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# LYCEUM

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TRAVEL REPORT

2016

MICHAEL HONYAK

SECOND PRIZE: TWO MONTHS TRAVEL

S O U T H E A S T A S I A



JUNE 21-24

TODAY WAS THE FIRST DAY OF MY EXPLORATION AFTER HAVING A LAYOVER IN NARITA AIRPORT IN JAPAN. WHILE THE SUMMER SOLSTICE WAS A FEW DAYS AGO, I ROSE WITH THE SUN AT 5:30AM AND FELT THE TRUE ENERGY OF THIS ENVIRONMENT. TODAYS ADVENTURES WERE TO PADANG PADANG, ULUWATU TEMPLE AND SULUBAN BEACH TOWN. PADANG PADANG IS A PLACE WHERE LIGHTS ARE AFFIXED WITH WIRE TO TREES, ROADS ARENT PAVED, OVERGROWTH CONSUMES, AND THE STRUCTURES ARE BUILT ATOP ROCKY SLOPES WITH CONCRETE SLABS CRUDELY BUILT. NEVER EXPERIENCING ANYTHING OF THIS SORT BEFORE, MY EYES WERE TAKING IN THE BEAUTY OF HAVING NO CODE. YOU ARE FORCED TO STAY IN THE PRESENT MOMENT, BECAUSE IF NOT YOU MAY TRIP DOWN THE SIXTEEN INCH STEPS. ULUWATU TEMPLE, MY NEXT STOP, BEGAN WITH WEARING MY FIRST SARONG. HERE IT IS MORE ABOUT THE JOURNEY THAN THE DESTINATION. THE WINDING PATH THAT MEANDERS ALONG A FEW HUNDRED-FOOT-TALL SEA CLIFFS INSTILLED SUBLIME FEELINGS AS I HEADED TOWARD THE TEMPLE. THE RAILINGS WERE OF CONCRETE, BUT CRUMBLING IN SOME PLACES EXPOSED BRICK CONSTRUCTION UNDERNEATH. A PACK OF ABOUT THIRTY MONKEYS WALKED ALONG SIDE ME AT ONE POINT EATING BANANAS AND CORN. TRYING TO FOCUS ON THIS REALITY, I WAS DISTRACTED LONG ENOUGH FOR ONE OF THEM TO SNEAK UP FROM BEHIND AND SNATCH THE GLASSES RIGHT OFF MY FACE. NOW AT THE TEMPLE, THERE WAS A MASSIVE STAIRCASE THAT LED TO THE WORSHIP STRUCTURE AT THE TOP. THIS ARRIVAL SEQUENCE EXPOSED THE HIGHER POWER TO ME. THE WORSHIP STRUCTURE AT THE TOP HAD DETAILS ON TOP OF DETAILS WITH STATUES OF ANIMALISTIC FIGURES, THRESHOLDS THAT LEAD TO MORE THRESHOLDS, AND ROOF STRUCTURES OF THE MOST INTRICATE I HAVE EVER SEEN. WOMEN CARRYING BASKETS ON TOP OF THEIR HEADS HEADED INTO THE MAIN WORSHIP SPACE WITH BOXES MADE OF LEAVES, FLOWERS AND INCENSE INSIDE. I HEADED TO SULUBAN NEXT, A PLACE THAT IS HARD TO KNOW WHERE YOU ARE GOING AND LEADS TO A MASSIVE CAVE AT THE BEACH BELOW. THE BUILDINGS HERE WERE EVERYTHING FROM CORRUGATED METAL AND BAMBOO SHACKS MIXED WITH UPSCALE TOURIST TRAPS FILLED WITH LOCAL KNICK KNACKS. ARRIVING AT THE CAVE BELOW WAS AWE INSPIRING DUE TO THE SHEER SIZE. WATER TRICKLED DOWN THE ROCKS THAT MONKEYS SAT UPON AND INCENSE FILLED THE AIR. IT WAS LOW TIDE SO I WAS ABLE TO WANDER OUT ONTO THE BEACH AND EXPERIENCE THE RAW BEAUTY OF SEA CLIFFS.



INDONESIA

BALI . BUKIT PENINSULA



# JUNE 25

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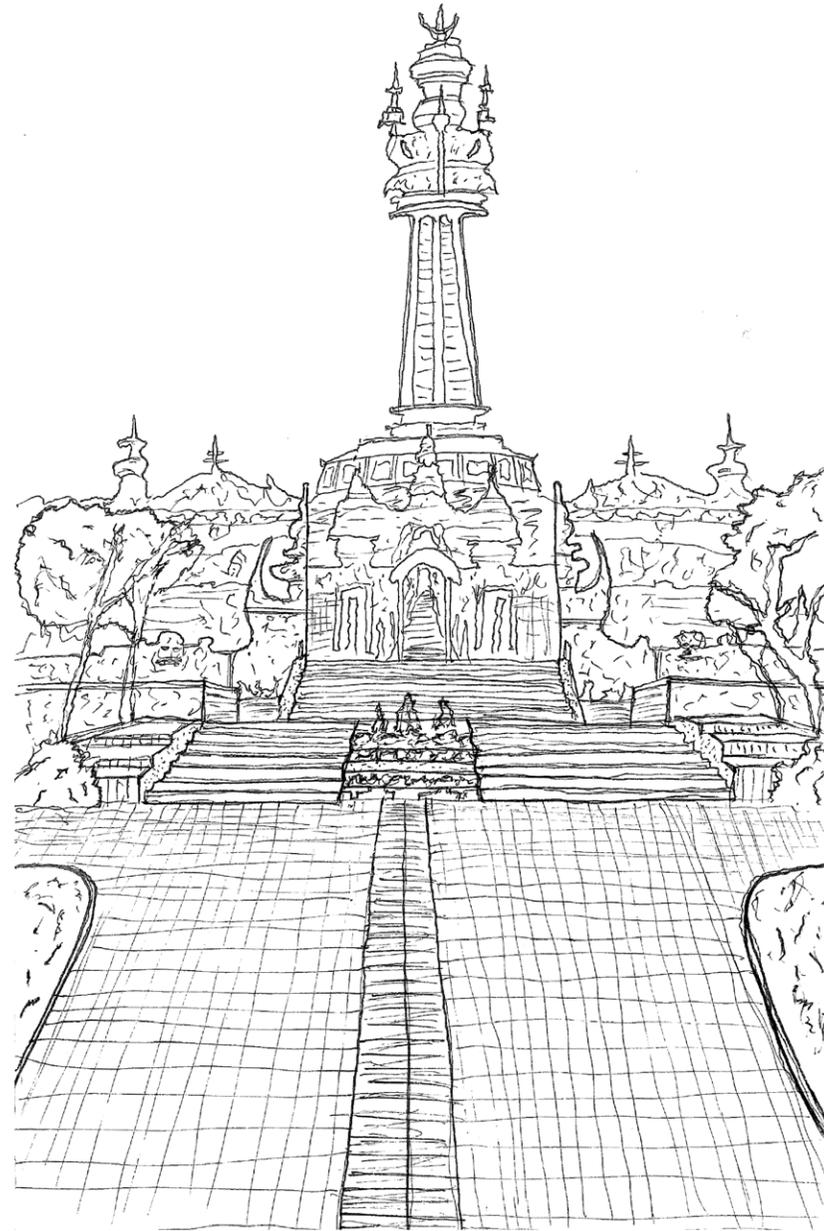
TODAY I TOOK A RIDE OVER MANY LONG BRIDGES OVER THE OCEAN TO GET TO SANUR, A CITY THAT SEEMED TO BE QUITE BUSY. THE CONSTANT SOUND OF SCOOTERS ALLURED ME TO RENT ONE AND TO CHECK OUT MANY OF THE LOCAL PLACES TO EAT, TEMPLES, AND THE MONUMENT. AT FIRST, I WAS LOST RIDING ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE ROAD, BUT QUICKLY FOUND MYSELF COMFORTABLE WITH A GPS. THE LOCALS SAID THAT THIS IS THE CRAZIEST PLACE TO DRIVE, AS THERE ARE NO RULES ON THE ROAD (WHERE TO DRIVE, SPEED LIMITS, ETC.). I STOPPED AT MANY STREET VENDORS AND A RESTAURANT COMPOSED OF A BEAUTIFUL THATCHED ROOF WITH BAMBOO TIED WITH CORDAGE BEAUTIFULLY. FROM HERE I HEADED TO PURA BLANJONG. THIS SACRED WORSHIP SPACE WAS EMPTY AND HAD MANY SHRINES AND PLACES TO PRAY. EACH HAD ITS OWN UNIQUE STONE FOUNDATION AND EITHER BAMBOO OR THATCHED ROOF. THE AIR WAS MUSTY WITH INCENSE AND I COULD FEEL THE PRESENCE OF THE PAST. AFTER LOOKING AT LOCAL TRADE SHOPS AND EXPLORING HOW PEOPLE MAKE A LIVING HERE, I WENT TOWARDS THE MAIN CITY PARK WHICH HOUSES THE BAJRA SANDHI MONUMENT. I WAS UNAWARE THAT IT WAS RAMADAN AND THE PARK WAS VERY ALIVE WITH FAMILIES PLAYING AND EXERCISING. I WAS ABLE TO GET INTO THE MONUMENT BEFORE DUSK AND THIS WAS THE PERFECT TIME. THE AMOUNT OF EXTRAVAGANT DETAIL THAT WENT INTO EVERY INCH OF STONE BLEW MY MIND. THE CONTRAST FROM THE SHADOWS REVEALED EVERY CREVICE AND DREW ME CLOSE. WITH EVERY STEP, I SAW MORE AND MORE. INSIDE THE MONUMENT IS A CIRCULAR PATH THAT TOLD THE STORY OF THE MONUMENT AND HOW IT WAS CONSTRUCTED BY MEN WITH ONLY HAMMERS AND CHISELS. I WAS PREVIOUSLY SIDING WITH THE ORNAMENTATION AND CRIME ARGUMENT, BUT THIS EXPERIENCE CHANGED MY MIND COMPLETELY. HERE, IT EXPRESSED THE HUMAN TOUCH AND EVOKED FEELINGS.



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# INDONESIA

# BALI . SANUR



# JUNE 26

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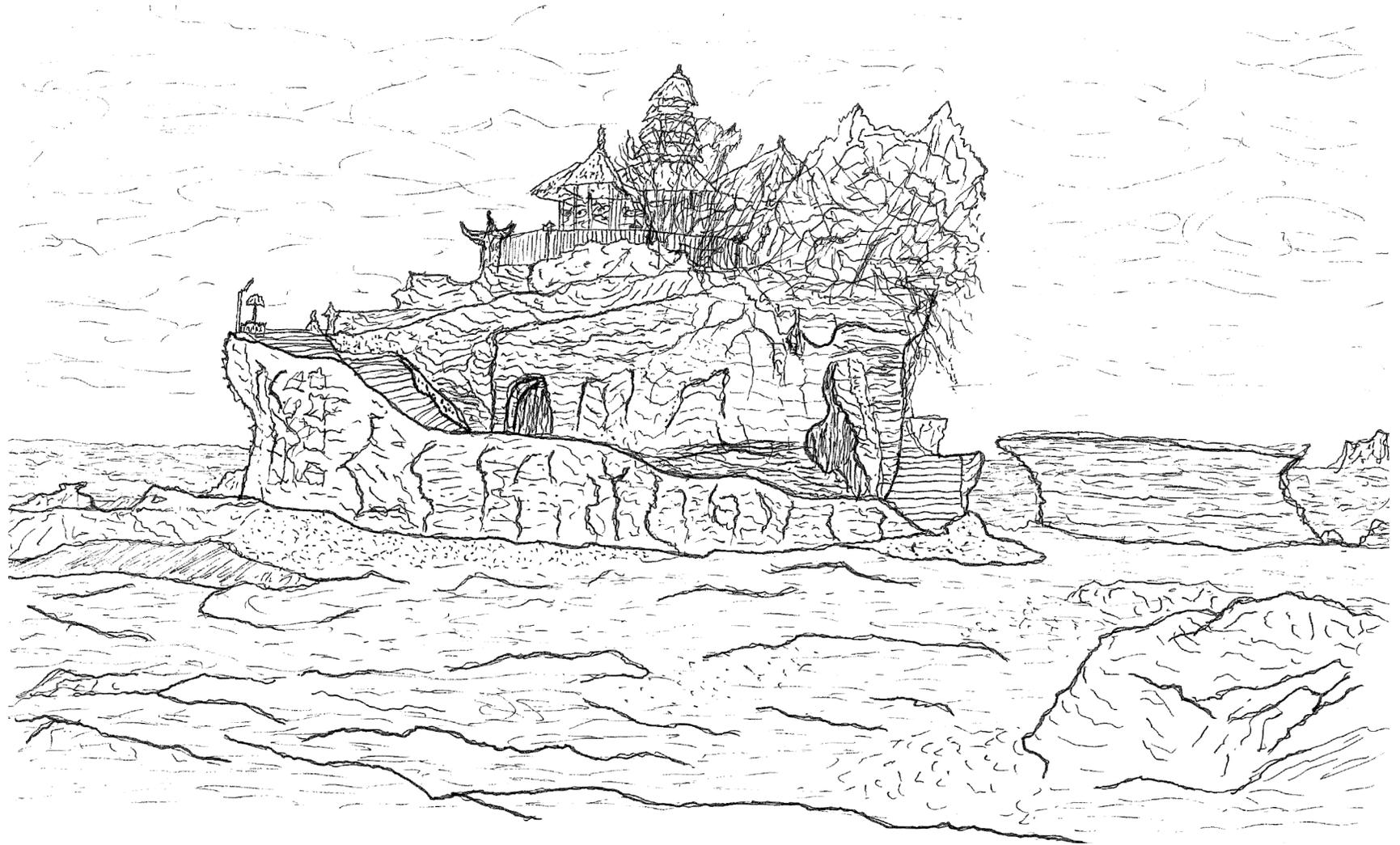
FROM SANUR I RODE OVER TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ISLAND TO SEE TANAH LOT TEMPLE AND THE CITY DENPASAR ON THE WAY. DENPASAR WAS WILD AND I DONT THINK IT EVER STOPS MOVING. ON THE AFTERNOON RIDE THROUGH STREETS, EVERY INCH WAS FILLED WITH VENDORS AND BUSTLING PEOPLE. ON THE WAY BACK AT IT MAY HAVE BEEN JUST AS FAST, WITH NIGHT LIFE COMING ALIVE AND NIGHT MARKETS LIGHT UP WITH VIBRANT COLORS SPILLING OUT IN ALL DIRECTIONS. THROUGH THE RURAL PATHS I TOOK, I ALSO SAW THE OPPOSITE. IT WAS QUIET, PEACEFUL, THE PEOPLE ALL SEEMED HAPPY ALTHOUGH THEY DIDNT HAVE MUCH AND IT WAS DIRTY. METAL ROOFS THE DONT FIT TOGETHER HELD UP BY WHATEVER WAS AVAILABLE GOT THE JOB DONE IN THIS AREA. THEN THOUGH SOME RICE FIELDS AND COFFEE PLANTATIONS THE TERRACED HILLS STOOD OUT AND DEMANDED THE EYES PRESENCE. I TOOK A QUICK WALK THROUGH SOME AND TRIED LUWAK COFFEE (BEANS EATEN BY A LUWAK AND POOPED OUT AND THEN ROASTED). THE LOCALS TOOK ME INTO THE KITCHEN TO SEE THE ENTIRE PROCESS AND IT WAS FASCINATING AND TASTED GREAT! ARRIVING AT TANAH LOT TEMPLE WAS MORE TOURISTY THEN EXPECTED, BUT GAVE ME THE CHANCE TO TALK AND WALK THE MARKETS ALONG THE WAY, EATING ROASTED CORN AND LOOKING AT ART AND CLOTHING. I CAME AT LOW TIDE SO THE TEMPLE WAS ACCESSIBLE AND WAS LIKE NOTHING I COULD HAVE EXPECTED. A STONE MONOLITH CARVED INTO A BEAUTIFUL ARTISTIC FORM WITH STAIR CASES CASCADING UP EITHER SIDE. I WAS UNAWARE OF THE FRESH WATER SPRING UNDERNEATH THE TEMPLE, AND DUE TO THE HOLIDAY, THERE WERE MEN GIVING BLESSING AFTER WASHING YOUR FACE WITH THE HOLY WATER POURING OUT OF A STONE RESEMBLING GANESH. SEEING THE TEMPLE WAS ONE PART OF THE DAY, WHILE EXPERIENCING THE CULTURE AND ACTIVITIES WAS ANOTHER.



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# INDONESIA

# BALI . SANUR



## JUNE 27

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THIS WAS A TRANSFER DAY, I PACKED UP AND STARTED MOVING TOWARD THE CITY OF UBUD AT AROUND MID-DAY. AFTER THE LONG DRIVE, I TOOK SOME TIME TO UNDERSTAND THE CITY AND ROAMED THE STREETS TO UNDERSTAND MY NEW SURROUNDINGS. I COULD TELL WITHIN THE FIRST HOUR THAT THIS WAS A VERY CULTURAL DISTRICT AND EVERYONE WAS INVOLVED IN SOME SORT OF ART OR CRAFT LIKE THE BAUHAUS ON A CITY SCALE. I WATCHED MEN CARVE WOOD, ANIMAL BONES, AND ROLL HAIR LIKE BLANKETS FOR ROOFS. EVERYONE WAS SPIRITUAL AND PRAYER HAPPENED AT 6AM, NOON, AND 6PM I WAS TOLD. THERE WERE ALSO MANY TYPES OF TEMPLES ALL USED FOR DIFFERENT PURPOSES, FROM THE LARGE FORMAL ONES TO THE SMALL ONES OUTSIDE HOMES. INCENSE WAS ALWAYS LIT AND OFFERINGS TO THE GODS COULD BE FOUND VIRTUALLY EVERYWHERE, SO MUCH THAT IT BECAME RUBBISH SPREAD THROUGHOUT THE STREETS. THE FOOD HERE WAS THE BEST SO FAR AND THE VIBES WERE RADIANT WITH LOVE.



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# INDONESIA

BALI . UBUD

# JUNE 28

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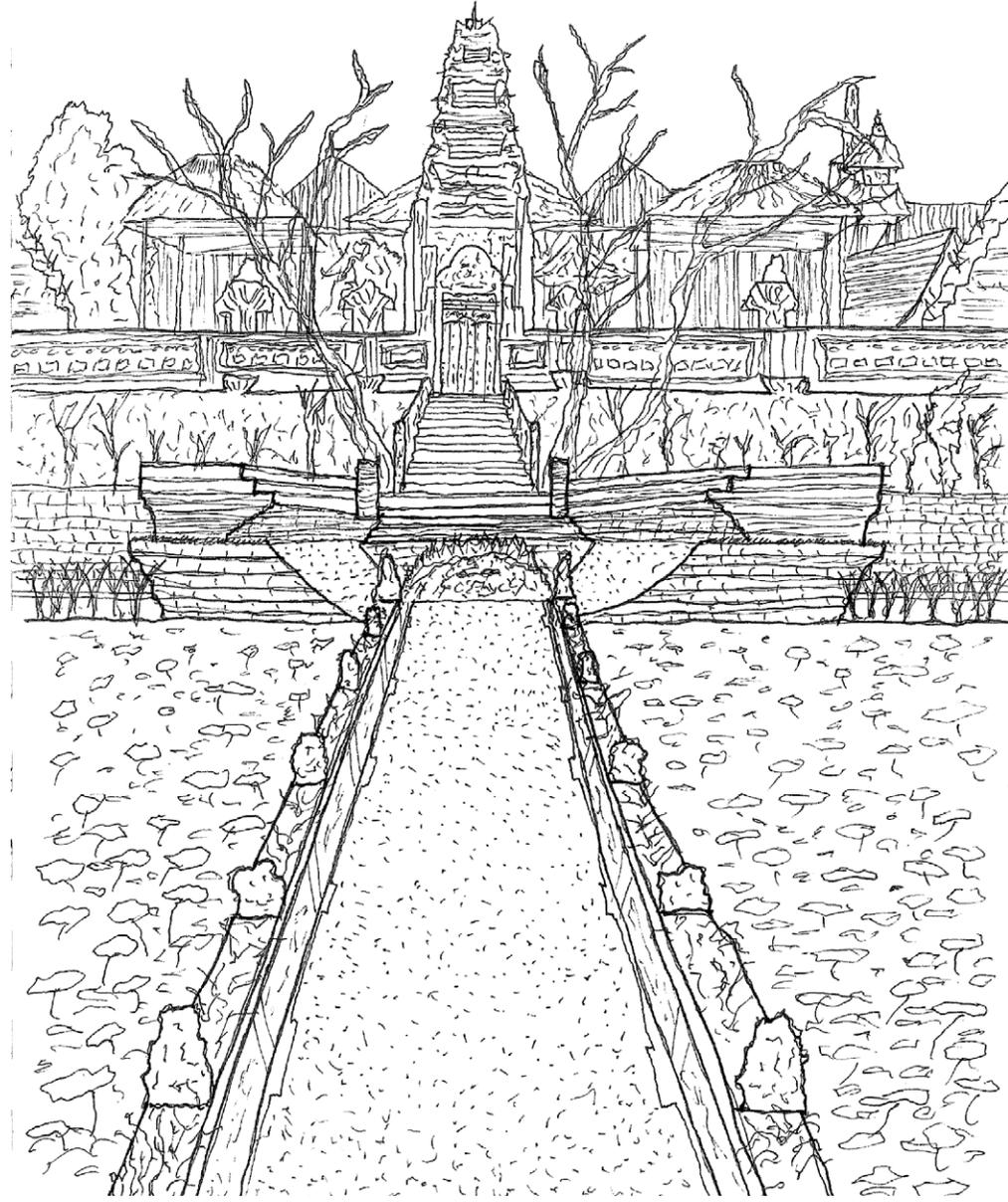
I ROSE EARLY TODAY TO BEAT THE CROWDS TO THE SACRED MONKEY FOREST AND VIEW THE MANY TEMPLES INSIDE WITHOUT HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE IN THE WAY. THE SURREAL EXPERIENCE OF HUNDREDS OF MONKEYS JUMPING ABOVE MY HEAD AROUND WALKING ALL AROUND ME WAS A GREAT WAY TO START. THE FIRST TEMPLE I SAW SAT PERCHED UPON THE RIVER SIDE AND WAS COVERED WITH HUNDREDS OF YEARS OF MOSS AND OTHER OVERGROWTH. THE SHRINES TAPERED UPWARDS AND HAD ROOFS THAT LOOKED LIKE THEY WERE MADE OF COCONUT TREE HUSKS. THIS LED ME TO ANOTHER BEAUTIFULLY ORNATE TEMPLE IN THE CENTER OF THE FACILITY THAT HAD BEEN THERE FOR SO LONG THAT EVEN THE FLOOR WAS BLANKETED WITH GREEN GROWTH. I COULDN'T ENTER AND WANTED TO SKETCH, BUT KNEW THAT IT WAS NOT GOING TO WORK OUT HERE. MONKEYS HAD CLIMBED ON ME EARLIER AND OPENED MY BACKPACK AND TOOK MY BUGSPRAY. GETTING OUT MY PEN AND PAPER WOULD HAVE BEEN A BIG MISTAKE. JUMPING ALL OVER ME, ONE MONKEY SCRATCHED ME AND I HAD TO GET A RABIES SHOT LATER THAT DAY. STILL A MAGICAL EXPERIENCE THOUGH! LEAVING THE FOREST, I HEADED THROUGH THE MARKET AT THE HEART OF THE CITY AND MAN IT WAS PACKED. IT WAS FUN TRYING TO BARGAIN WITH THE LOCALS AND GET A GOOD DEAL FOR FRUITS AND OTHER GOODS. I ASKED MANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CITY AND EVERYONE HAD A STORY TO TELL. THIS IS HOW I FOUND OUT ABOUT THE UBUD PALACE AND THE MAIN TEMPLE, PURA TAMAN KEMUDA SARASWATI. I VENTURED THROUGH BOTH OF THEM FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE DAY. THE PALACE SHOWED ME HOW THE SPACE PLANNING OF A ROYAL HOME WAS LAID OUT AND THE SARASWATI TEMPLE LET ME BETTER UNDERSTAND HOW IMPORTANT AN ENTRANCE WAS.



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# INDONESIA

# BALI . UBUD



# JUNE 29

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TODAY WAS PACKED FULL OF SITES AS I RENTED A SCOOTER AND WENT ON A TOUR OF UPPER UBUD. THE FIRST STOP WAS AT TEGALALANG RICE TERRACES. THE SCALE OF THESE THINGS WAS WHAT MADE THEM SO SPECTACULAR, SIMILAR TO A HADID STRUCTURE BUT OF PURE LANDSCAPE. I HAD NO IDEA HOW THEY MADE THOSE RETAINING WALLS SO STRONG WITH ONLY MUD AND HOLDING BACK SO MUCH PRESSURE FROM THE IRRIGATION SYSTEM THAT DRIPPED FROM ONE TO THE NEXT DOWN HUNDREDS OF FEET. THE NATURAL CURVES THROUGH ALL OF THE TERRACES WAS SO INSPIRING AND SPARKED IMAGINATIVE DESIGNS IN MY MIND. AFTER THIS I GOT TO TIRTA EMPUL, A SACRED SPRING. THIS PLACE WAS VERY CROWDED BECAUSE OF A HINDU HOLIDAY, BUT I LOVED THE REPETITIVE EXPERIENCE. THE SEQUENCE OF SPACES LED TO ANOTHER SEQUENCE OF PRAYER. YOU WOULD PRAY, WASH YOUR FACE WITH WATER SPURTING OUT FROM A STONE CARVED BUCKET, AND THEN MOVE TO THE NEXT ONE TO THE RIGHT AND REPEAT. LOOKING AROUND FROM THE POOL YOU ARE STANDING IN, THERE WERE STATUES OF HUMAN LIKE FIGURES AND ANIMALS CARVED INTO THE STONE FROM HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO. FINISHING UP THE TOUR WAS AT GUNUNG KAWI. HERE I SAW AND EXPLORED AROUND A FEW SITES OF STONE CARVINGS THAT PRESUMABLY SET THE VERNACULAR FOR THE CITY. THE CARVINGS LOOKED TO BE ABOUT SIXTY FEET HIGH AND HAD DETAILS THAT I SAW IN ALL BUILDING IN THE CITY. THE MAIN AREA HERE HAD BEAUTIFULLY PRESERVED STATUES CARVED INTO THE STONE WITH ARCHES ABOVE THEM AND PERFECT SQUARES AS ENTRY POINT TO VIEW THEM. THE HUGE WATERFALL TO THE LEFT, WITH ITS BUBBLING SOUND, GAVE THE PERFECT SOUNDTRACK FOR THIS ENVIRONMENT.



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# INDONESIA

BALI . UBUD

# JUNE 30

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THIS MORNING I HEADED TO THE AIRPORT AND STARTED MY EXCURSION TO BOROBUDUR AREA. IT TURNED OUT THAT COMBINED WITH MY FLIGHT, THE TAXI RIDES TO THE AIRPORT AND THEN TO BOROBUDUR AREA TOOK UP THE ENTIRETY OF THE DAY. I ARRIVED TO MY ROOM RIGHT OUTSIDE BOROBUDUR TEMPLE AT NIGHT AND GOT TO TASTE TRADITIONAL JAVANESE FOODS MEALS PREPARED BY THE ROOM OWNER. A NICE TREAT TO START MY JAVA TRIP.



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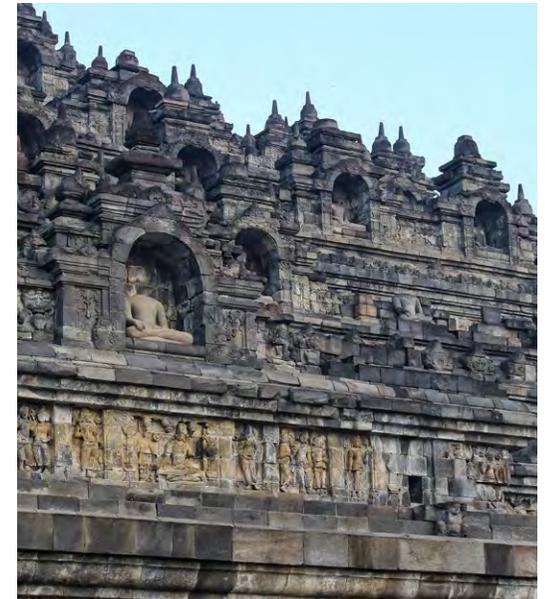
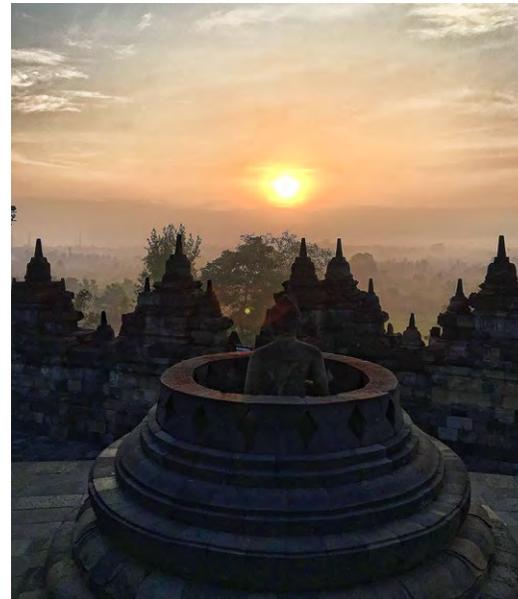
# INDONESIA

JAVA . YOGYAKARTA

# JULY 1

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I ROSE TODAY WITH A LOUD SPEAKER BOASTING MUSLIM PRAYERS FOR RAMADAN HOLIDAY AT 4:30AM. AN INTERESTING WAY TO START THE DAY, BUT A PERFECT TIME TO WAKE UP AND HEAD TO THE BOROBUDUR TEMPLE BEFORE SUNRISE ON MY BIRTHDAY! THE JAVANESE COFFEE GOT ME MOVING AND I HEADED DOWN THE DARK STREETS TOWARD THE TEMPLE. THE BUILDING I PASSED BY WERE MODEST STRUCTURES BUILT OF LOCAL MATERIALS AND SOME STILL HAD THE BAMBOO POLES HOLDING UP THE SLAB ABOVE, POSSIBLY JUST TO BE SURE THEY STAND. IT WAS NICE TO SEE HOW THE LOCALS USED BAMBOO IN ALL PARTS OF THE BUILDING PROCESS FROM THE SCAFFOLDING, DOWN TO HOW THEY MIXED THE CONCRETE. NEXT, I FOUND MYSELF IN AWE, GAZING AT THE BELL SHAPED PEAK PROTRUDING FROM THE MISTY JUNGLE TREES ABOVE. THE ENTRANCE SERIES THAT LED UP TO THE TEMPLE WAS BEAUTIFUL, REVEALING MORE AND MORE AS I OVED CLOSER. WITH THE STAIRS STILL PARTIALLY HIDDEN IN THE MORNING DARKNESS I ENTERED THE TEMPLE AND DECIDED TO MAKE MY WAY TO THE TOP TO SEE THE MORNING SUN RISE FROM UNDER THE BUDDHA STATUE EXPOSED FROM ITS BELL-SHAPED ENCLOSURE. THIS WAS A SIGHT I WILL NEVER FORGET AND THE ENERGY HERE WAS LIKE NOTHING I HAD EVER FELT. I DESCENDED THE TEMPLE BY MOVING CLOCKWISE THROUGH EACH OF THE RINGS TRYING TO DEPICT THE STORIES THAT WERE SO WELL PRESERVED CARVED INTO EVERY INCH OF THIS MASTERPIECE. THE PATH TO ENLIGHTENMENT IS A PERFECT WAY TO DESCRIBE THIS SPACE. EVERYWHERE I LOOKED WAS THE NEXT MOST INTRICATE CARVING, FROM THE WALLS, TO HOW THE FLOOR WAS PUT TOGETHER, TO THE INTERLOCKING BLOCKS OF TETRIS SHAPED PIECES THAT COMPOSED THE FLOOR. THE CIVILIZATION THAT CONSTRUCTED WAS MORE ADVANCED THAN I COULD HAVE IMAGINED. MY GUESS IS THAT THE ANIMALS AND WHEELS CARVINGS SUGGESTED THAT THE WHOLE FOREST POPULATION WORKED TOGETHER TO GET THIS DONE. I STAYED HERE TILL FOR MOST OF THE DAY, EXPLORING THE ENTIRETY OF THE SITE.



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# INDONESIA

JAVA . YOGYAKARTA

## JULY 2

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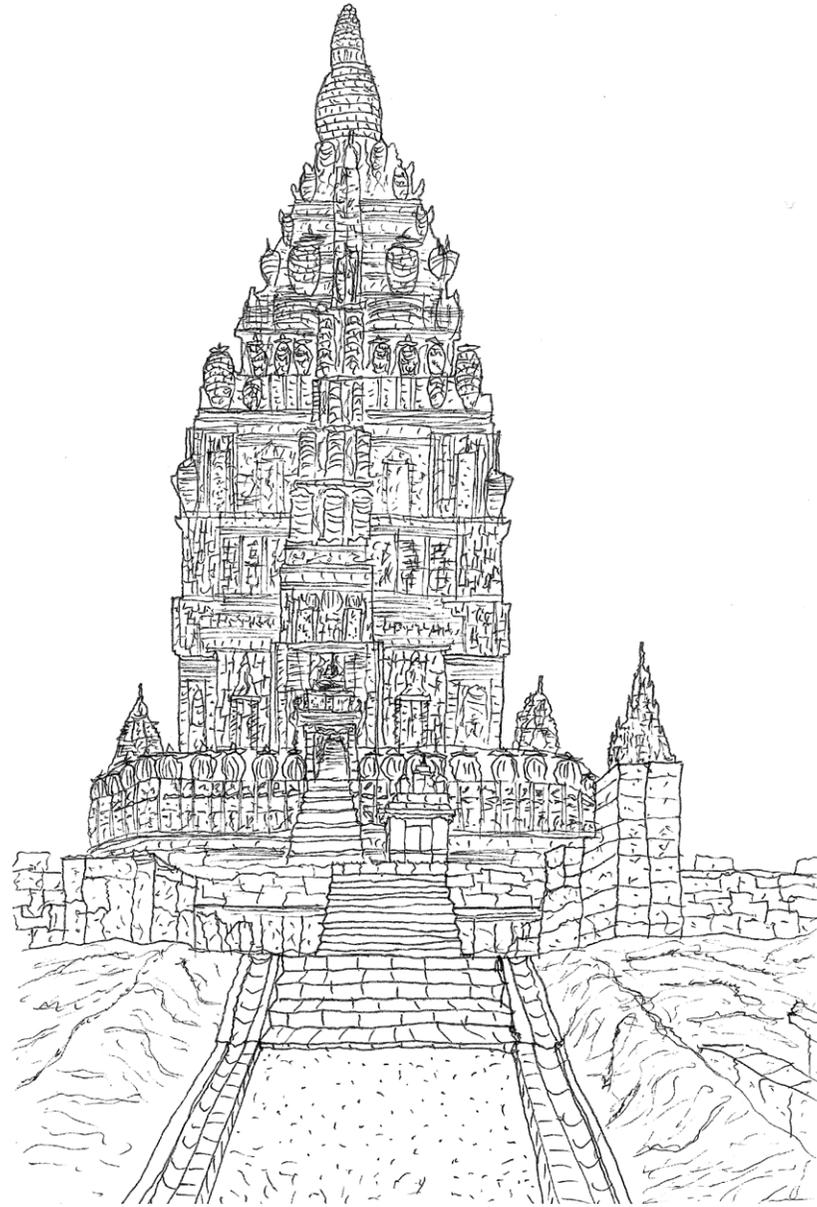
I WAS OFF TO PRAMBANAN THIS AFTERNOON, ABOUT A TWO-HOUR DRIVE WITH THE HOLIDAY TRAFFIC. RATHER THAN THE SUNRISE, THIS TEMPLE IS PERFECT FOR ITS SUNSET. I WAS ABLE TO SEE HOW PEOPLE WERE LIVING WITH CLOSE TO NOTHING AND STILL SMILING THROUGH THE RIDE. MOST FAMILIES HAD PRIVATE RICE PLANTATIONS USED TO FEED THE FAMILY THAT TURNED INTO CORN FIELDS IN THE OFF SEASON. ONCE AT THE PRAMBANAN TEMPLE SITE, I GOT MY TICKETS AND PROCEEDED TO THESE STONE MOUNTAINS THAT APPEARED SO DELICATE IN THEIR ARRANGEMENT. THE PLAN VIEW OF THIS SERIES OF STRUCTURES REMINDED ME OF A MANDALA AND THE ENERGY WAS JUST AS LIVELY AS AT BOROBUDUR. I TOURED THE SITE INSIDE AND OUT, MARVELING AT THE VIEW FROM INCHES AWAY AND FROM THE OUTER RING OF RUINS. THERE WAS SO MUCH TO SEE CARVED INTO THE MAIN STRUCTURES, AS WELL AS THE TREASURES STILL BURIED IN THE PILES OF RUINS. THE RUINS SHOWED ME HOW THEY WERE CONSTRUCTED, WHICH HINTED AT THEIR TECTONICS. EVERY STONE HAD AN INDENTATION FOR THE NEXT TO FIT PERFECTLY INTO. THE PRECISIONS OF THE BUILDERS IN THIS ERA OF TIME WAS ASTOUNDING TO EXPERIENCE. THEY WERE SO INTELLIGENT IN THE WAY THINGS WERE PUT TOGETHER AND IT GAVE ME SO MANY IDEAS I WANT TO IMPLEMENT INTO MY OWN PRACTICE. AT NIGHT FALL THE SKY LIGHT UP AND I SPENT TIME GAZING UPON THE MAIN TEMPLE WITH THE CONTRAST BETWEEN LIGHT AND DARK PLAYING WITH EVERY DETAIL AND CRACK.



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# INDONESIA

JAVA . YOGYAKARTA



P R A M B A N O N

# JULY 3

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MY DEPARTURE FOR JAKARTA, THE CAPITAL OF INDONESIA, WAS THIS AFTERNOON. UPON ARRIVING I WENT TO THE CENTER OF THE CITY TO SIGHTSEE ALL OF THE BUILDINGS AND THE NEW AREA I WAS IN. THERE WERE SO MANY TALL BUILDINGS HERE, A BIG CHANGE FROM MY TRIP SO FAR. I SAW WISMA 46, THE ICONIC SKYSCRAPER, THE PEAK RESIDENTIAL TWIN TOWERS, AND MANY OTHERS THAT WERE JUST AS INSPIRING. I NOTICED THE PATTERNS AND REPETITION HERE STUCK OUT. THERE WAS SO MANY COMPLEXES THAT HAD UP TO SIX OF THE SAME STRUCTURES. I ALWAYS SAW TWIN BUILDINGS IN AMERICA AS PLACES THAT WERE TRYING TO ECONOMIZE, BUT HERE IT WAS A LITTLE OUT OF CONTROL. THIS IS SOMETHING I AM CONSIDERING FOR MY DISSERTATION PAPER AND I LIKED THE FACT THAT ECONOMY THROUGH REPETITION IS VERY IMPORTANT IN PLACES IN ASIA. TO ME IT MEANT THAT THERE IS A LOT OF ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT TO BE MADE. SO MUCH CONSTRUCTION WAS HAPPENING HERE AND THE VERTICALITY OF THIS PLACE HAD ME LOOKING UP MORE THAN I AM USED TO. IN THIS FAST-PACED CITY, I MOVED SLOW THROUGH THE TRAFFIC, AND SAW THAT THERE WERE MANY BEAUTIFUL SPACES AS WELL AS DIRTY STREETS.



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INDONESIA

JAVA . JAKARTA

# JULY 4

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MY ACTIVITIES TODAY REVOLVED AROUND THE NATIONAL MONUMENT PARK AND THE FIRST STOP WAS AT THE MASJID ISTIQLAL MOSQUE. FROM THE ROAD, THE MASSIVE DOME SITTING UPON A WHITE MONOLYTHIC STRUCTURE IS PROMINENT AND DRAWS ATTENTION, DESPITE BEING SHORT IN A RATHER TALL PART OF THE CITY. ENTRY WAYS TO MOST TEMPLES I HAD BEEN TO THUS FAR HAVE STOOD OUT, BUT THIS ONE WAS RATHER HIDDEN. AFTER DRESSING IN THE APPROPRIATE GOWN, I STARTED MY JOURNEY TO THAT INCREDIBLE DOME. EVERY NOISE ECHOED OFF THE STONE CLAD FLOORS AND WALLS, THAT ALSO REFLECTED LIGHT AND GAVE A SENSE OF PURITY TO THE EXPERIENCE. THE FACADE WAS A REPEATING PATTERN OF LINEAR GEOMETRY WHEN OPEN TO THE OUTDOORS WHICH PASSIVELY VENTILATED THE CORRIDORS. THESE CORRIDORS LED TO A THRESHOLD AND THEN OPENED TO REVEAL AN ENORMOUS CONVENTION CENTER SIZED ROOM THAT HOUSED NOTHING BUT A METALLIC GOLDEN DOME AND TWELVE COLUMNS APPEARING ABOUT EIGHT FEET IN DIAMETER. THE EMOTIONS THAT THIS SPACE EVOKED WERE OF GOD-LIKE PRESENCE, DUE TO THE SHEER SIZE OF EVERY ELEMENT IN THIS DESIGN COMBINED WITH THE STONE MATERIAL PALATE. FROM THE MOSQUE, I WENT TO THE MUSEUM TO LEARN ABOUT THE HISTORY OF INDONESIA AND THEN ASCENDED NATIONAL MONUMENT TO SEE THE CITY FROM ABOVE.



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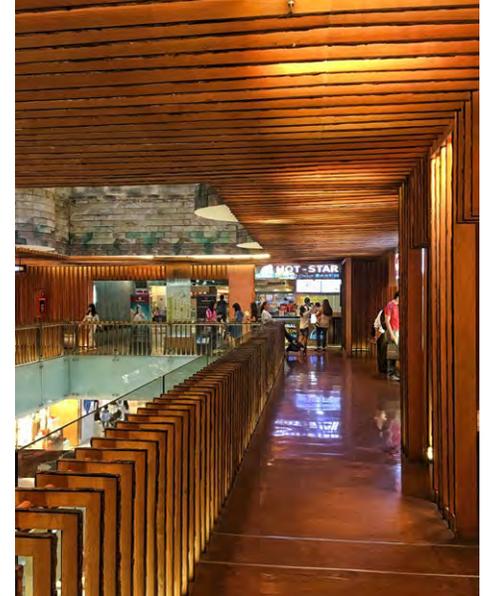
INDONESIA

JAVA . JAKARTA

# JULY 5

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TODAY WAS A BIT RAINY AND I KNEW IT CALLED FOR SOME INDOOR ACTIVITIES SO I TOOK AN ADVENTURE TO THE MOST POPULAR MALL HERE, THE GRAND INDONESIAN. I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN FASCINATED WITH LARGE SCALE PROJECTS SUCH AS MALLS AND AIRPORTS BECAUSE OF THE MULTITUDE OF DESIGN DECISIONS THAT GET TO BE MADE ON A SINGLE PROJECT. THE SITE WAS A LOT TO TAKE IN AND DIDNT KNOW WHERE TO START, LITERALLY. THERE WERE TWO WINGS TO THE MALL, SEPARATED BY A FOOD COURT SKYBRIDGE AND HAD A HOTEL INSIDE ALONG WITH A HIGH RISE BANK COMING OUT OF THE TOP. THE ENTRANCE WAS DESIGNED NICE AND HAD CONTEMPORARY FACADES CLADDING THE OPPOSING GEOMETRIES WITH VARYING PATTERNS. THE INTERIOR SPACES WERE ALSO JUST AS STIMULATING, WITH INTERACTIVE DIRECTORY MAPS AND ATRIUMS THAT EXTENDED THE LENGTH OF THE EIGHT FLOORS. THERE WAS ONE SPACE IN PARTICULAR THAT I REALLY ENJOYED AND IT WAS THE FOOD COURT SKYBRIDGE, AND NOT JUST BECAUSE OF THE ASIAN CUISINE. THE ENTIRE SPACE FROM THE WALLS TO THE CEILINGS WAS CONSTRUCTED OF A SLATTED DESIGN COMPRISED OF WOOD PANELS WITH THE BARK OF THE TREE SILL ON THEM. THE SPACE WAS WARMING, COMFORTING, AND MODERN. A COMBINATION THAT DOESNT ALWAYS WORK OUT. ON THE CORRIDORS DOWN THE SIDES OF THE SPACES THERE WERE WINDOWS TO SEE THE SKYLINE AND HERE THE SLATTED CONSTRUCTION SWITCHED TO PLEXIGLASS WITH FOLIAGE DRAPING DOWN. AS FAR AS I COULD SEE, THERE WAS RHYTHM IN THE REPETITION, BLOCKING VIEWS OF OTHERS AND HIGHLIGHTING THE BUILDINGS OUTSIDE. LATER AT NIGHT I RODE TO THE AIRPORT TO START MY NEXT CITY EXPLORATION IN DOWNTOWN SINGAPORE.



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# INDONESIA

JAVA . JAKARTA

# JULY 6

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OF ALL THE PLACES TO GO AND SEE IN SINGAPORE, THE TOP THING ON MY LIST IS GARDENS BY THE BAY SO I STARTED HERE. AT FIRST SIGHT, I WAS TAKEN AWAY BY THE BIOMIMETIC FORMS OF TREE LIKE STRUCTURES WITH FOLIAGE GROWING UP THEM. THE ENGINEERING AND ARCHITECTURE HERE WERE IN PERFECT SYNC WITH EACH OTHER CREATING BEAUTIFUL FORMS THROUGH TUBULAR CONSTRUCTION AND GREEN WALLS. I TOOK THE PATH THROUGH THE FOREST OF MECHANIC TREES AND WOULD VISIT THEM AFTER I VISITED THE CLOUD FOREST DOME AND FLOWER DOME. THE ARRIVAL SEQUENCE HEADING TOWARD THE DOMES WAS JUST AS INTRIGUING AS THE DROP OFF ZONE, WITH PARAMETRIC ROOFS OF SLATTED CONSTRUCTING BENDING AND TWISTING LEADING ME IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. THE DOMES CAME INTO FULL SIGHT AND HAD A TRULY SUBLIME MOMENT OF PAUSE. THESE STRUCTURES TO ME WERE THE PERFECTION OF USING INSPIRATION FROM NATURE TO CREATE ARCHITECTURE. THE SHELL-LIKE DOMES HAD STRUCTURAL RIB CAGES AND ALSO APPEARED AS SHELLS NEAR THE WATER. ENTERING THEM AND EXPERIENCING THE STRUCTURES FROM INSIDE WERE EQUALLY AS MARVELOUS, IN THE CLOUD FOREST PARTICULARLY. THE GLASS CURTAIN WALLS THAT CREATED THE ENCLOSURE WERE HELD UP BY TENSION MEMBERS TO SUSPEND THEM AS WELL AS PIN JOINTS. THE LIGHTNESS OF THIS CONSTRUCTION OVER THE TYPICAL SPACE FRAME HAD ME STARING FOR A LONG TIME, TRYING TO FIGURE OUT JUST HOW THIS WAS ACCOMPLISHED IN SUCH A WAY. THE INTERIOR ALSO CONTAINED A CASCADING WATERFALL WITH MIST SPRAYING THE PLANTS AND TREES. THE MASSIVE CORE HAD A CATWALK THAT ZIG-ZAGGED DOWN FROM FIVE STORIES HIGH AND WAS FULLY SUSPENDED BY ONLY A FEW TENSION CORDS AND SMALL PIERS CONNECTED AT AN ANGLE FROM THE CORE BY A PIN JOINT. THIS GAVE ME A STOMACH DROPPING FEELING WHILE WALKING DOWN THE PATH, AS THE PATH WAS ALSO TRANSPARENT THROUGH THE METAL MESH WALKWAYS AT THE EDGES. ONCE IN THE GARDEN OF BIOMECHANICAL TREES I FOUND OUT THAT THE ENTIRETY OF THIS PARK WAS SUSTAINABLE IN ITS WATER COLLECTION AND ENERGY CONSUMPTION MAKING ME THINK EVEN HIGHER OF THIS PLACE. I WATCHED THE DAZZLING LIGHT SHOW HAPPENING IN THESE STRUCTURAL TREES AFTER DARK AND WAS ALSO THINKING OF HOW THEY WERE ABLE TO BUILD THESE AFFORDABLY DUE TO THE INTRICACY OF EVERY PIECE. I FOUND A PATTERN AFTER A WHILE AND IT WAS THAT EVERY FOUR STRUCTURAL BAYS OF THE TREE WERE THE SAME WITH OVERLAPPING PIECES TO DISGUISE THEM; AN ABSOLUTELY GENIUS SOLUTION.

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# SINGAPORE

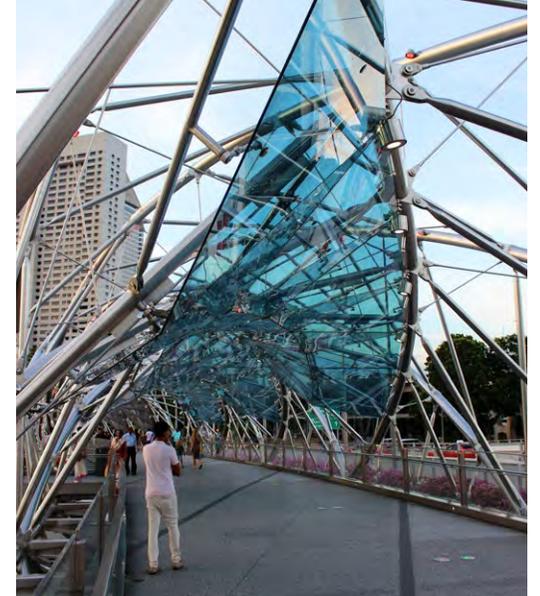
# SINGAPORE

# JULY 7

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THE ENTIRE DOWNTOWN AREA WRAPS AROUND THE BAY AND TODAY I DECIDED TO WALK THE PERIMETER WHILE EXPLORING LANDMARKS ALONG THE WAY. I WAS DROPPED OFF AT MARINA BAY SANDS HOTEL TO START AND BEGAN BY VISUALLY INVESTIGATING THIS RESORT. I THOUGHT IT WAS VERY IMPRESSIVE FROM A FAR, BUT WAS ALSO PLEASANT TO SEE FROM UP CLOSE WHERE THE DETAILS CAME INTO VIEW AND THE BENDING FORMS HAD ME TURNING MY HEAD IN ALL DIRECTIONS. THE FORM WAS ONE OF NEW IDEAS AND NOT A REPLICA OF THE PAST SO I APPRECIATED IT A LOT. THAT WAS A GREAT IDEA TO CONNECT THE 3 MAIN STRUCTURES THAT APPEARED TO BE SIX BY A SKYBRIDGE AND POOL AREA. I WALKED THROUGH THE MALL TO THE MOSHE SAFDIE ART MUSEUM NEXT AND SAT OUTSIDE FOR QUITE SOME TIME. THE SIMPLICITY IN THIS PIECE OF ART, APPEARING AS A LOTUS ABOVE A LOTUS POND WAS JUST AMAZING. IT WAS A MASTERPIECE TO SAY THE LEAST FROM OUTSIDE EXTENDING TO THE INTERIOR. INSIDE, I WENT THROUGH SOME EXHIBITS AND FUTURE WORLD WHICH WAS MORE LIKE LIGHT WORLD I WOULD SAY SHOWED ME HOW YOU CAN USE LIGHT AS A MEDIUM TO CREATE IMPLICIT SPACES. WALKING FROM HERE I WENT ACROSS THE HELIX BRIDGE AND THAT WAS AN ADVENTURE IN ITSELF. AGAIN, THE ENGINEERING AND ARCHITECTURE WORKED TOGETHER FLAWLESSLY, CREATING A STRUCTURE THAT WAS NOT ONLY FUNCTIONAL, BUT ALSO BEAUTIFUL AND HAD A STRONG MEANING. THE DNA STRAND IS ITS APPEARANCE, BUT LOCALS TOLD ME THE MEANING IS THAT IT RESEMBLES A NET FROM THE OLD FISHING TOWN THAT CATCHES ALL THE TOURISTS HEADING TO THE CASINO ON THE OTHER SIDE. MY FAVORITE STRUCTURES ARE ARCHITECTURE ENGINEERING MASTERPIECES, AND THIS WAS DEFINITELY ONE OF THEM. AFTER THIS, I SAT BY THE ESPLANADE BUILDING AND SAW THE INNER WORKING OF ITS KINETIC PARAMETRIC FACADE THAT OPENED AND CLOSED AT SPECIFIC POINTS. THIS IS SOMETHING I SEE DONE IN SCHOOL PROJECTS, BUT IN THE LARGE SCALE OF THIS BUILDING, I WAS TAKEN BY THE AMOUNT OF WORK THAT MUST HAVE BEEN DONE ON EVERY SINGLE PIECE OF JOINERY.

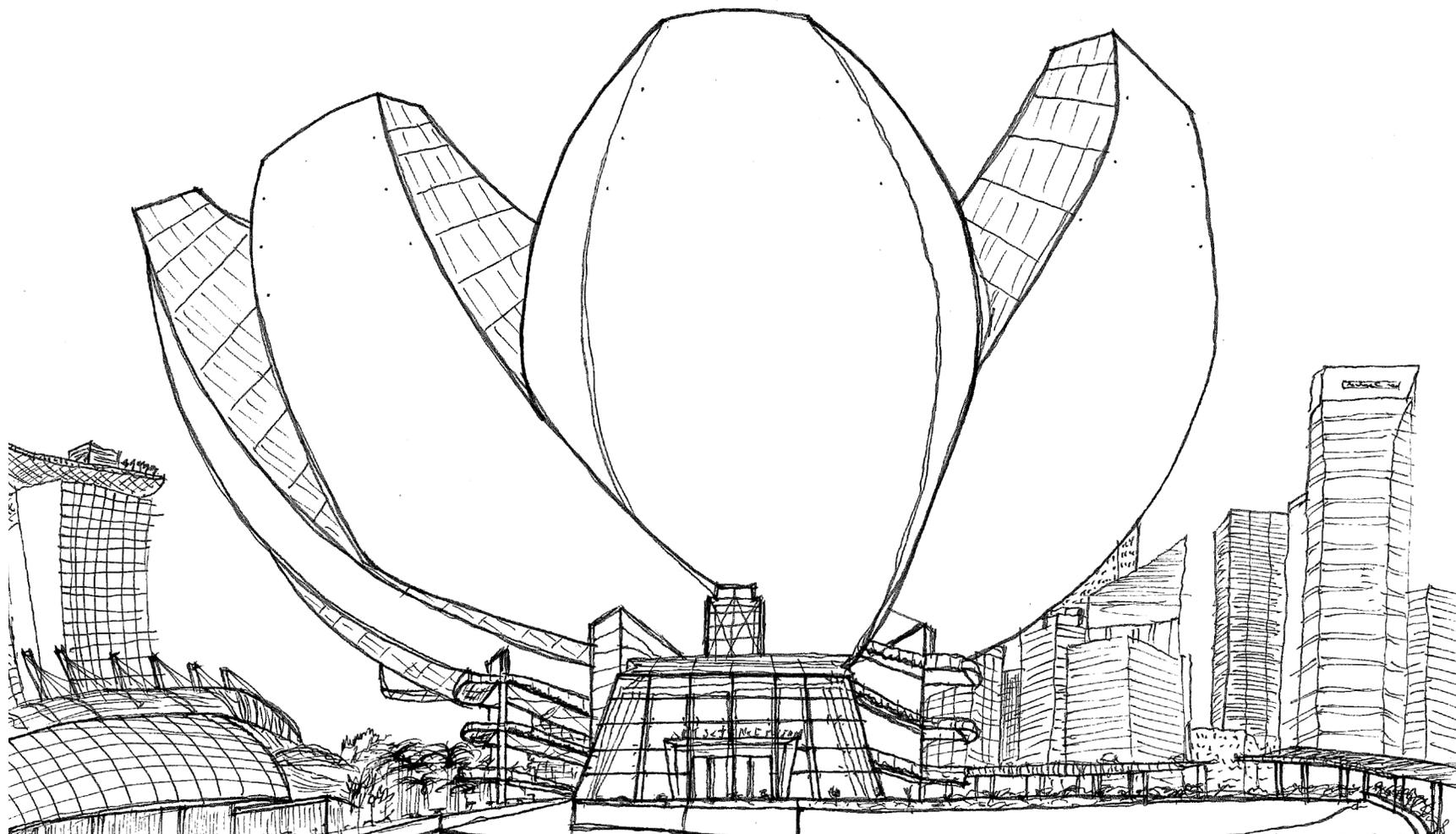
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# SINGAPORE

# SINGAPORE



ART SCIENCE MUSEUM

# JULY 8

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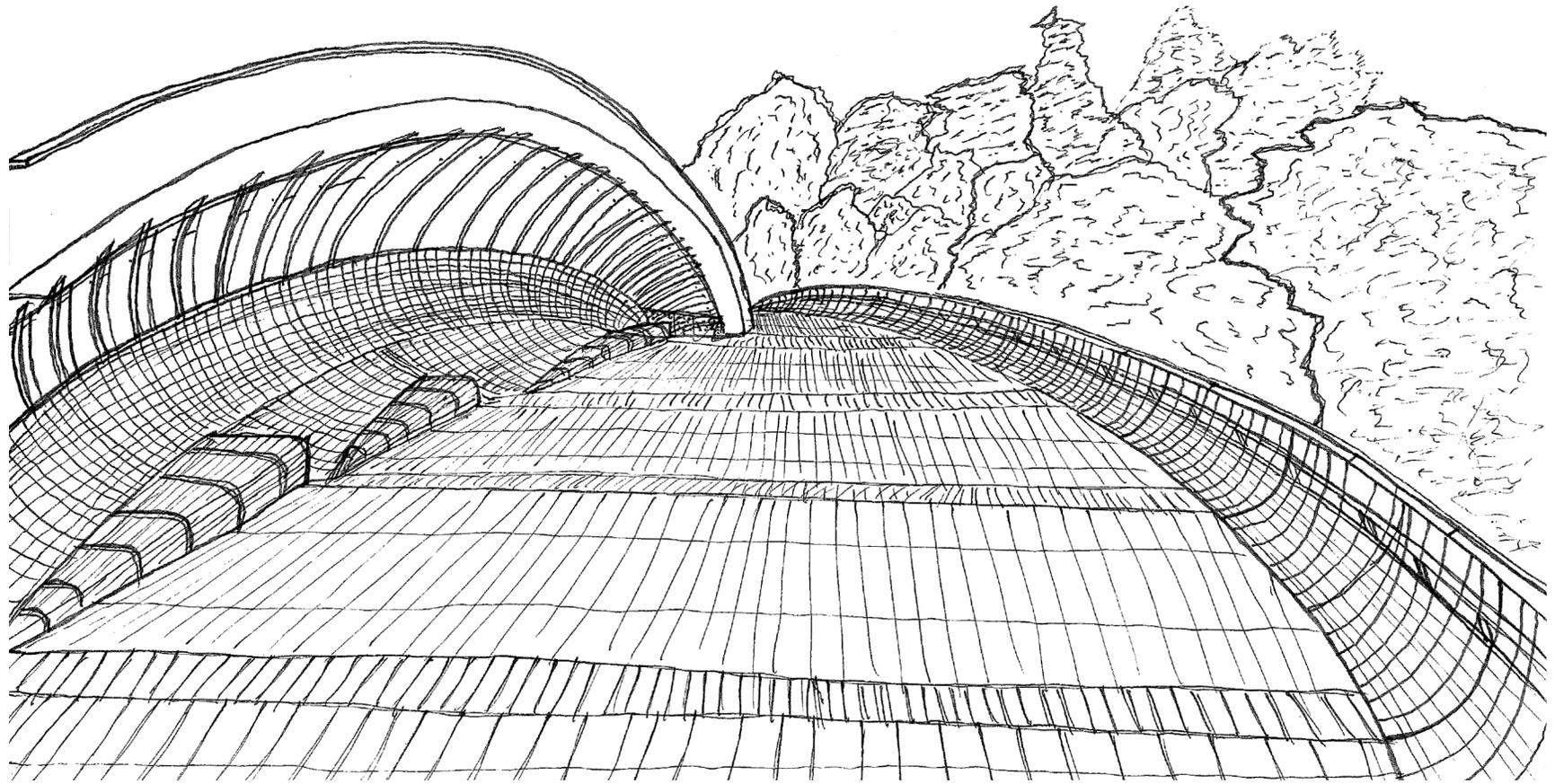
LEAVING THE DOWNTOWN CORE TODAY I VENTURED OFF TO THE WEST SIDE OF THE CITY TO MOUNT FABER PARK AND HORTON PARK ALONG THE SOUTHERN RIDGES TRAIL. THIS FOREST WAS FULL OF NATURAL INSPIRATION. WALKING ALONG THE TRAIL THERE IT WAS CONCRETE PATHS FOR SOME POINT, DIRT PATHS FOR OTHERS, AND SOMETIMES UP HIGH IN THE TREES ALONG A RAISED BRIDGE. PLACES ON THE PATH EVEN HAD VIEWS OF AN ISLAND IN THE DISTANCE, PAST THE CITY SKYLINE THAT WAS ALSO VISIBLE FROM ATOP THIS MOUNTAIN. A HIGHLIGHT WAS THE HENDERSON WAVES BRIDGE. I COULD NOW SAY THAT SINGAPORE IS FULL OF THESE ARCHITECTURAL ENGINEERING TREATS. THIS BRIDGE HAD NO LINEAR ELEMENTS WHATSOEVER. THE FLOOR BENT UP TOWARD THE HANDRAILS, WHICH WERE ALSO SLOPED AND TAPERING DOWN, AND UP TOWARD THE WAVE LOOING SEMI-ENCLOSED PAVILION SPACES ON THE OPPOSING SIDE. THE SPACES WERE SHAPED AS WAVES, HENCE THE NAME, AND INSIDE THE WAVE PAVILION THE SPACES ACTUALLY FELT LIKE I WAS SURFING. THE CONSTRUCTION WAS OF A WOOD DECK AND METAL SLATTED PARAMETRIC PIECES THAT ALL CAME TOGETHER IN HARMONY TO MAKE A VERY USED SPACE. MANY FAMILIES WERE THERE WITH CHILDREN, AS WELL AS COLLEGE STUDENTS STUDYING OR TAKING A NAP. AFTER COMPLETING THE TRAIL, I STOPPED AT THE ION ORCHARD MALL, A TECHNOLOGICAL APPEARING ENTRANCE THAT HAD THE WORD PARAMETRIC ALL OVER IT. THE FACADE WAS A TESSELLATION OF GLASS FRACTALS AND THE MAIN STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS SUPPORTING THE ENTRANCE OVERHANG WAS TWO TREE LOOKING COLUMNS THAT BRANCHED OUT FOR SUPPORT. THERE WAS ALSO A MASSIVE GLASS CURTAIN WALL THAT TWISTED NINETY DEGREES AND LOOKED LIKE FABRIC SWOOPING IN FROM THE LEFT TO THE RIGHT SIDE UNDER THE CANOPY. THE INTERIOR CONTAINED MATERIALITY AT ITS FINEST, MADE OF STONE AND METALS THAT HOUSED HIGH FASHION STORES ON EITHER SIDE OF THE CORRIDOR.



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# SINGAPORE

# SINGAPORE

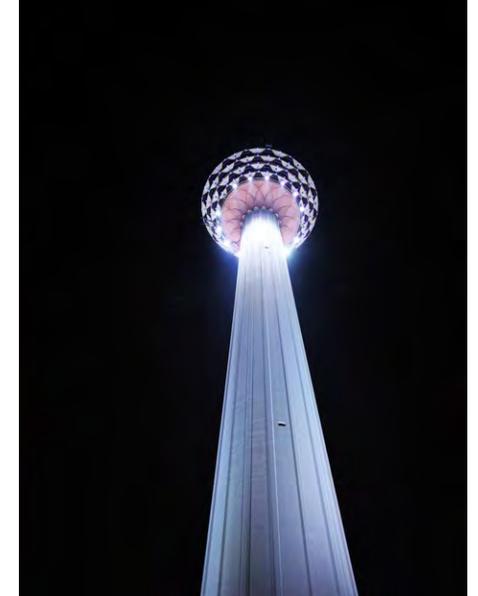


HENDERSON WAVES

# JULY 9

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THIS AFTERNOON I LEFT SADLY SINGAPORE AND TOOK A PLANE OVER TO KUALA LUMPUR WITH SOME NEW EXCITEMENT TO SEE THE PETRONAS TOWERS. AFTER ARRIVING AND GETTING SETTLED IN MY NEW CITY I THOUGHT THE BEST WAY TO SEE MY SURROUNDINGS AND PLAN MY VISIT WAS FROM THE TOP OF THE CITY AT THE HIGHEST VIEW POINT IN THE KL TOWER (MENARA TOWER). I GOT TO THE TOP BEFORE DARK AND SAW THE CITY SPRAWLING FOR AS FAR AS THE VISIBILITY WOULD ALLOW. THE SKYLINE WAS RATHER IMPRESSIVE WITH THE PETRONAS TOWERS, THE TALLEST BUILDING IVE EVER SEEN DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF ME, TRUMPING EVERYTHING AROUND. FROM ABOVE I WAS ABLE TO SEE THE CITY LIGHT UP AFTER DARK, AS THE NIGHTLIFE CAME ALIVE AND THE CARS AND BUSES TURNED THE STREETS RED AND YELLOW. THE MAIN STREETS WERE EASY TO FIND AS WELL FROM ATOP THIS TOWER AND AFTER LEAVING I EXPLORED CHINATOWN AND MAJOR ROADWAYS ON FOOT. THIS CITY HAD VERY GOOD FOOD AND THE MAJOR CULTURES FELT LIKE THEY HAD DESIGNATED AREAS. THERE WAS PROMINENTLY INDIAN, CHINESE, AND MALAYSIAN.



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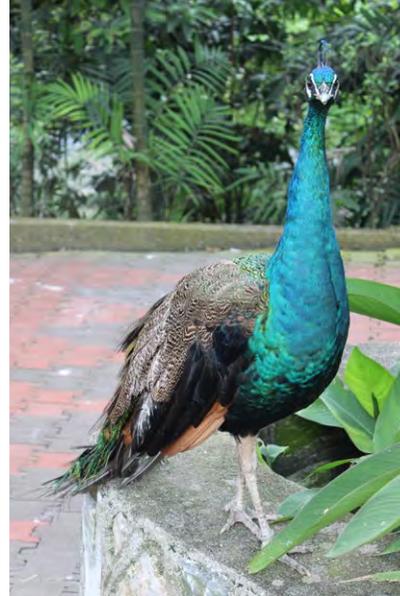
## MALAYSIA

## KUALA LUMPUR

# JULY 10

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THE WORLDS LARGEST FREE FLIGHT WALK IN AVIARY IS IN KUALA LUMPUR. I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A PERFECT OPPORTUNITY TO SEE A LARGE-SCALE STRUCTURE AS WELL AS HOW A NATURAL HABITAT IS CONTAINED. FROM FIRST GLANCE, I COULD SEE THE STRUCTURE WAS ENCLOSED BY A METAL MESH AND SUPPORTED BY MASSIVE STEEL COLUMNS, RESEMBLING A TRANSPARENT CIRCUS TENT. THE SPECIES INHABITING THIS PLACE SEEMED LIKE THEY HAD ENOUGH ROOM BECAUSE THE HEIGHT LOOKED OVER FIFTY FEET HIGH. BETWEEN THE TENSION MEMBERS AND COLUMNS, THE ENTIRE STRUCTURE WAS SOUND AND IT CREATED A SPACE WITH EXPLICIT BOUNDARIES THAT APPEARED IMPLICIT. I LEARNED ABOUT AND INTERACTED WITH THE LOCAL AVIAN SPECIES AND WAS THEN OFF TO KL SENTRAL. THIS IS A PLACE THAT LOCALS TOLD ME WAS THE CENTER OF THE CITY AND MOST TRANSPORTATION METHODS RAN THROUGH HERE. IN THIS ONE FACILITY THERE WAS BUS TRANSPORTATION, TAXI TRANSPORTATION, THE RAIL TRANSPORTATION, AND A MALL. THIS WAS A GREAT PLACE TO INTERACT WITH MALAYSIANS AND OTHER FELLOW TRAVELERS, GETTING ADVICE AND LEARNING TO COMMUNICATE WITH THOSE WHOM DIDNT UNDERSTAND ENGLISH. I EXPLORED THE SURROUNDING AREA ON FOOT SUBSEQUENTLY, FINDING TOURIST TRAPS IN SOME PLACES AND LOCAL EATERIES IN OTHERS.



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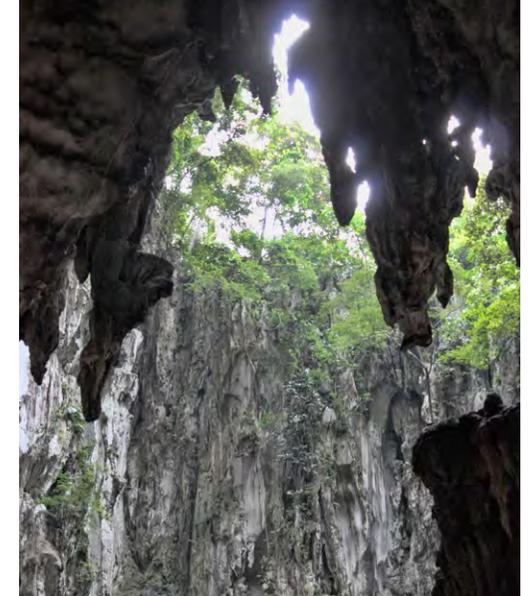
MALAYSIA

KUALA LUMPUR

# JULY 11

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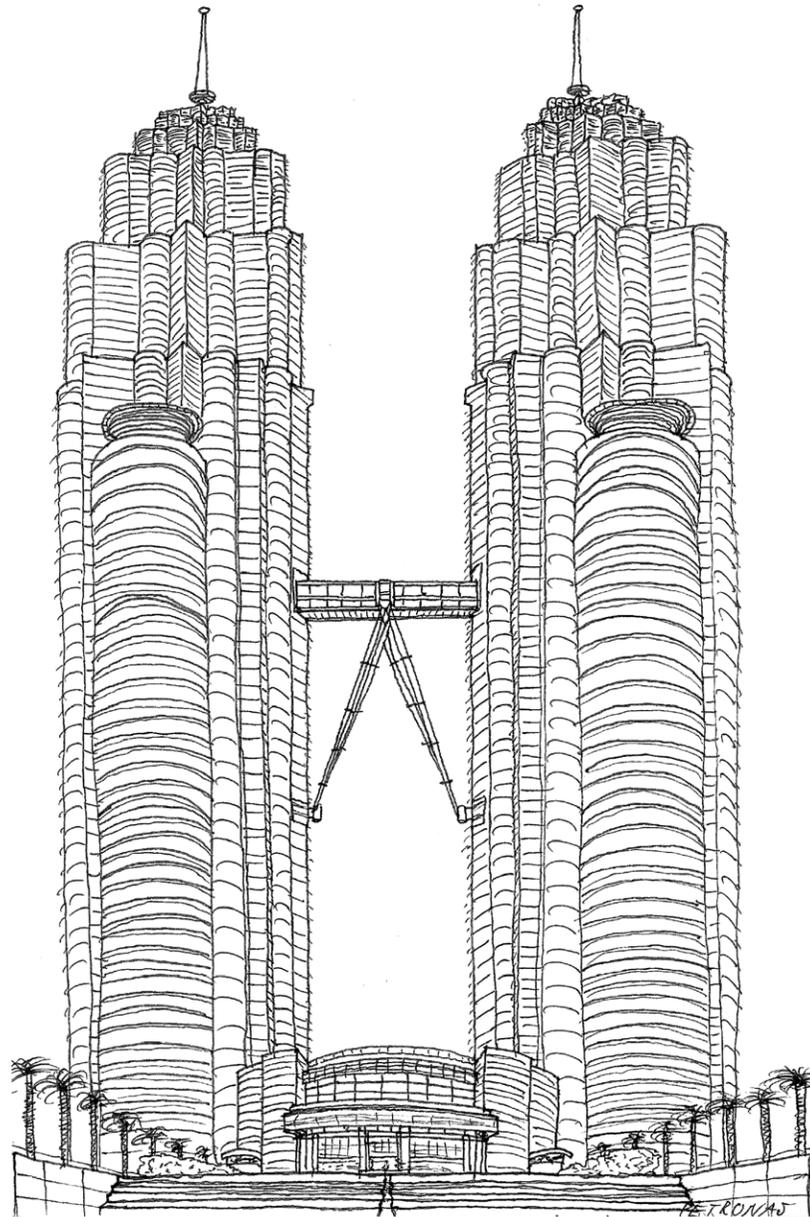
I ARRIVED AT KLCC, THE PARK IN FRONT OF THE PETRONAS TOWERS, THIS MORNING AND VENTURED AROUND THE VICINITY. THERE WERE SO MANY INTERESTING SPACES THIS PARK CREATED WITH THE AMOUNT OF LANDSCAPE DESIGN THAT HAPPENED HERE. WITH THE TERRACED SEATING, PAVILIONS, AND TREES EXTENDING VINES DOWN EVERYWHERE, I FOUND INSPIRATION AROUND ALMOST EVERY CORNER. THIS WAS A NICE GETAWAY IN THE MIDDLE OF SUCH A DENSE CITY. I MARVELED AT THE PETRONAS TOWERS FROM MANY DIFFERENT VANTAGE POINTS ALSO BEFORE ENTERING THE MALL ON THE BASE FLOOR. I APPRECIATED HOW MANY OF THE DETAILS INSIDE DISPLAYED THE SAME CONCEPT AS IN THE DESIGN OF THE TOWERS, SUCH AS THE OFFSET TAPERING FEATURE THAT IS MOST PROMINENT. FOLLOWING THIS, I MADE MY WAY ACROSS THE CITY TO THE BATU CAVES. THE ENTRY TO THIS HINDU TEMPLE LOOKED DAUNTING AT FIRST, WITH HUNDREDS OF STAIRS TO CLIMB, MONKEYS GUARDING THE STAIRS, AND THE TALLEST STATUE I HAD EVER SEEN STANDING IN FRONT CAST IN GOLD PAINT. AFTER MAKING MY WAY TO THE TOP I ENJOYED THIS SEQUENCE OF ARRIVAL THOUGH. THE VIEW NOW BEHIND ME WAS OF THE CITY I WAS JUST IN, WITH THE PETRONAS TOWERS STANDING HIGH, WHILE IN FRONT OF ME WAS A LARGE CAVE SYSTEM WITH STALACTITES HANGING DOWN AND A GAPING HOLE IN THE CENTER. THE ARCHITECTURE OF NATURE IS QUITE PERFECT IN ITS IMPERFECTIONS, SHAPING SPACES THAT INFLUENCE BUILDINGS EVERYWHERE. THIS MADE ME THINK OF AN OCLUSUS AT THE TOP OF THE PANTHEON DOME AND HOW THAT CAME ABOUT. DRAPING DOWN ALL THE SIDES WERE LUSH GREEN TREES AND VINES, GIVING VIBRANT COLOR TO A PLACE SO DARK AND COOL. THERE WAS CURRENTLY CONSTRUCTION HAPPENING INSIDE OF A HINDU TEMPLE AND IT WAS A SHAME TO SEE, BECAUSE IT TOOK AWAY FROM THE NATURAL BEAUTY AND FELT TOTALLY OUT OF PLACE WITH IT RIGID BOX LIKE STRUCTURE OPPOSING ITS SURROUNDINGS. MY FINAL THOUGHT HERE WAS THAT STRUCTURES IMPACT SPACES VISUALLY AND EMOTIONALLY AS WELL AS CONSCIOUSLY AND SUB CONSCIOUSLY.



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## MALAYSIA

## KUALA LUMPUR



PETRONAS TOWERS

# JULY 12

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THIS AFTERNOON I TOOK A PLANE FROM KUALA LUMPUR TO SIEM REAP, CAMBODIA. THE CHANGE OF SCENERY WAS SO DISTINCT FROM ABOVE AND IT WAS RELIEVING TO ARRIVE INTO A SMALL AIRPORT IN THE VAST GREEN LANDSCAPE. MY FIRST EXPERIENCE HERE WAS FUN AND PECULIAR AS I RODE A TUK TUK DOWN A DIRT ROAD TO MY ACCOMMODATION PASSING BY OXEN ALONG THE WAY. AFTER PACKING UP AND TRAVELING TO A NEW COUNTRY AND UNPACKING, IT WAS GETTING LATE, SO I DECIDED TO HEAD OVER TO THE MARKET CITY TO EXPERIENCE THE PLACE WHERE MOST OF THE CITY EATS AND SHOPS. MARKET CITY IS ARRANGED BY A RIGID GRID WHICH MAKES IT EASY TO EXPLORE THE ENTIRE AREA BECAUSE YOU CAN WALK BACK AND FORTH, WINDING THROUGH THE LARGER STREETS, BUT THE ALLEY WAYS IN BETWEEN CAN GET CONFUSING AND I LOST MY SENSE OF DIRECTION A FEW TIMES IN THESE TIGHT PLACES. I HAD NEVER EXPERIENCED NARROW ALLEY SPACES LIKE THIS BEFORE AND NOW I UNDERSTAND HOW IT CREATES A MORE COMFORTING FEELING. WITH OPEN DOOR SHOPS ACROSS FROM EACH OTHER ALONG A TEN FOOT CORRIDOR AND PEOPLE EATING AND TALKING IN GATHERING SPACES IN FRONT OF THE SHOPS, I GOT A VERY RELAXED NICE FEELING, SIMILAR TO A LIVING ROOM. THIS AREA HAS GREAT LOCAL STREET FOOD, BARS, AND RESTAURANTS. IT ALSO HAS AN AREA CALLED THE OLD MARKET AND THIS IS WHERE MANY OF THE LOCAL ARTIST AND TEXTILE MAKERS CAN SELL SOUVENIRS, CLOTHING, AND OTHER HOMEMADE GOODS. I REALLY LIKED MY EXPERIENCE HERE DUE TO THE WALKABILITY, VERNACULAR, PEOPLE, AND ENVIRONMENT. IT IS A PLACE I WILL DEFINITELY COME BACK TO.



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## CAMBODIA

## SIEM REAP

# JULY 13

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TODAY I BOUGHT MY TICKETS FOR ALL OF THE TEMPLES AND IT INCLUDED THREE DAYS ADMISSION TO ACCESS THE SITES. TO MAKE SURE I GOT THE MOST OUT OF IT I WANTED TO START EARLY EVERY DAY AND THEREFORE TOOK TODAY AS A DAY TO EXPLORE THE CITY ON FOOT AND SEE PLACES THAT MOST PEOPLE THAT COME HERE DON'T. TO GET A GOOD VANTAGE POINT OF THE AREA I WENT TO THE TOP OF THE BUILDING I WAS STAYING AT AND IT WAS SURPRISING TO SEE THAT AT ONLY SIX STORIES HIGH, WAS THE TALLEST STRUCTURE AROUND. THIS GAVE ME A GOOD IDEA OF WHERE AND WHAT I WANTED TO EXPLORE. IT WAS THE DAILY LIVES OF PEOPLE LIVING HERE AND CONSTRUCTION SITES BECAUSE IT WAS BOOMING. I WANDERED DOWN MAIN ACCESS ROADS AND BACK ROADS TO SEE THE TRUE NATURE OF THIS PLACE IN HOW PEOPLE WORKED AND LIVED. WHAT WAS INTERESTING WAS HOW SIMILAR ALL OF THE AMENITIES HERE WERE TO AMERICA AS THIS CITY IS DEVELOPING FAST. AS I PASSED BY MULTIPLE CONSTRUCTION SITES ALONG MY JOURNEY I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY EYES. CONSTRUCTION WORKERS HERE WERE WEARING SANDALS, THEY WEREN'T WEARING HARD HATS, CONCRETE WAS BEING MIXED WITH LOGS, AND THE SCAFFOLDING WAS MADE OF TIED BAMBOO STRUCTURES. I HAD NO IDEA THAT THIS LEVEL OF CONSTRUCTION STILL EXISTED AND WHILE IT SEEMED UNSAFE AND PRIMITIVE, THEY WERE ACTUALLY VERY PRODUCTIVE AND SAFE AFTER WATCHING FOR A WHILE.



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## CAMBODIA

## SIEM REAP

JULY 14

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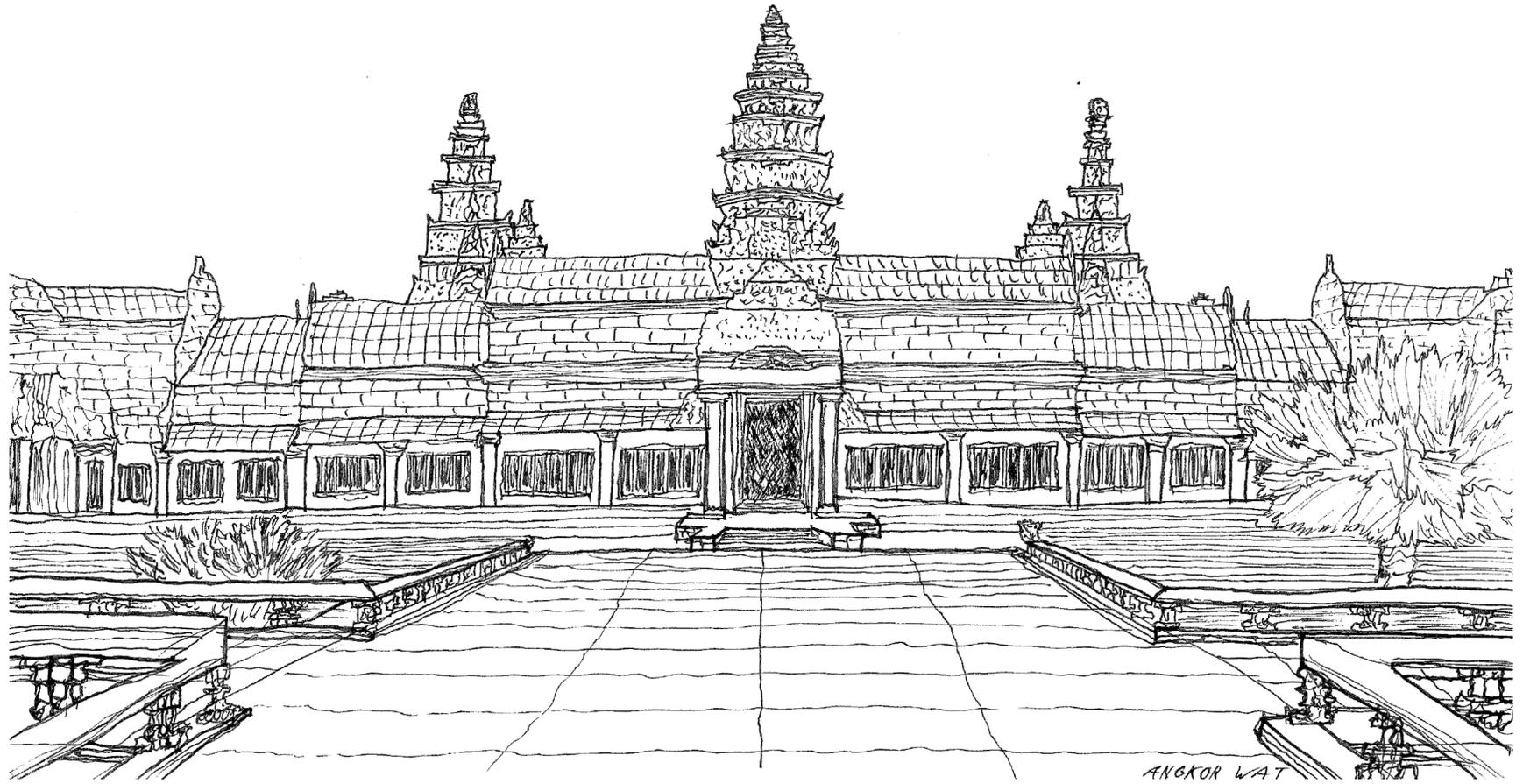
TODAYS ITINERARY STARTED BY VISITING THE FAMOUS ANGKOR WAT. I HAVE LEARNED ABOUT THIS STRUCTURE IN SCHOOL, BUT I CAN SAY THAT THE EXPERIENCE REVEALED DETAILS AND FEELING THAT CANNOT BE DESCRIBED IN A BOOK. AN ANALOGY HERE IS THAT EXPERIENCING THIS TEMPLE IS LIKE READING A BOOK, WHILE READING A BOOK ABOUT THIS PLACE IS LIKE WATCHING A MOVIE. FROM THE APPROACH, THE TEMPLE READS AS PERFECT SYMMETRY AND THIS JUXTAPOSITION TO THE ENVIRONMENT SURPRISINGLY BLENDS. UPON ENTRY THE REPETITIVE ELEMENTS, COLONNADES, DETAILING, AND SPATIAL PLANNING CREATED SPACES THAT PLAYED WITH LIGHT AND MASSES VERSUS VOIDS. IT EVOKED FEELINGS OF A HIGHER POWER IN SOME PLACES, AND JUST MADE ME STARE AND THINK AT OTHERS. THERE WAS NEVER AN ABSENCE OF THE HUMAN TOUCH AS STONE CARVINGS WERE NOT ABSENT FROM ANY SURFACE. I ALSO FOUND INTERESTING ARTIFACTS ALONG MY EXPLORATION SUCH AS ANCIENT SANSKRIT CARVING INTO WALLS REINFORCED BUTTRESS LIKE ELEMENTS FOR WALL REINFORCEMENTS. I TOOK A PATH THROUGH THE JUNGLE ON MY WAY OUT WHICH LED ME TO OTHER HIDDEN STRUCTURES IN THE JUNGLE THAT WERE ON THE MOAT SURROUNDING THE TEMPLE THAT HAD VAST INTERIOR ARCHED OPENINGS AND VIEWS ON THE WATER. FROM HERE I WENT TO PRASAT KRAVAN, AND THE FIVE SHRINES WERE CONSTRUCTED OF ONLY BRICKS. THIS WAS DIFFERENT THAN ANGKOR WAT CONSTRUCTED OF ALL STONE AND I WONDERED WHY THE CHANGE OF MATERIAL IN SUCH CLOSE PROXIMITY. IT ADDED A LEVEL OF INTRICACY AND CONTAINED BEAUTIFUL EXTRUDED FIGURES OF PEOPLE AND ENVIRONMENTS. MY NEXT STOP WAS AT SRAH SRANG WHICH HAD A BEAUTIFUL PLATFORM OVERLOOKING A VAST RECTANGULAR LAKE WITH STEPS DOWN TO IT AROUND THE PERIMETER. IT MUST HAVE BEEN A LIVELY PLACE AT THE TIME CIVILIZATION INHABITED IT, BUT NOW THE SILENCE AND SHEER SIZE GAVE OFF THIS MONUMENTAL STRUCTURE GAVE OFF A PEACEFUL, YET EERIE FEELING. ACROSS THE WAY WAS BANTEAY KDEI TEMPLE, AND IMPLICIT BOUNDARIES LINKED THESE PLACES. I NOTED THAT PROXIMITY AND DIRECTIONALITY CAN EITHER CONNECT OR SEPARATE SPACES THROUGH MY EXPERIENCE. THIS TEMPLE WAS STILL IN A VERY UNTOUCHED RUIN LIKE STATE AND I LIKED HOW I COULD SEE HOW THE STRUCTURE DECOMPOSED AND GREW WITH LIFE. TREES HAD KNOCKED DOWN AND GROWN ON TOP OF WALLS, BUT CREATED EXTRAORDINARY SPACES WITHIN ITS DECOMPOSITION. BRICKS WERE SCATTERED, CRUDE SUPPORT SYSTEMS HELD UP MASSIVE STRUCTURES, AND MOSS AND GROWTH COVERED THIS SITE MAKING IT HAVE A POST-APOCALYPTIC FEELING.

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CAMBODIA

SIEM REAP



ANGKOR WAT

JULY 15

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TODAY I VISITED A SERIES OF TEMPLES SO I WANT TO BRIEFLY DESCRIBE CERTAIN ASPECTS OF BAYON TEMPLE, BAPHOUN TEMPLE, PHIMEANAKAS, TERRACE OF THE ELEPHANTS, CHAU SAY TEVODA TEMPLE, THOMMANON TEMPLE, TA KEO TEMPLE, AND TA PROHM. STARTING AT BAYON TEMPLE, THIS BUDDHIST TEMPLE HAD LARGE CARVINGS OF OVER TWO HUNDRED FACES. THE PERIMETER GALLERY WAS CONTAINED BY LARGE WALLS INSCRIBED WITH CARVINGS DEPICTING DAILY LIFE, BATTLES, AND MYTHOLOGICAL STORIES. I LIKED HOW THIS STRUCTURE PLAYED WITH EXPANSION AND CONTRACTION OF SPACES IN CORRIDORS AS WELL. AT BAPHOUN TEMPLE, THERE WAS SUCH A STRONG HORIZONTAL PRESENCE IN THE FACADE WHICH READ NICE WITH THE LANDSCAPE. A FEW HUNDRED-FOOT-LONG LINEAR PATH SUPPORTED BY HUNDREDS OF CLOSELY SPACED COLUMNS EXTENDED TO THE ENTRY. THIS STRUCTURAL JUXTAPOSITION ALSO CREATED DYNAMIC DIRECTIONALITY. PHIMEANAKAS SEEMED LIKE A MONOLITHIC STAIRCASE AND WAS COVERED BY GROWTH AND OFF LIMITS. THIS THREE-TIER PYRAMID HAD GALLERIES WITH SHINGLE ROOFS AND A TOWER AT THE TOP. THE TERRACE OF THE ELEPHANTS WAS A WALK AWAY, AND HERE A LARGE PLATFORM OVERLOOKED MOST OF THE COMPLEX OF THE MANY TEMPLES AND SHRINES. HERE ELEPHANT STATUES EXTRUDED FROM THE STRUCTURE WITH THEIR TRUNKS SYMBOLIZING COLUMNS. CHAU SAY TEVODA AND THOMMANON TEMPLE ARE TWIN TEMPLES DIRECTLY ACROSS FROM EACH OTHER. THEY CONTAIN MULTIPLE STRUCTURES WITH INTERIOR SHRINES CONNECTED BY RAMPS, AND HAD INTRICATE CARVINGS THAT WERE VERY WELL PRESERVED. THE ENTRANCES WERE EXPERIENTIAL BECAUSE THE LINTELS WERE SO LOW THAT YOU HAVE TO BOW TO ENTER AND I UNDERSTOOD THAT FROM GUIDES AND EXPERIENCE. TA KEO TEMPLE, A FIVE-TIER PYRAMID WITH FIVE TOWERS, HAD A BEAUTIFUL SANDSTONE MATERIAL. THE VERY STEEP FRONT STAIR LED TO THE TOP WHERE THE ACCURATE SYMMETRY AND PLAN COULD BE APPRECIATED. TA PROHM WAS THE LAST STOP OF THE DAY. THIS TEMPLE, FAMOUS FOR ITS TREES THAT OVERGREW MUCH OF THE STRUCTURE DEMONSTRATED HOW POWERFUL NATURE CAN BE, HOW POWERFUL THE STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY OF THE PAST WAS, WHILE ALSO SHOWING TIME AS AN ELEMENT. THE SPACES CREATED BY ROOTS, TREES, AND CRUMBLING STRUCTURES WERE SOMETHING THAT CAN ONLY BE FELT AND NOT DESCRIBED. BIOMIMETIC INSPIRATIONS FLOURISHED IN MY MIND AFTER EXPERIENCING THIS MERGING OF NATURE AND MANMADE STRUCTURES WITH NATURAL ELEMENTS.

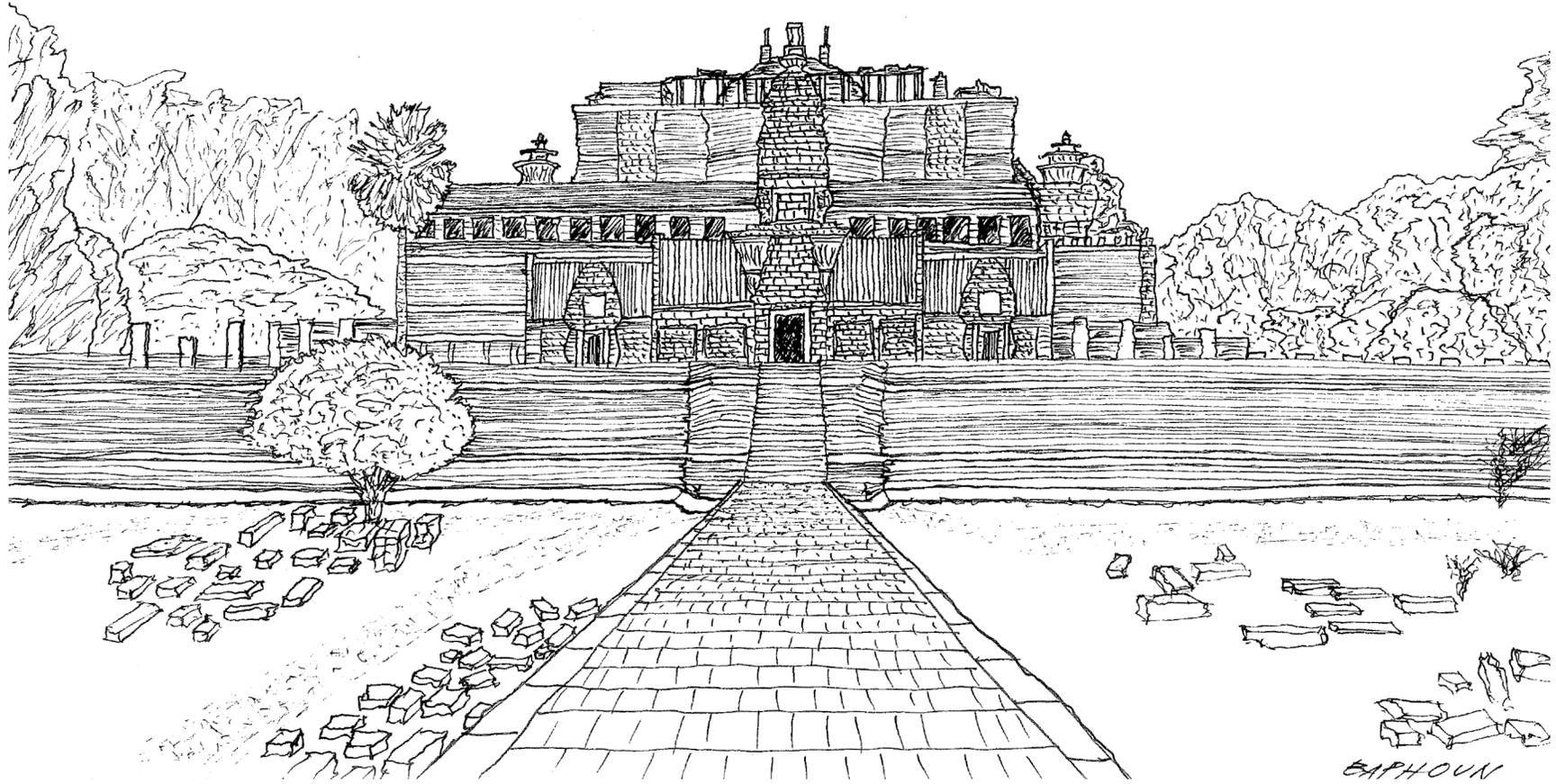
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CAMBODIA

SIEM REAP



BAPHOUN

## JULY 16

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I TOOK TIME TODAY TO SEE THE LOCAL COUNTRY SIDE VERNACULAR, WHERE I TOOK AN ATV TOUR THROUGH VILLAGES AND RICE FIELDS. IT WAS A RAINY DAY, SO IT WAS THE PERFECT CHANCE TO SKIP TEMPLES AND SEE AREAS OFF THE BEATEN PATH. THE ADVENTURE BEGAN IN THE EARLY AFTERNOON AND ENDED LATE IN THE EVENING. I STARTED BY MEANDERING THROUGH RICE FIELDS AND LEARNED ABOUT HOW THE PEOPLE HERE WORK WITH NATURE TO DECREASE EFFORT AND INCREASE EFFICIENCY. AFTER EXPLORING ACRES OF OPEN FIELDS, SMALL VILLAGES APPEARED. THE STRUCTURES WERE ALL HAND BUILT OF BRICKS, WOOD, CORRUGATED METAL AND THATCHED ROOFS AND THE PEOPLE WERE EXCITED TO SEE AND TALK WITH ME. I GOT A VERY WARMING FEELING HERE AND COMMUNICATED MOSTLY THROUGH HAND GESTURES. THERE WERE SOME SMALL SHOPS, BUT THESE VILLAGES WERE MOSTLY SELF-SUPPORTING AND EVERYONE CONTRIBUTED SOMETHING WHICH KEPT THESE VILLAGERS FROM GOING TO THE CITY. WHAT WAS INTERESTING WAS THAT ALTHOUGH OUTSIDES WERE CLUTTERED AND MESSY, THE PEOPLE KEPT THEIR INTERIOR SPACES VERY CLEAN AND ORGANIZED. THE SIGHTS TODAY MADE ME FEEL LIKE I WAS HUNDREDS OF YEARS INTO THE PAST WHICH GROUNDED ME AND LET ME SEE THE BARE ESSENTIAL NEEDS OF PEOPLE AND STRUCTURES.



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CAMBODIA

SIEM REAP

# JULY 17

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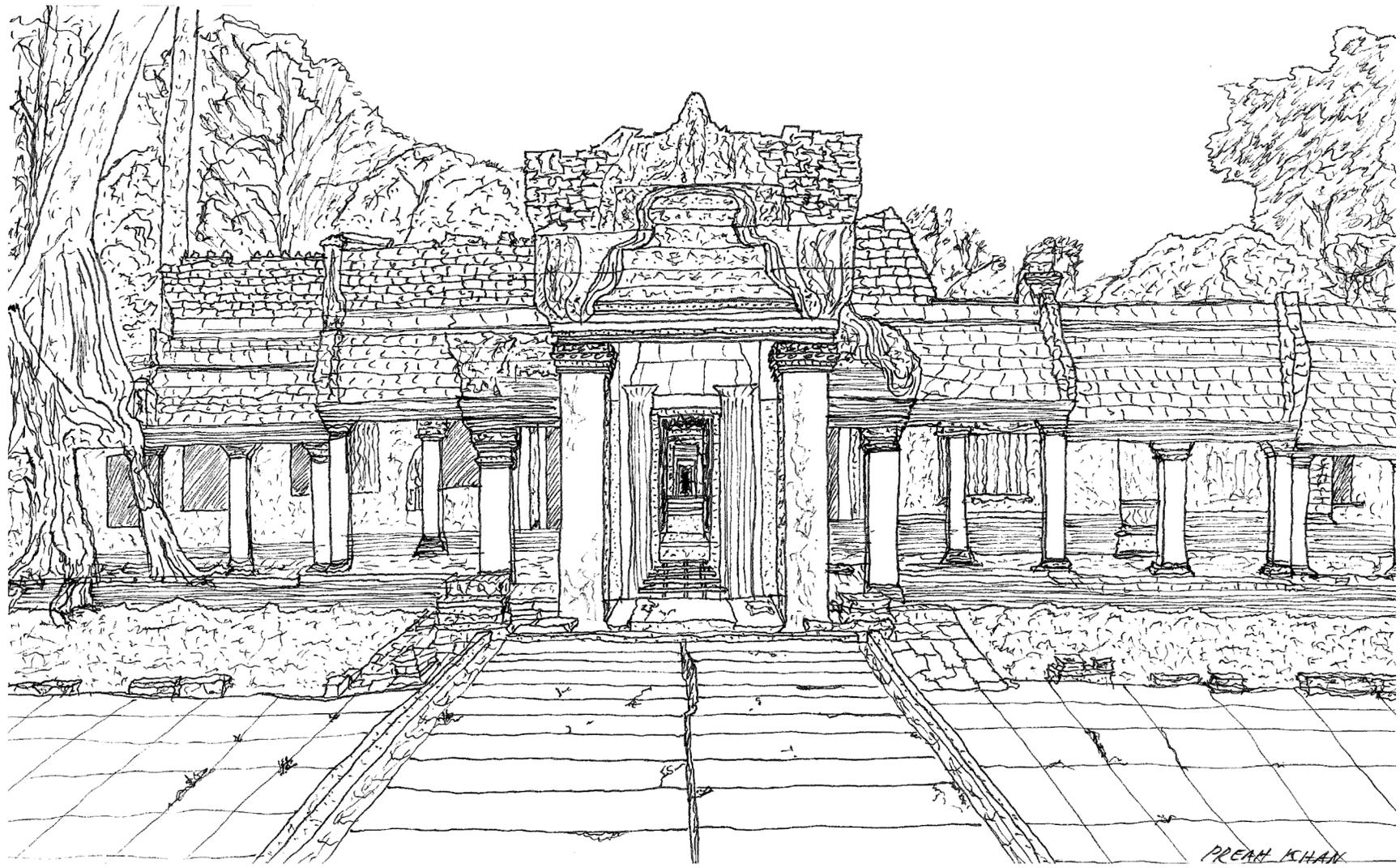
THE FIRST THING I DID TODAY WAS GRAB A TUK-TUK TO EXPLORE MY LAST DAY OF CAMBODIAN TEMPLES. PREAH KHAN WAS MY FIRST STOP. TO GET HERE I HAD TO CROSS A MOAT OVER A BRIDGE FULL OF MOSTLY HEADLESS STATUES THAT LED TO AN ENTRANCE STRUCTURE FALLING APART DUE TO LARGE ROOTS BELOW. IT WAS AN INTIMIDATING FIRST APPEARANCE. INSIDE THIS STRUCTURE THERE WAS SOME PLACES PERFECTLY PRESERVED WITH ORNATE DETAIL AND MULTIPLE LAYERS AND LEVELS CREATING SPATIALLY DYNAMIC SPACES. OTHER PLACES I LITERALLY CLIMBED THROUGH, OVER AND UNDER RUBBLE AND FOUND SACRED STATUES OF THE QUEEN AND OTHER ARTIFACTS HIDDEN FROM THE PUBLIC. THE LIBRARY STRUCTURE HERE WAS COMPOSED OF MASSIVE COLUMNS, LEAVING LITTLE ROOM FOR SPACE INSIDE. THIS MADE THIS SPACE FEEL VERY HEAVY AND ROOTED TO THE GROUND, BUT PERFECT FOR THE STORAGE OF KNOWLEDGE IN MY OPINION. THE NEXT STRUCTURE I VISITED WAS NEAK PEAN. THIS WAS MORE OF AN EXPERIENCE RATHER THAN A STRUCTURE THOUGH, AS YOU HAVE TO WALK ACROSS A VERY LONG BRIDGE INTO THE MIDDLE OF A LARGE LAKE, WHERE THERE IS AN ISLAND. ON THIS ISLAND, THERE IS A LAKE IN THE MIDDLE WITH A SMALL STEPPED STRUCTURE AND TOWER IN THE MIDDLE. THIS WAS AN ISLAND ON AN ISLAND IN A LAKE, SO THE IDEA OF NARROWING OR CONTRACTING SPACE WAS FELT THROUGHOUT THE JOURNEY. TA SOM TEMPLE WAS A COMBINATION OF MANY ELEMENTS I HAD SEEN IN PREVIOUS TEMPLES. THERE WERE LARGE CARVINGS OF FACES, SHRINES, TREES AND ROOTS GROWING ONTO WALLS AND ROOFS, BUT HIS TEMPLE WAS NOT PRESERVED YET. IT SEEMED LIKE IT WAS GOING TO BE RESTORED BECAUSE IT HAD TONS OF STONES LAID OUT IN GRIDS AROUND THE PERIMETER. IT WAS INTERESTING TO SEE HOW PRESERVATIONISTS WERE WORKING TO FIND OUT WHAT PIECES WENT WHERE IN THIS JIGSAW PUZZLE OF RUINS.



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# CAMBODIA

# SIEM REAP



# JULY 18

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AFTER STROLLING DOWN THE RIVERSIDE THIS MORNING TO EAT AT THE STREET MARKETS AND EXPERIENCE THE MANY BRIDGES I HEADED TO THE AIRPORT. THE RIDE THERE LEFT ME REFLECTING ON HOW MUCH HISTORY AND CULTURE THERE WAS IN CAMBODIA AND HOW I WANTED TO COME BACK. THE ANCIENT TEMPLES HERE ARE NOW IMPRINTED IN MY ARCHITECTURAL LENSES AND I WOULD LOVE TO COME FOR MORE INSPIRATION. I AM NOT A PRESERVATIONIST, BUT OLD STRUCTURES GIVE ME MORE INSPIRATION THAN NEW ONES BECAUSE I CAN CLEARLY SEE CONCEPTUAL IDEAS AND TECTONICS. MY NEXT COUNTRY TO SEE WAS THAILAND AND I WAS STARTING AT BANGKOK. THE DRIVE, FLIGHT, AND THEN DRIVE TOOK MOST OF THE REMAINDER OF THE DAY, BUT WHEN I ARRIVED I HAD AN URGE TO EXPLORE WITHOUT ANY DIRECTION. GETTING LOST IN BANGKOK FOR A FEW HOURS REVEALED INTERESTING SPACES THAT I WOULDN'T HAVE FOUND IF I HADN'T GONE EXPLORING. THIS WAS IMPORTANT FOR ME TO SEE AND FEEL BECAUSE THESE SPACES MADE BY THE CITY UNINTENTIONALLY IS SOMETHING ARCHITECTS NEED TO THINK ABOUT WHEN PLANNING. THE TRANSITION FROM A SLOW OLD CITY TO THIS EXTREMELY DENSE BUSY CITY FELT ODD AT FIRST, BUT SOME SIMILARITIES REMAINED LIKE THE STREET FOOD AND MARKETS THAT APPEARED EVERYWHERE.



CAMBODIA

SIEM REAP

# JULY 19

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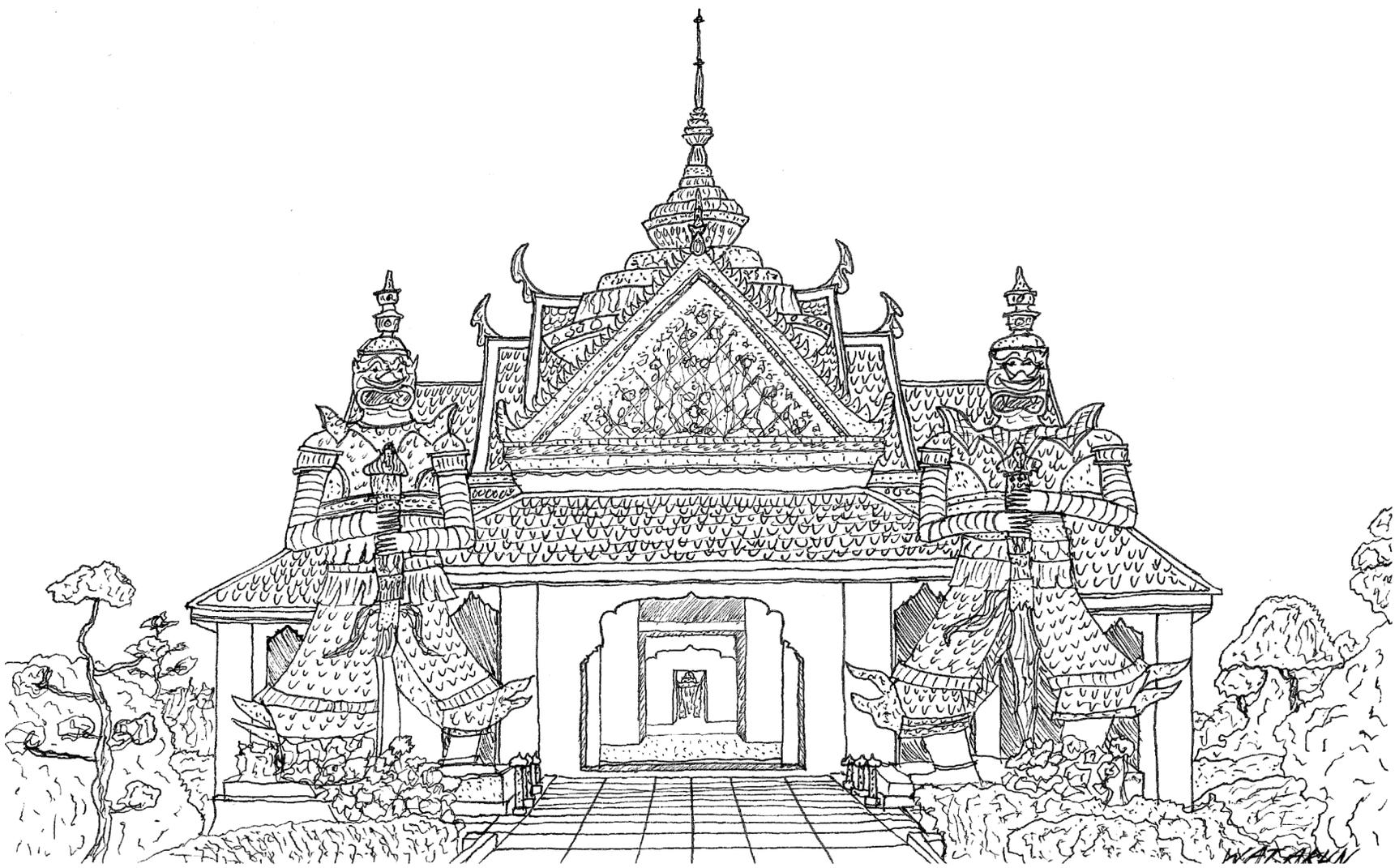
TO START THE DAY, I WENT TO KHAO SAN ROAD. THIS BUSY STREET HAD PLACES TO EAT, SHOP AND SOCIALIZE WITH OTHER TRAVELERS. IT POINTED ME IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION AND I THEN HEADED TO WAT PHO. THIS BUDDHIST COMPLEX WAS ENTERED THROUGH A SERIES OF BUDDHA STATUES AND STUPAS THAT WERE COVERED BY MOSAIC TILES. AS I LOOKED AROUND, GOLD EMBELLISHINGS AND MOSAIC TILES SEEMED TO BE THE PREDOMINANT COLORS AND TEXTURES. IT WAS BEAUTIFUL, BUT GAVE ME A FEELING THAT IT HAD BEEN DILAPIDATED AND RESTORED IN SOME WEIRD WAY. ONE STRUCTURE CONTAINED A GIGANTIC BUDDHA STATE LAYING DOWN AND IT TOOK UP THE ENTIRETY OF THE SPACE INSIDE. EVERY INCH OF SURFACE HAD DETAILED PATTERNS AND TEXTURES, SO THE HUMAN TOUCH WAS ALWAYS PREVALENT. WALKING AROUND THIS SYMMETRICAL MAZE OF SMALL STRUCTURES, IT SEEMED CAREFULLY PLANNED OUT, BUT TO ME THERE WAS RANDOM ASYMMETRIES AND STRUCTURES BLOCKING EACH OTHER MAKING IT FEEL A LITTLE CLUTTERED. I WENT TO THE PIER TO CATCH A BOAT ACROSS THE RIVER AFTER THIS AND SOON ARRIVED AT WAT ARUN. AT THE ENTRANCE GATE, THERE WERE TWO YAKSHA WARRIORS, TALLER THAN THE STRUCTURE. THIS GIANT STUPA WAS EYE CATCHING FROM ALL AROUND AS ITS POINT STOOD OUT IN THE CITY. IT ALSO USED MOSAIC TILE PATTERNS TO COVER THE ENTIRE SURFACE ALSO. THE FINAL STOP OF THE DAY WAS AT A TEMPLE ON TOP OF A HILL WITH PANORAMIC VIEWS OF BANGKOK, WAT SAKET. THE LONG WALK UP THE SPIRAL STAIRCASE ON THE PERIMETER WAS A GREAT EXPERIENCE AS IT REVELED VIEWS ALONG THE WAY AND HAD BELLS TO INTERACT WITH ALONG THE WAY. THE TOP HAD A MASSIVE GOLD STUPA AND INTERIOR SPACES WITH ARCHED CORRIDORS. A CONCLUSION FROM TODAY IS THAT PUTTING SACRED STATUES IN A SPACE DOESNT MAKE IT FEEL SACRED. DESIGN DECISIONS THAT SHAPE THE PLACE, THE LIGHT, AND THE MATERIALS DO.



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# THAILAND

# BANGKOK



W A T   A R U N

## JULY 20

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THE IDEA TODAY WAS TO EXPERIENCE THE STREETS, SHOPPING AREAS, AND MALLS NOT TO SHOP, BUT TO SEE THE LOCAL CULTURE AND SPACES MADE IN VERY TIGHT URBAN SETTINGS. AT SUKHUMVIT ROAD THERE SEEMED TO BE A MALL EVERY BLOCK AND THE STREETS HAD CIRCULATION AT ROAD LEVEL AND ABOVE AT CERTAIN INTERSECTIONS. THIS CREATED NICE SPACES WHERE INTERACTIONS BETWEEN PEOPLE HAPPENED BECAUSE IT HAD SHADING, SEATING, AND A VIEW OF THE INTERSECTION TRAFFIC CRAZINESS IN THE CENTER. THEN ON TO SOI PETCHBURI 10, THIS ROAD WAS ONE WAY AND WAS BASICALLY A DELICIOUS FOOD ALLEY. THERE WERE FRUIT AND VEGETABLE MARKETS, SMALL RESTAURANTS, SMALL VENDORS, AND OTHER FOOD RELATED PRODUCTS ALL HERE. IT WAS SHOCKING TO SEE HOW THIS CULTURE EATS ON THE STREET AND SHOPS HERE TOO RATHER THAN UTILIZING HUGE WAREHOUSES LIKE I AM USED TO. THIS GAVE THE AREA A SENSE OF PLACE AND COMMUNITY. I SAW MANY CONTEMPORARY STRUCTURES AND DECIDED TO EXPLORE THE MBK MALL BECAUSE OF THE PARAMETRIC FORMS SWEEPING ACROSS THE STRUCTURE WITH WAVE LIKE PANELING FACADE ELEMENTS. THE INTERIOR WAS JUST AS PLEASING TO THE EYE AS THE SENSES, WITH A CIRCULATION ATRIUM RESEMBLING ZAHA HADIDS STRUCTURAL STYLE. THIS SPACE WITH ITS MATERIALITY AND CURVILINEAR BENDING ELEMENTS GAVE IT A DIGITALLY LUXURIOUS FEELING.



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THAILAND

BANGKOK

# JULY 21

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TRANSITIONING FROM THE COMMERCIAL SCALE TO THE RESIDENTIAL SCALE, I BEGAN AT JIM THOMPSONS HOUSE THIS AFTERNOON. FROM THE EXTERIOR THIS STRUCTURE HAD GARDENS, TWO FISH PONDS, AND WAS SITUATED ON A RIVER GIVING A FEELING OF NATURAL CONNECTIVITY. ON THE INTERIOR, THE WAY HE WAS ABLE TO INFUSE MANY CULTURES INTO ONE PLACE WORKED WELL COMPOSITIONALLY. THE STRUCTURAL FORM WITH SEPARATED BUILDINGS, THE MATERIALS FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRIES AS WELL AS THE ARTIFACTS, AND THE RAISED THRESHOLDS BEFORE ENTERING ROOMS WERE ALL DESIGN ELEMENTS THAT HAD AESTHETIC AS WELL AS SPATIAL QUALITIES. ALL OF THE DETAILS AND SMALL DESIGN DECISIONS THAT WERE MADE HAD ME LOOKING PARTICULARLY CLOSE AT APERTURES, THRESHOLDS, AND MATERIAL CHANGES. AFTER THIS I WENT TO THE MAIN RIVER RUNNING THROUGH THE CITY AND TOOK A LONGBOAT TOUR. THIS WAS A GREAT EXPERIENCE OF HOW TRADITIONAL BOATS WERE USED AND I ADVENTURED THROUGH WATER VILLAGES WHERE ALL OF THE HOMES WERE OVER THE WATER ON STILTS. THE MAJORITY OF THE HOMES WERE STILL INHABITED AND I COULD ADMIRE AT THE TYPES OF CONNECTION TO THE WATER. THE CRUDELY BUILT WOODEN HOMES CREATED A VERNACULAR IN THE AREA THAT SHOWED CULTURE AND TRADITION. WATER WAS ESSENTIAL TO LIFE HERE WITH PEOPLE WERE WASHING, PLAYING, AND FISHING IN IT ALONG THEIR DOCKS.



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# THAILAND

# BANGKOK

# JULY 22

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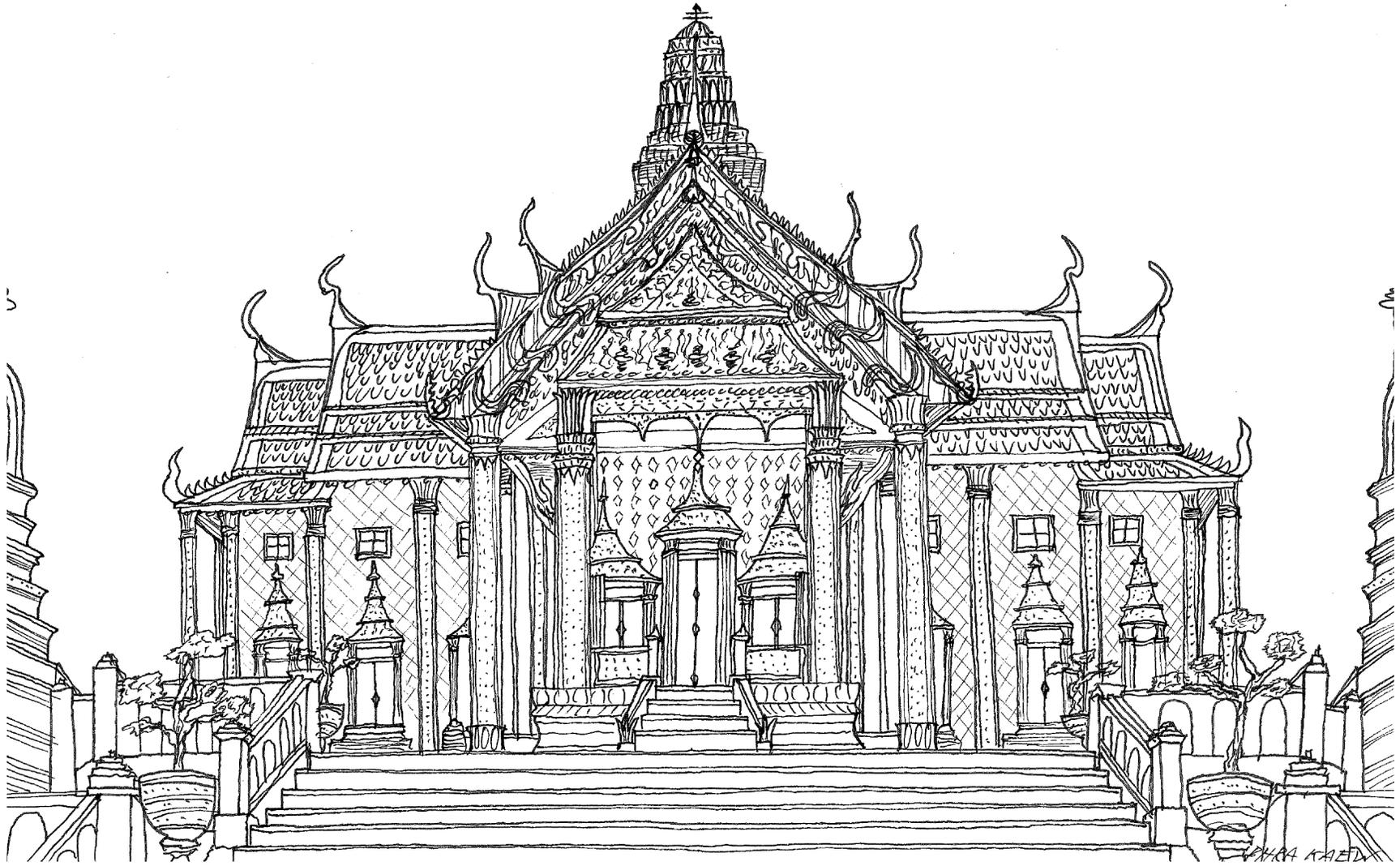
TODAY I VISITED THE GRAND PALACE COMPLEX, A PLACE WITH THE GRAND PALACE, TEMPLES AND SHRINES. THERE IS A COMPLEX INSIDE THE GRAND PALACE WHICH HAD PERIMETER WALLS AND WALKWAYS FULL OF BUDDHIST STATUES ALL MADE OF GOLD. AFTER WALKING BY MULTIPLE STUPAS, THERE IS A LINEAR PROGRESSION OF STRUCTURES. THE FIRST IS A GIANT GOLD STUPA SHAPED LIKE A BELL THAT WAS AS TALL AS ANY BUILDING AROUND. BEHIND IT WAS THE ROYAL PANTHEON, A BUILDING LITERALLY DRIPPING WITH DECORATION AND ORNAMENTATION OF REFLECTIVE MURAL AND GOLD CLAD MATERIALS. FRAGILE GOLD POINTS CAPPED EVERY ROOF EDGE AND IT GAVE A LIGHTNESS TO THE STRUCTURE. THE COLUMNS WERE TREATED WITH MICRO ORNAMENTATION DOWN TO FINGERNAIL SIZE WHICH MADE ME ALWAYS COME CLOSER TO REVEAL THE TRUE ELEMENTS OF THE MATERIAL. AS I WALKED AROUND THIS SYMMETRICAL COMPLEX I THEN CAME TO WAT PHRA KAEW. THERE WERE GOLD COLUMNS HOLDING IT UP WITH MURAL LIKE WALLS AND ORGANIC SPIRES ON THE ROOF EAVES. THE INSIDE WAS TREATED THE SAME WAY WITH EVERY SINGLE INCH OF THIS LARGE TEMPLE GIVEN EXTENSIVE ARTISTIC WORK. AFTER LEAVING THIS AREA I HEADED TOWARD THE GRAND PALACE AND PHRA MAHA MONTIAN. THE PALACE HAD A VERY ELEGANT APPEARANCE, WITH ARCHED OPENINGS, DETAILED LINTELS, HORIZONTALITY WITH DIFFERENT MATERIALS, AND AN EXTRAVAGANT ROOF PLATED IN GOLD MATERIALS THAT TWISTED AND EXTRUDED TOWARD THE SKY. THE HISTORICAL LANDMARKS ON EITHER SIDE MIMICKED THE NATURE OF THE TEMPLES IN THE EARLIER AREA OF THE COMPLEX, WITH SO MUCH COMPLEXITY THROUGH MATERIALITY THAT IT COULD BE RELATED TO SCALES OF A REPTILE. THE ORNAMENTATION STOOD OUT TO ME HERE AS I HAD NEVER SEEN SO MUCH ARTICULATION IN THIS AMOUNT OF ABUNDANCE.



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# THAILAND

# BANGKOK



WAT PHRA KAEW

# JULY 23

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I HAD TO TRAVEL FOR MOST OF THE DAY TODAY. I STARTED BY GOING TO BANGKOK AIRPORT AND THEN FLYING TO CHIANG MAI. AFTER ARRIVING IN THIS CITY, I FOUND AN ACCOMMODATION FOR THE NIGHT BECAUSE I WAS LEAVING EARLY TOMORROW, AND THEN WENT TO EAT AND EXPLORE THE OLD CITY. IT WAS A WALLED SQUARE CITY THAT HAD A WELCOMING AND HISTORIC FEELING. SOME OF THE EXTERIOR PERIMETER WALLS WERE STILL STANDING AND WERE COMPOSED OF ONLY BRICKS LAID A FEW FEET THICK. THE GRID OF THE INTERIOR CITY MADE IT VERY EASY TO FIND MY WAY AROUND, AND TEMPLES WERE ABUNDANT ON EVERY STREET IT SEEMED LIKE.



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THAILAND

CHIANG MAI

## JULY 24

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TODAY I HEADED HIGH UP INTO THE MOUNTAINS OF CHIANG MAI TO A KAREN VILLAGE TRIBE WHERE I WAS STAYING OVERNIGHT. AFTER DRIVING UP A MOUNTAIN WITH NO ROAD OR SIGNS I REACHED AN AREA THAT APPEARED TIME HAD STOOD STILL FROM HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO. THE VILLAGE WAS COMPOSED OF MANY DWELLINGS MADE OF ALL NATURAL MATERIALS SUCH AS BAMBOO AND WOOD COLUMNS AND THATCHED ROOFS. IT WAS BEAUTIFUL AND REMINDED OF LAUGIERS PRIMITIVE HUT. LOOKING AROUND, ALL I COULD SEE WAS VIBRANT GREEN RICE TERRACES AND A STREAM THAT RAN THROUGH THE CENTER OF THE VILLAGE. THE ACCOMMODATION I WAS STAYING IN WAS A HUT MADE OF ONLY BAMBOO, AND AS I WAS SO INTRIGUED ON HOW IT WAS MADE, THE LOCALS GAVE ME A FEW TIPS AND TRICKS ON BAMBOO STRUCTURES WITHOUT WESTERNER TOOLS OR MATERIALS. THE HUT WAS RAISED ON BAMBOO STILTS, THE FLOOR WAS MADE FLAT WITH A FINAL LAYED OF SMASHED BAMBOO, THE WALLS WERE WOVEN BAMBOO STRANDS, AND THE ROOF WAS BAMBOO PIECES CUT IN HALF AND OVERLAID. IT WAS REMARKABLE THAT THIS IS THE WAY KAREN PEOPLE STILL LIVE AND THAT THEY LIKED IT AND WOULDNT CHANGE IT. THE TRIBES PEOPLE TOOK US ON AN ADVENTURE TO A WATER FALL IN THE AFTERNOON THAT LOOKED ONE HUNDRED FEET TALL, AND I GOT TO SEE MANY NEW PLANT SPECIES ALONG THE HIKE THAT WERE AIDING IN MY INSPIRATIONAL BIOMIMETIC IDEAS. THE REST OF THE DAY CONSISTED OF HEARING STORIES, LEARNING OF CULTURE, INTERACTING WITH THE PEOPLE THAT LIVED HERE AND EATING THE BEST TASTING FRUITS, VEGETABLES, AND RICE.



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THAILAND

CHIANG MAI

## JULY 25

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SLEEPING IN A BAMBOO HUT OVERNIGHT WAS A GREAT EXPERIENCE AND LED ME TO APPRECIATE BAMBOO AS A MATERIAL IN A NEW WAY. NOT ONLY IS IT STRUCTURAL, IT CAN BE USED FOR AESTHETICS AND MAKES A SPACE FEEL VERY ROOTED TO THE EARTH. THE FIRST THING I DID TODAY WAS TAKE CARE OF ELEPHANTS THAT LIVED ON THE PROPERTY. I WAS ABLE TO MAKE THEM MEDICINE, FEED, AND WASH THEM. THIS WAS VERY ENJOYABLE AND FULFILLING. FROM HERE I WENT WITH SOME TRIBE MEMBERS ON A JOURNEY THAT LED US TO THREE OTHER VILLAGES. THE PATH THROUGH THE JUNGLE TOOK ME OVER BAMBOO BRIDGES MADE FOUR PIECES WIDE, PAST THE MOST INTERESTING PLANT AND TREES, AND THROUGH STREAMS AND RIVERS. THIS WAS AN INFLUENTIAL HIKE THAT INSPIRED ME TO BLEND WITH NATURE IN THE WAYS THAT JUNGLE TRIBES DO. THE OTHER VILLAGES USED THE SAME LOCAL VERNACULAR AND MATERIALS, BUT EACH ONE DID THINGS SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT, AND I THINK IT COULD BE DUE TO MICROCLIMATES OR AVAILABLE RESOURCES. THE STRUCTURES THAT USED NO NAILS, SCREWS, GLUE, ETC. OPENED MY MIND TO A NEW WORLD OF NATURAL CONSTRUCTION. THE PEOPLE EVEN LET ME WATCH AND SLIGHTLY HELP WITH TYING BAMBOO CROSS HATCHED AS A ROOF THATCH TO THE MAIN STRUCTURE. AS I DROVE BACK TO THE CITY, I THOUGHT THAT THIS EXPERIENCE CHANGED MY PERSPECTIVE ON BUILDING AND CULTURE.



THAILAND



CHIANG MAI

# JULY 26

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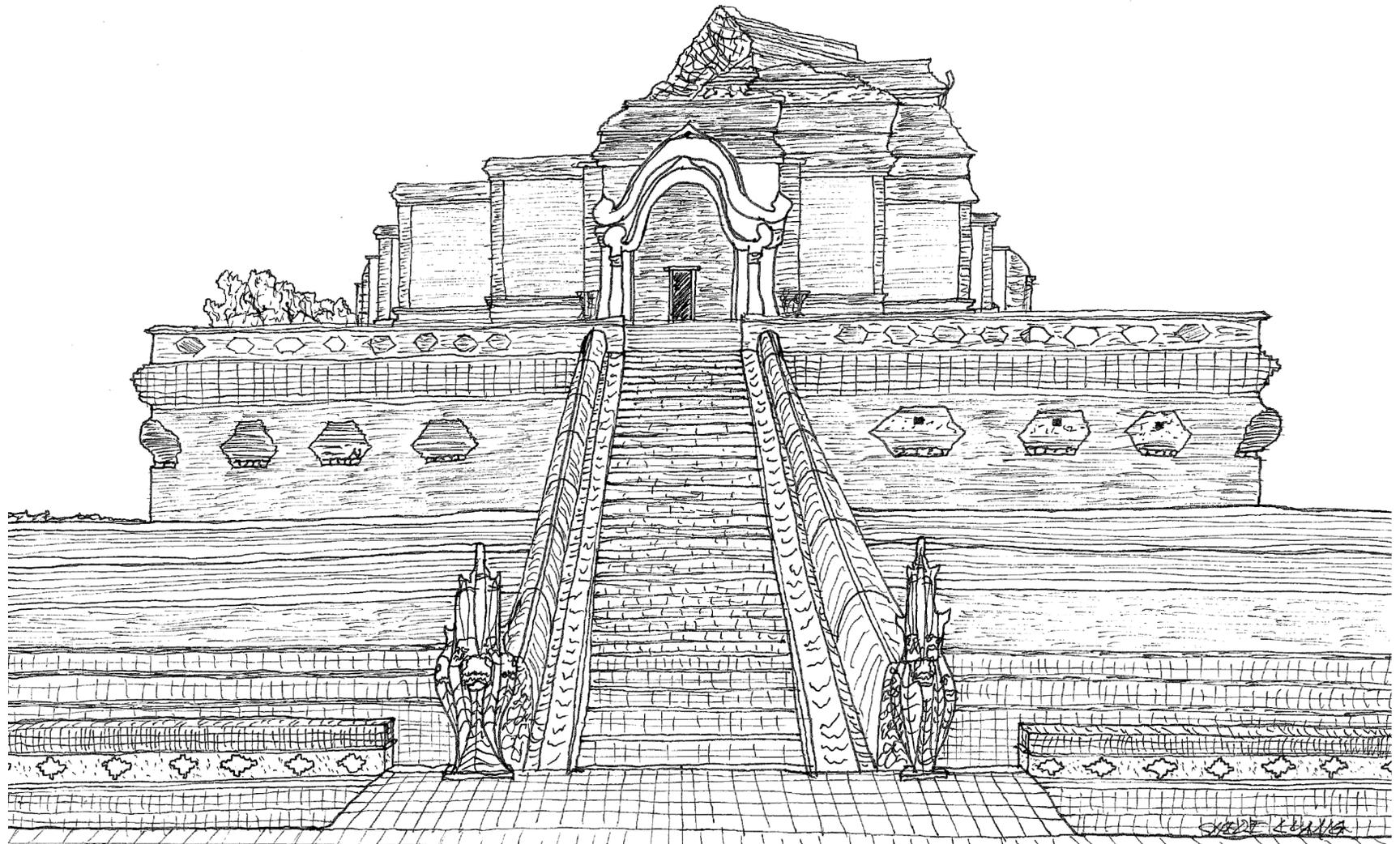
BACK IN THE CHIANG MAI CITY TODAY, I WAS EAGER TO EXPLORE THAT VAST NUMBER OF TEMPLES. WAT CHEDI LUANG WAS THE FIRST STOP AND THIS TIERED PYRAMID TEMPLE HAD FOUR GOD SIZED THRESHOLDS, ONE ON EACH SIDE, WITH STAIRS LEADING UP TO THEM GUARDED BY DRAGONS AT THE STAIR BASE. IT WAS CONSTRUCTED OF BRICKS AND IS NOW LEFT IN A DETERIORATED CONDITION THAT HAS NEARLY HALF OF THE ROOF CRUMBLING AWAY. WAT PHAN TAO WAS NEXT, AND THIS BEAUTIFUL WOODEN TEMPLE IS ONE OF THE OLDEST STILL STANDING. ITS HIGHLY DECORATED WALLS, WITH MATERIALS AND TEXTURES WERE FADING AND TO ME IT GAVE ANOTHER LAYER OF INFORMATION. THE INTERIOR HAD EXPOSED STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS OF COLUMNS AND TRUSSES, ALSO HIGHLY DECORATED, AND IT WAS CLEAR TO ME NOW ABOUT WHAT THEIR AESTHETIC JUDGEMENT WAS AT THE TIME. THE NEXT STOP WAS AT WAT PHRA SINGH, A COMPLEX MADE UP OF A FEW STRUCTURES THAT HOUSED SHRINES AND STUPAS THAT WERE TALLER THAN ALL OF THE ROOF PEAKS. THE WHITE PLATFORM BASES CONTRASTED IN A COMPLIMENTARY WAY TO THE RED AND GOLD MATERIALS AND COLORS THAT COMPOSED THE WALLS AND STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS. THE ROOFS WERE GIVEN THE MOST IMPORTANCE AS THEY WERE HIGHLY THOUGHT OUT WITH SHINGLES, EVE CAPS, AND POINTED ELEMENTS EXTRUDING FROM EVERYWHERE A CREASE OR LINE STARTED. WAT PHAN ON WAS A TEMPLE SITTING ON THE SIDE OF A PERIMETER WALKWAY SURROUNDING A GIANT GOLDEN STUPA. THE ELEMENTS OF THE EXTERIOR THAT STOOD OUT WERE THE LINTELS ABOVE THE WINDOWS AND THE ROOF EDGES, BOTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DETAIL THAT BROUGHT ATTENTION TO THEM. THE LAST TEMPLE I STOPPED AT WAS WAT CHIANG MAN, A WELL-MANICURED SITE THAT HAD A GOLDEN STUPA BEHIND IT RESTING ON A CONCRETE PODIUM MADE OF ELEPHANT STATUES. THE FRONT AND REAR ELEVATION OF THIS TEMPLE WERE MOST FASCINATING WITH HUGE FLAT PANELS COVERED IN MICROSCOPIC DETAILS OF CARVINGS, PAINTINGS, AND TEXTURES ALL CAST IN GOLD. THE INTERIOR, WITH ITS EXPOSED UNDERSIDES OF SHINGLES SHOWED, EMPHASIZED THE CONNECTION TO THE STRUCTURE.



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# THAILAND

# CHIANG MAI



WAT CHEDI LUANG

# JULY 27

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STARTING AT WAT SRI SUPHAN THIS MORNING, I WAS IN AWE AT THE SIGHT OF THIS SILVER METAL TEMPLE. FOR THE FIRST TIME, I COULD FEEL THE EMOTIONAL AND SPATIAL DIFFERENCE THAT MATERIALITY CREATES. THE SHARP, THIN, AND HARD ALUMINUM AND SILVER PANELS WERE DESIGNED WITH SUCH DETAIL AND PERFECT CONNECTIVITY. THE SPACE FELT COLD AND RIGID AS AN EFFECT. NEXT, I WENT TO WAT SUAN DOK, AN AREA THAT APPEARED AT FIRST LIKE AN ARTIC ARRAY. THIS TEMPLE WAS ESSENTIALLY AN AREA ENCLOSED BY A WHITE FENCE, FULL OF CLOSE TO ONE HUNDRED STUPAS, ALSO ALL WHITE. THEY WERE ALL DIFFERENT SIZES AND SHAPES AND SOME COULD BE EXPLORED WITH STEPS LEADING UP TO THEM. THE HIGH REFLECTIVITY AND SHINE COMING FROM THESE SMALL STRUCTURES GAVE OFF A COMFORTABLE FEELING EVEN THOUGH THE AREA COULD RESEMBLE A HIGH-CLASS CEMETERY. AT THE FAR END OF THIS TEMPLE WAS THE MASSIVE GOLDEN STUPA, TOWERING OVER ALL STRUCTURES AROUND AND SHINING A GOLD REFLECTION ONTO THE ALL-WHITE TEMPLE GROUNDS IN A BEAUTIFUL PLAY WITH LIGHT, SHADOW, AND REFLECTION. AT NIGHT, I WANDERED THE NIGHT BAZAAR, A STREET THAT EXTENDED FROM THE OLD CITY'S PERIMETER WALLS ALL THE WAY TO THE MOST CENTRAL POINT. IT FELT LIKE THE ENTIRE CITY WAS PRESENT AND I COULD BARLEY MOVE. I WATCHED THE LOCAL ARTIST DO CRAFTS, SUCH AS BLOWING GLASS OR CARVING WOOD AND ALSO WATCH LOCALS PREPARE FOOD IN TRADITIONAL WAYS.



THAILAND

CHIANG MAI

# JULY 28

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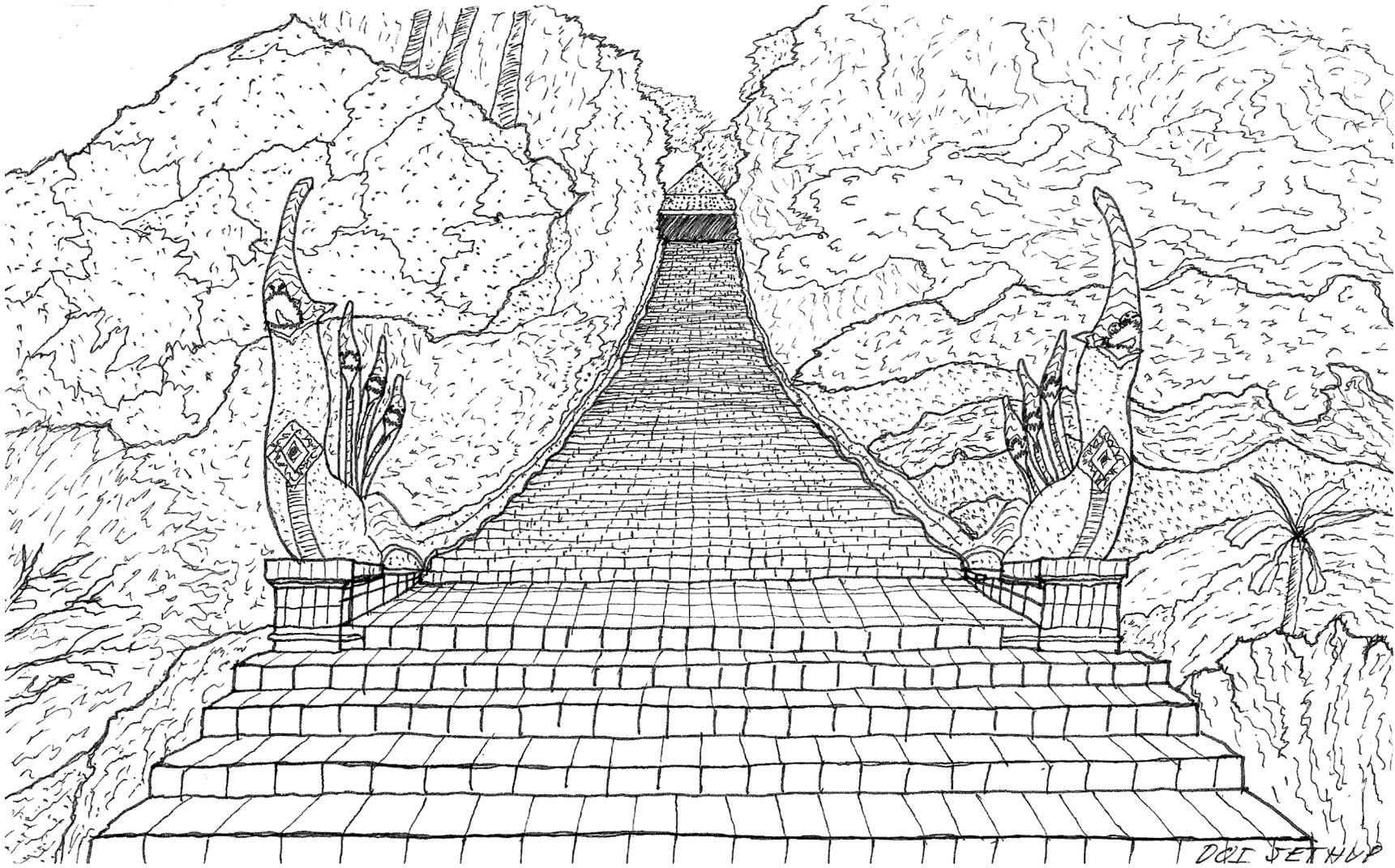
I TOOK A RIDE IN THE BACK OF A PICKUP TRUCK AGAIN TODAY, BUT HIS TIME UP TO THE TOP OF A MOUNTAIN OVERLOOKING THE CITY. HERE, I HIKE ROUND DOI SETHUP NATIONAL PARK AND LOOKED OVER THE CITY EXAMINING THE INTERESTING WAY THAT IT WAS ORIGINALLY PLANNED OUT AND HOW URBAN SPRAWL GREW OUT FROM THE CENTRAL OLD CITY. I CAME ACROSS STRUCTURES THAT WERE COMPLETELY COVERED IN GROWTH, LOOKING LIKE MODERN SUSTAINABLE OVERPOWERED WITH GREENERY. THE AMOUNT OF TIME FOR THIS TO OCCUR MADE IT A VERY SPECIAL STRUCTURE ENERGETICALLY AND SHOWED THE POWER OF NATURAL FORCES. FROM HERE I MADE MY WAY TO WAT PHRA THAT DOI SETHUP. THIS IS A GOLDEN TEMPLE VISIBLE FROM DOWN IN THE CITY BECAUSE OF HOW REFLECTIVE IT IS. THE ENTRANCE TO THIS TEMPLE IS UP HUNDREDS OF STAIRS ON A STAIRCASE WHERE THE HANDRAILS ARE TWO DRAGONS THAT HAVE HEADS AT THE BASE. THE EXPERIENCE ON THIS STAIRCASE WAS MYTHOLOGICAL IN A FAIRYTALE LIKE SENSE. AFTER CLIMBING TO THE TOP THE GOLDEN TEMPLE CAME INTO VIEW, A FOUR WALLED SYMMETRICAL STRUCTURE THAT CONTAINED A GREAT DEAL OF SHRINES AND STATUES. THIS SPACE, MEANT FOR PRAYER, LIFTS THE SPIRIT UPWARD WITH GESTURES MADE, AND DUE THE FACT THAT ITS PERCHED ATOP A MOUNTAIN OVERLOOKING EVEN THE AIRPLANES FLYING IN.



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# THAILAND

# CHIANG MAI



# JULY 29

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TAKING A DAY TO EXPERIENCE SOMETHING DIFFERENT, I ATTENDED A COOKING SCHOOL TODAY. IT HELPED ME GET A BETTER PERSPECTIVE OF CULTURAL VIEW AND BELIEFS BY TALKING TO INSTRUCTORS. THE DAY STARTED TOURING MARKETS IN THE AREA AND LEARNING ABOUT HERBS, SPICES, AND PRODUCE NATIVE TO THE AREA. THE PEOPLE HERE LIKE TO SHOP FOR FOOD DAILY TO ENSURE FRESHNESS. AFTER THIS I WENT TO A HOME/SCHOOL WHERE I LEARNED ALL ABOUT SELECTING INGREDIENTS, HOW TO PREPARE THEM, HOW TO COOK, AND HOW TO DRESS THEM AT THE END. IN A WAY, IT RELATED PERFECTLY TO THE PROCESS AND PROCEDURES OF BUILDING A STRUCTURE. ANALOGIES ARE IMPORTANT WAY OF MAKING CONNECTIONS AND THIS IS SOMETHING I COULD LATER USE AS A TOOL.



THAILAND

CHIANG MAI

JULY 30

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I WAS TRAVELING TO LAOS LATER THIS AFTERNOON, BUT WANTED TO SQUEEZE IN TWO MORE TEMPLES. I WALKED OVER TO WAT KET KARAM FIRST AND QUICKLY SAW THAT IT WAS A TEMPLE TO WORSHIP DOGS, WITH STATUES PLACED EVERYWHERE. THE ROOF FORM STEPPED DOWN IN LEVELS FIVE TIMES, LOOKING LIKE IT WAS GROWING OUT OF THE ENTRANCE. THERE WAS A SHRINE TO THE LEFT AND THEN A GIANT WHITE STUPA BEHIND IT THAT HAD DRAGON STATUE STAIRCASES. THE PERIMETER CIRCULATION OF THE TEMPLE LED ME TO EXPLORE THE EXTERIOR, AND EVERY STEP CLOSER REVEALED MORE DETAILS IN SUCH A WAY THAT PEOPLE ALL AROUND HAD TO GET WITHIN A FOOT TO REALLY SEE WHAT WAS HAPPENING. THIS WHITE BASE SUPPORTING A GOLD TEMPLE WAS WORKING FOR ME AESTHETICALLY AND COHESIVELY MERGED TOGETHER WITH COLUMNS PROTRUDING DOWN THE SIDES. THE NEXT TEMPLE, WAT SI KONG, WAS ONE OF THE FEW TEMPLES CURRENTLY UNDER CONSTRUCTION. I WAS ABLE TO SEE HOW BRICKS WERE THE FUNDAMENTAL MATERIAL, ALONG WITH MIXED CONCRETE. THE PROCESS WAS INTERESTING BECAUSE BAMBOO WAS USED TO ENSURE STRAIGHT LINES AND ELEMENTS WERE DIPPED INTO A GOLD SUBSTANCE FOR THE COATING THAT APPEARED EVERYWHERE IN THE CITY.



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THAILAND

CHIANG MAI

# JULY 31

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THIS IS MY FIRST DAY IN LUANG PRABANG, LAOS. THE CITY SEEMED CONSIDERABLY SMALL AND PLANNED OUT RATIONALLY AFTER TAKING A SCOOTER RIDE THROUGH THE TOWN TO GET A FEEL FOR IT. IT WAS BASICALLY A PENINSULA WITH A FEW LINEAR ROADS LEADING INTO A CITY CENTER, ALSO WITH A FEW LINEAR ROADS. THE MAIN CITY FEATURES WERE TEMPLES, SO I DECIDED TO START MY EXPLORATION THERE. I STARTED AT VAT VISOUNARATH, THIS WAS THE OLDEST TEMPLE AND THE ONE THAT STOOD OUT FROM ALL THE OTHERS. IT REMINDED ME OF CAMBODIA BECAUSE THIS MASSIVE STONE STRUCTURE HAD A BEAUTIFUL PATINA, EXPOSED THE STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY AT PARTS, AND HAD GROWTH CONSUMING IT AT OTHERS. THIS TEMPLE HAD A PERIMETER WALKWAY, AND WHILE ADMIRING THIS TEMPLE, I NOTICED THAT WHERE PARTS OF THE STRUCTURE WERE DETERIORATING AWAY, THE TRUE INTERIOR WAS BRICKS, NOT STONE OR CONCRETE. THE NEXT SERIES OF TEMPLES I VISITED HAD MANY SIMILARITIES, SUCH AS OF A BUDDHA SHRINE INSIDE, EXPOSED TRUSSES, HIGHLY DECORATED ROOFS, ORNAMENT IN EVERY POSSIBLE PLACE, AND A PODIUM. THESE TEMPLES INCLUDED: VAT AHAM, VAT HOXIENG, VAT THAT, VAT SIBOUNHEUANG, VAT SENE SOUK HARAM, AND VAT PA PHAI.



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# LAOS

# LUANG PRABANG

# AUGUST 1

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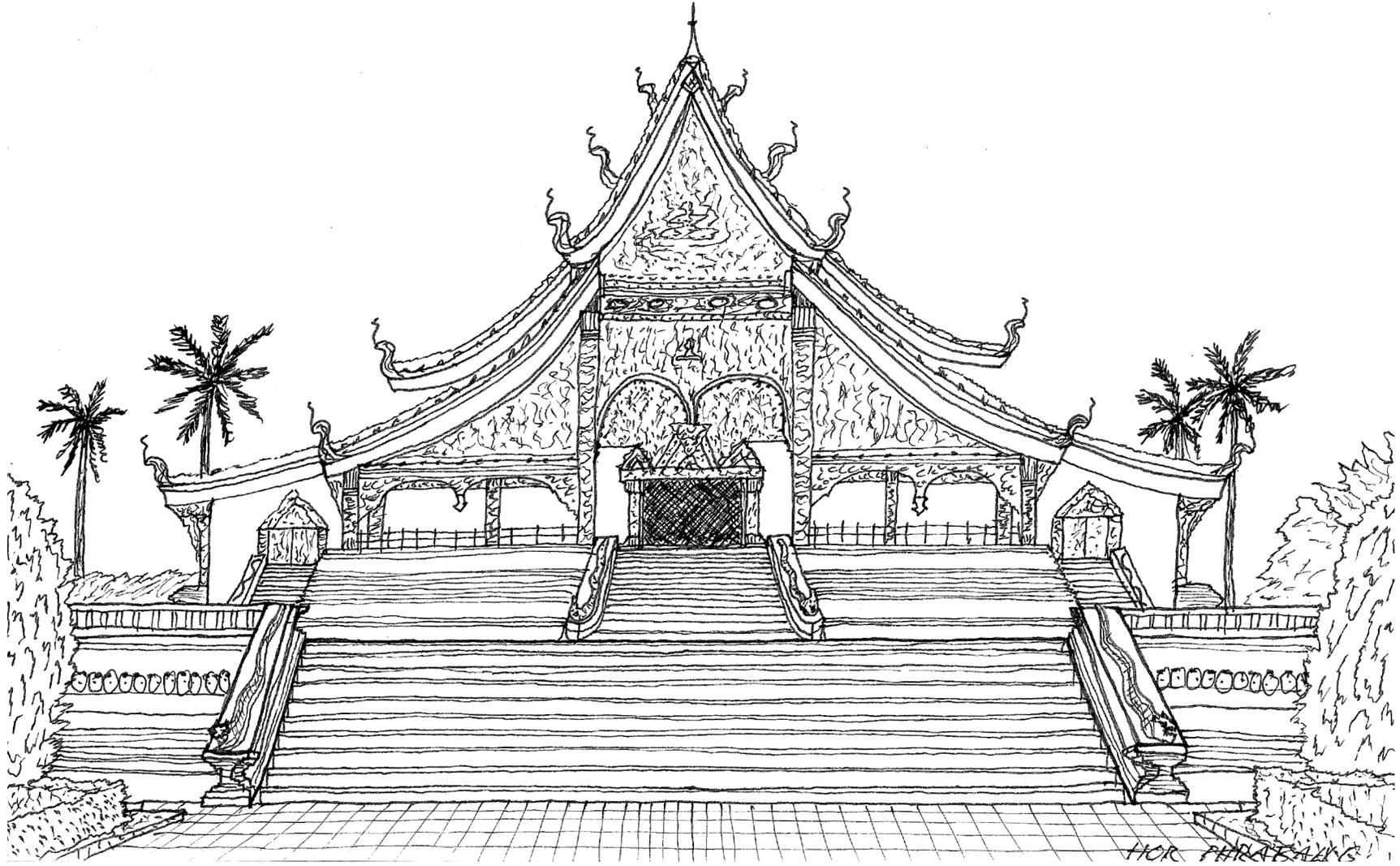
THE DAY TODAY STARTED WITH A TRIP UP TO KUANG SI WATERFALL AND THE TUK TUK RIDE TO GET THERE WAS FULL OF LUSH JUNGLE SCENERY. THE HIKING TRAIL HAD THREE MAIN ATTRACTION POINTS EACH WITH EITHER A LONG HORIZONTAL LEDGE OF THICK WATER FALLING OR A NARROW TALL STREAM FLOWING. THE WAY WATER MOVES AFFECT HUMANS EMOTIONALLY AND SPATIALLY I HAD OBSERVED BECAUSE OF THE DIFFERENT SOUNDS OR THE VELOCITY OF THE FLOW. THE STREAM THAT IT FLOWED DOWN LOOKED LIKE TERRACE RICE FIELDS, ONLY FILLED WITH THE MOST TURQUOIS SILKY WATER. AFTER ARRIVING BACK IN TOWN LATER THAT DAY I WENT TO A FEW MORE TEMPLES. WAT HOR PHRA BANG LOCATION IN THE NATIONAL MUSEUM COMPLEX AND WAT MAI. THE FIRST TEMPLE WAS DRAPED IN REAL GOLD, ORNAMENTED WITH LAYERS OF DETAIL, AND HAD A VERY LARGE INVITING STAIRCASE LEADING UP TO THE WHITE AND GOLD STRUCTURE. THE SECOND TEMPLE WAS DIFFERENT THAN THE NORM, BECAUSE IT LOOKED LIKE TWO STRUCTURES WERE MERGED INTO ONE WITH OPPOSING ROOF STRUCTURES AND THE MATERIALITY OF WOOD WITH RED DETAILS LACKED THE USUAL GOLD ELEGANT APPEARANCE.



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LAOS

LUANG PRABANG



WAT HOR PHRABANG

## AUGUST 2

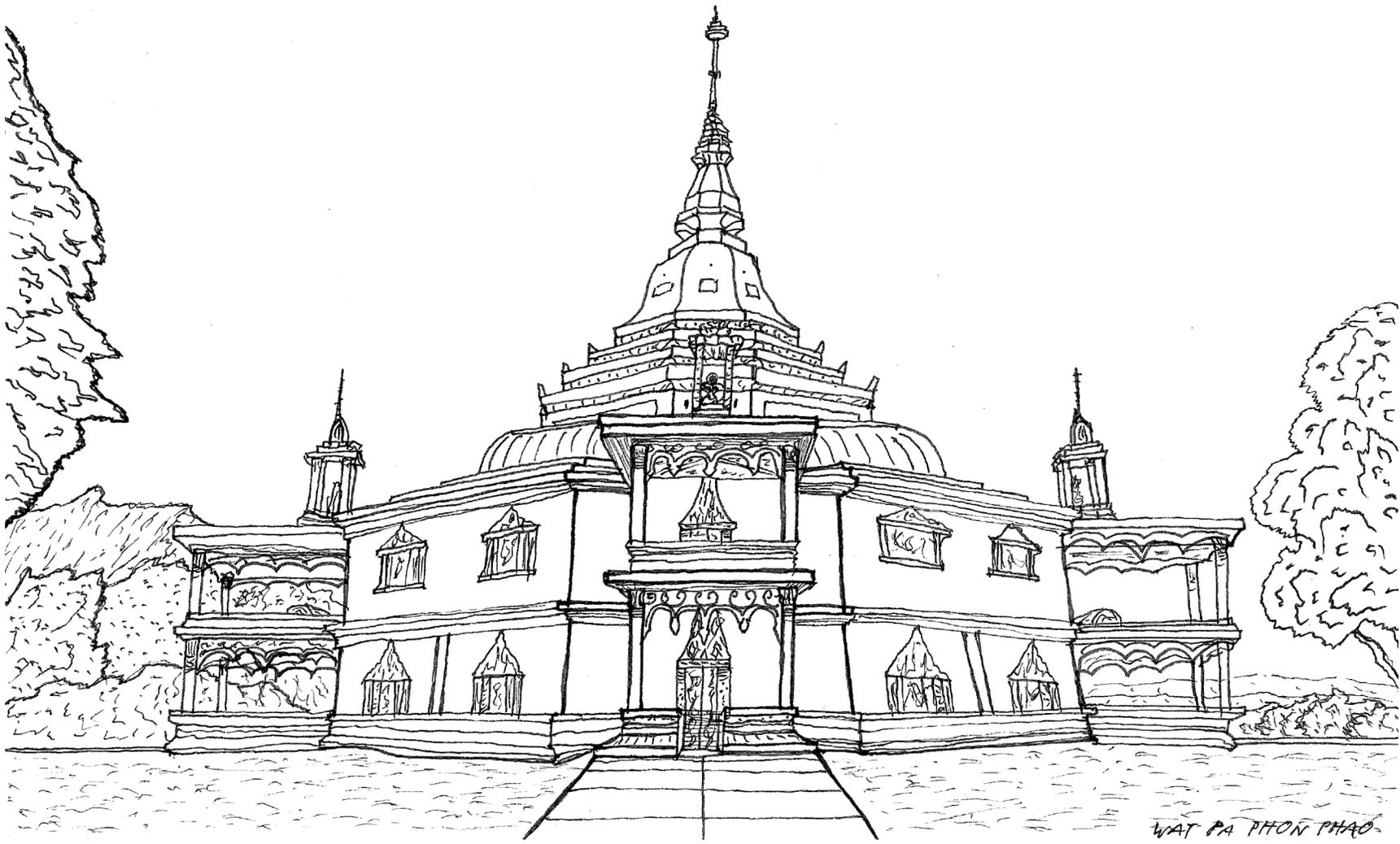
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I HAD THE SAME PLAN TODAY AS YESTERDAY; A WATERFALL IN THE MORNING AND TEMPLES IN THE EVENING. I WENT TO TAD SAE FALLS, A PLACE THAT REQUIRES YOU TO ADVENTURE THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS FOR A WHILE, AND THEN TO TAKE A SMALL CANOE UP AND ACROSS A RIVER. WHEN I ARRIVED ALL I COULD SEE WAS THE SHEER SIZE OF THIS WATERFALL. RATHER THAN HEIGHT, THIS WATERFALL HAD THICKNESS AND HORIZONTAL DEPTH AND LAYERS. I WAS ABLE TO ADVENTURE AROUND THE HUNDREDS OF TERRACED WATERFALLS AND SEE HOW NATURE SHAPES ITSELF HERE. THE GROUND WAS STICKY TOO SO IT WAS EASY TO NAVIGATE AROUND THE BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPE. AFTER THIS I WENT BACK TO SEE A FEW TEMPLES. VAT XIENG THONG HAD REMARKABLE OTHER COLORS OF BLUES AND GREENS IN THE FORM OF TILES MURAL TEXTURES ONTO THE PODIUM. IT GAVE THIS TEMPLE THE APPEARANCE IT WAS ABOVE WATER AND ALSO HAD THE WHITE PLATFORM WITH GOLDEN FACADES AND POINTED ROOF ENDS. IT HAD A FEW HIGHLY ADORNED STRUCTURES IN THE COMPLEX, INCLUDING TRADITIONAL BOATS IN STORAGE, A CHARIOT, AND SHRINES. WAT PA PHON PHAO WAS A TEMPLE OVERLOOKING THE CITY FROM THE TOP OF A HILL IN THE DISTANCE. THIS ALL GOLD PAINTED TEMPLE RESEMBLED A HOUSE WITH WINGS AND HAD A DOME. IT WAS UNUSUAL IN COMPARISON TO TEMPLES I HAD BEEN SEEING IN THIS AREA AND I APPRECIATED THE VIEW THAT DISPLAYED THE CITY LAYOUT ON THE PENINSULA.



LAOS

LUANG PRABANG



WAT PA PHON PHAO

## AUGUST 3

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THIS WAS MY LAST DAY IN LAOS AND I WAS HEADING TO VIETNAM LATER THIS AFTERNOON. BEFORE SPENDING THE REST OF MY DAY TRAVELING I TOOK A SCOOTER ON AN ADVENTURE WITH NO DIRECTION. I RODE DOWN THE RIVERS EDGE OF THE CITY AND FOUND BUSTLING MARKETS. THIS WAS WHERE A LOT OF THE COMMUNITY SPENT THE DAY VOID OF TOURISTS. AFTER TAKING SOME BACKROAD PATHS EXPLORING THE NATIVE ENVIRONMENTS AND COMMUNITIES, IT REVEALED THAT OUTSIDE OF THE CITY THE PEOPLE STILL LIVED IN HUTS AND WERE FARMING FOR THE MOST PART. I COULDN'T BELIEVE HOW SUCH A SHORT DISTANCE CHANGED A CITY'S VERNACULAR.



LAOS



LUANG PRABANG

# AUGUST 4

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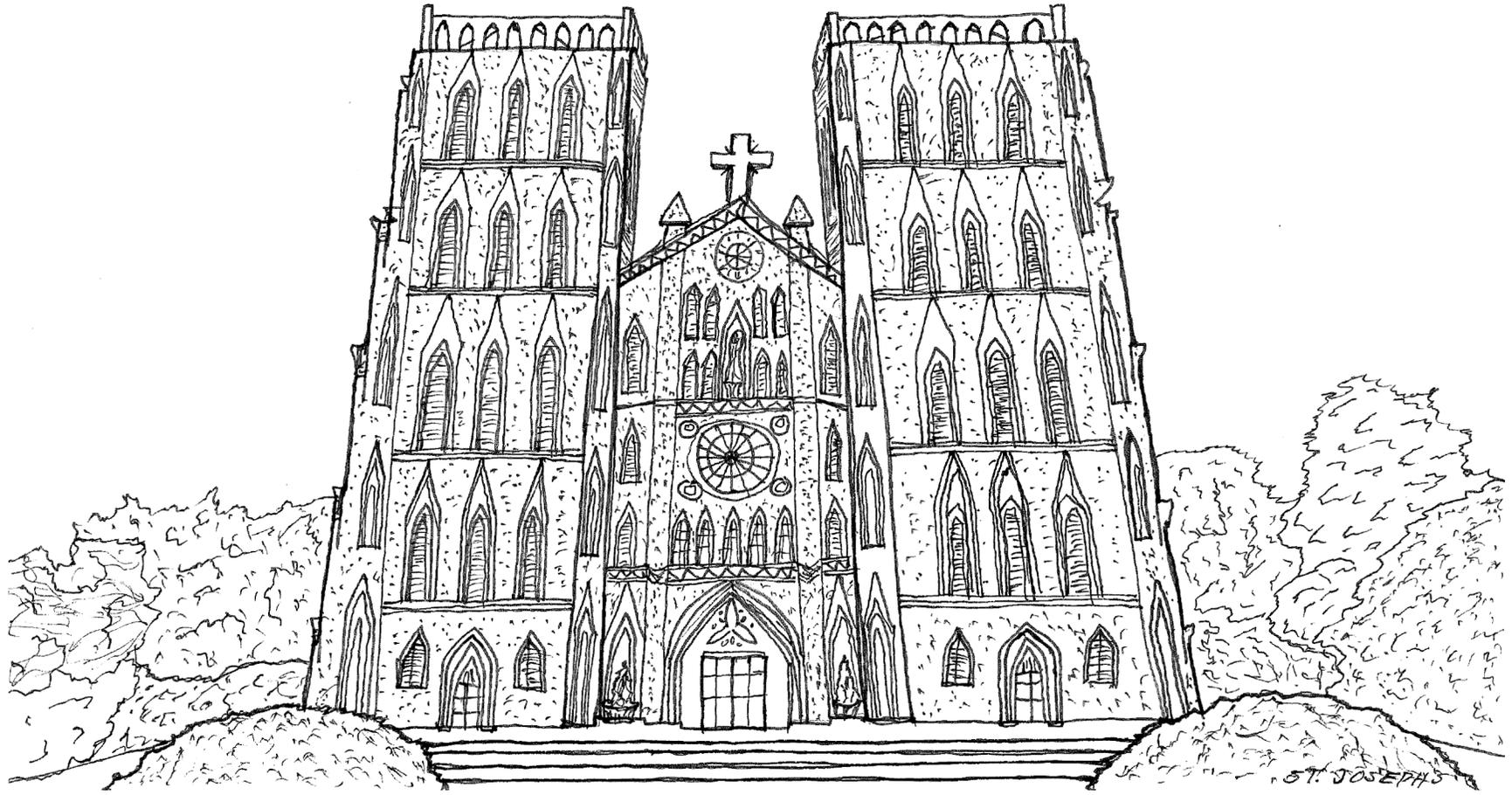
I ARRIVED IN HANOI LAST NIGHT AND WENT TO THE OLD QUARTER, AN AREA WHERE I WAS EXPLORING FOR A FEW DAYS. WHEN I LEFT MY HOTEL, THE SIDEWALKS WERE FULL SO FULL OF PEOPLE, VENDORS AND SCOOTERS, THAT I COULD BARELY WALK. THE STREETS WERE ALSO FULL OF SCOOTERS WEAVING AND SPEEDING PAST SO IT WAS HARD TO CROSS STREETS. THIS WAS A CULTURE SHOCK AT FIRST, BUT AFTER GETTING USED TO IT, IT WAS QUITE FUN. THE FIRST PLACE I WENT TO WAS A COFFEE SHOP, BUT THE FIRST SITE I WENT TO WAS TEMPLE OF THE JADE MOUNTAIN. LOCATED IN THE MIDDLE OF A LAKE, THE ONLY WAY TO GET THERE WAS OVER A LONG RED BRIDGE. THE EXPERIENCE FELT PEACEFUL AND LIGHT BEFORE ARRIVING AT THE TEMPLE. THIS HISTORIC CONCRETE STRUCTURE WITH SHINGLED ROOFS AND RED PARTITION WALLS SAT SURROUNDED BY THE LAKE, SUBLIME TO SAY THE LEAST. ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE LAKE, THE NEXT SITE I VISITED WAS ST. JOSEPHS CATHEDRAL. THIS WAS A GOTHIC BUILDING WITH POINTS ON ALL OF THE FACADE AND STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS THAT RESEMBLED A VERTICAL EXTRUSION OR SCALING AND GAVE THIS BUILDING A STRONG PRESENCE. THE LAST BUILDING I SAW TODAY WAS THE HOA LOA PRISON. THE FEELING HERE WAS UN-DESCRIBABLE, WITH THICK CONCRETE WALLS, STEEL DOORS, AND BARRED OPENINGS.



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VIETNAM

HANOI



ST. JOSEPH'S

## AUGUST 5

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TODAY I VISITED THE HANOI FLAG TOWER, A FORTRESS WITH A MILITARY MUSEUM, BEFORE HEADING TO THE TEMPLE OF LITERATURE. THE SPACES MADE BY THE COURTYARDS HERE FELT VERY CALMING AND THE ARCHITECTURAL LANGUAGE FELT VERY LIGHT WITH OPEN CORRIDORS AND ROOF ENDS TAPERING UPWARDS. THE FOUNDATIONS WERE MADE OF STONE WHICH TRANSITIONED TO EITHER STONE OR RED WOODEN COLUMNS. THE DECORATED RED WOODEN PARTITION WALLS THEN EXTENDED UP TO THE SHINGLED ROOF, PULLED UPWARDS AT THE ENDS. I TRANSITIONED OVER TO ANOTHER AREA FOLLOWING THIS AND STARTED AT THE ONE PILLAR PAGODA. A BEAUTIFULLY SIMPLISTIC CONCEPT THAT FLOATED A STRUCTURE OVER WATER ON A SINGLE COLUMN. SEEING THE MAUSOLEUM NEXT, IT WAS THE EPITOME OF A JUXTAPOSITION. THIS WAS THE HEAVIEST MOST MASSIVE GROUNDED STRUCTURE I HAD EVER SEEN WITH A STONE PODIUM AND 6 THICK COLUMNS ATTACHED TO AN EVEN DENSER ROOF CAP. THIS IS THE FINAL RESTING PLACE OF HO CHI MINH WHERE YOU CAN SEE HIS PRESERVED BODY. I VISITED HO CHI MINH'S HOUSE AFTER THIS AND GOT TO EXPERIENCE HIS EXTENSIVE PROPERTY. AFTER DRIVING TO THE MIDDLE OF A LAKE, I REACHED TRAN QUOC PAGODA. THIS BUDDHIST COMPLEX WAS MY LAST DESTINATION AND I WALKED AROUND ADMIRING THE SHRINES, LISTENING TO THE PEOPLE CHANTING, AND WATCHING THE SUN SET BEHIND THE TALL NARROW PAGODA.



## AUGUST 6

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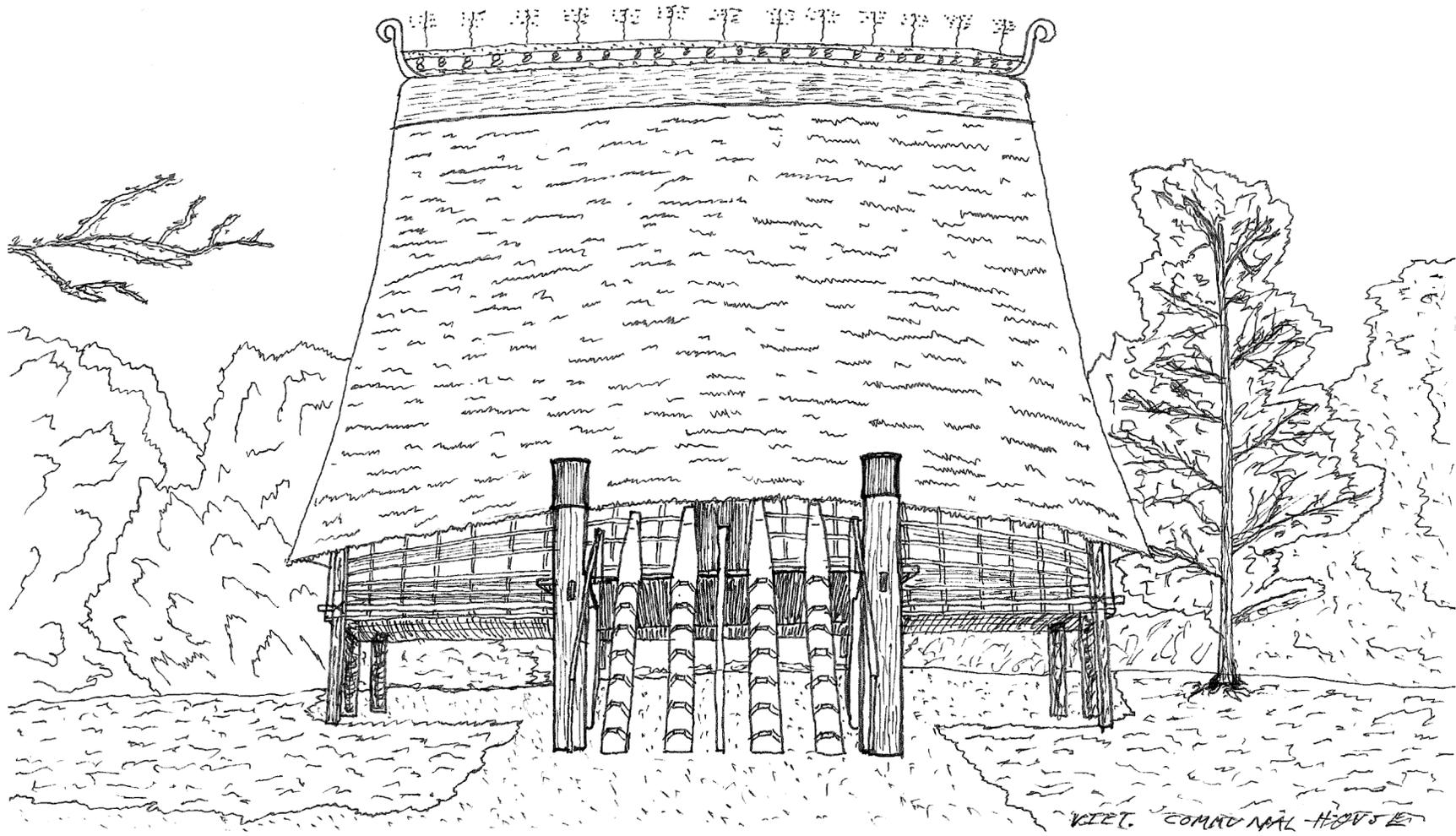
MIXING CONTEMPORARY FORMS WITH THE ANCIENT VERNACULAR, THE MUSEUM OF ETHNOLOGY WAS A GREAT EXPERIENCE. THE EXTERIOR OF THE MUSEUM WAS FULL OF ALL TYPES OF STRUCTURES OF THE ANCIENT PAST, WITH HUTS THAT I WAS ABLE TO WALK INTO AND WERE MADE SOLELY OF NATURAL MATERIALS WITHOUT THE AID OF TECHNOLOGY. THE BAMBOO HUTS HAD THATCHED ROOFS AND INTERWOVEN FLOORS THAT HAD DETAILS THAT HAD ME EXAMINING FOR HOURS. I LOVED THE TECTONIC CONNECTIONS THAT ARCHITECTURE OF THE PAST WAS DEVELOPING THROUGH TIES, INSERTS, AND INTEGRATING MATERIALS. IT WAS SO FASCINATING. THE CONTEMPORARY MUSEUM ON THE CONTRARY, LOOKED AMAZING FROM A DISTANCE DUE TO THE SWEEPING FORMS, BUT NOT WHEN UP CLOSE. I VISITED TWO TALLEST TOWERS FOLLOWING THIS, THE LOTTE TOWER AND THE KEANGNAM TOWER.



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## VIETNAM

## HANOI



MUSEUM - COMMUNAL HOUSE

# AUGUST 7

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TODAY I TRAVELED TO HA LONG BAY BY BUS AND WAS STAYING FOR TWO NIGHTS IN THIS DEVELOPING CITY. THE DRIVE THROUGH THIS COUNTRY WAS FULL OF RICE FIELDS, LOTUS PONDS, AND FARMS WITH MULTIPLE LEVELED ROW HOUSES. WHEN I ARRIVED, IT WAS LATE AFTERNOON AND I EXPLORED THIS HUGE EMPTY CITY UNDER CONSTRUCTION. I SAW SO MANY BUILDINGS BEING BUILT AS I WALKED AROUND AND EXPLORED THE WATERS EDGE, WHERE DYNAMIC ARCHITECTURAL FORMS WERE BEING CONSTRUCTED IN THE FOREGROUND OF A SUBLIME OCEAN VIEW FULL OF SMALL ISLAND MOUNTAINS. THESE PICTURESQUE LIMESTONE ISLANDS TOWERED OUT OF THE OCEAN AND COULD BE SEEN FROM ANYWHERE IN THE TOWN.



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VIETNAM

HA LONG BAY

# AUGUST 8

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I TOOK A BOAT TRIP TODAY TO VISIT A VARIETY OF FORMS THAT NATURE EITHER CONSTRUCTED OR DECONSTRUCTED. IT WENT THROUGH THOUSANDS OF THESE LIMESTONE ISLAND MOUNTAINS WHERE WE STOPPED AT VARIOUS POINTS FOR ACTIVITIES. ONE STOP WAS AT A HOLLOW ISLAND THAT WAS A HUGE CAVE. THE INTERIOR WAS AN ORGANIC PARAMETRIC FANTASY AND THE COLORED LIGHTS AIMED IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS MADE THIS SPACE MOVE IN DYNAMIC WAYS. IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL COMPOSITION OF SLENDER AND THICK STALAGMITES AND STALACTITES THAT CONTAINED SOME CLEAR SPAN OPENINGS OF HUNDREDS OF FEET. I STOPPED AT HO CHI MINH'S PRIVATE ISLAND AS WELL AND WALKED THE SPIRAL MOUNTAIN STAIRCASE TO THE TOP, WHERE A PAVILION SAT AND ISLANDS VISIBLY EXTENDED IN EVERY DIRECTION FOR MILES.



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# VIETNAM

# HA LONG BAY

# AUGUST 9

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I TRAVELED FOR A FEW HOURS BACK TO AIRPORT BEFORE WAITING FOR HOURS FOR A PLANE. THEN I TOOK A FEW HOUR PLANE RIDE AND SUBSEQUENTLY AN HOUR DRIVE TO MY ACCOMMODATION IN HO CHI MINH CITY. THUS, THIS DAY WAS OVER.



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VIETNAM

H A L O N G B A Y

# AUGUST 10

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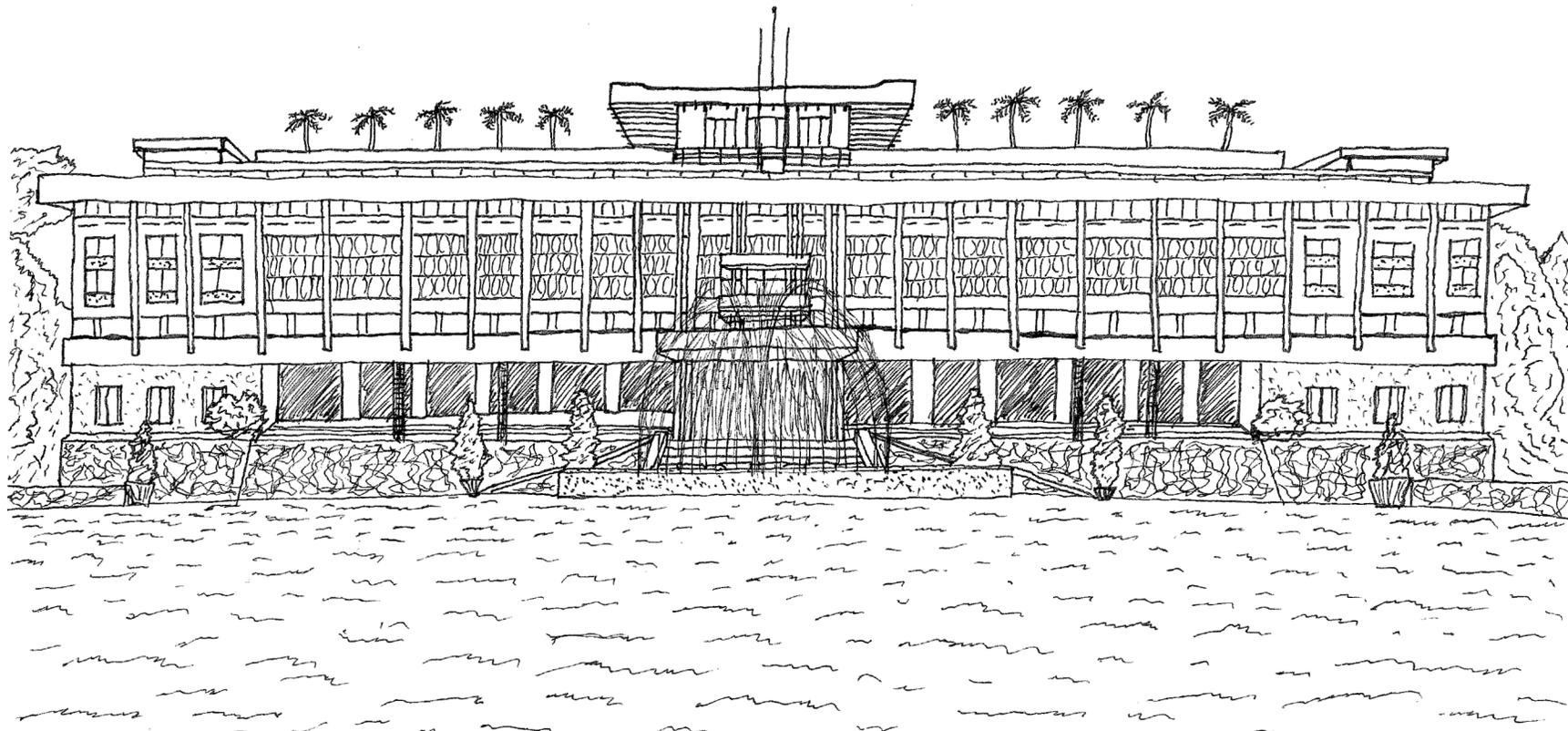
INDEPENDENCE PALACE WAS THE FIRST SITE I VISITED. A LONG CIRCULAR DRIVEWAY ENCIRCLING A GREEN LAWN LED TO THE ENTRANCE WHERE THE ROYAL FEELING BUILDING WAS. ALL OF THE ROOMS WERE OPEN AND DISPLAYED THE ELEGANT FURNISHINGS AND DECORATIONS. I LIKED HOW THE CORRIDORS WERE OPEN TO THE EXTERIOR AND THE FACADE THAT OPPOSED THE RIGID FORM AND SEMI ENCLOSED THE SPACE. THE MULTI-LEVEL PALACE FELT LIKE A KING'S HOUSE WITH WESTERN IDEALISTIC INFUSIONS. AFTER THIS I LEARNED ABOUT THE OTHER PERSPECTIVE OF THE VIETNAM WAR AT THE WAR REMNANTS MUSEUM. THE WEIGHT OF THE ENERGY WAS SO DENSE AND NEGATIVE HERE THAT THE CENTRAL ATRIUM, OPEN TO THE ELEMENTS PROVIDED A NICE BALANCE OF RELIEF. THE LAST STRUCTURE I SAW TODAY WAS THE NOTRE DAME CATHEDRAL. IT WAS INTERESTING HOW SUCH A LARGE FAMOUS CATHEDRAL IS LOCATED IN THE MIDDLE OF LARGE ROADWAYS AND I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND THE REASONING. IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL GOTHIC STYLE BUILDING THAT DREW ATTENTION NONETHELESS, WITH ELONGATED WINDOWS AND ROOFS EXTRUDING INTO POINTS HIGH ABOVE. THE INTERIOR WAS UNFORTUNATELY CLOSED.



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## VIETNAM

## HO CHI MINH



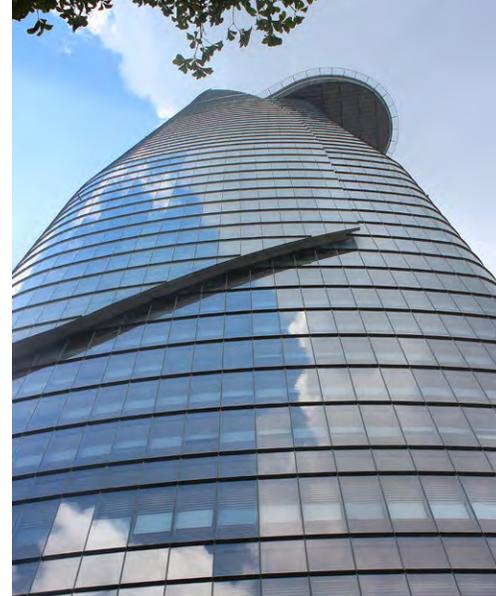
IND. PALACE

INDEPENDENCE PALACE

# AUGUST 11

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I WENT INTO THE DOWNTOWN AREA TODAY AND ADVENTURED AROUND THE HIGH RISES TO SEE THIS ASPECT OF THE CITY. BITEXCO FINANCIAL TOWER WAS MY FIRST CHOICE BECAUSE THE ELEGANT CURVING STRUCTURE HAS AN OBSERVATION DECK TO SEE THE CITY UNDERNEATH A HELICOPTER PAD. THE INTERIOR WAS FULL OF LUXURIOUS FINISHES AND THE EXTERIOR GRABBED ATTENTION WITH ITS ELLIPTICAL SHAPE SUPPORTING A MASSIVE CANTILEVER. THE VIETCOM BANK TOWER STEPS UP ON OPPOSITE SIDES UNTIL IT REACHES A PINNACLE OF A SLENDER POINT. IT HAS A MASSIVE APPEARANCE FROM AFAR, BUT UP CLOSE THERE ARE NARROW LINEAR LINES THE DIVIDE THE MASSES AND GIVE A HUMAN SCALE. TO SEE MORE OF THE LOCAL ARTS AND CRAFTS I WENT TO BEN THANH MARKET THIS EVENING WHICH WAS A GATHERING PLACE FOR ALL SORTS OF VENDORS TOTING SOUVENIRS, FOOD, AND CLOTHING.



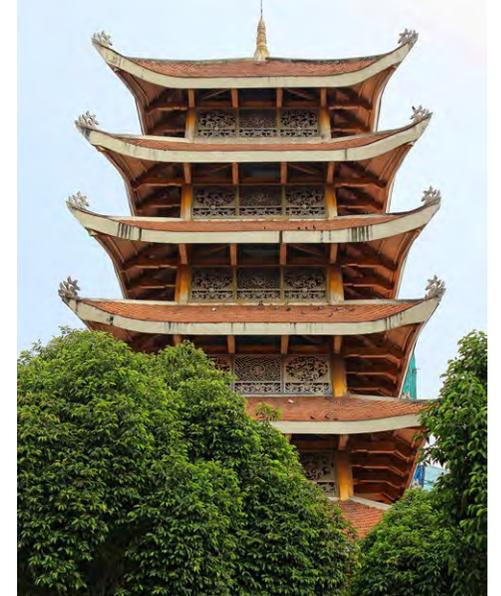
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## VIETNAM

## HO CHI MINH

AUGUST 12

TODAY WAS THE FINAL DAY OF MY TRAVELING ADVENTURES AND I CHOSE TO SEE TWO OF THE MOST FAMOUS PAGODAS. THE FIRST, VINH NGHIEM PAGODA, WAS THE FIRST PAGODA IN THE COUNTRY TO BE CONSTRUCTED OF CONCRETE AND IT TRANSLATED INTO A VERY MONOLITHIC FEELING. WHERE MOST WERE TECTONICALLY LIGHTENED, THIS ONE HAD AN OPPOSITE FEELING. NEXT, I WENT TO QUOC TU PAGODA. THIS OVERSIZED COLORFUL STRUCTURE STOOD SEVEN LEVELS TALL. THE REPETITION OF PAGODAS GAVE OFF A LIGHTENING FEELING AND PLAYED WITH HORIZONTALITY AND VERTICALITY. THE SHRINE STRUCTURE TO THE RIGHT OF THIS PAGODA HAD A WIDE OPEN TALL PRAYER SPACE WITH A WOOD FLOOR AND GOLDEN DECORATIONS, ALL VERY ORNAMENTED AND PATTERNED WITH MATERIALS. THE ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS ON THE INTERIOR SPACE ALL POINTED UP, AND THAT GAVE A LIFTING EXPANSIVE FEELING TO THE EXPERIENCE.



VIETNAM

HO CHI MINH