



Labour, craft and tradition, and their roles in the emerging models for social, economic and environmental sustainability. Extracting the fibres of the pineapple leaf, Puerto Princesa, May 8, 2007.

A Philippines Internship Report Part I

A recap of input and output from the first month of a two-month, two-part design internship in the Philippines. Part I Locations include Manila and Puerto Princesa; dates span April 25 to May 27, 2007.

Jeff Werner
ECI #0027662
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The repositioning of social welfare in a broader context. A fashion show in a major Manila shopping centre featuring garment accessories produced by the village weavers we worked with in the provinces. April 25, 2007.

What have you been up to?

Part I of the internship revolved around the Rurungan sa Tubod Foundation, an independent organization in the Palawan province of the Philippines that has implemented—and more importantly, continues to maintain—a social welfare program that establishes economically viable weaving centres in small villages.

A cooperative arrangement between Rurungan and the Emily Carr Institute in Vancouver, Canada was created to send two ECI students to work with and provide Rurungan with design expertise and knowledge while allowing us, the interns, to learn about sustainable craft and broader social, economic and political issues both within design and without.

ECI selected myself and fellow Industrial Design student Raneen Nosh for the internship. Our travel and living expenses were provided by the Institute

while accommodation and meals were provided by Rurungan at their training and administrative centre in Puerto Princesa, Palawan.

In short, Rurungan trains women in small fishing villages to weave high-end, marketable piña textiles, a pineapple-based textile unique to the Philippines, as an entrepreneurial endeavour that provides supplementary income and a greater level of independence. The weavers work from home as they see fit and work for themselves, selling their output to the Rurungan foundation, which guarantees a certain return on their work and then markets and sells it locally and internationally.



Where and how does the economy fit with the people, and vice-versa? Women of the Anilawan weaving centre, May 2, 2007.

What have you learned?

Our learning involved understanding the origin of the province's socio-economic problems and the various methods used to resolve them, then compiling and distilling the accomplishments and aims of the Foundation and disseminating them in a new data-driven website at <http://rurungan.org>. We also visited two weaving centres and met with, interviewed and worked with people involved at all levels of the organization, from the pineapple farmers to fibre extractors, weavers, administrators and marketers. We also visited the show rooms in Manila and met with established designers involved with Rurungan and beyond.

The bulk of our work was the creation of a new website for the Foundation. Raneen handled the design while I did the construction.

A notable, 24-hour excursion outside our work with the Foundation was spent learning, first-hand, the entire process behind one of Palawan's primary economic drivers, fishing, from fitting the boats to net fishing with 25 men in the middle of the night to trucking goods to buyers to selling in the local markets.

Additionally, I also managed to immerse and develop my skills in short video production, Final Cut Pro and the blogging tool WordPress.

As for how these experiences will impact my professional practice the key word there is 'will': in some ways I must discover that upon my return to ECI. However, I am currently thinking about this question and will have a clearer idea after processing the remaining portion of the internship.



Where do our goods and services come from, who benefits most from their trade, and how will these sources change in the future of a developing nation? Swimming the catch of fish to shore off the coast of Puerto Princesa, May 22, 2007.

Appendix (Output at jeffwerner.ca)

[Photography](#)

60-photo selection of the more than 1,500 made.

[Ukay-Ukay](#)

The used clothing store phenomenon in Baguio City.

[Wikipedia editing and additions](#)

Some gaps relevant to the projects that are being filled in on the global encyclopedia.

[Bacon Sandwich](#)

With Pablo and Ali, Host family home, Puerto Princesa, 1:00:

[Puerto 1](#)

Video walk-through of market activity, 0:33.

[Tools and Modifications](#)

Third set of various design observations in the Philippines.

[Peace Corps Online](#)

Features my photo of a Manila newspaper regarding the killing of a PC worker.

[Underground River](#)

A 2:40 video of an excursion to the Underground River attraction, Puerto Princesa.

[Philippines Nagtabon](#)

A short video of a bicycle visit to the fishing village and beach near Puerto Princesa.

[Filipino web designer network forum](#)

Including a discussion started with replies of links to other Filipino graphic designers.

[An Inconvenient Truth](#)

A Filipino blogger re-posts my photo of election campaign advertising.

[Security, Use and Packaging](#)

More design observations from the Philippines.

[Welcome to Puerto](#)

A short video walk-through of the first look at Puerto, from the airport tarmac.

[Out of / In Place](#)

Design observations of a guest room at a family home in Manila, Philippines.

[Philippines Traffic](#)

Video from Manila, Philippines, April 27, 2007

[Philippines Mall](#)

Video from Manila, April 28, 2007