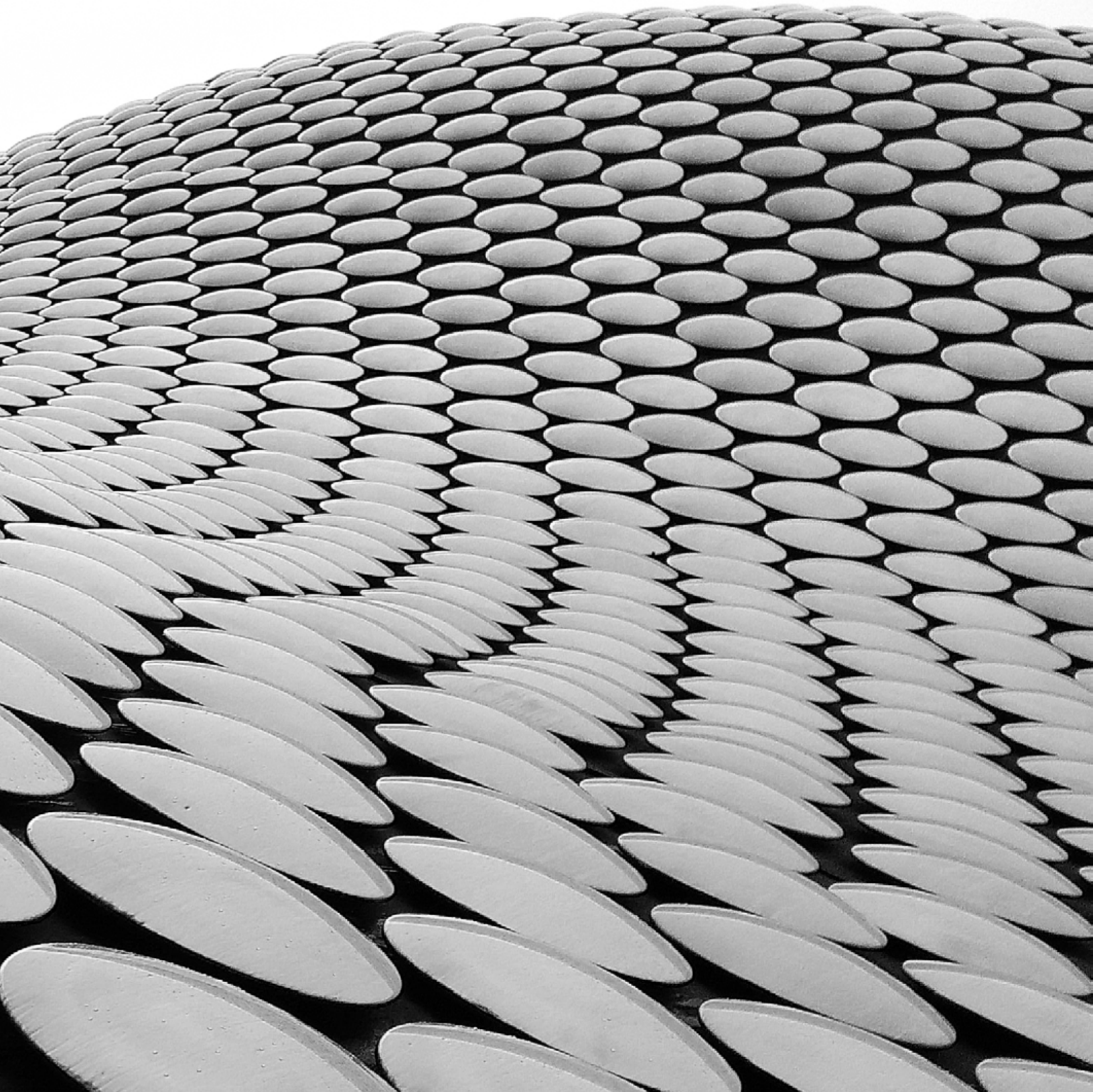
A N G L E S
P R O F I L E

Archi Mono

Ken McKenzie's monochromatic architectural portraits

Photography
Ken McKenzie
Interview
Patrick Kasingsing

Selfridges Building,
Birmingham, United Kingdom





Kindly introduce yourself.

My name is Ken McKenzie and I reside in the city of Toronto, Canada. I am a professional within a non-profit agency that focuses on providing nutritious and affordable food for those in need. I am an avid traveler and always use this as a springboard for my architectural photography.

What sparked your interest in the photography of architecture? When, and how did this fascination start?

Funny, but until 16 months ago, I never had any interest in photography. I joined Instagram in November of 2014 and posted my first picture of a skyscraper in Toronto. Very unimpressive, as it was blurry and taken from a distance. I received mixed comments from the community but one person asked me to shoot a close-up. I returned to the building, stood ten feet from the base, looked up and WOW! I saw shapes that I never would have imagined from a distance. I was hooked from that point on.

Your photos are often rendered in monochromatic tones. Why is that? What is it that black and white images show that a colored photo do not?

I find color to be a bit of a distraction when focusing on shapes and patterns and that is strictly my opinion on my own pictures. Black and white helps me concentrate and perfect composition and lighting, which are integral to great photography.

What grabs you to capture the image of a building?

I try to find an interesting angle that is different from the norm. Abstraction and over-exaggerated shapes can be very appealing and it is possible to come out with interesting results if done correctly.





Instagram has made photography accessible to the general public, thus the immense number of architecture-themed accounts. What makes your feed different from all the rest?

There are so many outstanding architectural accounts out there and the beautiful thing is that each photographer has developed their own unique style. I focus on bold shapes, stark lines, twists and curves; basically strong geometrical forms whenever I can.

How do you go about photographing buildings? Do you go on a quick ocular of the structure first before snapping away or are you the spontaneous type of photographer?

When shooting architecture, I need to do a full walk around to find the most interesting angle. I will take numerous shots of the most appealing angles. I don't edit and play around with the image till I get home. I usually take 20 shots to find the best one to post on my Instagram account.

Can you share a memorable experience you had when photographing a building? What made it memorable?

Nothing is more satisfying than when you shoot a building that you know looks great and has the potential to be featured in an architectural gallery.







Two buildings in particular jump out. The Absolute Towers a.k.a the ‘Marilyn Monroe’ building in Mississauga, Ontario and The Selfridges building a.k.a ‘The Bullring’ in Birmingham, UK.

What imaging device do you use?

All of my pictures are taken using a OnePlus One Android smartphone. I would like to purchase a DSLR camera in the future but a mobile is just so much more convenient and spontaneous for me.

You live in the urban metropolis of Toronto. Did living in the city influence your choice of photography subject?

Definitely. I have always been drawn to tall buildings and as a child growing up in a small city in Ontario, I was enamored with massive city skylines. I always knew I would eventually call Toronto home and live amongst these buildings.

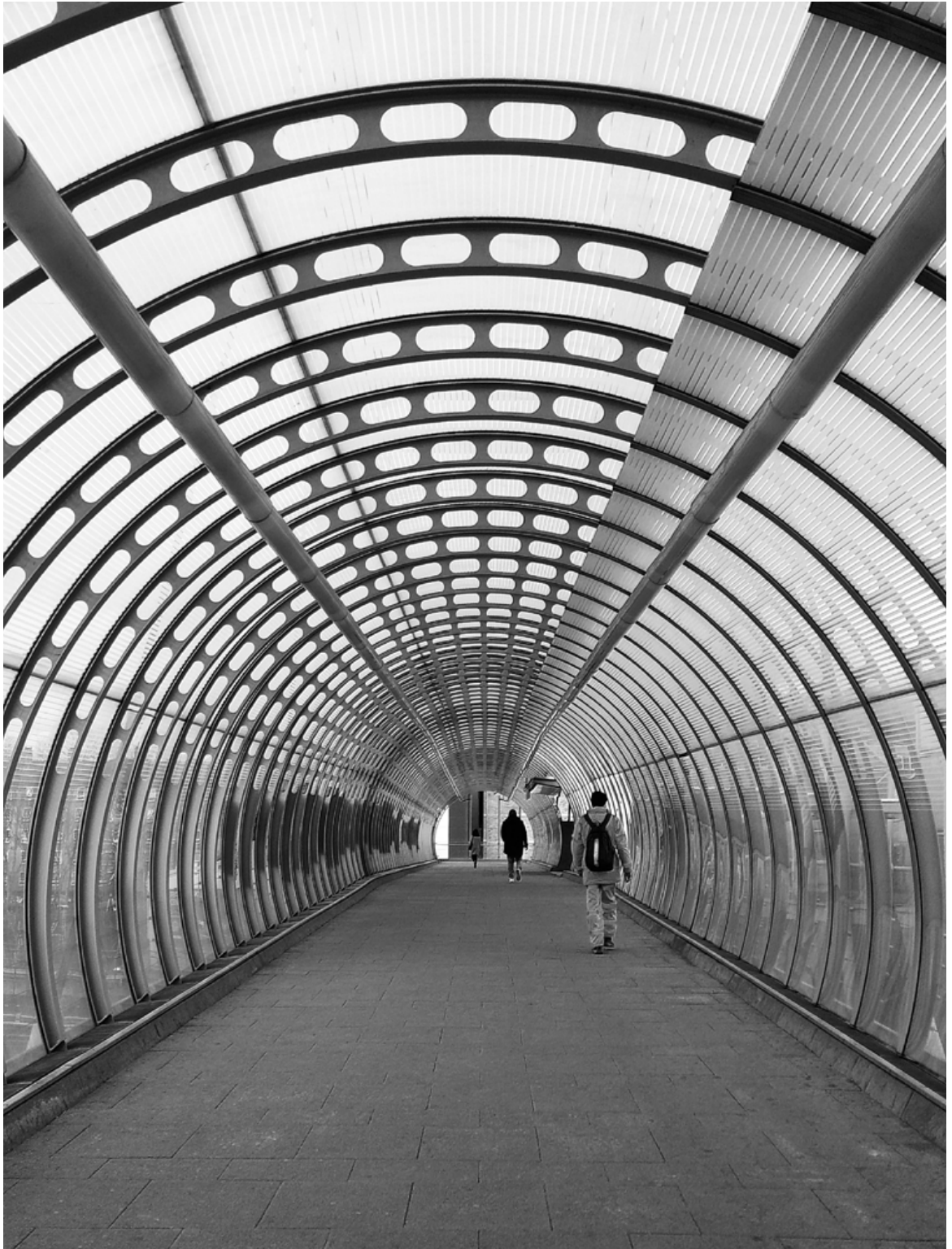
What building or place have you always wanted to visit and photograph, but have yet to do so?

No particular building, but I do love what I see coming out of Singapore and Melbourne. Architects take such big risks with over-the-top styles and the results are incredible in these cities. I hope to visit these places one day. ●

Opposite page: Absolute Towers, Mississauga, Canada

Follow Ken on his hunt for architectural geometries on Instagram @britannia6009









A N G L E S
P R O F I L E

Geometric Electric

*Music, fashion and culture come together in
Charmaine Wright's personal take on architecture*

Photography

Charmaine Wright

Interview

Patrick Kasingsing





Kindly introduce yourself.

I am a painful perfectionist. “Painful” is too nice a word. In fact, I am an an*! perfectionist, which sometimes is not the best quality in an individual. I spend too much time agonizing over minute details which no one will even notice.

What sparked your interest in the photography of architecture? When, and how did this fascination start?

My journey of shooting architecture on Instagram started about a year ago when I got bored of shooting fashion-related objects like shoes, handbags, and bling. Shooting architecture gave me more room to express my creativity.

Not everyone is gifted with the photographic eye but you’re definitely a natural when spotting angles. How did you hone this skill?

Thanks for such kind words. I think being a designer definitely helps.

As a designer, how did your design background influence the aesthetic and subject of your photography?

My aesthetic does not depend on my design training alone. Music and subcultures also played a big part in honing my creativity. I’m heavily influenced by 80s British Synth pop and subcultures like Punk, Gothic and New Romantics. My work tends to be dark and unemotional.

Opposite page:
Lai Tak Tsuen, Hong Kong





You are a resident of Hong Kong, an architectural mecca and definitely an Instagram hotspot. What are your favorite places or buildings in the city that you'd like to suggest readers to visit?

Apart from the well-known skyscrapers, Innovation Tower of the HK PolyU will be one place that I would suggest. It is designed by Zaha Hadid and is amazing in many ways. An absolute visual treat.

You seem to be a well-traveled individual. What places or buildings have made its mark on you?

Italy and Japan are the two countries that I never got bored visiting, and the one building that really made a mark on me is the II Duomo di Firenze in Florence. The precise craftsmanship and its phenomenal size is mind-blowingly impressive.

What's the craziest thing you've done in order to capture a photo?

I wouldn't say crazy but lying on the ground in the middle of a street in London shooting the PWC Building was probably the most embarrassing experience, as people were walking in and out of the block, watching me lying on the ground as I took pictures.

My aesthetic does not depend on my design training alone. Music and subcultures also play a big part in honing my creativity too.



Opposite page:
Hong Kong Design Institute, Hong Kong
Right: Lee Garden, Hong Kong



How has photographing architecture helped your career in design?

I think most people find it amazing that a fashion person is more keen to shoot architecture than clothes and it often sparks interesting conversations during meetings.

What takes primacy in your brand of photography? Beauty? Or story?

Both beauty and story are important in my work. Since I started using Lightroom a few months ago, it has given me enormous room in manipulating photographs into more conceptual images consistent with my aesthetic. My shots have become 'MY shots' if you know what I mean. Like a signature.

Aside from the photography of architecture, do you engage in other hobbies?

Interestingly enough, my other hobby is not design or visual-related at all. I'm attending dance lessons, learning all the basic skills that I have missed out when I was a child. ●

Opposite page:
Aberdeen Centre, Hong Kong
Top: Holiday Inn Atrium, Singapore



A N G L E S
P R O F I L E

Draw the Line

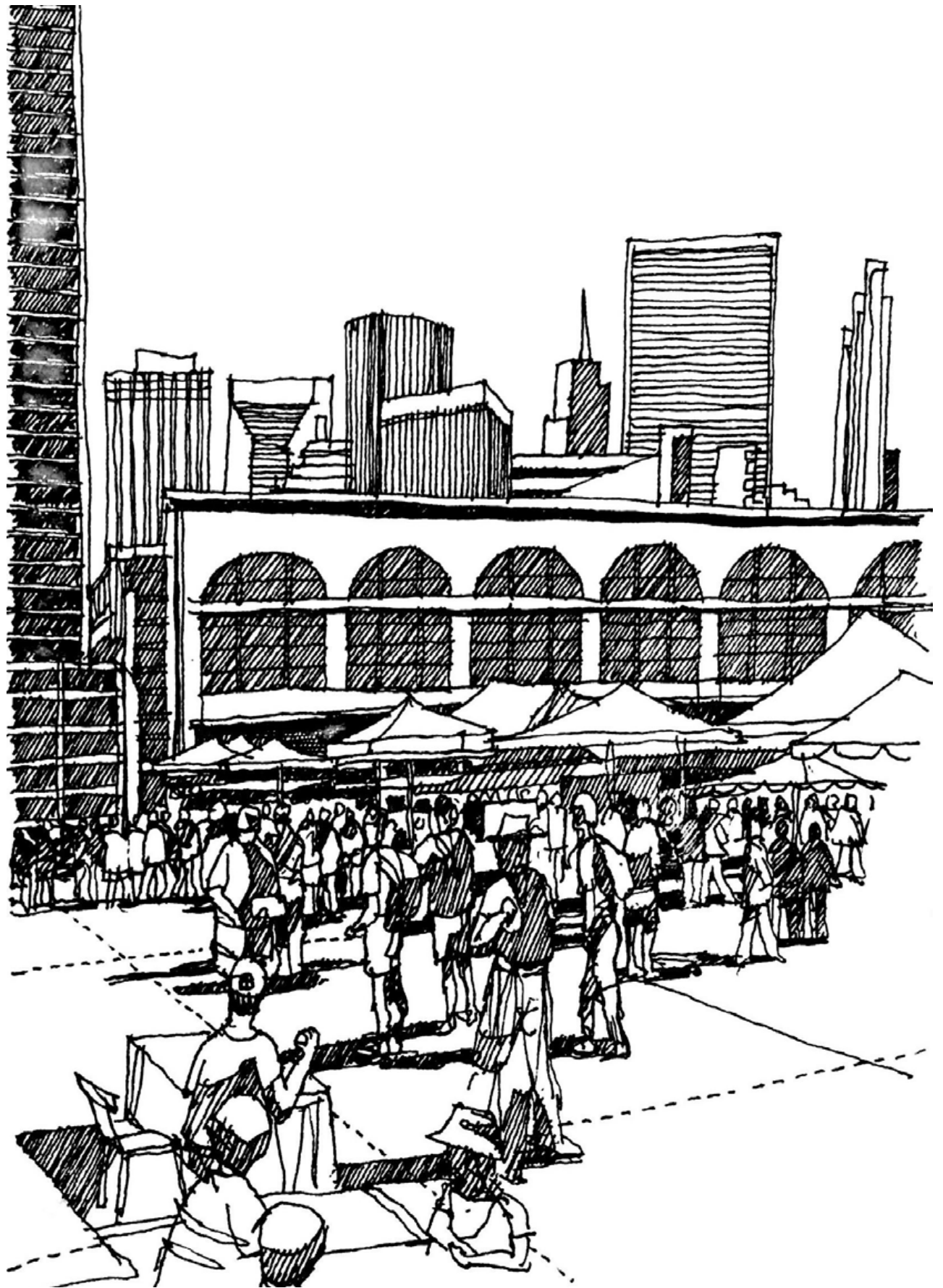
*Opening new perspectives
through paper and pen with
freehand sketcher, Carlos Almeida*

Illustrations

Carlos Almeida

Interview

Patrick Kasingsing





ARINS
AMERICA
2014.

Kindly introduce yourself.

I'm a Portuguese-American architect living and working in California, United States. I was born in Lisbon, Portugal. My passion for drawing started way back when I was just five years old, when I saw an older cousin sketching a man's face. This childhood memory affected me greatly that it inspired me to pursue sketching.

What sparked your interest in sketching architecture and spaces? When, and how did this fascination start?

My interest in architectural illustration revealed itself when I was in college, where I became very passionate about architectural structures and geometry.

Your freehand sketches are beautifully and simply drawn. You capture well the spirit of a place even with just pen and ink. How do you decide which scenes to draw? What brings out the urge to draw a certain scene or place?

I'm not very picky about which scenes or details I sketch but contrasts, like the fascinating interplay of light and shadow, entices me to pick up my pen and draw.

How does freehand sketching enhance your appreciation of architecture? How do you think such an art can help others in their understanding of architecture?

Based on personal experience, freehand sketching can facilitate a better understanding of details and objects, whether it comprises an entire scene, or a single column or window. The reason for this is, unlike photography, where you can quickly capture your subject with a push of a button, sketching takes much longer and is a gradual process of capturing an object. This gives you more time to absorb information as well as to appreciate the artistry and beauty of the object and its details.



Freehand sketching can facilitate a better understanding of details and objects, whether it comprises an entire scene, or a single column or window.

How often do you embark on freehand sketch sessions? Do you draw from memory or immerse yourself into the outdoors by drawing on-site?

I sketch all the time. I can do both: from memory or outdoors. It all depends on the situation and moment.

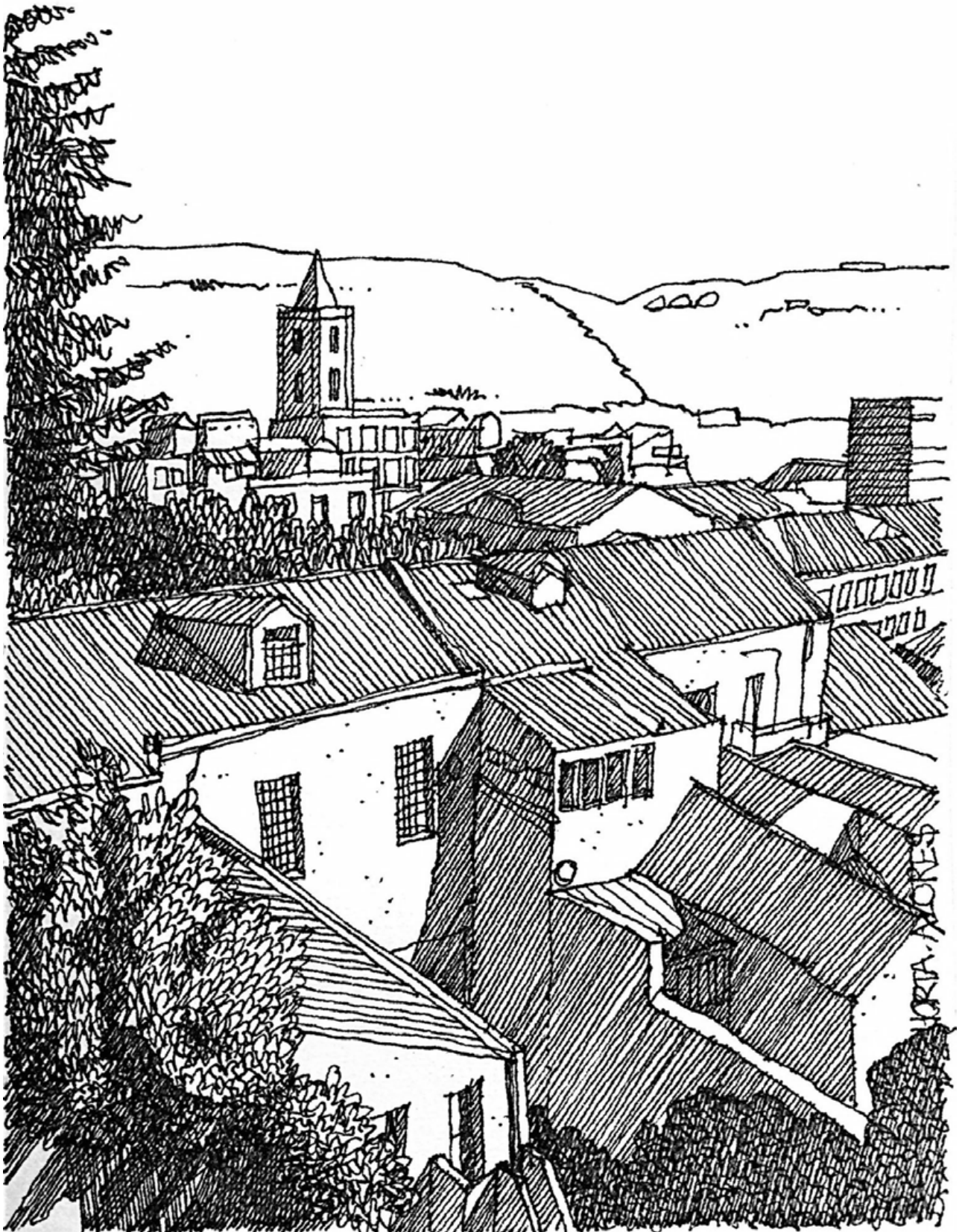
What are your drawing tools?

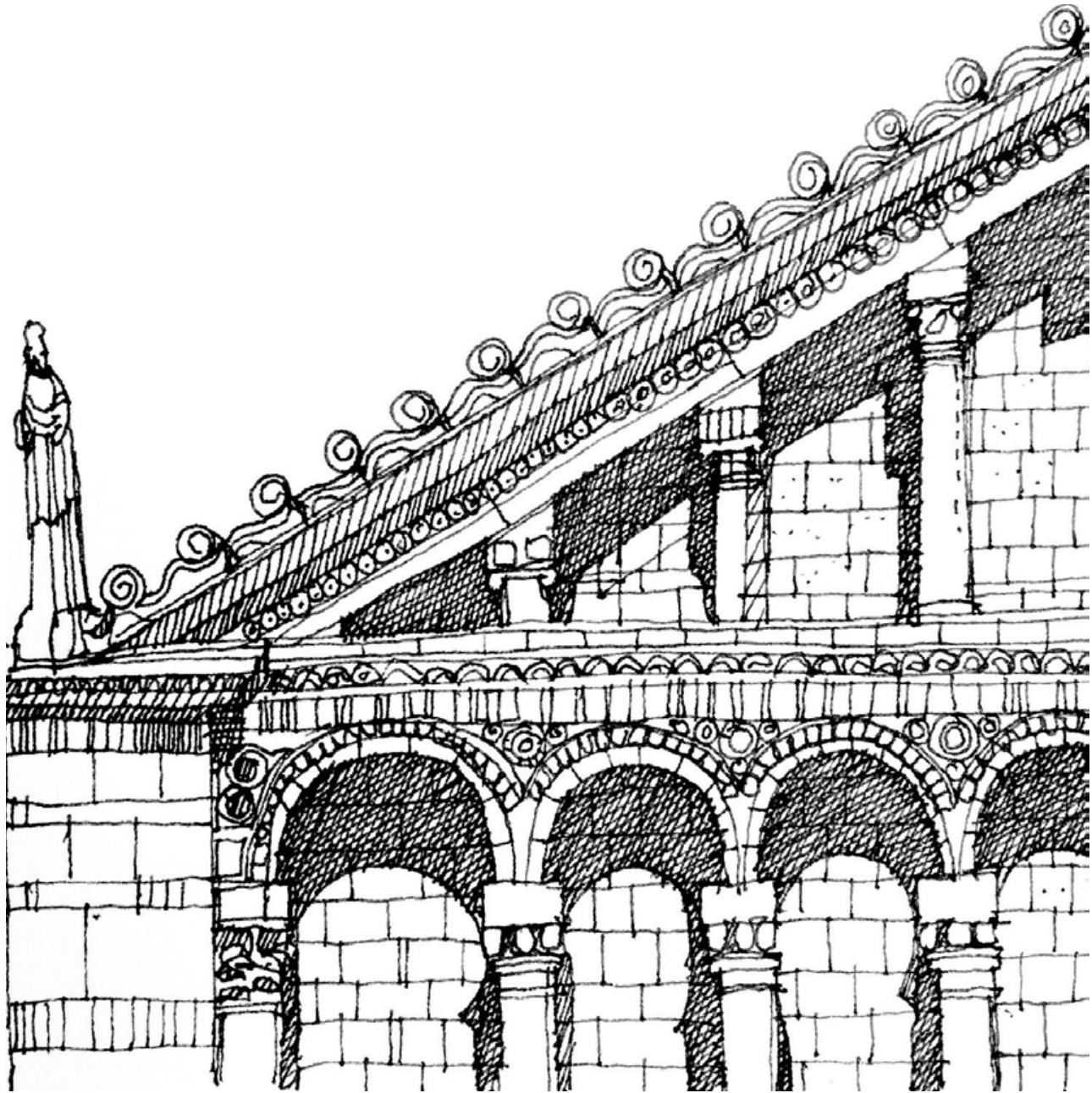
I normally settle with a long-time sketching companion—my Montblanc Classic 149 fountain pen. Watercolor paper is my canvas of choice for sketching. For me, the lines drawn on this paper type appear to have more character.

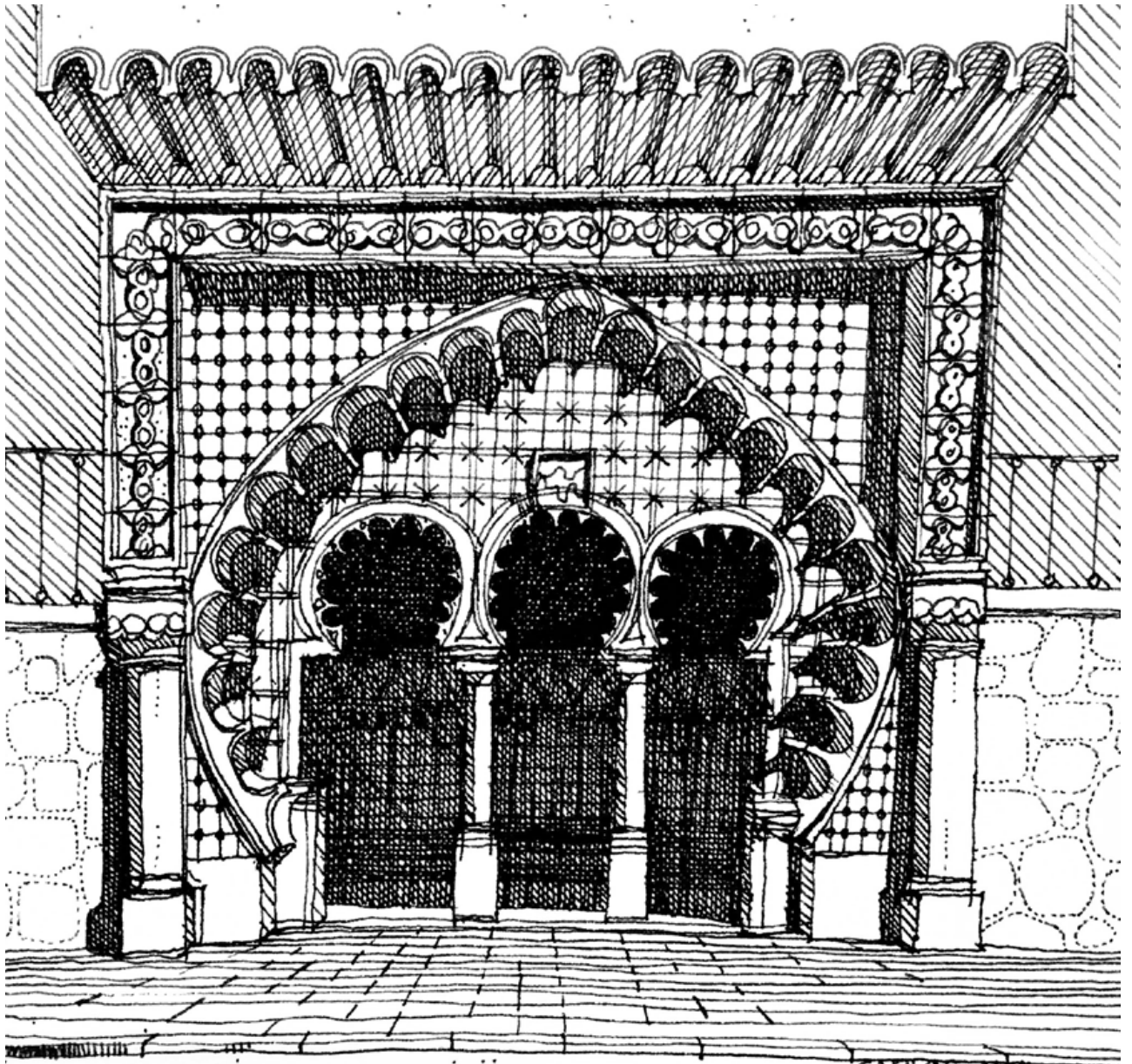
You're also into photography. What makes these two art forms that you have mastered similar to each other? What makes them different? And how do you divide your time between these two passions?

Both are completely different with the only similarity being the object to be registered. These processes can impact you differently. If I want quicker results and more control over post-production, photography is the way. Sketching requires more time and you don't worry about post-production; the goal is to capture something good and poetic, an image that you can keep in your memory for a long time. ●

Carlos would like to take this opportunity to recommend a follow of the official Instagram account of the Museu Universidade de Lisboa (University Museum of Lisbon, Portugal) @muhnac, a visual feed of the museum's expansive collection dedicated to Science.

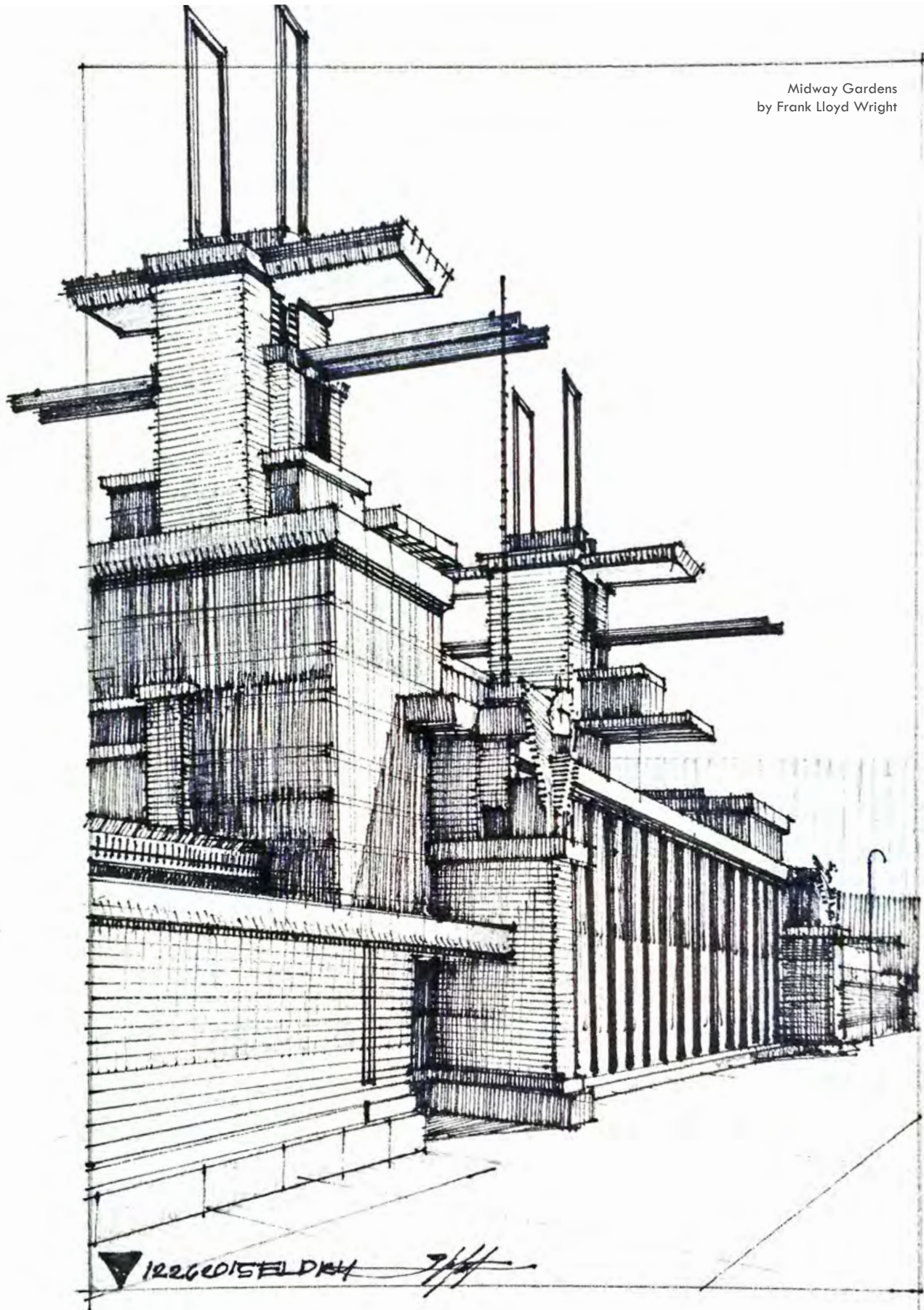






CARLOS ALMEIDA
2014

Midway Gardens
by Frank Lloyd Wright



1226015 ELDK F.L.W.

A N G L E S
P R O F I L E

Master Stroke

*Eldry Infante pays tribute to
the masters of Architecture
through illustration*

Illustrations

Eldry John Infante

Interview

Patrick Kasingsing



Kindly introduce yourself.

Hi! I'm Eldry John Infante, a third-year architecture student. I like to sketch on my spare time and I've always wanted to be an astronaut (An architect in space. I think that'll be really cool).

What sparked your interest in sketching architecture? When, and how did this fascination start?

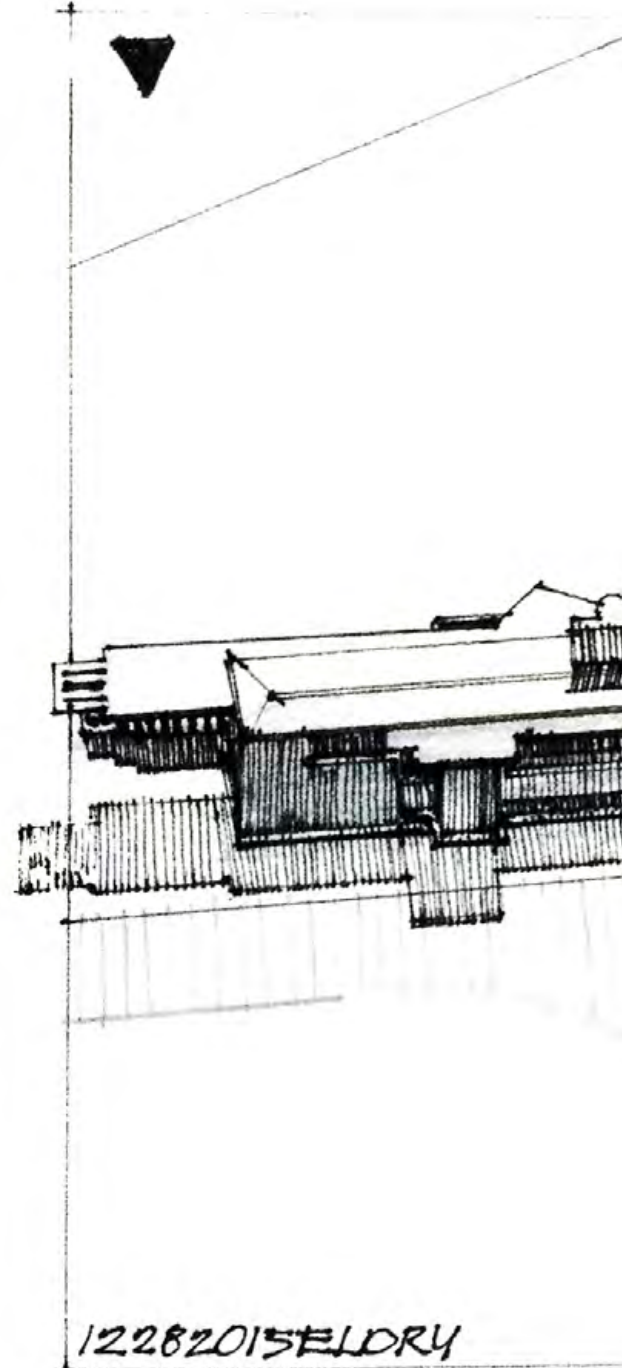
I honestly can't pinpoint when it started, just that I've always loved sketching architecture. It feels like I'm with the building's architect, sketching his first draft.

Your renderings of architectural landmarks in ink are superb. How much time do you typically spend working on these drawings?

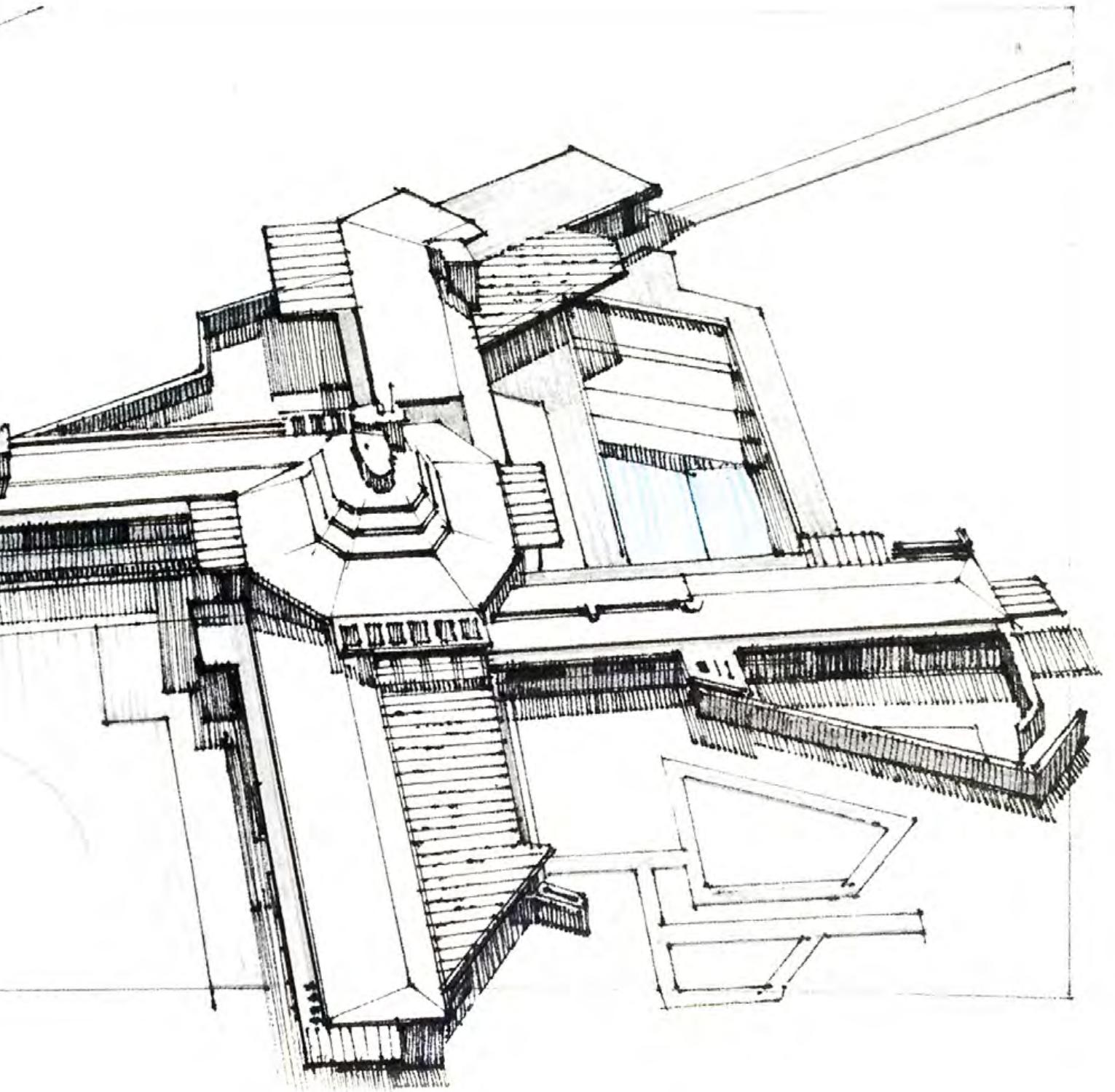
I usually do my sketches on my spare time, like after class or on weekends. I usually finish them in an hour or two depending on the sketch's size and complexity.

Why do you think the art of hand-drawn architectural rendering should be preserved? What is it that hand-drawn renderings have that computer-generated 3D renderings don't?

Personally, I find hand-drawn architectural renderings more alive and honest, and allows the artist a share of the spotlight with the architect. For me, computer-generated renderings have a tendency to be generic in that they can fail to show the individuality of the rendering artist because it's always governed by the software's settings and limitations.

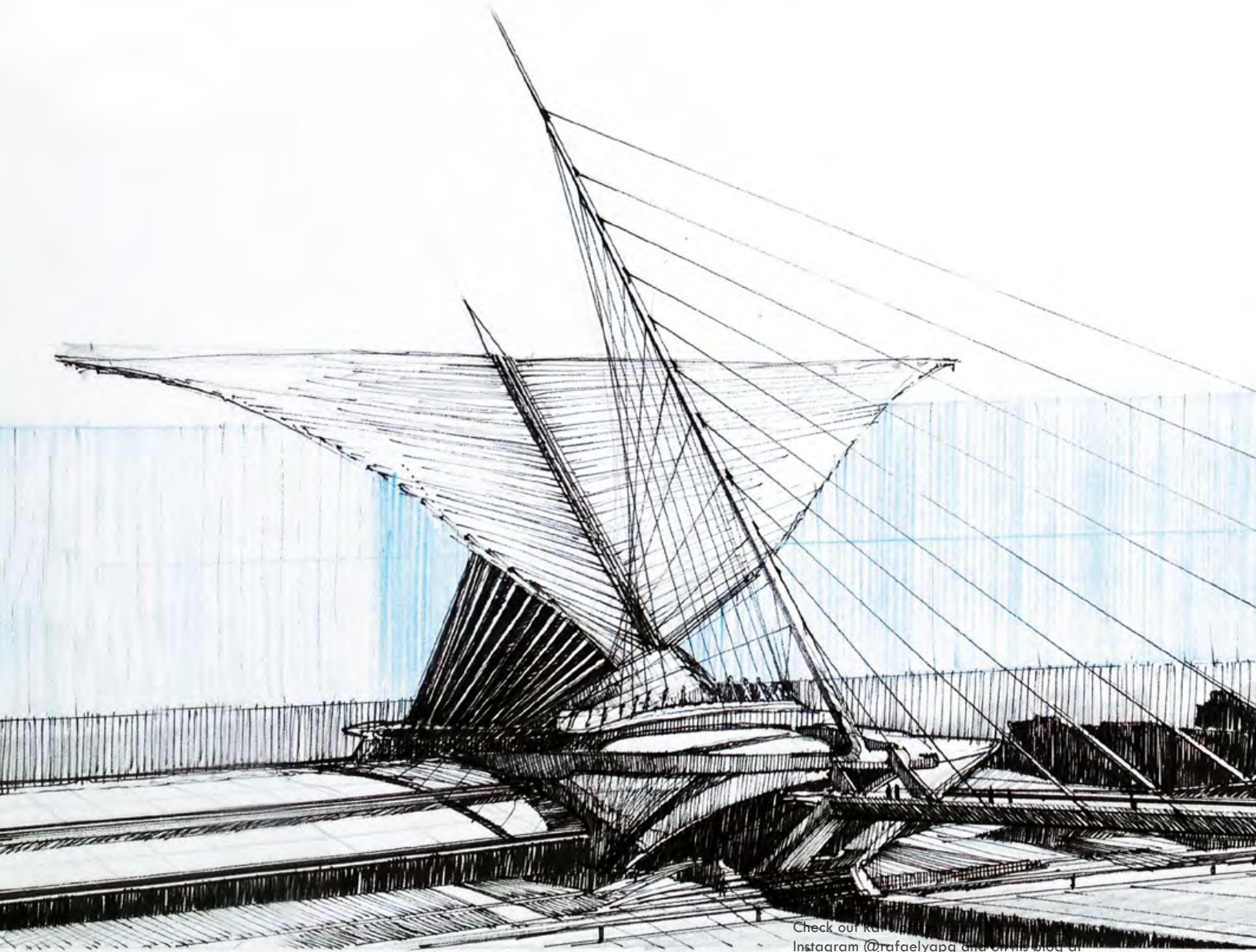


Wingspread, or the Herbert F. Johnson House by Frank Lloyd Wright

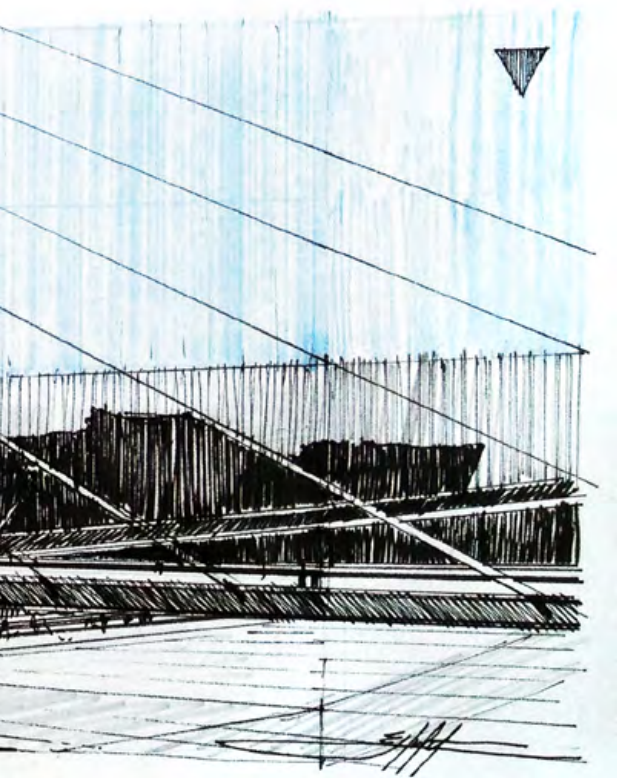
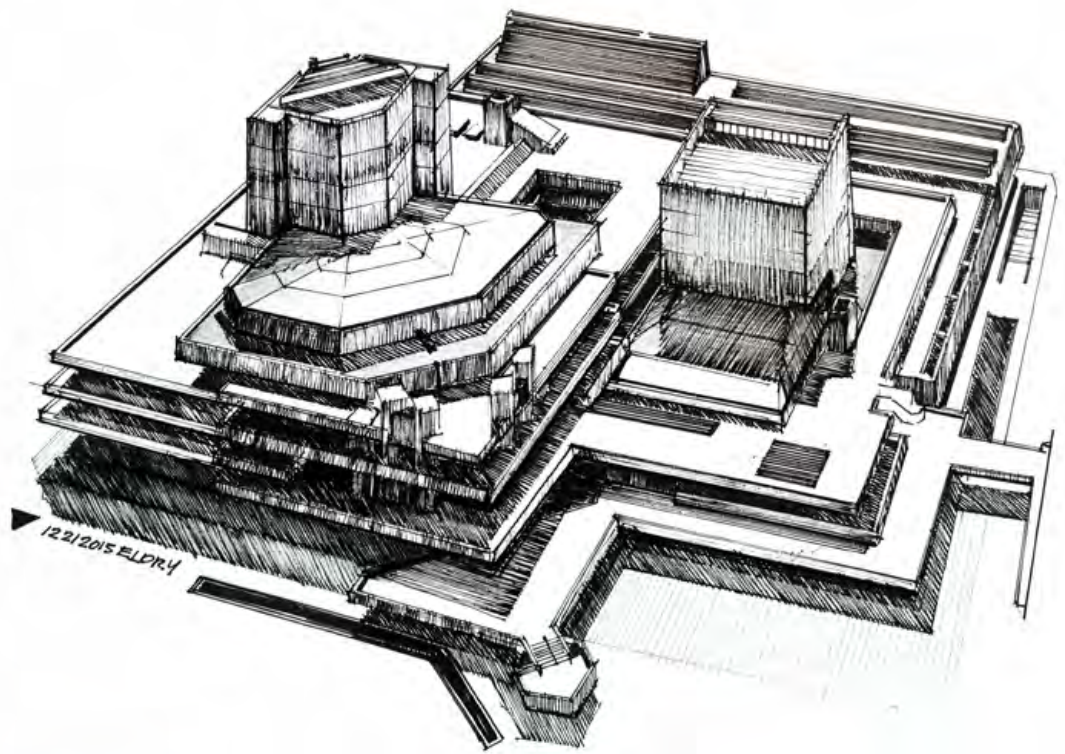


ANGLES PROFILE

Opposite page: London National Theatre by
Denys Lasdun, Below: Milwaukee Art Museum
by Santiago Calatrava



Check out Rafaelyapg on
Instagram @rafaelyapg and on his blog at
rafaelyapg.blogspot.com



Do you draw from memory or from a reference? How do you decide which architectural landmarks to draw? Do you have a favorite architectural style that you often illustrate?

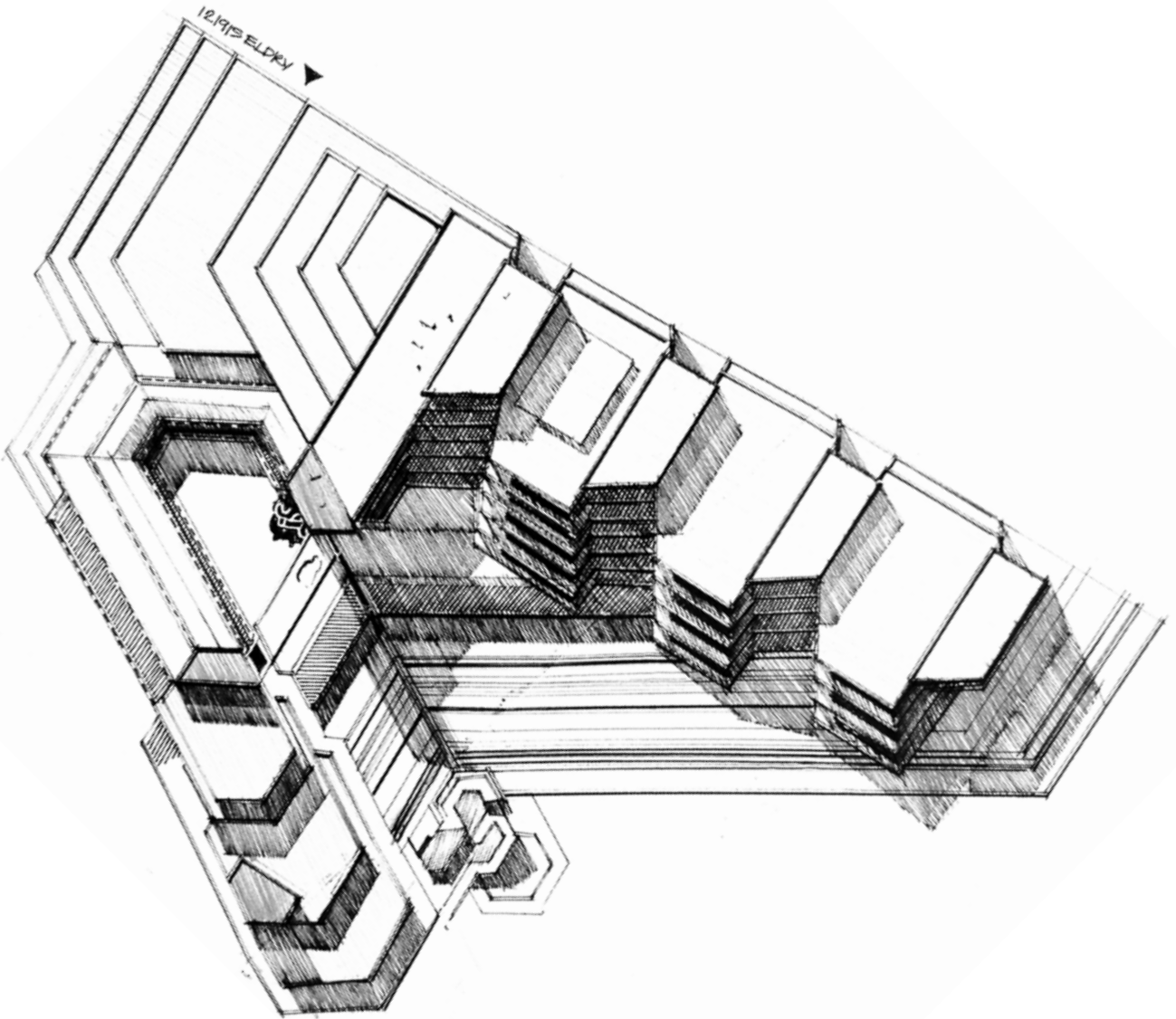
I always draw with a reference first. I usually illustrate buildings which I think have great composition, especially those where shadows fall beautifully on its surfaces. I particularly love the works of Frank Lloyd Wright and Leandro Locsin.

What are your drawing tools? What other mediums do you wish to try in drawing architecture?

My toolset consist of pens, pencils and colored pencils. I've always wanted to try other mediums and styles like using white markers on brown canvas.

How does having this skill of architectural illustration help in your understanding of architecture, and in your formation as a future architect?

Whenever I sketch buildings and spaces, it always feels like I'm conversing with its architect. It's like he/she is walking me through his design, telling me the purpose of every detail and how the many architectural elements that make up the building converge and converse with each other. Sketching helps me understand the purpose and the beauty of the profession. ●



GSIS Building by Jorge Ramos

Check out Raf's photos and illustrations on
Instagram @rafaelyapg and on his blog
rafaelyapg.blogspot.com

LENS

PHOTOGRAPHY

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FRONT PAGE

Photojournalist *Michael Chan* tells the story of the world we live in through photography

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EXHIBIT

INTO THE WILD

Lydia Hansen captures Nature at her most raw and beautiful in the tempestuous Pacific Northwest

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EXHIBIT

SNEAK PEEK

Spotless spaces and architectural peek-a-boos abound in *Benjamin Hösel's* photography

PHOTOGRAPHED BY
BENJAMIN HÖSEL



L E N S
E X H I B I T

Yasumasa Aoki, former Yakuza gang leader
(Full story on citynews.sg)

Front Page

*Today's world, as seen through the
lens of photojournalist Michael Chan*

Photography

Michael Chan

Interview

Patrick Kasingsing









Kindly introduce yourself.

Hello! I'm Michael Chan, from Singapore.

What sparked your interest in photography? What compelled you to pick up a camera and start shooting?

I was so thrilled when my dad handed me his camera, a Yashica Electro 35, when I was 14. The fact that I could freeze a moment in time inspired me to take pictures.

Your repertoire in photography spans many genres, united by a monochromatic treatment. Why is this so? What about black and white photography appeals to you and how you tell stories through photos?

For me, black and white images have a timeless quality. It helps a lot when I want to embed my core message via lines, shapes, texture and tones in a picture without the distraction of color.

Tell us about your experience as a photojournalist. How long have you been in the industry? Any memorable anecdotes attached to your photography experience?

It hasn't been long since I pursued the career of a photojournalist, having started in 2010. Before that, I was shooting concerts and events. One of the most memorable experiences I had was when I was asked to take pictures at a red carpet event in Hollywood. I was awestruck by the energy and excitement of it all, with the shouting and screaming for attention, so that celebrities will look our way, and the ridiculous rate of camera flashes that went off with every shot taken.

Top: Michael in Nepal
Opposite page: Siem Reap, Cambodia



How do you choose your subject? What subjects do you find the most joy photographing?

I enjoy photographing people. I was once a very shy person. I used to avoid taking human subjects. As I progressed in my career, I eventually began to enjoy interacting with my subjects. I usually look out for interesting characters, stories, and personalities as potential subjects.

In your many experiences and journeys around the world as a photojournalist, what is the most important discovery or realization that you have made? What made it so and what events inspired such a realization?

Life is fragile. Spend quality time with your family as much as possible and put away the phone at the dinner table. The assignments that I've covered often remind me that we are just one breath away from death. One event in particular, the 2010 Haiti earthquake, is proof of this, where close to 300,000 people were killed in an instant.

Life is fragile. The assignments that I've covered often remind me that we are just one breath away from death.



Right: A street scene showing the devastation suffered from an earthquake in Nepal, 2015. Opposite page: Village woman in Bangladesh





Rooftop of Chinese embassy in Jakarta Indonesia.
Opposite page: Escalators in Singapore train station.



A neighbor from afar. A surgeon from Singapore attending to an injured boy in a mobile clinic in Haiti, days after the 2010 earthquake.

What's the craziest thing you've done in order to capture a photograph?

When I was young, I wanted to document the happenings in a certain red light district. I stealthily went in on foot and sometimes in a car. It went pretty well till I was spotted by an angry pimp! I got away unhurt and learnt that there can be better ways to approach my chosen subject. I now photograph people with respect and dignity because of the experience.

What is your imaging device of choice?

As the saying goes, the best camera is the one that is with you when you need it. I take a lot of pictures with my iPhone whenever I'm inspired! When it comes to work, I utilize heavy-duty cameras like the Canon 1dmk4 and 5dmk3.

If you weren't a photojournalist today, what would you have been?

Maybe a chef!

Any place, event or scenario you wish to photograph but haven't?

The Northern Lights! ●

Some Haitians taking a plane ride out the country. The massive 2010 earthquake in Haiti killed close to 300,000 people.

Follow Michael on Instagram:
Monochrome work @greyasylum;
Daily random ding bangs: @michaelchanfoto







Girl taking a bath by the river in her village, Bangladesh
Opposite page: Old tree in Siem Reap, Cambodia.



Redwood National Park, California

LENS
EXHIBIT

INTO
THE
WILD

*Nature's beauty, untamed,
as captured by Lydia Hansen*

Photography
Lydia Hansen
Interview
Patrick Kasingsing





Kindly introduce yourself.

My name is Lydia, I'm a 17 year-old junior high school student. I live in the Pacific Northwest. When I'm not out taking pictures, I ride my horse.

What sparked your interest in nature photography? What compelled you to pick up a camera and start shooting the outdoors?

My interest in photography hadn't really picked up until this past year or so. I am so fortunate to live in such a beautiful area it would have been a shame to not start capturing it.

Your photography is notable for its monochromatic tones, with an emphasis on texture and scale. What is it that monochromatic images can tell us of nature that colored photography can't?

You can do so much with black and white. Oftentimes, I find that the color of a photo distracts from the subject. After you remove the color, only the raw image is left and it often forces you to pay more attention to the little details.

You show quite a lot of promise as a photographer at such a young age. How did you train yourself in photography and what do you do to hone this skill?

The best way to learn is to get out there and do it. I haven't taken any classes; I just mess around and take a bunch of shots. Now that I have kind of figured things out, I read articles and anything I can find online to keep improving.

Photography is a way for me to express my own creativity. It's always soothing, and almost a form of therapy.

How does a normal shoot day go for you? What are the challenges you encounter photographing nature?

I never really plan a shoot but rather I take my camera everywhere. Oftentimes, I shoot while inside a car which is a big challenge. It's almost impossible to hold still and you better hope the windows are clean!

What are your favorite subjects in nature to photograph? Do you ever see yourself venturing out into other fields of photography?

I love fog; it adds so much dimension to a landscape. I am not restricting myself to one particular field; it just so happens that I live in such a beautiful setting with a lot of natural subjects.

What's the craziest thing you've done in order to capture a photograph?

One time, I stood out the sunroof of a moving car just to capture some shots of the giant redwoods. The worst part was that the shots came out blurry.

What is your imaging device of choice?

I got a Nikon D3200 last year for my birthday, so that's what I use. I plan to upgrade to bigger and better things sometime in the future.

You have shown how beautiful the Pacific Northwest is with your photos but are there any other places in the world that you've been aching to visit and photograph?

I would love to visit New Zealand. There's just something about the mountains and variation in the landscapes that draws me in.

Ultimately, what does photography do for you? What is its role in your life?

Photography is a way for me to express my own creativity. It's always soothing, and almost a form of therapy, to go out into nature armed with just a camera. ●

Fern from our front lawn

Follow Lydia on Instagram @capturingtheearth





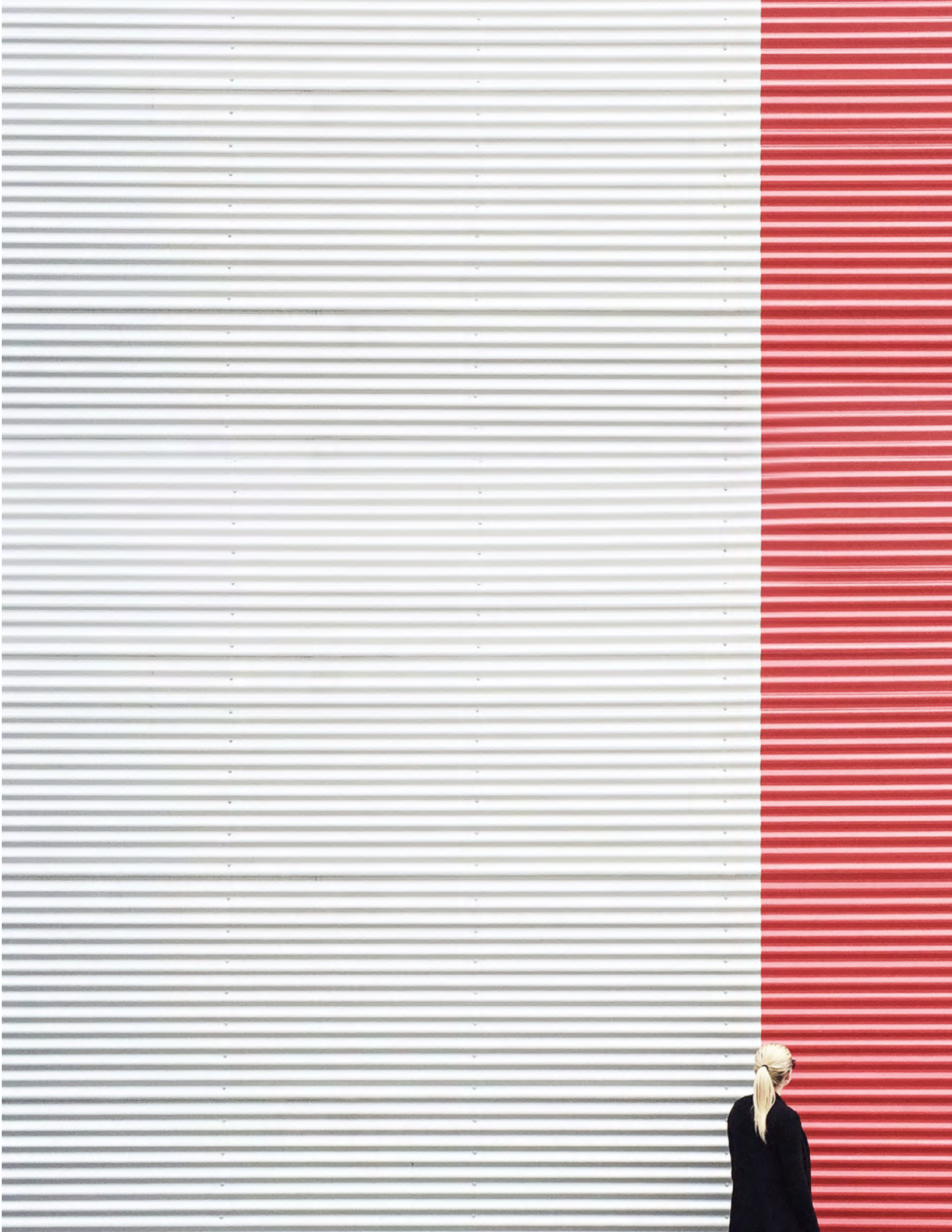
Cle Elum, Washington



Eastern Washington



Issaquah, Washington



L E N S
E X H I B I T

Sneak Peek

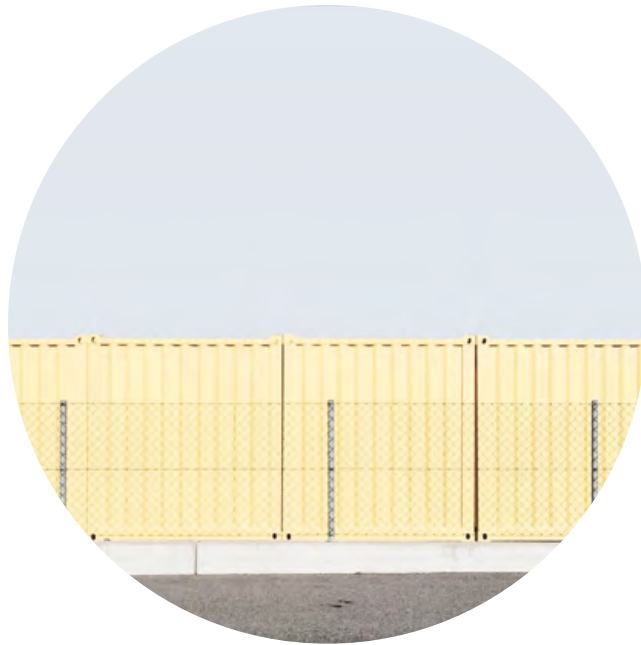
*A playful and colorful take on
minimalism by Benjamin Hösel*

Photography

Benjamin Hösel

Interview

Patrick Kasingsing



Storage containers, Carinthia
Opposite page: Girl, Carinthia





Benjamin Hosel
Opposite page: Girl, Milan

Kindly introduce yourself.

Hi! I'm Benjamin, a 27 year-old art director. I was born in Klagenfurt at Wörthersee, a small city in Carinthia, Austria. I'm the founder of die Agentur Lux, an agency specializing in branding & design.

What sparked your interest in photography? What compelled you to pick up a camera and start shooting?

My love for photography sparked from its being a great source of inspiration for my designs. It's also a medium where I can express my love for good architecture. In my opinion, nearly every building has got interesting forms, textures and shadows, and they're all just waiting to be captured.

Your photography is minimalist, with an abundance of blank space punctuated by forms peeking from corners, more often than not, architecture. What inspired such a look for your photography?

My daily work as a designer. Distilling what is essential and focusing on the basics is part of my job as a creative director. I love blank and white spaces in my designs and this is also apparent in my pictures.

Minimalism in photography is quite a growing trend especially in social media gallery sites like Instagram. Why do you think this is so?

While I don't exactly know why this aesthetic is a growing trend right now, my take on this is that this kind of style is timeless. This, and simplicity greatly appeals to the people of our generation. It's simple, clean and straightforward. Like good fashion and art!

Distilling what is essential and focusing on the basics is part of my job as a creative director. I love blank and white spaces in my designs and this is also apparent in my pictures.

How did being an art director influence your photography aesthetic? Were you influenced greatly by design principles?

As an art director, I'm always searching for new ideas, and so it is with my photography. My design principle of keeping it simple but with a significant story to tell influences my photography aesthetic a lot.

How do you choose your subjects? And how do you decide to frame them? How do you decide which parts to retain and which to leave out?

I'm a spontaneous photographer. I endeavor to make the image and its composition as simple as possible, focusing my energies on the essentials or the elements that tell the story, removing all that is disturbing or distracting to the subject.

What role do blank spaces play in your photography? How do they enhance and communicate the story you want to tell?

Blank spaces set the stage and offers a wide range of opportunity to focus my viewers on the story I'd like to tell or communicate.

Do you see yourself venturing out from this aesthetic and experimenting with new ways of photography?

Yes, definitely. I'm always open to experimenting with new styles and techniques. ●

Tower, Mofalcone
Opposite page: Shadows, Carinthia

Follow Benjamin's moods and new works on Instagram [@hoeselbenjamin](#), and on his website at [dieagenturlux.at](#)









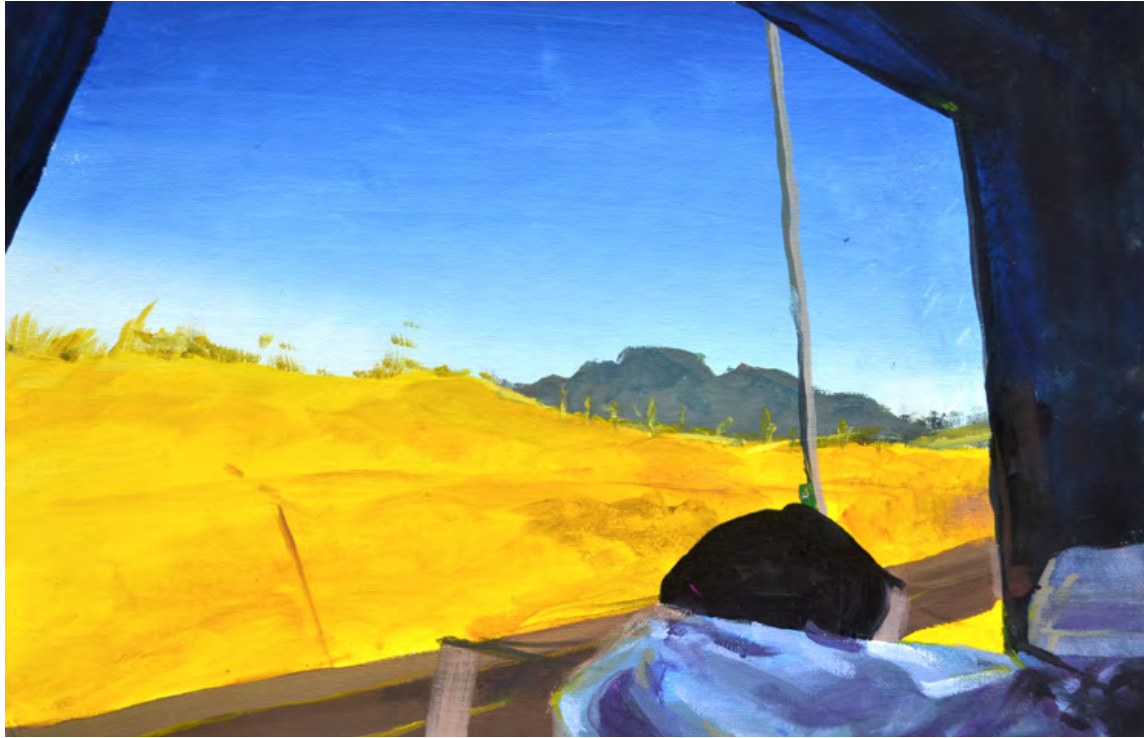
Left: Gasoline, Monfalcone, Right: Edges, Carinthia, Opposite page: Church towers, Vienna



Light off, Carinthia

CANVAS

ART AND DESIGN



ART BY ALFRED MARASIGAN

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STUDIO

WHY SO SERIOUS?

Serious Studio on their design philosophy, day-to-day activities and plans for world domination

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Alfred Marasigan's artworks explore the concepts of being in transit and sense of place

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Monica Esquivel's colorful, vintage-inspired illustrations serve equal heaps nostalgia and quirky fun

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We ask graphic designer *Kelly Huang* and design studio *11 Fifty-Nine* their take on five design issues

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RUMINATIONS

DESIGN, UNDERCOVER

Mikhail Plata reflects and ruminates on how Design makes the world go round, even if we don't always notice



Why So Serious?

*The people from Serious Studio
delivers a dose of wit and verve to
branding design and identity, a field that
could benefit from a bit of fun*

Portfolio
Serious Studio
Interview
Patrick Kasingsing



From left Deane Miguel, Kookie Santos, Lester Cruz, Tintin Lontoc

Kindly introduce yourself.

Hello, we're Serious Studio! We design for businesses in and out of the Philippines. We listen to a lot of jazz and we strictly observe Taco Tuesdays. Collectively, we're young (our team's mean age is 24) and individually, we're all designers with other specialized skills we bring to each project.

How did Serious Studio start? Also, care to share the origin of your studio name?

We started the studio fresh out of college under a different name back in 2013, knowing most of the risks and charging in anyway. The parallel growth of local design and small local businesses made us hopeful, and it turns out, our timing was just right. Of course, nothing about it was easy. You're surrounded by people who doubt you, and this can be a discouraging thing for a creative professional. However, we've learned to put in the work and to mostly take criticism in stride. There's also a part of us that loves to prove people wrong, so that's fueled our ambition as well. As for the name, we try not to take it too seriously. Make of that what you will ;P

What makes Serious Studio different from all the other local design studios?

To preface: it's difficult to answer that question without implicitly dragging down other Manila-based design studios. The truth is, we don't know how our peers work, and we only know what we've seen.



This page: EDSA Beverage Design Group



This spread: Departures & Arrivals Singapore



We feel that how we're different is in adamantly not sticking to a single style. We also try to keep things purposeful without falling into utilitarian austerity.

Based on that, we feel that how we're different is in adamantly not sticking to a single style. It looks like aesthetic inconsistency, but in our premise and philosophy—Make Sense & Look Good—there's a reason why "make sense" comes first. We try to keep things purposeful without falling into utilitarian austerity. (Because, of course, as *je ne sais quois* as it is, aesthetics serves its own purpose.)

We've also been known to be irreverent, and in a way that turns people off. That's fine with us, because where we are right now, we're not interested in working with people whose values aren't aligned with ours.

The importance of branding and a solid design identity is slowly but surely making itself felt into local mainstream consciousness. Why do you think this is happening now? And what steps is Serious Studio taking to further educate the public on the importance of Design

The simple answer is: consumers are getting smarter. The exponential rise of niche businesses means you have to pick and choose (from literally thousands of outlets) who you want to pay attention to. Filipinos have better access to the world through the web and travelling, and now they're more conscious about design. Not everyone will understand the technicalities, but you don't need to be an expert to sense when things don't connect the way they should.



On how we're educating the public: our aim with every project is to put the core of the business to the fore of any designed space. So if you're at a restaurant, or retail space, or site we've designed, you'll have plenty of opportunities to get to know the hard work and the concept behind our clients' products. We try to leave a strong impression by making people feel like they're not just being mindlessly sold more and more things. On the fun side, we also try to forge a space that's—in today's colorful parlance—"Instagram-ready." On one hand you're feeling all the feels as you connect with a brand, and on the other, you're taking all those new feelings and bottling them into a selfie.

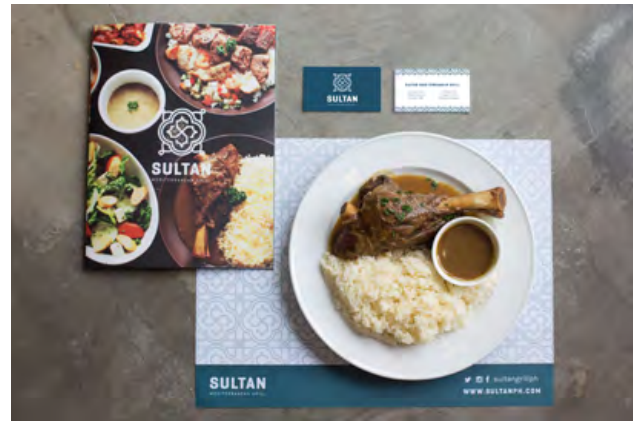
Would you say that Serious Studio has a particular design style? What do you think of styles, and would you say having a defining style is a must for every design professional?

Given that we're a branding company, we do our best not to restrict ourselves to a style. Having a single, defined aesthetic can limit your work after all. We try to immerse ourselves in different design methods and techniques, rooting our work approach based on the brand's target market. It also helps that we're a group, so everyone has a different contribution to our overall output.

Our advice? Just find your voice, and make sure it shows up in the work that you do. Your style can change, but just make sure your voice remains true.

Opposite page:
Sultan Mediterranean Grill
Top: Tryst

Our advice? Just find your voice, and make sure it shows up in the work that you do. Your style can change, but just make sure your voice remains true.



For a young studio, you already have quite an admirable and enviable portfolio. How did you manage to secure such projects? What tips can you give to design professionals seeking to increase their visibility and network?

Thank you for your kind words! We started from the bottom, just like our good friend Drake. (Whether this is a mutually-acknowledged friendship is anybody's guess.) It's definitely not as easy as it looks. Here are some tips:

Don't be afraid to say no. Work with people who see you eye to eye, and with people who understand the value of what you do. The option to decline projects is, more often than not, a privilege, but there are people out there ready to take advantage of creative professionals. Sometimes saying no is necessary for long-term growth.

Know your shit. The best way to get someone to understand the purpose of design is to present strong foundations and visible results. If you can show clients both, it will allow them to trust you. If you get them to trust you, they'll let you do practically anything.

Be nice and treat people with respect. You may not know it now, but that math classmate or org mate could end up being your future client.

A good client is someone who understands and values what you do. You should not have to educate a client about your work. Great things happen when there is mutual respect and understanding.

How do you go about selecting your clients? What for you is a good or a bad client? What are the warning signs a design professional need to take note of in dealing with a client?

A good client is passionate about what they do. Work with someone who has a good grasp of what they are. If you end up having to fill in the blanks instead of just creating something authentic, then things can end up problematic for you, and for the client.

If your client is in business to simply capitalize on something, they're most likely going to be cheap about everything including your work. Stay clear of these people.

A good client is someone who understands and values what you do. You should not have to educate a client about your work. Great things happen when there is mutual respect and understanding.

A good client is someone who pays. No excuses, and no bullshit about being a 'startup' or an 'NGO.' The work you do has value, and incurs costs. If they're truly good, they should know this and should be willing to pay, no matter how small.

A good client is not only good to you, but good to their people and the environment. If we see that the client has bad business practices, we immediately say no. Never compromise your beliefs and principles when choosing who to work with.

Opposite page: The Original Savory





How is your office atmosphere like on a daily basis?

The general studio vibe is more or less relaxed. Most days, we're working with short timelines and quick turnarounds but we like to keep things comfortable to make sure we're not exhausted day-in, day-out. The office itself is both neat and messy, its inhabitants determined yet untethered, the workflow loose but with a singular, definite goal. A good way to sum up the Serious Studio day-to-day process would be "organized chaos."

How does your office deal with the stresses of long work hours? Do you embark on office activities or outings and trips to rejuvenate and get away (momentarily) from all the work?

On the contrary, we advise against long work hours. We work up to 5-6 PM and run out like normal humans. Some people have this weird belief that if you work more hours, you get more things done—that's really not the case. Brains get tired throughout overtime and your ideas turn into shit as you go past eight hours into the day. There's a huge difference between being busy (doing a lot of stuff) and being productive (actually getting stuff done), and the latter is easily achieved with a fresh perspective every start of the day.

We usually do random stuff on Fridays: we watch movies, get active, explore the city, and more.

What are the 'serious' plans of Serious Studio for the future? Are there plans for expansion?

World domination. ●

Some people have this weird belief that if you work more hours, you get more things done—that's really not the case. Brains get tired throughout overtime and your ideas turn into shit as you go past eight hours into the day.

Top: Suelas

Follow Serious Studio on Instagram @seriousstudio. Check out their portfolio at www.serious-studio.

CANVAS
ARTIST



THE NOMAD

*Alfred Marasigan and his relentless
pursuit of new creative territories*

Portfolio

Alfred Marasigan

Interview

Patrick Kasingsing





Title page: *Construct 2*. Oil pastel and acrylic on cement. 7 x 5 in.
Un Seul Grain de Riz: International 'Small Format' Art Competition & Show, Galerie Metanoia, Paris (FR), Dec. 19, 2015 - Jan. 9, 2016.
Top: *Place 2*. Acrylic and poster paint on canvas. 12 x 18 in. 2015.



The process of capturing relationships between the personal and the spatial fascinates me. I often explore associations between identity, personal narratives, and myth-making, with context, landscape, and environment. In particular, I like how human subjectivity lends value to 'space' as concept, and transforms it into 'place' as experience. Just as well, I am intent on grasping the essence of placelessness.

Whenever I travel via different modes of transportation, I gain valuable insights regarding myself and the world. I treat such experiences as sites of introspection. Ultimately, finding groundedness in transit motivates my art-making.

Kindly introduce yourself.

Hello! I'm Alfred Marasigan! I'm a visual artist, art educator, and compulsive thinker. I'm just starting out!

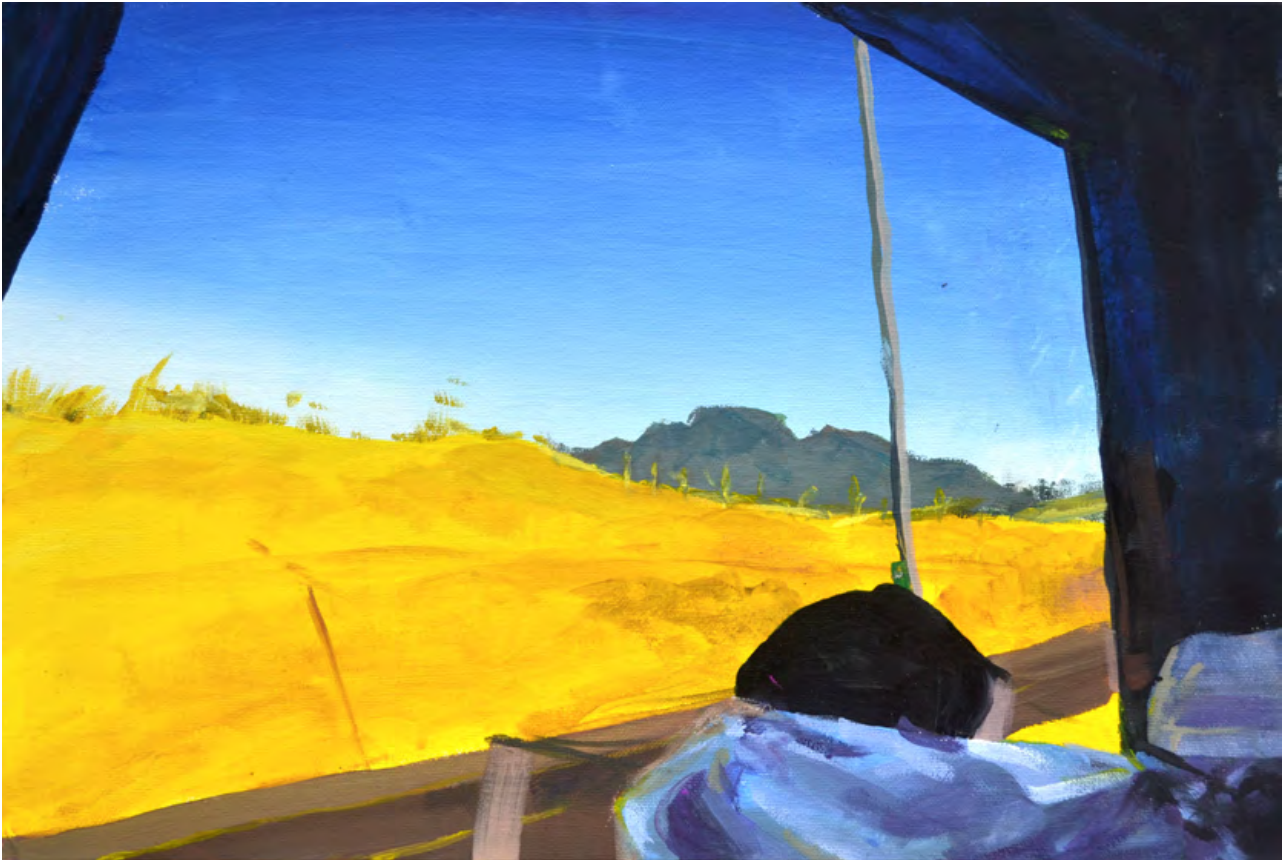
What sparked your interest in painting? What is it that drove you to this particular art form?

My mom told me that one of the very first things I drew was a heart. She has always felt like it has a connection with my similarly shaped birthmark. Maybe I've always had it in me? Haha! No, it's just that for as long as I can remember, I've been drawing ever since I got hold of my mom's scratch papers (she was a teacher, too). Then I kept joining contests in high school, attending workshops during summer, and eventually pursuing Fine Arts in college.

I guess I eventually felt special making beautiful things for myself and other people. Painting simply has this accessible quality for me as a creator. I didn't really grow up well-off, so painting is the most convenient way for me to make art. Now, I'm branching off into conceptual art using objects and installations because they lend a unique dimension to my painted works.

What particular themes and subjects do you enjoy depicting? Why are you attracted to these themes?

I have always been drawn to the idea of journeys, and I found that ideas that involve spaces and places like landscapes, nationhood, and home best help me make sense of myself and the world, however interchangeable. I also introspect a lot, and I believe that the themes I explore provide valuable insight to one of the most fundamental questions humans ask – why are we *here*?



Place 2. Acrylic and poster paint on canvas. 12 x 18 in. 2015.



Place 17. Acrylic on canvas. 12 x 12 in.
StART101 Gallery, Quezon City (PH), Nov. 27, 2015.



Place 11. Acrylic on canvas. 12 x 16 in. 2015.

Social media has enabled the masses more access to view and appreciate traditional art forms like paintings and sculpture. What is your take on this? Do you find this good or bad? Do you think this diminishes the value and experience of the artwork?

If anything, social media enriches the way we tell stories. On the flip side, that same capacity can convolute perception. I don't think I can make a value judgment on social media since it's new, and we're still trying to formulate some sort of cultural etiquette around it. It's both good and bad, depending on who uses it, why, when, etc. Art will persist despite and because of contemporaneity. *Sobrang* teacher, but Walter Benjamin's "Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" should shed light on the Internet Age.

Do you believe in having an art style in your visual output? Why? Why not?

I think that on a personal level, it shouldn't matter since most art is a dialogue with the self. However, because art should also be shared with people, it must also strive to be cohesive visual narratives. It used to be a personal dilemma—to find one's "art style" (which I'm sure is among the Top 5 Existential Questions Artists Ask Themselves)—but it is only in trying out a lot of things that I have truly found my voice. For instance, while my training has always been geared towards painting, I slowly integrate mixed media, found objects, and installations into my body of work because I trust myself enough that whatever I make will "look" like "me". Ultimately, change is the lifeblood of art.

I think that on a personal level, it (having a style) shouldn't matter since most art is a dialogue with the self. However, because art should also be shared with people, it must also strive to be cohesive visual narratives.



Place 43. Oil pastel and acrylic on canvas. 12 x 18 in. 2015.

Who are your artistic idols? And how have they inspired you in your artistic philosophy and work as a visual artist?

Wow, I have a lot, but no one in particular, too! I always get asked this question and it's always difficult to answer because I am more drawn to the works than to the artist as an individual. In that sense, I don't think anyone can idolize more than twenty people at a time. But to name a few, I love Mark Rothko, Constantin Brancusi, Ed Ruscha, Edward Hopper, David Hockney, Jeff Koons, Janine Antoni, and Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle. A lot of them also deal with place, but for the most part, their unique approaches in creating compact, insightful, critical, witty, and enduring work fascinate me. I also owe a great deal of my confidence in art-making to a lot of my professors in Ateneo and UP. Outside the academe, Sir Bogie Ruiz and Sir Eric Zamuco offered indispensable guidance. Their deeply innovative yet highly personal worldviews helped me shape my own.

*Locale 2. Elastomeric paint on canvas.
180 x 66 x 4 in. 2015.*

Check out Alfred's works
on alfredmarasigan.com and on
Instagram @alfredmarasigan!

You also teach in fine arts. What do you think is the most valuable lesson/thing/piece of advice you can give to Art students who are in the process of finding and solidifying their artistic identities?

Trust yourself. It may be cliché to some, but it's one of the hardest pieces of advice to follow. Know that the things that move you will get you to where you need to be. Most of my students problematize finding their own "art styles", but I think it's simply discovering the best way to communicate with one's self. Once you find clarity in the way you understand yourself and the way you navigate society, your own unique visual language will unfold; allow yourself to be surprised. ●



Once you find clarity in the way you understand yourself and the way you navigate society, your own unique visual language will unfold; allow yourself to be surprised



Marker 1 (Polaris). Reflectorized sticker on aluminum sheet and steel pole.
36 in. x 40 in. x 4 in. Places, Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP), Manila (PH),
Mar. 10 - April 10, 2016.



*Flight. Places, Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP),
Manila (PH), Mar. 10 - Apr. 10, 2016.
Photographed by Henri Palma*



Places, Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP),
Manila (PH), Mar. 10 - Apr. 10, 2016.
Photographed by Andrea Beldua





C A N V A S
A R T I S T

CO L O R A M A

*Monica Esquivel's illustrations
evoke nostalgia with a generous dash
of color and story*

Portfolio
Monica Esquivel
Interview
Patrick Kasingsing

Opposite page: *Cat Mask*



Kindly introduce yourself.

During the day, I'm a graphic designer for By Implication, a software development company. At night, I'm a freelance artist whose specialties include editorial and food illustration.

What sparked your interest in painting? What is it that drove you to this particular art form?

Japanese and American cartoons definitely played a big role here. When I was a kid, I filled notebooks with drawings of characters based on my favorite girls from Magic Knight Rayearth, Akazukin ChaCha, Gatekeepers, and the Powerpuff Girls.

As for the factors that made me decide to pursue illustrating professionally, those came in much later in life. If I'm going to be honest with myself, I wasn't completely convinced that I could actually do illustration as a source of income until recently. Even back in college, despite having drawn for student publications and a charity storybook, I always thought that I would settle with doing graphic design work professionally and just drawing as a hobby.

It was my first job with a publication company that made me realize that I can't just relegate drawing as something I just do for myself. While in that company, I got the chance to make some editorial illustration work for one of its magazines. It dawned on me then that I wouldn't mind drawing for a living. When I moved to my current company, this one allowing and leaving me enough time to do freelance work, I immediately started looking for illustration jobs. My hunt proved fruitful and now I'm content and regularly getting a variety of illustration projects.

Opposite page: *Nautical Colors*





Opposite page: *Microscopium*

In today's world where digitally-made works or photorealistic media are so commonplace, I became immediately attached to the seemingly warmer, hand-drawn, and traditional aesthetic of old posters.

What inspired your illustration aesthetic? Your digital brushwork and coloring is beautifully rough and unhurried, not too polished and flat, which gives your figures and work in general a playful, hand-drawn character often missing from digital illustration.

Because I was a BFA Information Design major back in college, I was exposed to a lot of graphic design work. The aesthetic of vintage illustration and posters captured my attention right away. I was particularly drawn to the ones that had distinct lines and limited yet bright and contrasting palettes. The posters of Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and Jules Chéret come to mind. Vintage travel posters, with their solid blocks of color, are also a main source of inspiration for me. J.C. Leyendecker's works have also greatly influenced my works, especially my choice of subject matter for personal pieces.

In today's world where digitally-made works and photos or photorealistic media are so commonplace, I became immediately attached to the seemingly warmer, hand-drawn, and traditional aesthetic of old posters. That, coupled with my Japanese and American cartoon-filled roots resulted to my current drawing style.

What are your favorite illustration subjects? And who are your artistic inspirations?

I'm particularly fond of drawing people in sailor suits and other nautical themes. When I'm not drawing something that involves sailor suits, I'm probably coming up with an illustration that has plants.

As for artistic inspirations, I'm very fond of the works of J.C. Leyendecker, Sachin Teng, Kali Ciesemier, James Jean, Akihiko Yoshida, and Kotake. While their impact on my style isn't really all that obvious, they've inspired me to try out certain things in my works. Of course, vintage posters are still frequent pegs of mine up till now.

Opposite page: *Heartbeat*

Monica's works can be viewed at cargocollective.com/monicaesquivel. She sometimes posts some ink drawings on her Instagram @moaniez.

I'd love to further refine my style and to explore more themes. I usually work on a couple of personal projects and also join art shows so that I could develop more.

What are the challenges one faces as a freelance illustrator and how do you deal with them?

Probably pricing my work. Despite having gone through the process several times before, presenting my rates to potential clients always stays somewhat difficult. I don't want to charge too much because the client might back out, and yet I don't want to charge too low either because I do want my works to be priced the amount I think they're worth.

Do you believe in having a personal style? Is it a must for a design professional to have his/her own design style?

I don't really think it's a must but more of a preference. Having a personal and distinct style can contribute to an artist's own brand and make it easier to sell. It's also very fortunate if the said style satisfies the aesthetic preferences of certain groups or niches since it would mean that clients wouldn't simply run out. Personally, I also feel a sense of pride whenever a stranger recognizes my work as mine.

On the other hand, artists who don't just stick to a single style can potentially have access to a wider range of clients. The strength of their work is that they can easily mold their output based to their clients' needs.

How would you like to grow more as an illustrator and what steps are you taking to take your illustration skills a step further?

I'd love to further refine my style and to explore more themes. I usually work on a couple of personal projects and also join art shows so that I could develop more. Of course, I also try to grow when doing client work as they offer the opportunity to try out new ideas. With my freelance work, I'm not just simply working with my own preferred subjects. ●



there's nothing
romantic
about ghosts
stop running
your lips over
things that
harm you

C A N V A S
A R T I S T

Time To Quill

*Rachel Ang finds joy in beautifying words
through the art of calligraphy*

Portfolio
Rachel Ang
Interview
Patrick Kasingsing



and i wanted to
tell you that
i could meet a
thousand faces
but at the end
of the day i
still yearn for
a trace of you



Kindly introduce yourself.

I'm Rachel, 24, a freelance digital media manager and calligraphy enthusiast.

What sparked your interest in calligraphy?

I've always been fond of writing in all forms: calligraphy, literature, even music. I don't remember when exactly but I've always liked writing random stylized notes on my notebooks back in high school. Calligraphy has become a form of therapy and self-expression for me.

How would you describe your style of calligraphy? Are there any inspirations that helped shape the beautiful script that you now write in?

I try not to conform to one specific 'style' per se. In order to grow, I believe you have to try different styles until you find your niche. I'm still in the process of learning, but if I had to describe my 'style', I'd say it's very romantic—a lot of curves and flourishes. But the thing is, my normal handwriting is also a bit like that, except I try to add a little more creativity into my calligraphed pieces.

Follow Rachel's realities on Instagram at [@rachellynnang](#), or her calligraphic journey over at [@writeconnection](#).

I believe calligraphy can't be 'perfected' in a way, because what makes calligraphy so special is the fact that it's manually written and there's always room for error.

There is a growing interest in the art of calligraphy recently. Care to give your two cents on why this is happening? And with the growing number of calligraphers out there, what do you think is your edge? What makes you different?

I think the recent spark of interest in the art of calligraphy is because a lot more companies are also creating new and more innovative ways to promulgate the craft. I remember when I was just starting to experiment a few years back, there was still no such thing as a brush pen. I started out with different nibs of the fountain pen, then discovered the dip pen, and recently brush pens. Gaining easy access to the proper tools of the craft is one big factor that I can say contributed to this sudden surge of interest in calligraphy.

It's hard to pinpoint an 'edge', as everyone's really using the same tools and learning from each other. If I really needed to choose, though, I think it's more of my versatility as an artist that sets me apart in a sense that I'm not very egotistic with my art. This way, there will always be room for improvement and growth.

How much training and practice did you commit to perfect your calligraphy? What are the challenges that you encountered?

I believe calligraphy can't be 'perfected' in a way, because what makes calligraphy so special is the fact that it's manually written and there's always room for error. That's actually one of the main challenges I encountered when I was starting out. I was trying so hard to make things 'perfect' and it would frustrate me when things weren't as clean as I'd wanted them to be, and that discourages people a lot. Like with other things, it's all a matter of practice and allotting time into honing your chosen craft. ●





Magisimula
ako
sa
unpisa

when
i
look
at
you
i
see
poetry

someone
will come
to sing
into these
empty
spaces



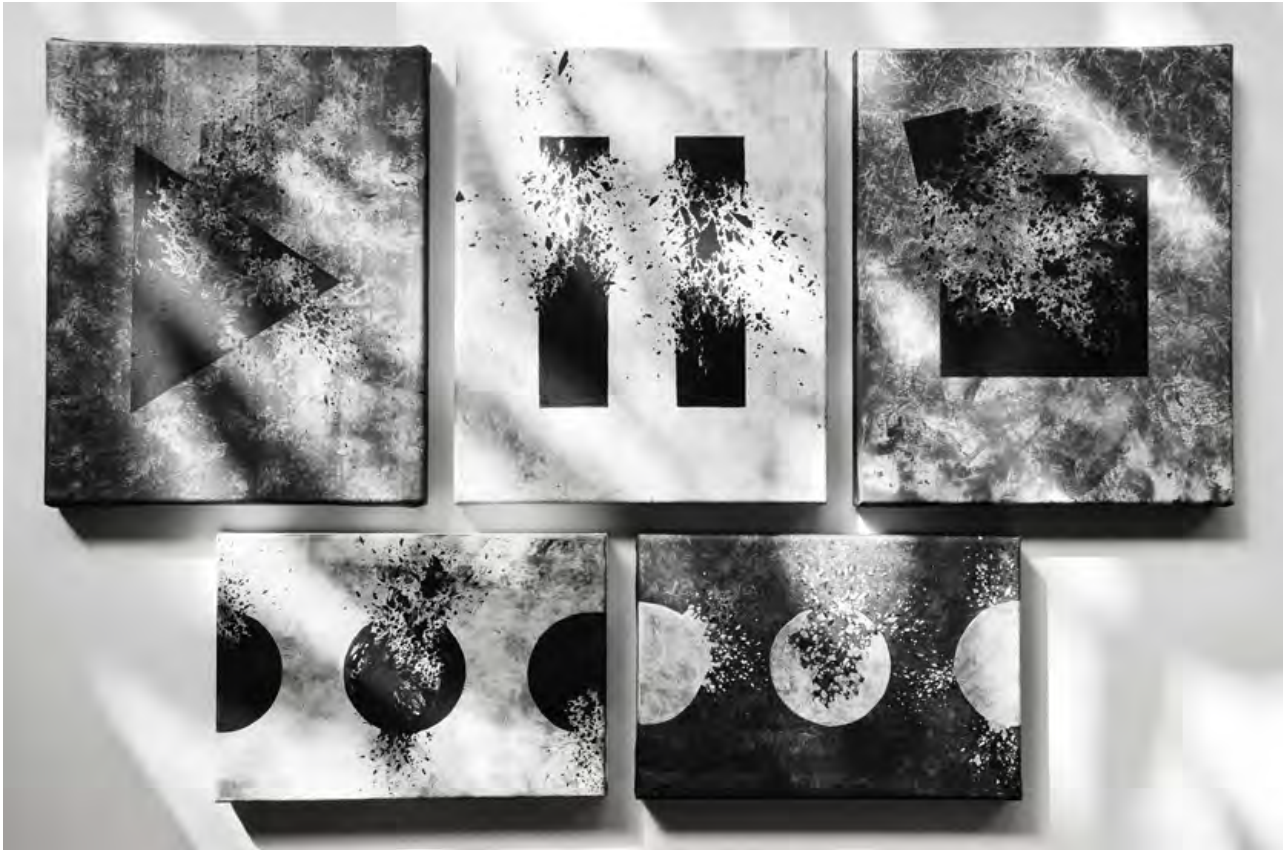
C A N V A S
T W O O N F I V E

Multi Media

*Graphic designer Kelly Huang's
multi-faceted creativity chooses no medium*

Portfolio
Kelly Huang
Interview
Patrick Kasingsing





Top: *Timeline*, acrylic on canvas (22x16, 27x16), 2015
Bottom: Photo series from Ximending, Taipei, Taiwan, taken with Canon D7000, Lens 18-200mm

Kindly introduce yourself.

I'm now a graphic designer but in a broader sense, a visual artist because of the variety of projects in various mediums that I've done. It's really hard to give a clear definition of my work as I am a work in progress.

What role does your job play in the field of Art and Design

Being a graphic designer is sort of like being a bridge-builder; it is our job to create solutions which can effectively help information to cross over to targeted users. I also see myself as a storyteller. There's always a back story behind every project and its consumer, and it's our job as designers to listen to these stories to help formulate and implement the appropriate design solution.

Give us your personal take on the general importance of Art and Design

I think Art and Design is pivotal in helping to preserve and develop a society's cultural identity. A strong artistic and cultural identity ensures that our beliefs, values, and traditions stay intact and is accessible for future generations to learn from and appreciate.

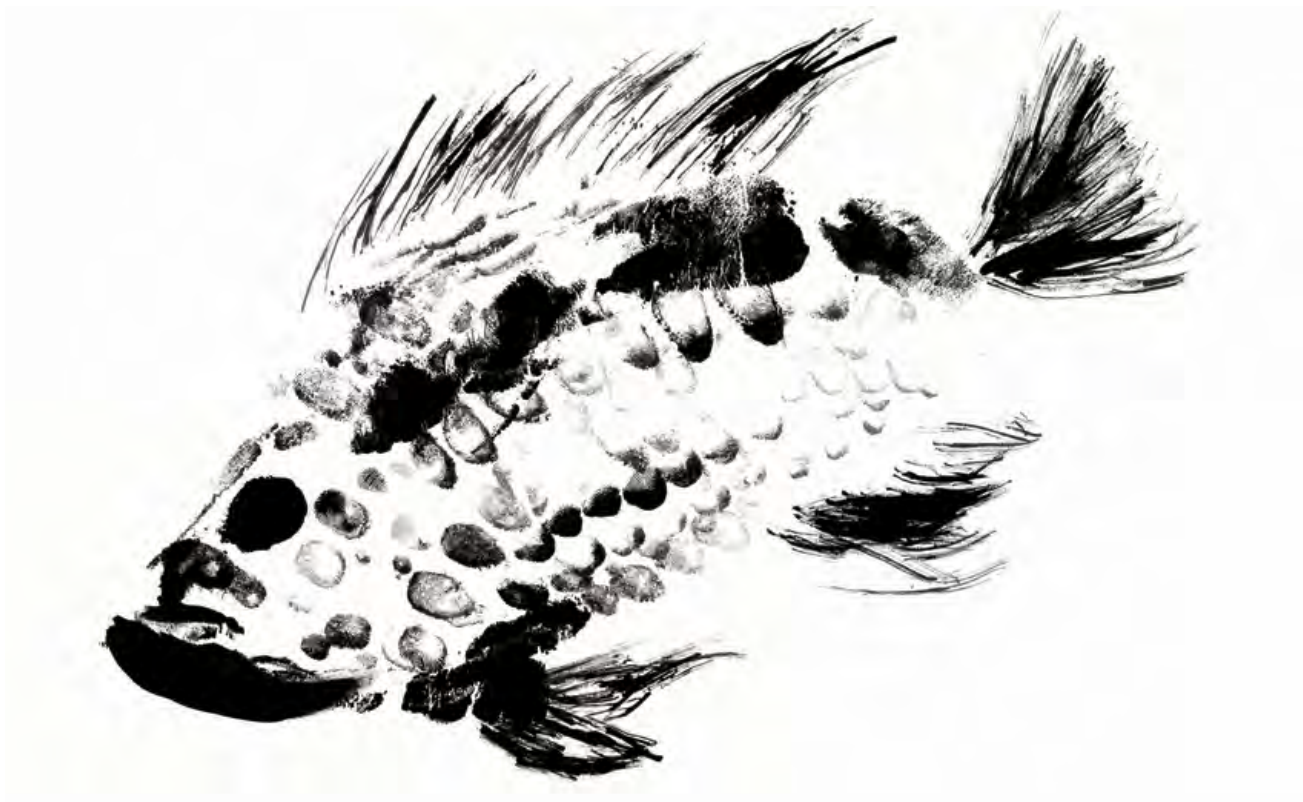
How do you, as a professional in a design field, spread and protect the value of Art and Design.

There are now plenty of social media platforms on the Internet that can be used to share and display our works with ease. While convenient, we should also be aware that a quick screenshot can enable the theft of one's works. I never upload a whole series of my work unless I trust the platform. I also took a one-year class in Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) to better inform myself of the tools I can use to protect my body of work. While sharing is easy, we all have to be well-prepared for ill-intentioned people, just in case.

What is your favorite Design rant?

That will have to be negotiating prices. Don't be afraid to defend your rate to your clients. Your work has value. Don't even think about doing a logo for \$100, as succumbing to such transactions undervalues and disrespects the design profession. No one should undervalue himself or herself. ●





Tribal Memory, Second Edition, Illustration, ink on paper, 2015



Faith, Craft, displayed at the exhibition "Culture of Taiwan", 2013

Your work has value. Don't even think about doing a logo for \$100, as succumbing to such transactions undervalues and disrespects the design profession.

Find inspiration at Kelly's Instagram [@kaining_huang](#)

HELLO
PAMPANGA



TOURISM
WAS JUST A
VISION FOR
THE CITY

**MALABON TRI
CYCLE
TOURS**

Malabon Tricycle tours Deck, Keynote, 10" x 7"

CANVAS
TWO ON FIVE

POP
UP
SHOP

*11FiftyNine believes its small size
and compact operation is its biggest strength*

Portfolio
11FiftyNine
Interview
Patrick Kasingsing



Manila! Deck, Keynote, 10" x 7"



Kindly introduce yourself.

The idea of 11FiftyNine began when we were in college—roughly a year ago. It's like a pop-up project-based agency. We caught on the vision of helping brands become more human-centered and also letting people know about brands or projects through visually effective story telling.

So Heleina and I decided to make this agency that's mainly run by the two of us. I'd be in charge of the copy or the story telling side and she takes care of all the execution—which is the art side. Any deliverables that we couldn't make, we'd outsource the work from our friends who specialise on that discipline. So we have videographers, graphic artists, photographers, and even researchers and interviewers. Anything a campaign needs, we've got a person for that. Basically, when we have a project, it's like getting the whole Avengers gang together!

What role does your job play in the field of Art and Design

If anything, we believe that our role is not just to simply make nice copy or design, but to tell a story, effectively delivered through a visual experience. Aesthetically appealing work is amazing but we've learned that people remember stories—and that's what we're here to do. We help our clients connect to their audience and vice versa by creating copy and art that relates, or affects, people in a deeper sense—like to the core of the person, if possible. Something that grabs them and makes them think about things, not merely giving them a barrage of facts upon facts decorated nicely.

Aside from that, we're also able to help other freelancers get more exposure by getting connected with 11FiftyNine projects.

From left: Patricia Herbolario, Heleina Enrique

LIVING THE CURIOUS LIFE
BRAND BOARD

logo



font

Modern No. 20

Regular

Italic

A B C D E F G H I J

A B C D E F G H I J

K L M N O P Q R S

K L M N O P Q R S

T U V W X Y Z

T U V W X Y Z

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

color



#FFF



#000

business card



website banner



Living the Curious Life Brand Identity

Give us your personal take on the general importance of Art and Design

Patricia Herbolario: My personal take on art, and I think this goes equally as important for design, is that it needs to hit people in the heart. *Kaya nga he-art eh.* In all honesty, you can live in a world not giving a shit about art but you wouldn't enjoy it. It's a shallow existence. Art needs to disturb those comforted, and comfort those disturbed. I've always loved this line and hate myself for not inventing it. It has to create an impact on people and I'm not talking about making things look nice or pleasing, I'm talking about something deeper and it's not about making profit either. Sure, H and I are marketing students and sales is a big indicator if your work worked or not but it's never just that. The best marketing campaigns were so humanly grounded to the point that they evoked something in the person. You have this power to change them if you have a great message and a solid execution and that is no longer marketing, that is art.

Heleina Enrique: In addition to that, art and design is incredibly important simply because it makes life better. It adds color, so to speak, to what would have been a black and white existence. Can you imagine a world without art and design? It would be very boring and difficult! We'd be stuck with the same ol' pre-historic stuff. Whether or not people are aware of it, we enjoy great design. Like the way we enjoy movies, or books, and so on. The way our phone evolves today is a result of design thinking. From blocky things to being sleek and having a touch-sensitive display. Art and design paves the way for innovation.

Furthermore, it's an avenue for expression. Whether we think we're creative or not, we all show it, just in different ways.

How do you, as a professional in a design field, spread and protect the value of Art and Design.

How do we protect it? We're making the world a better place by advocating bullet point-free presentations and we don't use Comic Sans. Joking, but for us, it's always been about being able to tell the story of a brand in a more meaningful and memorable way.

What is your favorite Design rant?

When the clients think we can magically make what they want in hours and have it ready by the next day. ●

Art needs to disturb those comforted, and comfort those disturbed. I've always loved this line and hate myself for not inventing it.

Follow Patricia Herbolario on Instagram @littlemissteapat and on her blog at littlemissteapat.com



Image from unsplash.com (Jo Szczepanska)

Design, Undercover

We may not always notice but Design is an integral part of our daily lives

Written by Mikhail Plata

Some say visual design can be a thankless business. It concerns itself with creating works that fit subtly within the daily experiences of people. But people certainly notice the effects of bad design. And a designer might point out that it's easy to see why visual design in particular matters to the world being that you see visual design practically everywhere.

How then do we appreciate the extent of the significance of visual design? How do we see it? How do we feel it? Consider the idea that it exists within experiences and connections that are direct results of designed work: people talking over magazines, people clicking buttons on a site, people viewing advertisements, quoting film dialogue, reading comics, spreading protest pamphlets, imitating trends, responding to petitions, perusing services, interacting over social media. These might sound mundane, especially when we picture ourselves in such situations, but the story changes once we widen our lenses and see that the experience of one can be the experience of many.

Then, we can appreciate the significance of design—whose true lasting power lies in its ability to shape perception and provoke reflection, communication and expression. These are the aspects which form understanding. They influence behavior and culture, and affect decision-making—for better or for worse. And visual design does its work in the subtlest of ways by giving people touchpoints with which to interact.

But touchpoints do not stand by themselves. Context always factors in the delivery of a work. Effectiveness in delivery ensures that the heart of the work comes through to the audience. But subject matter makes the biggest difference—because the subject of design work orients real, palpable, social outcomes. Subject matter influences thought and opinion and, thus, behavior and action.

If we dissect design into (1) subject, (2) form, and (3) delivery, we can draw that visual designers cannot simply approach the development of a work from an aesthetic point of view—the greater challenge lies in connecting aesthetics to experience such that visuals matter to a project's final purpose. Being able to draw correlations between audience experience and touchpoints is key and is a good point to begin seeing where the power and significance of visual design emerges.

The reason that I begin with such reminders is that it's easy to lose control of what is said in the making of design work. Once a work has been made and delivered, its audience will behave in certain ways given the new stimulus to which they are now exposed. They might think and act differently, they might respond to a call to action, or they may be repulsed from certain things, behaviors, and even people. Here we see that the power of design as indicated by a phenomenon known as conversion—an active response of an audience towards the objective of an experience.

Let's consider, too, that visual design is a medium among many types of media. There is a world of ways in which a creator can achieve an objective, deliver a message or elicit behavior. Visual design is only one of them. It's important to remember that the nature of design as medium prevails over any other purpose. I'm talking about the distinction between form and function, between art and design. It's very easy to get caught up in the making of a work—the way it looks, the way it's made, the way it impacts the audience—than the purpose or effectiveness of the work. Form and function go hand in hand.

It's a common pitfall for visual designers to keep thinking about the way things look. This is understandable since designers do not necessarily work using scientific frameworks in which graduated effectiveness is a factor, but this highlights the importance of measures of success because these are indicators that concretely show how design has actually caused a change. Parameters, success indicators and the understanding of change lets us know whether a designed work is actually significant or not.

Thus, we can say that significance is the real resultant effects of having performed an action—of having unleashed a work upon the world. It falls in line with connotation and is measured from what has actually happened as a result of a work's creation. It takes a certain attitude and honesty to acknowledge what is actually happening and to understand a work with a comprehensive lens that far extends beyond aesthetics.

Of course, the effects of a designed work can only be half-determined by its designer. The rest depends on the responses of the audience. Nonetheless, this brings to light the depth at which visual design factors into the world and humanity. This depth assigns a significant urgency, responsibility and duty on the hands of the designer but also opens a wealth of opportunities for shaping the world through visual media. ●

It's very easy to get caught up in the making of a work—the way it looks, the way it's made, the way it impacts the audience—than the purpose or effectiveness of the work.

Read more of Mikhail's musings on the design profession on his blog at mikplata.wordpress.com

COMPASS

TRAVEL

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PASSPORT
GOING LOCAL

Kit Singson immerses herself in the hustle and bustle of frenetic Bangkok

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BACKPACK
A SCENIC ESCAPE

Cy Yambao is enraptured by the mystical natural attractions of Siquijor and Dumaguete

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PASSPORT
KALEIDOSCOPE

Danielle Austria takes on Hanoi her way, and is rewarded with a side of the city unseen by many

PHOTOGRAPHED BY
KIT SINGSON



Photography by Danielle Austria

A F E W
W O R D S

The stories you will find in the next few pages, we hope, will once and for all prove to you, dear reader, that there is no distinction between all manner of travel.

The differences between a ‘tourist,’ or a ‘traveler,’ or a ‘nomad,’ or a ‘wanderer,’ or a ‘backpacker,’ are all contrived. Not one of them are better than the others, and not one of them are to be aspired. Let’s face it: we like labels. It’s easy and convenient. Yet, take caution and don’t get too comfortable. These identities are the result of our constant search for meaning, which is definitely not in itself a bad thing; but when it turns into a vehicle for judgment and putting oneself atop a pedestal, then it becomes a vicious knot of negativity—something none of us need in copious amounts. When these labels turn into an inescapable box, then it becomes a prison of our own design. The kind of travel each of us seek can be as wide as the spectrum of personality or even the entire of human experience. As acclaimed travel writer Pico Iyer once wrote: “Travel, then, is a voyage into that famously subjective zone, the imagination, and what the traveler brings back is—and has to be—an ineffable compound of himself and the place, what’s really there and what’s only in him.”

Thus, the important thing is to ask yourself: Why do I travel? What is it in me that compels me to seek new worlds? Do I find comfort and respite in the luxury of full-service hotels and opulent surroundings? Do I love nature because I feel incomparable peace in its presence? Do I need to experience life as those from other cultures or nationalities do, while immersed in the place they call home? It’s an unending journey of self-discovery, for when you think you’ve answered the first question, out comes another, and the cycle continues. It can change as you grow old. It can change as you meet people from different walks of life. It can change as soon as you plant your feet on the next big city or mountain or shore. So take everything you think you know about travel and throw it out the (airplane/train/bus) window. Let travel turn your life inside out and shake your spirit from head to toe, until it becomes not an activity or a pastime, but a part of you that no one can take away.

In this edition of Kanto, the Travel section will transport you to the lush nature escapes of Negros Oriental, the enchanting and bustling side streets of Bangkok, and the artistic and Old World locales of Hanoi. While your body is currently stuck in the confines of your home or office, read on and allow your imagination and soul to fly to these lovely destinations and inspire you to book that next flight. Cheers and happy travels! ●

Sibyl
@sibyllayag



C O M P A S S
P A S S P O R T

Going Local

*Bangkok, from its quiet side-street cafés
to its gilded Buddhist temples*

Written and photographed by Kit Singson



WE DIDN'T SEE MUCH of the outside when we arrived at Suvarnabhumi Airport. So alighting the Airport Link to some colourful buildings was a pleasant view. My friend and I spent a good 10 minutes taking photos of and by this.



WE CHECKED IN at One Day | Pause and Forward Hostel along Sukhumvit 26. While waiting for our beds, we had lunch at their resident café called Casa Lapin X26.

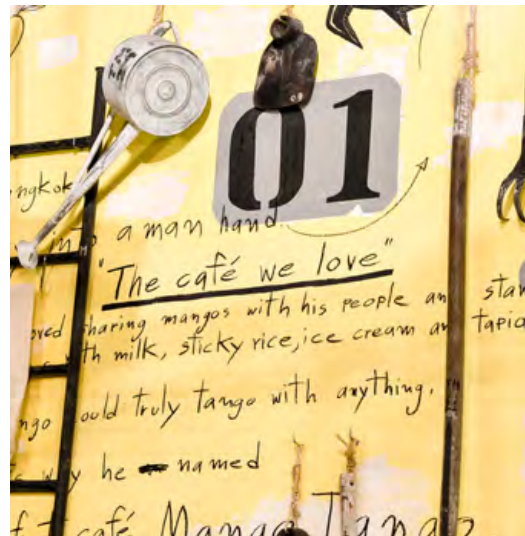


SOME VIGNETTES from the hostel's common areas.
We particularly liked how the sunlight hit different textures of the pantry, including their canvas blinds and a rope ladder attached to a brick wall.



WE HEADED NORTH from Sukhumvit 26 to look for a café we found online called Broccoli Revolution. As with all discoveries, we fell in love the minute we stepped in. Their colourful (and uber healthy) berry mix smoothies were served in bright porcelain bowls and with a wooden spoon.

DIFFERENT DISHES from the Asiatique food court. Chicken Rice, THE best Pad Thai, and Mango Sticky Rice from Mango Tango – a small container van boutique café inside the complex.











THE WHITE TEMPLE wasn't really white. It was all sorts of colourful!
The designs are individual porcelain tiles forming mosaics and patterns on these huge towers and stupas. Walking around was exhausting with the sun right against your back. Avail of the water bottle that comes with your entrance ticket.



CHATUCHAK is a food lover's nest. The side streets are teeming with barkers calling out to hungry tourists and aromatic Tom Yums being delivered to their tables. More fresh fruits, a glass of lansones tea.







I DIDN'T TAKE A LOT OF PHOTOS in Chatuchak and I've filtered it down to interesting portraits of tourists and vendors alike. But it was **CRAZY**. I would go back to Bangkok any day just to shop and have a beer.



Bangkok, Thailand

Bangkok is a whole spectrum of experiences. You could spend two days going around the temples and go shopping at Chatuchak—or you could book four nights at an artist hostel and skip all the temples but one and inhale the cultural air of the city. I mean really dig in there: Memorize the street names, comb the alleys for authentic Pad Thai, step inside a ladyboy strip club on a drunken night, and make your way by foot across kilometres of highway dirt to ridiculously picture perfect coffee shops. Be prepared for a lot of walking and familiarize yourself with the MTR because it's the most convenient means to go around Bangkok. Remember that being mistaken as a local has its merits so embrace the warmth and kindness from the Thai. Better than going where the locals go is acting like a local. Good thing we already look like them!

PLACES TO GO

Definitely dedicate an afternoon going to **Asiatique**, a harbour complex where you can shop, dine, and ride a ferris wheel. For design enthusiasts, **Terminal 21** (and its toilets, yes) is absolute eye candy, while the **Bangkok Arts and Culture Centre** houses a variety of quaint shops and rotating exhibitions you can visit for free.

THINGS TO DO

You mustn't miss hitting the touristy activities like shopping at **Chatuchak** (we spent a good eight hours going around A THIRD of the market) and **visiting the temples**. Some people say seeing Wat Pho (The Temple of the Reclining Buddha) is enough but this will depend on how much of a sight-seer (versus a –doer) you are during trips. For a dose of some nightlife, head to **Khaosan Road**, a popular destination. The street is lined with restaurants and bars that offer delicious food and cheap alcohol. The occasional fellow-tourist friends you'd make are the icing on the cake.

WHAT TO EAT

What not to eat is the question! Bangkok is a huge melting pot of flavors and you can experience it just about anywhere in the city. Refresh yourself with **fresh fruits and juices** from any street vendor while on a walk. Get the best **Pad Thai** from the common food court in Asiatique and the most interesting plate of **street food** whatsis and a bottle of **orange juice** (it's so good you have to) outside Wat Pho. Sample **Tom Yum** and **Chicken Rice** from stalls along Chatuchak's periphery and drown the heat with **Thai Iced Tea**. If you're a coffee junkie, you have to get a fix from **I+d Style Café x Brave Roasters**.

Follow Kit's sea-to-summit encounters on Instagram @kitsingson.



C O M P A S S
B A C K P A C K

A Scenic Escape

*Why Dumaguete, Negros Oriental should be
on every nature lover's bucket list*

Written and photographed by Cy Yambao



W

When I first visited Dumaguete, I was fortunate enough to spend a couple of days in a beach resort on a cliff, from where I can see the nearby island of Siquijor over the horizon. I promised myself I would be back to explore more of the city's natural attractions, including places of interest in Negros Oriental's neighboring islands. Two years later, I found myself on a leisure trip with friends, in which we rode ferries and boats as if they were jeepneys, watched dolphins emerge from the water a few hours after sunrise, climbed steep paths, walked amidst abundant greenery, took a dip in lagoons, and played with powdery white sand. Dumaguete, despite being one of the most underrated tourist spots in the country, certainly deserves a second visit—even a third, a fourth, and a fifth—for its laidback atmosphere and overwhelming beauty. ●

A 40-MINUTE *HABAL-HABAL* RIDE brought us to this paradise, popularly known as Balinsasayao Twin Lakes in the town of Sibulan, Negros Oriental. Boats and kayaks can be rented to take you to the other side, where a climb up the viewing deck allows you to appreciate the calming stillness of both the Balinsasayao and Danao lakes from a vantage point.




IT WAS A DREAM COME TRUE to encounter these dolphins in their natural habitat! We woke up extra early for the hour-long boat ride along Bais Bay and onto Tañon Strait. We had to rely on pure luck just for a sighting—they jump out of the water so fast, they would often be gone by the time our heads shifted to where our tour guide was pointing.



AFTER DOLPHIN WATCHING, we headed to the Manjuyod White Sand Bar, where we experienced swimming right in the middle of the deep blue seas and watching fishermen dive only a few meters away. The boat ride to this strip of white sand beach involved battling stronger winds and bigger waves, so imagine my relief after our small motorized boat has been docked safely beside one of the house-on-stilts available for rent.



INSTEAD OF RIDING A *HABAL-HABAL*, we ended up trekking the steep and narrow road that leads to the breathtaking Pulangbato Falls. Its name was derived from the reddish rocks that give the water flowing from the falls a rusty color. We opted not to go for a swim, but we did spend a good time simply sitting on the rocks and letting the sound of the water streaming down take over.



THE ONLY WAY to get closer to the falls was to step from one rock to another, occasionally dipping your toes in the freezing water.




THE SAME TRICYCLE DRIVER who brought us to Balinsasayao Twin Lakes drove us to Pulangbato Falls in Valencia, which is approximately an hour away from Dumaguete City. Located within the vicinity of an active volcano, the uphill road to the waterfalls has rock formations emitting sulfur fumes.



CAMBUGAHAY FALLS is one of the most frequented attractions in Siquijor, an island province accessible via a two-hour ferry ride from Dumaguete. A hundred and thirty five steps down the main road, this majestic beauty welcomes you with its turquoise waters and surrounding lush trees. One of its three lagoons is for the more adventurous, as this is where visitors can try the Tarzan swing, which lets you jump into the water from a thick rope tied to a huge tree.





SIQUIJOR might be one of the provinces people are apprehensive to visit, what with all the myths originating from this island, but the locals turned out to be much more accommodating than we expected. Our tricycle driver-slash-tour guide, who also happens to be a barangay councilor, introduced us to Paliton Beach in his hometown, San Juan, after time constraints prevented us from heading to Salagdoong Beach. We wanted to maximize our remaining hour in this pristine beach so much that we actually didn't mind almost missing the last ferry back to Dumaguete.



Dumaguete

We've heard numerous times how expectations often lead to disappointments. The city of Dumaguete, however, is one of those places where you can look forward to the best that nature has to offer—and wonder with anticipation if life can get any better as each day of your trip passes. This underrated gem in Negros Oriental, which is approximately an hour away from Manila by plane, boasts of unspoiled beaches, lakes, and waterfalls enveloped in verdant landscapes. A ferry ride away from nearby islands, Dumaguete is your gateway to pockets of paradise in the Visayas region.

PLACES TO GO

A handful of islands are conveniently accessible from Dumaguete via ferry. Spend a day at popular diving site Sumilon, explore the marine reserve at Apo Island, appreciate the enchanting sights of Siquijor, or even go on an extended vacation in Cebu. Tours may be booked in advance, but if you prefer to plan the trip yourself, you can just go straight to the port and buy ferry tickets on the spot.

THINGS TO DO

Make the most out of your trip by hiring tricycle drivers as tour guides, as they know exactly where to bring you and even recommend an accurately timed itinerary for the day. Be adventurous enough to ride a *habal-habal* to Balinsasayao Twin Lakes, where you can bask in the beauty of nature aboard a boat or kayak. Get closer to sea creatures by booking a private boat for dolphin watching at Bais Bay, and make a stopover at the Manjuyod White Sand Bar before the high tide sets in. The scenic paths to Dumaguete's attractions make the relatively long tricycle, bus or van, and boat rides worthwhile.

WHAT TO EAT

One should not miss Jo's Chicken Inato, an eat-with-your-hands restaurant whose grilled chicken is reminiscent of Bacolod's chicken inasal. When the heat gets unbearable, head over to Panda Ice Cream Haus, a short walk from Silliman University. Spend a night feeling like a true local as you indulge in street food at Rizal Boulevard. Try the tempura, the city's own version of fish cake or *kikiam*, and allow the sound of the waves in the background wash over your conversation with friends.





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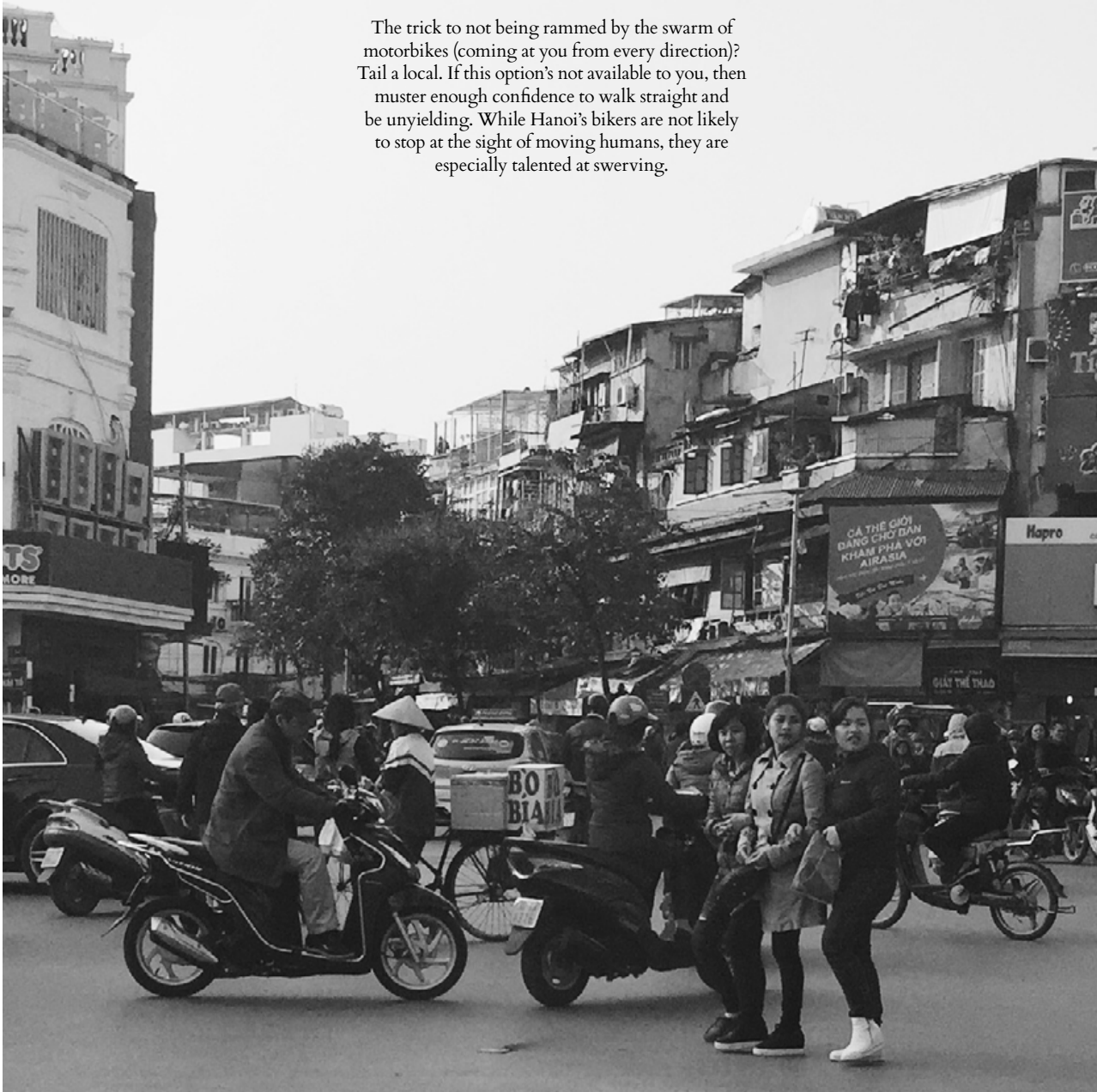
Snapshots of Hanoi in 72 hours

Written and photographed by Danielle Austria

MOPED CITY

Crossing a street in Hanoi is not for the faint-hearted. A Manilaño such as myself would think that she's got her pedestrian game on point but as soon as she realizes that the crosswalk is nothing more than white stripes on asphalt, reaching the other side becomes an adventure.

The trick to not being rammed by the swarm of motorbikes (coming at you from every direction)? Tail a local. If this option's not available to you, then muster enough confidence to walk straight and be unyielding. While Hanoi's bikers are not likely to stop at the sight of moving humans, they are especially talented at swerving.





W

When we think of travelling, there's almost always the pressure to see *everything*, do *everything* and try *everything* that a new place has to offer. We have to make the most of it, and it's understandable to cram so many things in so little time.

But the beauty of travelling is that there's not one right way to do it. Looking back at my three-day winter trip to Hanoi, Vietnam's capital, I noticed that it was short of many little must's that are intrinsic to the city's culture. I was still a tourist in many ways (no shame in that) but I skipped the temples and war museums in favor of long walks around the district, night markets in favor of sleep and street food tours in favor of art.

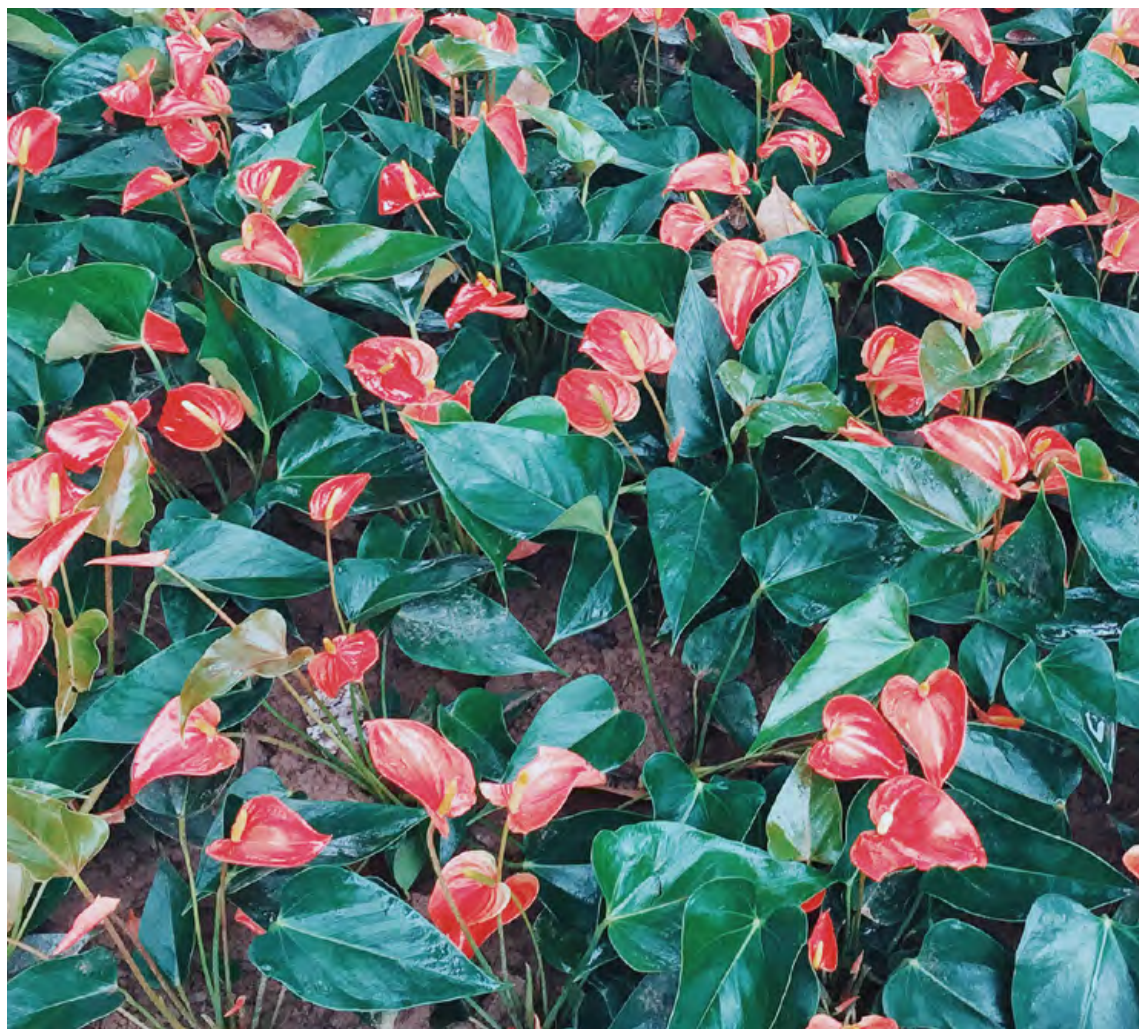
Some would say I missed out. I say, there's a piece of Hanoi for everyone. ●



HOAN KIEM LAKE

Lakes are to Hanoi, as temples are to Bangkok and palaces are to Seoul. There are many of them, each one with a unique story to tell. All of Hanoi's lakes are scenic but its most famous one is Hoan Kiem, after which the Old Quarter's district is named. Hoan Kiem Lake is central to the Hanoian life. It is *always* crowded with locals and tourists out for a stretch or simply looking for respite.

Flower patches and trees adorn Hoan Kiem Lake's surroundings and there is a red wooden bridge that leads to an 18th century Buddhist temple.



LAKES ARE TO HANOI, AS TEMPLES ARE TO BANGKOK
AND PALACES ARE TO SEOUL. THERE ARE MANY OF THEM,
EACH ONE WITH A UNIQUE STORY TO TELL.



CREATIVE CITY

Easily bored with history lessons, but curious about the Hanoi of today? Fret not, always-on millennial, for Vietnam's capital is burgeoning with hipster haunts that capture a younger and more creative-friendly sub-culture. One such space is Hanoi Creative City, a 10-minute ride from Hoan Kiem Lake (30 minutes by foot, I know this by experience), in Luong Yen street, Hai Ba Trung district. Its graffiti-painted, high-rise building is populated by artisanal food shops, indie clothing labels and entertainment zones.

Also check out Hanoi Rock City.



TET ART FAIR.

City from above by Pham An Hai. Hanoi Creative City is the new home of the annual Tet Art Fair, which ran its second show with the theme “A.poth.e.o.sis”. It used to be that Vietnamese families rang in the Lunar New Year by buying pieces of artwork that invite vitality and beauty into their homes, but the tradition was slowly abandoned by the current generation. Tet Art Fair seeks to revive and preserve this custom for posterity, while encouraging support for local and international contemporary artists.

To know more about its advocacy and yearly schedules, visit www.tetart.org.



N92 by Mai Huy Dong.



Trua mua he (Summer noon) by Hoang Duy Vang



TRANG TIEN STREET

One can argue that Trang Tien is the richest street in Hanoi. In the past, it served as the Nguyen Dynasty's treasury and was where Vietnamese coins were minted. Today, Vietnam's well-heeled community come to Trang Tien to hobnob and shop for luxury items. The street's token attraction is Trang Tien Plaza, which sits at the corner of Hoan Kiem Lake. It is Hanoi's first high-end shopping mall, where you can find brands like Louis Vuitton, Dior and BVLGARI, among others. More than just a shopping mecca, Trang Tien street is also lined with art galleries, cultural establishments and theaters.



LIKE MANILA, HANOI IS A CITY OF CONTRASTS. WHILE IT ENJOYS RAPID DEVELOPMENT, LIFE IN THE CAPITAL IS STILL LARGELY GOVERNED BY SIMPLICITY.

An elderly balloon peddler sits on his bike, waiting patiently for patrons to approach. Like Manila, Hanoi is a city of contrasts. While it enjoys rapid development, life in the capital is still largely governed by simplicity. This is more evident in the Old Quarter, where hole-in-the-wall pho joints, backpacker hostels and night markets rule the trade.

HALONG BAY

“Is it one scenery or many sceneries? Is it the scenery in the world or somewhere?” I ask that too, Pham Van Dong.









HALONG BAY

The side trip to Halong Bay is a bittersweet experience. On one hand, it really is a beauty to behold—*otherworldly*, if you will. On the other, it has become one of Vietnam's worst tourist traps, with man-made additions taking away from its natural beauty (artificial lights playing up the mood in caves, contrived souvenir shops everywhere, and just too many people), and the threat of scams and high-way robbery that force some travelers to reconsider. I'll say this much, Halong Bay is not beyond saving but it takes effort from both the local government and tourists to secure its heritage.



HANOI, VIETNAM

PLACES TO GO

Among the most touristy things you can check out: war museums like the Hoa Lo prison and the Museum of Vietnamese Women, cultural establishments like the Hanoi Opera House and the Thang Long Water Puppet Theater (a must!), and historical sites like the Temple of Literature. If, like me, you're not big on the past and you just want to experience the city for what it is now, you can sign up for walking tours around Old Quarter (usually free), go art gallery-hopping or simply find your peace in one of Hanoi's many lakeside views.

THINGS TO DO

A sidetrip to UNESCO-protected Halong Bay (3–4 hours away from the capital) is a quintessential part of the Hanoi getaway. Its emerald waters and numerous, towering limestone formations—Vietnam's answer to our very own El Nido—make it one of the most Instagram-worthy spots in Southeast Asia. Also see: Lan Ha Bay (an alternative to tourist-heavy Halong Bay), the terrace rice fields in Sa Pa—it snows in some winters, traditional handicraft villages of Bat Trang and Van Phuc, the ancient Duong Lam village and the valley of Mai Chau.

WHAT TO EAT

I never had a cup of Vietnamese coffee that I didn't like, from the hotel brew to Cong Caphe's coconut milk version to Giang Café's original egg coffee (yes, you read that right). Vietnam is another layer of heaven for caffeine addicts, and Hanoi's local coffee scene is always buzzing with new flavors to try. Pho is obviously not hard to come by in Hanoi. It's practically sold everywhere and is stupid cheap at less than \$2 per bowl. The best banh mi I had was Ahn Nguyen's shawarma fusion, which you can find near the night market at Old Quarter.

Follow Dani on Instagram at [@awsmchos](#) and on her blog [awesomeinmanila.com](#)



QUILL
LITERATURE

Ang
Huling
Habilin

Written by
Apple Noda

Alas-singko y medya na ng umaga subalit laganap pa rin ang kadiliman ng gabing nagdaan—makapal ang habong ng mga maitim na ulap sa kalangitan na tumatakip sa buwan at mga bituin;

marahan ang pagbagsak ng ambong nakikipagsabayan sa paglatag ng hamog sa mga halaman; malimit ang pag-andap ng liwanag sa isa o dalawang poste ng ilaw na siyang lumilikha ng mga aninong animo’y nagsasayaw—tulog pa ang bayan ng San Ildefonso.

Maliban sa isang tao.

Sa murang isip ni Julian, hindi niya aakalain na kakailanganin niyang gawin ito. Ngunit sa labing-anim na taong gulang na ito, talos na ng isip niya ang bigat at tindi ng problema na hinaharap ng pamilya nila.

Dahan-dahang yayapak si Julian sa lupa, pinangungunahan ng takot na baka may makarinig at may makaalam kung saan siya pupunta. Mabilis siyang kikilos, walang lingon-lingon. Didiretso siya sa likod ng simbahan, sa may kakahuyan. Walang maririnig na kahit ano mula sa loob ng maliit na gubat si Julian, nangingibabaw ang katahimikan at malawak ang kalatagan ng dilim. Pero hindi magpapatalo si Julian sa kaba at pangamba; desidido niyang susuungin ang kakahuyan.

Babalansehin sa kaliwang kamay ang isang pala at isang nangangalawang na tabo na may kanin at tutong na hinaluan ng tubig, ipapahid ni Julian ang namamawis niyang kanang kamay sa kupas na pantalong suot at hihinga ng malalim. Bibilisan niya ang lakad paloob sa kakahuyan. Kakainin siya ng masukal na gubat, lalamunin ng dilim at kawalan.

Tuloy-tuloy lang sa paglalakad si Julian at hindi bibigyang pansin ang pag-ingit ng mga puno, ang malamig na hanging umiihip pati ang manakanakang kaluskos sa kung saan man. Nakatuon lang ang isip niya sa isang layunin at kailangan niyang pagtagumpayan iyon.

• • •

Masyadong tahimik ang kapaligiran. Habang banayad na ihip ang hangin mula sa dakong kabukiran, may manipis na ambon namang babagsak mula sa mamula-mulang kalangitan. Wala ang nakasanayan nang bulungan ng mga dahon at sanga, ngunit naroon pa rin ang mga aninong animo’y kalansay na nagsasayaw. Tanging ang mga yapak lang nina Señor Alfredo at Elias sa mabatong landas ang maririnig sa kalawakan ng hasyenda. Kahit na mabigat ang baul na buhat-buhat at aandap-andap ang apoy ng lamparang hawak ng dalawang lalaki, hindi nila iniinda ang sakit ng katawan at lamig ng gabi. Diretso lang ang tingin at lakad ni Señor Alfredo samantalang nakasunod sa kanya si Elias sa likod.

“Alam mo, nagpapasalamat ako sa inyong serbisyo. Sa iyo at sa buo mong pamilya. Malaki ang naging papel ninyo sa buhay namin sa hasyenda. Kung wala kayo, sigurado akong mas

mabigat ang trabaho roon. Muli’y maraming salamat sa walang sawang pagtugon niyo sa mga pangangailangan naming mag-anak.”

Napatingin na lang si Elias sa amo.

Nagsimula nang lumakas ang ulan at unti-unti nang tumitindi ang ihip ng hangin. Lumampas na sila sa entrada ng hasyenda ngunit patuloy lang sa paglakad si Señor Alfredo. Pasikot-sikot na ang dinadaan nilang landas – paikot sa bukirin, sa likod ng isang kubo, patabas ng pilapil – bago sa kanya ang daan ngunit mukhang alam na alam ni Señor Alfredo ang pupuntahan nila. Kung sakali mang magkawalaan sina Señor Alfredo at Elias, siguradong matatagalan si Elias na matunton ang daang pauwi. Nakaka-labimpitong pilapil na sila nang biglang lumiko si Señor Alfredo. Bumibilis ang lakad niya kahit na bumibigat ang nararamdaman niyang pagod. Sumapit sila sa isang kambal na puno ng mangga at doon sila tuluyan nang tumigil. Hindi niya napansing nasa loob na pala sila ng kakahuyan, malapit sa likod ng simbahan ng kabilang ibayo. Dahan-dahang ibinaba ni Señor Alfredo ang baul mula sa pagkakabuhay at isinandig ito sa puno ng mangga. Isinabit nila ang lampara sa isang nakausling sanga at nagsimula nang maghukay. Ngayon, mistulang bagyo na sa lakas ang bagsak ng ulan at pagaspas ng hangin.

Inabot rin sila ng dalawa’t kalahating oras sa paghuhukay ng humigit-kumulang sampung talampakang hukay. Dahil sa ulan, nahirapan silang hukayin ang lupang unti-unti nang nagiging putik. Bago pa man tuluyang gumuho ang nalikha nilang hukay, ipasok na nila ang baul sa loob ng butas na sukat sa sukat sa laki at lalim. Sinisimulan na ni Elias na tabunan ng lupa’t putik ang gusi at nangangalahati na siyang punuin ang butas nang marinig nito ang isang bilin ng Señor.

“Elias, inaatasan kitang magbantay dito. Huwag kang aalis hanggang sa aking pagbalik.”

•••

Maraming tumatakbo sa isip ni Julian habang tinatahak niya ang daan paloob ng kakahuyan. Pilit niyang hinahalugog sa utak niya ang iba pang maaaring paraan para malusutan ang suliranin nila, iba pang solusyon na hindi kasing katawa-tawa nito. Alam niyang hibang lang ang taong maghahanap ng kayamanan sa kakahuyan, sa panahon ng teknolohiya at siyensya. Sino na nga bang matinong tao ang magtatago (o sa kaso niya’y maghahanap) ng kayamanan sa gubat? Bahagi lang ito ng mitong ikinuwento ni Mang Emong pero sa kung anong dahila’y pinatulan niya ito. Hindi niya lubos maisip na ngayo’y nasa gitna na siya ng paghahanap nito. Siguro desperado nga lang siyang talaga. O kung hindi ma’y baliw na rin tulad ni Mang Emong na naniniwala pa sa kayamanan.

Sa gitna ng katahimikan, konsyertong maituturing ang lakas ng pagtibok ng puso at sabay na paghingal ni Julian. Dumadagundong naman ang dating marahang yapak niya na ngayo’y animo’y yabag ng higante sa bawat pagbagsak ng paa niya sa lupa. Naalala niya tuloy si Aling Maring sa paraan ng kanyang paglakad, ang kasera nilang nagpakulong sa ama niya. Padaskol ang mga yabag ni Aling Maring. Komosyon ang bawat hakbang nito— umaalimbukay ang alikabok sa bawat bagsak ng mga paang sikip na sikip na sa suot na tsinelas, umaalog ang taba sa bawat galaw at nagsasayaw sa malaki nitong katawan ang suot na maluwang na bulaklaking daster. Para siyang gulaman kung gumalaw na nasasama ang buong katawan sa tuwing mayuyugyog ang kahit isang bahagi lang nito.

Hawak na naman ng kasera ang paborito nitong abanikong pamaypay sa kanang kamay at plastik na bayong sa kaliwa. Hindi yata't masama ang timpla ng matandang babae; lalo siyang pinatatanda ng manipis at magkasalubong nitong kilay, matiim na tikom ng bibig, at mabalasik na mga mata gayong limampu't isang taong gulang lang naman ang biyudang babae. Uma-umaga ang 'pagkumusta' ni Aling Maring sa kanila bago magpunta sa palengke. Minsan pa'y naaabutan niya si Julian habang nagpapakain ito ng manok at sa batang ito na niya pinadadaan ang 'pangangamusta' nito.

"Magandang umaga po," ang mahinang bati ni Julian. Nagmumukha siyang kuto sa tabi ng dambuhalang babae.

Inangilan kaagad siya ni Aling Maring at tinaasan ng kilay.

"Aba'y huwag mo nga akong minamagandang umaga! Walang maganda sa umaga ko. Ika-anim na buwan n'yo na itong hindi pagbabayad! Sapat na ang palugit ko sa inyo. Dapat nga'y pinalayas ko na kayo. Sus, uupa-upa kayo, tapos hindi naman kayo makabayad sa oras. Mano'ng humanap na kayo ng malilipatan kung hindi n'yo mababayaran ang tatlumpung libo sa linggong ito."

Tahimik lang si Julian, hindi nagtataas ng tingin. Nakatitig lang siya sa mga manok na paikot-ikot sa paanan niya, kumakahig pero hindi naman nanunuka. Lumilipad din ang isip niya habang daldal nang daldal ang kasera nila. Nararamdaman niyang sumisilip na ang sinag ng araw sa pagitan ng mga ulap, unti-unti nang nagigising ang barangay. Humihina na ang huni ng mga kuliglig, dumarami na ang maririnig na ugong ng makina ng traysikel, tumitilaok na ang mga manok at tumatahol na ang mga aso. Nilulunod niya ang sarili sa samut-saring mga tunog sa paligid ngunit sadyang pumapaimbabaw ang namumukod tanging matinis na boses ni Aling Maring. Malayo man ang isip sa kausap, napansin agad ni Julian na tumigil na ang kasera sa napakahabang marakulyo nito.

"So, kelan nga kayo magbabayad?"

"Eh, Aling Maring, hindi ba pwedeng i-extend pa nang kaunti?"

"Tama na ang tatlong linggong palugit ko sa inyo. Kung hindi, ipapakulong ko ang ama mo. Hindi ako nagbibiro. May mga pinsan akong hukom at abogado, hindi ako mangingiming dalhin ito sa korte."

Magsisimula na itong maglakad palayo at mapapansin ni Julian na may dumi ng aso sa daraanan nito.

"Aling Maring!"

Magbibigay-babala sana si Julian kaso hindi na lumingon ang matandang babae at nagtaas pa ng boses.

"Hanggang ngayong linggo na lang kung hindi ay pupulutin niyo sa kulungan ang ama mong baon na baon na sa utang."

Magpapatuloy ito sa paglalakad at maratapakan ng gamusang sapatos nito ang dumi ng aso.

Nang inutusan ni Señor Alfredo si Elias na bantayan ang pinagbabaunan ng baul, bumalik sa alaala ni Elias ang nagdaang sampung taong nanilbihan siya sa pamilya ni Señor Alfredo. Noon pa ma'y sa kanila na siya nakatira, doon sa isang kuwartong inilaan para sa mga katiwala. Parehong tagapagsilbi kasi ang mga magulang niya. Matagal na nilang pinaglilingkuran ang pamilya ng Señor, dalawang salin ng henerasyon na rin ang namagitan sa kasunduan ng dalawang pamilya. Dahil nga sa kasunduang ito, gusto man niya o hindi, siya ang ipinalit sa kanyang ama bilang punong katiwala.

Sa totoo lang, higit pa siya sa pagiging katiwala ni Señor Alfredo. Hindi naman lingid sa lahat na may nakaraan silang dalawa. Palibhasa'y nag-iisang anak si Señor at siya lang ang batang madalas nakikita sa bahay, natutuhan na nilang ituring na kapatid ang isa't isa. Halos magkasama sila sa lahat ng bagay—nakapaglalaro sila nang sabay, naisasama siya sa tuwing lilibutin ni Señor ang hasyenda at kung minsan pa'y nabibigyan siya ng pagkakataong makasama sa mga pamamasyal ng pamilya ni Señor.

Nang si Señor na ang pumalit sa kanyang ama bilang tagapagmana ng hasyenda, siya na ang napili nitong maging kanang kamay. Ginampanan niya nang tapat ang dalawang tungkuling iniatang sa kanya—ang maging punong katiwala ng bahay at maging kanang kamay ng Señor.

Siya ang palaging kasama ni Señor Alfredo sa lahat ng lakad nito, mapa-San Ildefonso man o mapaibayo. Sa tagal ng kanilang pagsasama, napansin niyang may talento siyang manghikayat ng tao para gawin ang anumang iutos niya. Gamit ang talentong ito at mga koneksyon ni Señor Alfredo, nagtagumpay silang palawakin ang kalakalang agrikultura sa San Ildefonso pati na ang paglinang sa lupain ng hasyenda.

Naging tapat siyang kanang kamay kay Señor. Lahat ng iniutos nito'y tinupad niya sa abot ng kanyang makakaya. Malaki ang utang na loob niya at ng pamilya niya sa pamilya ni Señor. Sa pagpapatira, pagkukpok at pagkilala sa kanila bilang halos kadugo na ng pamilya ni Señor—alam ni Elias na kulang pa ang buhay niya para magpasalamat sa mga nagawa nito.

Kaya nang kinailangan nilang lumikas dahil sa mga paglusob ng mga dayo, naaalala niyang hindi siya nag-alinlangan na ihanda ang sarili para protektahan ang Señor.

Dali-dali niyang kinausap ito, ang pamilya nito pati ang mga kasama nilang mga katiwala at nagmungkahi na makitira muna sila sa Maynila kasama ng isang kamag-anak. Kung hindi sila aalis agad, madadamay ang lahat sa napipintong pagsabog ng giyera.

Noong araw na ring iyon, nagmamadaling tumungo si Elias sa kwarto ni Señor Alfredo, sa lugar na inilaan nitong maging kanyang opisina. Nadatnan niyang sinasamsam at itinatabi nito ang mga kagamitan at mga papeles sa ibabaw ng mesa nito.

Magkatulong na pinagsama-sama nina Señor Alfredo at Elias ang mga papeles at inilagay sa isang maliit na baul. Ang iba pang kagamitan ay sa mga kahon itinabi. Malapit nang matapos sa pagliligpit ang dalawa nang mapatingin si Señor Alfredo sa kaha de yero sa may bandang likod ng kuwarto. Napansin na lang ni Elias ang kanyang amo na balisa

“Ano po iyon, Señor?”

Napatingin na lang si Señor Alfredo kay Elias at napakamot ng ulo. Isinuklay nito ang payat at butuhang mga daliri sa maputi niyang buhok.

“Hindi ko kasi maisip kung paano itatago ang laman nung kaha. Ang hirap namang dalhin niyan dahil sobrang bigat. Hindi rin ako nagtitiwala sa mga bangko ng Intsik dito sa atin. At kung iiwan man natin ‘yan dito at nagkataong pasukin ang bahay na ito, siguradong wala na tayong babalikan.” Lumapit si Elias kay Señor Alfredo at bumulong.

“Señor, sa pamilya namin, ibinabaon ng matatanda ang kayamanan nila sa lupa. Dinadala lamang nila ito sa isang lugar na tanging sila lang ang nakakaalam. Pagkatapos, nilalagyan nila ng mga palatandaan ang mga pinagbaunan nila. Kadalasan, ‘yung mga hindi madaling magiba o masira ang ginagamit nilang mga tanda, tulad ng mga puno o malalaking bato. Sa tingin ko naman, wala namang masama kung ibabaon natin ‘yan sa lupa.”

Sandaling nag-isip si Señor Alfredo at napagdesisyunan naman niyang mas mabuti na ngang ibaon na lang muna ang ginto kaysa makuha pa ng iba. Sakto rin namang may alam siyang lupa kung saan sila maaaring humukay.

“Mainam ang payo mo, Elias. Magpaalam ka muna sa iyong pamilya at samahan mo akong magbaon. Magdala ka rin ng mga lampara at pala. Dalian mo’t mahirap nang abutin ng gabi sa labas.”

Ipinasok at isinalansan ni Señor Alfredo ang ginto sa loob ng isang tansong baul. Pagkatapos, binuhat niya ito at ipinatong sa mesa. Bago siya lumabas, kinuha niya ang isang punyal mula sa likod ng aparador. Ito ang punyal na minana niya mula sa kanyang namayapang ama. Dahil hindi ito sanay na hawakan ang punyal, nagitla siya sa kakaibang bigat at lamig nito sa kamay. Sinuri niya ang talim kung maayos pa ang kondisyon nito bago niya isinuksok sa gilid ng pantalon. Lumabas ang Señor ng kuwarto at tinawag ang kanyang maybahay. Nang magkakarap na sila ay tinanong niya ito tungkol sa mga bata at sa iba pang mga katiwala.

“Kaunting pag-iimis na lang ng mga gamit at makalalakad na tayo,” sagot ni Señora Teodora.

“May pupuntahan lang ako sandali. Mauna na kayong umalis, susunod na lang ako. Mag-iwan na lang kayo ng isang kabayo. Dalian ninyo at baka gabihin kayo sa daan. Ipadala mo na lang sa mga katiwala ‘yung mga gamit ko.” Sabi ni Señor Alfredo.

Matapos ang usapan ng mag-asawa, nagkita naman sina Señor Alfredo at Elias sa silong ng bahay. Nakadamit ng pula si Elias at may hawak na dalawang pala at dalawang lampara. Sumaglit muna si Señor Alfredo sa loob ng bahay para ilabas ang baul at saka sila naglakad pahilaga.

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Unang narinig ni Julian ang kuwento ng kayamanan mula kay Mang Emong, iyong lalaking nagche-chess madalas sa kanto. Matanda na si Mang Emong, payatin at maitim ang balat, madalas kasing nabababad ang katawan sa init ng araw sa paglalaro. Kilala siya sa San Ildefonso dahil siya lang ang natatanging chess player na hindi pa natatalo ng kahit na sino sa bayan nila.

Minsang nautusan si Julian na mangutang sa karinderya sa may kanto dahil wala na naman silang tanghalian. Nagkataong naroon naman si Mang Emong at gaya ng nakasanayan, naroon siya’t titig na titig sa mga piyesa ng chess sa mesa. Iniikutan na siya ng langaw at lamok pero hindi niya ito pinapansin dahil ang konsentrasyon nito ay nasa paglalaro.

Saktong paalis na si Julian nang tumawa nang malakas si Mang Emong. Napatingin siya dito pati na ang mga tindera sa loob ng karinderya. Maging ang mga napadaa'y nagulantang rin.

“Paano ba yan? Panalo na naman ako. Mayaman na naman. Ha ha ha!”

Iniabot ng kalaban ni Mang Emong ang natalong ipinustang pera at nayayamot na umalis. Napansin ni Mang Emong na nakatingin si Julian sa kanya. Nilapitan niya ito at tinapik sa balikat.

“O, ikaw ‘yung apo ni Ka Lusing, ‘di ba? Ano’t naparito ka?”

“Mangungutang po sana ako ng tuyo at bigas. Pero hindi na raw ho pwede.”

“Mangungutang? Anong hindi pwede! Aba, apo ka yata ng dating may-ari ng lupain ng San Ildefonso! Sinong nagsabing hindi ka pwedeng bigyan ng tuyo at bigas?”

“Wala naman ho kaming perang pambili. Kung mayaman lang ako...”

Napahumindig si Mang Emong at kinabig si Julian palapit rito.

“Mayaman kayo! Hukayin mo lang ang kayamanan sa gubat.” bulong ng matanda.

“Ayan ka na naman, Mang Emong! Wala naman hong kayamanan doon sa gubat! Kayo lang ang nag-iisip noon.” Matinis ang boses ng nakikinig na tindera sa karinderya, nakapamewang habang paspas nang paspas ng pamaypay sa mga langaw na umaali-aligid.

“Ayaw mong maniwala? Naku, bara ka, halika rito’t ikukuwento ko ang kwento ng kayamanan niyo. Sabi ng mga matatanda, ibinaon raw ang kayamanan niyo doon sa kakahuyan noong sumalakay ang mga Olandes dito sa atin. Doon sa tabi ng kambal na puno ng mangga sa gitna ng kakahuyan, doon may pulang tandang. Palatandaan daw ‘yon. Doon ka huhukay.

Sabi nila, kaluluwang bantay raw ang pulang tandang. Sa totoo lang e mailap yun sa tao. Dati ko na ‘yung himanap pero ‘di pa ako pinapalad. Iilan pa lang naman talaga ang nagsabing nakita nila ang tandang. ‘Sus, baka nga kuwento-kuwento lang nila yun kasi ‘di naman nila mapatunayan ng buo. Sabi nila hindi mo raw talaga ito makikita dahil mabilis pa sa kurap ng mata ang pagsulpot-tago nito.

Malaki raw ‘yung pulang tandang, parang nag-aapoy ang balahibo pati ang pakpak nito. Kapag nasisinagan naman ng araw ay animo’y ginto ang kulay. Sabi ng ilan, makikita itong paikot-ikot at paulit-ulit na kumakahig sa lupa. Nakapagtataka nga e kasi sabi ng mga matatanda na doon lang siya kumakahig sa kinatatayan niya pero hindi naman nagkakahukay ‘yung lugar na yun. Parang parating patag naman daw.

Kilala mo ba si Ka Igme, ‘yung dati kong kalaban dito sa kanto? Yung kalbo na puti yung balbas? Ayun, sinubukan niyang hukayin ‘yung lugar kung saan palaging kumakalahig ‘yung tandang. E mintis yata sa paghuhukay ‘yung pobreng matanda at walang nakuha. Medyo nabaliw ng konti si Ka Igme pagkatapos niyang subukang hanapin ‘yung kayamanan. Parang parating ginugulat, parang parating may kinatatakutan. Lingon nang lingon, tapos minsan, nagsasalita siya nang mag-isa. Nakakatakot. Wala nang may alam kung nasaan siya ngayon.

Si Manang Flor, ‘yung tindera ng manggang hilaw dito sa atin tuwing hapon, ‘e sinabihan din ‘yung anak niya para hukayin ‘yung kayamanan sa gubat.

Walang nakakaalam kung natuloy ba siyang humukay kasi bigla siyang nagka-nervous breakdown. Sabi ng marami, kinakausap daw ng anak ni Manang Flor ‘yung mga hayop sa paligid niya. Parang si Ka Igme, nawengwang din yung binata. Nasiraan ng bait.

Mukhang may sumpa pa nga yata ‘yung paghahanap ng kayamanan. Pero ayos lang iyon bata, baka ‘pag ikaw ang humukay e okey lang. Ha ha ha! Kamukhang-kamukha mo pa naman ang lolo mo. Baka umamo sa’yo ‘yung tandang at ibigay na lang sa’yo yung kayamanan.”

Natatawang tinapik-tapik ni Mang Emong ang likod ni Julian na siya namang mataman ang pag-iisip. Inabutan niya ang batang lalaki ng isang plastik ng tuyo at dalawang takal ng kanin. “O, iuwi mo na ‘yan. Ako nang bahala dito.”

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“Elias, ikaw ang inaatasan kong magbabantay niyan. Huwag kang aalis hanggang sa aking pagbalik.”

Mabilis kumilos si Señor Alfredo. Bago pa nalaman ni Elias ang nangyayari, naitarak na ng Señor ang punyal sa kanyang likod. Mabigat na bumagsak ang katawan ni Elias sa tinatabunang gusi at umagos ang dugo mula sa kanyang sugat. Naghihingalong hinila ng lalaki ang punyal sa kanyang likuran at sinubukang tumayo ngunit tuluyan nang bumigay ang tuhod nito sa sakit at pagod. Unti-unti nang naghalo ang ulan, dugo at putik sa hukay at hindi naglaon ay sinipsip na rin ito ng lupa. Maya-maya pa ay nilagutan na ng hininga ang punong katiwala.

Dali-daling tinabunan ni Señor Alfredo ang katawan ni Elias ng natitira pang nahukay na lupa. Sa bawat pagpapala nito ay inaalayan niya ng dasal ang patay. Nagpapalitos na ang mga kamay at hila na ng luha ang mga mata ng Señor ngunit wala pa rin itong pagtigil sa pagtatabon. Hindi naglaon ay natapos niya rin ito at nagsimula na siyang bumalik sa hasyenda para sumunod sa kanyang pamilya.

Lingid sa kaalaman ng Señor ay nagbalik si Elias. Bumalik ito para tuparin ang habilin ng Señor na pagpapabantay sa kanya.

Kilalang-kilala niya ito at alam na niya ang takbo ng isipan ng amo. Malayo na ang inabot nilang dalawa at pareho sila ng pinapahalagahan, pareho silang may pinoprotektahan.

Totoong dugo at pawis ang ibinuwis niya noong gabing iyon. Nang itarak ng Señor ang punyal sa likod niya, naramdaman niyang isinalang niya ito sa pinakamalaking misyong kailangan niyang tuparin. Makiroto at mahapdi, pero tiniis niya ang sakit dahil alam niyang siya lang ang pinagkakatiwalaan ng Señor. Sa kanya lang niya iaatas ang tungkuling pangalagaan at bantayan ang produkto ng buhay niya, ng buhay nilang dalawa.

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Sa wakas na naaninag na ni Julian ang gitna ng kakahuyan, doon kung saan may kambal na puno ng mangga. Dali-dali nitong lalapitan ang puno at huli na bago niya mapansin ang pulang tandang na katabi ng puno. Nakatingin lang ang tandang kay Julian. Dadakot si Julian sa lata at isasaboy na sana niya ang mga butil ng basang kanin nang mapansin niyang iuod na ito. Mahuhulog sa kamay niya ang dakot na kanin na siya namang lalapitan ng tandang. Nandidiring ihahagis ni Julian ang

laman ng lata sa tandang na nakatunghay sa kanya at itataktak pa ang natitirang laman sa lupa. Hindi naman magdadalawang-isip ang tandang at agad itong tutukain.

Maubos ng tandang ang mga butil ng kanin at babaling ito kay Julian; mapilit ang tinging ipupukol sa kanya. Titingin pa ang bata sa loob ng lata ngunit ubos na ang kanin at wala na siyang maibigay. Mag-iingay ang tandang at tutukain ang mga paa ni Julian. Nakapagtata kang halos malambing ang pagtuka ng pulang tandang na parang halik ang dampi nito sa mga paa niya.

Maaalala ni Julian ang pakay niya sa kakahuyan at pagbabalingan na ang kanyang paghuhukay. Dala ng tagal ng panahon at pagbabago-bago ng anyo ng lupa, hindi nagtagal at naaabot na rin ng pala ni Julian ang baul.

Sisirain na ni Julian ang kandado at makikita ang ginto sa loob. Malulula ang bata sa nakalulunod na dami ng piraso ng ginto. Hindi malaman ni Julian kung tatawa ba o iiyak sa sobrang saya. Idadawdaw nito ang kamay sa baul at hahawakan ang kayamanan.

Makakarinig siya ng malakas na tilaok ng tandang. Hahanapin niya ang pinanggalingan nito at lilinga sa paligid niya. Makikita niya ang pulang tandang na nakatuntong sa itaas ng sanga ng punong mangga. Mataman siya nitong tinitingnan. Pareho silang hindi titinag—si Julian at ang tandang. Maya-maya'y palapit na ang tandang. Hihilahin ni Julian ang bagong hukay na kayamanan at tuloy-tuloy na aatras palayo. Maaalala niya ang mga kuwento ni Mang Emong at pangungunahan ito ng takot dahil hindi naman nasabi sa mga kuwento na hinahabol ng tandang ang sinumang makakita dito. Maiisip din nito ang mga taong nasiraan ng ulo dahil nakita nila ang tandang. Habang paatras ay mararamdaman niya ang tindi ng init ng araw sa batok at likod nito habang nakikipagtitigan siya sa tandang na humahakbang patungo sa kanya. Hindi malaman ni Julian kung epekto ba ng init o talagang lumalabo na ang paningin niya nang napapansin niyang sa bawat pagkurap niya'y parang naglalaho na ang tandang. Dahil sa takot na baka iniengkanto siya ng tandang ay dali-dali itong tatalikod at pakaladkad na itarakbo ang gusi. Sa paghahangos nito, hindi niya mapapansin na masasabit ang isang pulang pakpak sa tali ng gusi.

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Nangamba si Elias. Natakot siyang baka hindi na siya balikan ng Señor at tuluyan na siyang matali sa tungkuling hindi na maisasakatuparan kailanman. Ngunit dinaig pa rin ng pangungulila at pagaasam na makita ang amo ang nararanasang pagkabalisa ni Elias sa pagkakaiwan sa kaniya doon. Matibay ang pananalig niyang si Señor ang magbibigay ng kalayaan niya.

Hindi na niya mabilang ang panahong dumaan nang biglang isang umaga, bago lumapat ang unang banaag ng araw sa kakahuyan, ay dumating rin ang Señor na may hawak na pala at tabo. Sa wakas ay mukhang kukunin na nito ang kayamanang ibinaon. Mataman nitong tinitigan ang Señor dahil mukhang bumata yata ito.

Minatiyagan niya ang paghuhukay ng Señor. Matagal niyang inaagaw ang atensyon nito ngunit mukhang hindi siya nakikilala. Sabik na nilapitan ni Elias ang lalaki ngunit parang natakot pa ito. Hila-hila ang baul ng dalawang kamay, tumalilis itong nahihintakutan. Hahabulin sana ni Elias ang Señor pero nakita niyang may naiuwi naman itong bahagi niya. Matibay ang paniniwalang babalikan siya ng Señor, umupo itong muli sa tabi ng puno ng mangga. ●



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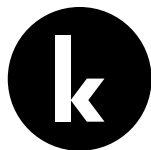
PARTING SHOT

A VISUAL ENDNOTE

Photographed by Joy Meryll Ngo

I find joy and fascination walking along the streets of Milan. Aside from the generally cool weather, the city is a creative hub bursting with art, history, and fashion. But even in a city whose creative revolutions and technologies is oriented towards the future, it has always treated its past with reverence. Just take these quaint and charming trams, which not only transports people to their stops but momentarily takes you back in time, subtly reminding us that wherever our destination may be, we always have to remember where we came from.

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