

FEBRUARY-MARCH 2010

ypp e-newsletter

TAO-Pilipinas Young Professionals Program



A streamer posted by government agencies in the aftermath of Tropical Storm *Ondoy* (Ketsana) declare this children's playground in a community along the Manggahan Floodway as within the danger zone. The orange PVC pipe beside the streamer indicates the height of flooding that occurred during *Ondoy*. Communities along the floodway continue to stay despite the risks.

Everyone at TAO is looking forward to summer. The office workload since the year started has been quite backbreaking that it's not surprising the staff already need a short breather even before summer begins. And with various projects running simultaneously, we'll be able to accommodate a record number of summer interns this year. (Although it's still a puzzle how to fit 10 more people in the office in this sweltering heat.)

The YP interns and volunteers provide manpower support that enables us to extend technical assistance to as many poor communities as possible. Apart from giving them opportunities for exposure and training, the YP internship presents us with the challenges of mentoring students/young graduates. We try our best to make their internship a meaningful experience but in the end, it is their attitude to learning and commitment (beyond completing the required OJT hours) that will make their 2-month stay at TAO worthwhile. To our incoming interns, welcome to TAO.

IN THIS ISSUE

: Community Architects and Technical Professionals' Meeting held in Davao City

: JFLFI-ARDEP hold YP Design Challenge for Visayas-Mindanao

: YP Lecture Series goes to Bicol universities

: YP Community Micro-project updates

: TAO staff visits Arch. Ning Tan's Bamboo House

: TAO facilitates International Training Courses on Shelter

: YP Reading List

Reviews of Lawrence' *The Wabi-Sabi House*; and Taschen's *Bamboo Style*

: Events

- UST-Archinet holds seminar featuring Darco Radovic and Ken Yeang
- Christian Aid organizes forum on Urban Poverty and DRR

quote this month

"The essence of education is not to transfer knowledge; it is to guide the learning process, to put responsibility for study into the students' own hands... it would rather place people on their own path of discovery and invention."

- **Tsuneshaburo Makiguchi** (1871-1944), educator and author (quote from "Makiguchi The Value Creator: Revolutionary Japanese Educator and Founder of Soka Gakkai, 1973.)

"It's time for us to go to the people rather than ask the people, especially the poor, to come to us."

Community Architects and Technical Professionals' Meeting held in Davao City

The Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR) convened a national process workshop for community architects and technical professionals in the Philippines who have been working with poor communities in their shelter needs. The workshop was held on February 9-10, 2010 at the Felis Resort Complex, Davao City.

Five organizations providing technical assistance to poor communities attended the gathering: Philippine Action for Community-led Shelter Initiatives, Inc. (PACSII); Panirahanan, Inc.; TAO-Pilipinas, Inc.; JF Ledesma Foundation, Inc. (JFLFI); and Bricklayers. It was also attended by representatives from people's organizations (Homeless People's Federation and SAMA SAMA) and academic institutions in Visayas and Mindanao (West Negros University, Mindanao State University, and University of the Philippines Mindanao).

The two-day gathering saw the sharing of experiences and lessons from the various groups, including their historical involvement, concepts/approaches, and issues and challenges on working with poor communities. Workshops were facilitated to identify and discuss common concerns; among the issues identified were: government housing policies, land access, collaboration with local governments, community engagement approaches, alternative technology development, documentation of community-led processes, acceptability of community-led design and construction practices, and the sustainability of organizations engaged in technical assistance. The workshop culminated with the participating groups committing to plan for actions that would address key issues and strengthen the network of technical professionals in community development work.

The national-level workshop was held in preparation for the ACHR Regional Community Architects Meeting in Thailand on April 2010. (*Ge Matabang*)

~0~0~0~0~

JFLFI-ARDEP hold YP Design Challenge for Visayas-Mindanao

The JF Ledesma Foundation Inc. (JFLFI), in collaboration with the Asian Rural-Urban Development and Peace Institute, Inc., organized its own YP Design Challenge for young professionals and students in the Visayas and Mindanao region. (JFLFI is the partner organization of TAO-Pilipinas which spearheads YP activities in Visayas and Mindanao while TAO-Pilipinas organizes those in Luzon.) The design competition was themed "Incremental Housing Design and Development for the Slum Dwellers: The YP-VisMin MDG Challenge."

The team from West Negros University Civil Engineering Department garnered first place for their entry which used interlocking reinforced *eco-blocks* made of recycled plastic mineral water bottles filled with sand and cement mortar. The team is composed of Engr. Rey A. Ramos, Ryan Christopher Leyte, Marfalo Sungkip, Annie Montales, and Betha Lou Rufin.

Second place award went to Danilo Ravina of the University of San Carlos Technological Center - College of Architecture. Architect Ravina's design solution comprised of building the structure in five phases/increments namely, phase 1: structural frame and roof; phase 2: masonry works; phase 3: wall framing, cladding, doors and windows; phase 4: floor; and phase 5: utilities.

Third place was awarded to the team from Mindanao University of Science and Technology composed of Anne Barillo, Rico Doydora, Jay-Ar Lituañas, Ricsie Lucero, Juricel Magsigay, and Beginno Monsanto. Their design was a one-story housing unit made of composite and readily available construction materials (concrete, steel, and wood).

The awarding ceremony for the winning teams was conducted by JFLFI in San Carlos City, Negros Occidental last December 2009. For more information about the YP Design Challenge in VisMin, email Ms. Maricel Bingham at jflfi@yahoo.com.



YP Design Challenge Vis-Min
First Place:
West Negros University
Civil Engineering Dept.



YP Design Challenge Vis-Min
Second Place:
University of San Carlos Technological Center
College of Architecture



YP Design Challenge Vis-Min
Third Place:
Mindanao University
of Science and
Technology

Winning entries from the YP Design Challenge for Visayas and Mindanao (images courtesy of JF Ledesma Foundation, Inc.)

YP Lecture Series goes to Bicol universities



The YP program of TAO-Pilipinas brought their lecture series to Bicol universities on February 25 to 27, 2010 as part of a small awareness-raising campaign to encourage a more conscious effort among technical design professionals and students to integrate disaster risk management (DRM) in building design and construction processes. TAO's Rosalyn Marcelo and Geraldine Matabang presented the results of their action-research project entitled *"Integrating DRM in Site Planning and House Design of Resettlement Projects in Albay"* to three academic institutions in Bicol: Aquinas University of Legaspi (AUL) Polytechnic Institute on February 25; Bicol University (BU) Department of Architecture on February 26; and Central Bicol State University for Agriculture (CBSUA) Graduate School on February 27.

AUL Secretary General, Engr. Virgilio Perdigon Jr., and the Dean of the Polytechnic Institute, Engr. Teresa Bondad, facilitated the lecture in Aquinas University. In BU, Architecture Department Head, Arch. Reynaldo Nacional, mobilized students from different classes to attend the lecture. The lecture was also presented to the MS Disaster Risk Management graduate class of Blenn Huelgas in CBSUA.

The YP lecture series was started in December 2009 and has since been conducted in various universities in Metro Manila. The last of the scheduled lectures in Manila was held at the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila (PLM) on March 5 as part of a day-long seminar for students of the College of Architecture and Urban Planning. This information dissemination initiative is funded by the ProVention Consortium which also provided funding support for the research project. *(Ge Matabang)*

Photos, top to bottom: Aquinas University; Bicol University; Central Bicol State University for Agriculture; and Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila.

TAO staff visits Arch. Ning Encarnacion-Tan's Bamboo House

On February 4, 2010, TAO staff and interns visited Arch. Ning Encarnacion-Tan's bamboo house in San Mateo, Rizal. Arch. Ning is a member of the TAO-Pilipinas Board of Trustees and currently a Project Architect and Consultant to C.C. Puno Jr. Construction Inc. She specializes in designing Philippine and Bamboo Architecture and is recognized for her contributions in the sphere of green and sustainable architecture.

Her two-storey bamboo house was exhibited in 2003 and has since been transferred several times, in San Mateo, Antipolo, Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya and then to Patiis in 2007. The bamboo house is currently being rebuilt in San Mateo where construction started in the middle of 2008 and is now half-complete. Another bamboo structure is also being built beside the house and is intended to become a workshop area where Arch. Ning could demonstrate bamboo house construction.

Apart from having the opportunity to observe the architectural and construction details of the house, the staff also discovered techniques on strengthening bamboo structures as Ms. Ning shared her learnings during and after the construction. After having lunch at the place, the group had siesta and felt the relaxing nature of living in a house made of bamboo. *(Rosalyn Marcelo)*



YP Community Micro-Project Updates

Tanza (Bicol and Chungkang Areas) Micro-project: Samahang Patubig ng Tanza

This community micro-project aims for the provision of clustered water meter connection for selected urban poor households in the Bicol and Chungkang Areas of Barangay Tanza, Navotas City. Last January, the YP team completed the mapping of households that are included in the water supply project. Measurements were taken by the team for the distribution layout of water pipes for each household. Planning preparations for the WATSAN echo-workshop to be held in the community on April were also done by the YP team.

By March, after a short period of coordination and negotiations, Maynilad Water was able to provide the water supply infrastructure (including the connection of pipes to the metered line) to the community. On March 8, TAO-Pilipinas and the Samahan ng Nagkakaisang Kababaihan (SNK) of Bicol and Chungkang Areas signed a memorandum of agreement (including loan application requirements and obligations) for the water supply project. Nineteen (19) SNK members who were able to comply with the savings requirements were the signatories and made up the first batch of beneficiaries.

Loan payment collections have already been started as well as the screening for the second batch of beneficiaries. Project monitoring activities by TAO-Pilipinas and DAMPA is also ongoing and will continue for the next six months. *(From the progress report by Gloryrose Dy)*



Left to right: YPs orient the community about the project; beneficiaries answering the certificates of inspection; YPs map households included in the water supply project; location of existing water meter connections and where the clustered connection will be built.

YPs attend RTD on Safe Water for Poor Communities

The Partnership of Philippine Support Service Agencies, Inc. (PHILSSA) has just organized a round table discussion on "Improving Access to Safe Water for Poor Communities" at the Ateneo de Manila University on January 29, 2010. Coming on the heels of the YP Workshop on Water Sanitation, TAO-Pilipinas sent three workshop participants (Gloryrose Dy, Christina Fiel, and Jesmar Catuiran) to the forum to further increase their awareness on various initiatives that provide safe water access for poor communities.

The forum was a venue for sharing experiences in community-based water projects by organizations such as Peace and Equity Foundation, A Single Drop for Safe Water (ASDSW), Andres Soriano Foundation, Coca-Cola Foundation, Foundation for the Development of the Urban Poor, and Manila Water. Different technologies used in the water projects were highlighted such as rainwater harvesters, ram pumps, biosand filters, and ceramic filters. Trends and innovations in waste and wastewater treatment were also discussed by Susan Murcott of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Important points that were tackled in the forum included identifying culturally-appropriate and affordable technologies for communities; importance of organizing communities around water projects; provision to informal settlers with security of tenure issues; and the sustainability of water projects. *(From documentation report by PHILSSA)*

TAO facilitates International Training Courses on Shelter

Forty-four (44) international delegates visited the Philippines from February to March to continue their coursework administered by the Housing and Development Department (HDM) of Lund University in Sweden. The event was locally coordinated by TAO-Pilipinas from February 15 to March 12, 2010 at Torre Venezia Hotel in Quezon City.

Twenty-nine (29) of the delegates belong to the autumn batch of the Shelter Design and Development (SDD) International Training Course designed for professionals working on shelter issues. They came from 16 different countries: Bangladesh, Ecuador, Etiopía, Gaza, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Philippines, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Tunisia, Zambia and Uganda. The rest of the delegates are fifteen (15) undergraduate architecture students of Lund University-Sweden under the Urban Shelter Course: Architecture in Extreme Environments. Majority are exchange students from Spain, France, Switzerland, Sweden, Italy, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Germany and Austria.

The program was under the guidance of HDM Director Johnny Åstrand in coordination with TAO RP Program Director Faith Varona. This is the second consecutive year that TAO-Pilipinas facilitated these courses, which integrated lectures on social housing programs, policies and perspectives, as well as site visits from social to middle and high-income housing projects in Metro Manila.

Field visits included Smokey Mountain Permanent Medium Rise Buildings, NHA-National Bilibid Prison PNR Resettlement Housing Project, St. Hannibal Christian Community Resettlement Site – Phase II, Quezon City Housing and Urban Renewal Authority Homes 2 – Vasra, Portofino and Royal Palm Real Estate Developments, and Kasiglahan Village Resettlement Project – Montalban among others. Apart from housing projects, the delegates also toured other remarkable places such as the Intramuros (Old Manila), Barangay Holy Spirit Ecology Center and the Payatas Biogas Plant.

The SDD course ended with final presentation of the participants' proposals and the submission of their individual papers. The closing ceremony and awarding of certificates was held at the Harbor View Restaurant - Mall of Asia in Pasay City in February 26.

The Urban Shelter students stayed in Manila until March 12 to complete their preliminary data gathering and studies for the Urban Shelter course requirement. They were tasked to come up with a neighborhood design and model house design scheme for middle income families in a 1.8 hectare site in Barangay Damayang Lagi, an on-site development project that QC-HURA plans to undertake in the near future.

As part of the study, the students also attended lectures on Philippine Architecture, Urban Development and Public Spaces at the University of the Philippines College of Architecture; Housing Laws and Policies at the National Housing Authority. Separate lectures on Green Architecture and Bamboo/Vernacular Architecture were also arranged. To culminate this phase of their study in the Philippines, the students presented their preliminary design ideas and impressions about Philippine housing development at the National Housing Authority, attended by representatives from the NHA and HURA. Both also gave inputs to help and guide the students in the further development of their design study.

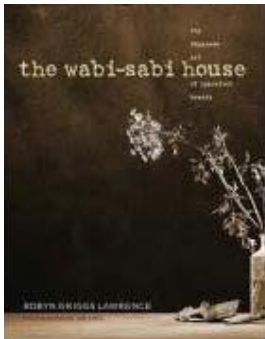
The Urban Shelter course will end in May 2010 with the students' presentation of their final design at Lund University, Sweden. More information about the courses may be viewed at http://www.hdm.lth.se/education/international_training_programmes/.
(Rosalyn Marcelo)



Top to bottom: Seminars at Torre Venezia Hotel; Field visit to Payatas; HDM Director Johnny Astrand with Quezon City Mayor Sonmy Belmonte; Field visit at St. Hannibal Housing Project in Pasay. (Photos courtesy of Rachele and Teodor Astrand)

YP Reading List

Every issue, the YP e-newsletter features a selection of TAO Resource Center & Library materials as reviewed by TAO staff and volunteers. The TAO Resource Center & Library is now open for students and researchers' use. Library use is by appointment and guidelines may be viewed at <http://www.tao-pilipinas.org/resources/library>. You may call Angel Sales at 441-0998 / 436-7301 or email lib@tao-pilipinas.org to schedule your visit.



Title: **The Wabi Sabi House: The Japanese Art of Imperfect Beauty**
Author: **Robyn Griggs Lawrence**
Publisher: **Clarkson Potter (2004)**

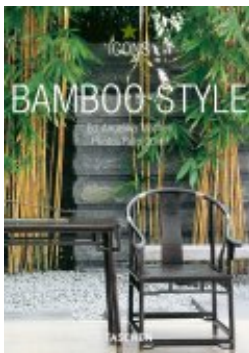
About the author (from book jacket):

Robyn Griggs Lawrence is the editor in chief of *Natural Home*, a magazine that helps readers create healthy, serene abodes and lifestyles.

Review:

Wabi-sabi denotes a Japanese world view and the book by Robyn Griggs Lawrence represents a Westerner's perspective and understanding of this Japanese aesthetic taste. The author devotes a whole chapter on explaining the meaning of wabi-sabi and defines it in essence as "finding beauty in imperfection and profundity in nature, of accepting the natural cycle of growth, decay and death." She links it with its origins in Zen Buddhism and the Japanese tea ceremony before outlining the wabi-sabi aesthetic for home decorating. She further explains the concept by differentiating what it is from what it is not (clean vs. cluttered, handmade vs. machine-made, clotheslines vs. electric dryers, recycled glass vs. crystal, etc.)

The author engages the reader with her own pursuits in making her home and lifestyle attuned to the wabi-sabi aesthetic. One can relate to her difficulties in adapting to a lifestyle of simple living in a world dictated by a highly consumerist culture. Nevertheless, the wabi-sabi way that she espouses is very inspiring and would want you to start de-cluttering your own room or make you change perception on the true value of our possessions. The book serves as an encouraging introduction to wabi-sabi and provides insights on its application to modern lifestyles, particularly in housekeeping. Reading this book would make you want to learn more about wabi-sabi and the author provides a very good bibliography and listing of information sources on creating a wabi-sabi environment at home. (*Ge Matabang*)



Title: **Bamboo Style**
Editor: **Angelika Taschen**
Publisher: **Taschen (2006)**

About the editor:

Angelika Taschen studied art history and German literature in Heidelberg, gaining her doctorate in 1986. Working for TASCHEN since 1987, she has published numerous titles on art, architecture, photography, design, travel, and lifestyle.

Review:

Bamboo Style is a collection of 80 photographs showing bamboo as a building material and its versatile uses in landscaping and house interiors. Bamboo is featured in these photographs as a beautiful design element in natural landscapes and in contemporary built environments like in the bamboo gardens of Japan and in cottages in Sri Lanka, Bali, Bangkok, and Davao, Philippines.

The photos in this book effectively evoke serenity and elegance of surroundings, belying the origins of this material as a common grass that can grow almost everywhere. As reflected in these photos, architects and designers are now rediscovering bamboo for its natural qualities and are increasingly integrating it in modern structures. Most of the photographs place bamboo in an almost isolated, rural setting (e.g. in villas and resorts) except for one where it is used as scaffolding for a high-rise building. The editor could have included more photos of how bamboo is integrated in urban surroundings. (Would such photos still give that calming effect?) Nevertheless, the book is good source for design inspiration and is a testament to the beauty and sustainability of bamboo. (*Ge Matabang*)

UST-Archinet holds symposium featuring Darko Radovic and Ken Yeang

The Architecture Network (Archinet) of University of Sto. Tomas organized a symposium that featured world renowned authorities on sustainable urban designs, Dr. Darko Radovic and Dr. Ken Yeang, as guest lecturers. The symposium with the theme, "Asian Green Cities: Visions of the Modern World," was held on January 30, 2010 at the UST Medicine Auditorium.

Dr. Darko Radovic, a Professor of Architecture and Urban Design at the University of Tokyo, introduced his concept of "eco-urbanity" which is also the title of a book he authored. He defined eco-urbanity as both ecological sustainability and the sustainability of urban cultures. He then discussed the impacts of globalization on the quality of life in cities and how global markets dictate unsustainable growth patterns and architecture. Dr. Radovic likewise presented examples from Barcelona, Tokyo, and Bangkok to show how globalization has flattened differences and resulted to creating "placeless" cities. He called for nurturing an ecological and cultural sensitivity in the development of sustainable cities.



Top: Darko Radovic; bottom: Ken Yeang

Dr. Ken Yeang, Malaysian architect-planner and pioneer-advocate of Ecological Design, outlined his strategies for designing a "green" building. He also identified four eco-infrastructures that should be integrated in any master planning project (and accorded each with a color code): green infrastructure for nature's corridors and networks; blue infrastructure for hydrological/water management; grey infrastructure for engineering systems; and red infrastructure for the built environment, including socio-economic systems. The open forum that followed Dr. Yeang's presentation included discussions on retrofitting existing cities to become "green" and addressing cultural issues in designing buildings. (*Ge Matabang*)

~0~0~0~0~

Christian Aid organizes forum on Urban Poverty and DRR

Christian Aid recently organized a forum on "Understanding Risk and Vulnerabilities of Urban Poor Communities" with TAO-Pilipinas representatives in attendance. The forum was held on March 10, 2010 at the Institute of Social Order, Ateneo de Manila University as part of Christian Aid's Urban Poverty program. It aimed to identify disaster risk reduction (DRR) interventions and strategies for urban poor communities.

Dr. Rosa Perez of the Manila Observatory gave a presentation on climate and meteorological risks and an analysis of the effects of Tropical Storm *Ondoy* (Ketsana). Mr. Ramon Santiago of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) also presented the agency's projects for disaster preparedness and Metro Manila hazards and risk analysis. Representatives from various urban poor communities which are hazards-prone (such as the Buklod Tao community in San Mateo, Rizal and riverside communities along Pasig River) also gave presentations that highlighted the risks they face in order to live within the city and have access to services. In-city relocation was emphasized as a viable option for urban poor communities. The forum underscored the need for awareness building, community involvement in DRR planning, and actions that would address risk reduction, humanitarian work, and the creation of safe settlements. (*Ge Matabang*)

~0~0~0~0~