

Associate Producer's Journal—The Inanga Project
Patrick McGovern
Rwanda, Africa
May 13th- June 13th, 2010

FOREWORD

The following is Patrick McGovern's first-hand account of his participation in the 2010 *The Inanga Project* from May 13th to June 13th in Rwanda, Africa. Patrick traveled under the guidance of Gregory Barz, Ph.D., a research professor and ethnomusicologist from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN. Patrick traveled on scholarship from Vanderbilt Undergraduate Summer Research Program (VUSRP).

Day 1

Thursday, May 13th, 2010

10:49 p.m., Kigali—Hotel Isimbi

Dr. Barz and I landed in Kigali around 6:00 p.m. after about 30 hours in transit. It was a long journey from Austin, TX, and I was exhausted. My first sight flying into Kigali was sloping hills riddled with white lights. These illuminated hills ranged for miles, which gave me the first visual reality of the "land of a thousand hills." After we received our bags and cleared customs, we met with Dr. Barz's Rwandan colleague Pierre Kayitana. Pierre was a very kind man—talkative and helpful, especially when he gave us a personal ride in his car to our hotel. Dr. Barz met Pierre through his Rwandan cousin living in Nashville. From interaction with his cousin, Dr. Barz gathered that Pierre is "the guy that knows everybody," a truthful description apparent after our first conversation. We assumed that he was a filmmaker.

During the car ride I experienced beautiful, encompassing overlooks that gave a closer view of the lighted hillsides than from my airplane window. On the way, we passed the famous Hotel des Mille Collines, the sight of the famous story inspiring the movie *Hotel Rwanda*. We arrived and checked into Hotel Isimbi. After checking in we said goodbye to Pierre and told him we would meet him in the afternoon tomorrow. Dr. Barz and I then went off to the Auberge la Caverne, the hotel he stayed in last year, and the hotel we will be staying the remainder of the trip, to grab dinner.

My initial reactions to Rwanda are certainly mixed. I have not, and will never again, embark on a journey like this, and find myself as culture shocked as I am excited. It is worth mentioning that the presumed plans for the trip have been changed due to Prof. Barz changing schedule. The initial plan for this summer was to continue year two of Barz's ten-year research project entitled "Songs of Reconciliation." The project was intended to create an ethnography of music in relation to the genocide, requiring intense follow up research. However, for the next five summers, Dr. Barz will be taking a fellowship in Bloemfontein, South Africa at the University of the Free State, rather than coming back to Rwanda. This means that this year's trip could possibly be the last of this particular research project. This change could lead to this year being extremely important, as it will be the last for the project and last to create something publishable from the topic of "Music of Reconciliation in Rwanda." It does change much of the intended research plans, now focusing on smaller, more manageable projects rather than attempting to get a richer, fuller picture. I am excited to find out where the project will go, with sights now set for two starting objectives of recording two local *inanga* players and possibly tracking down an *inanga* maker. Also, research plans now reach to possibly finding and interacting with a member of the smallest minority group in Rwanda, the Twa, for an outsider's perspective of the genocide.

I cannot help but scold myself for at first looking at Rwandans and attempting to identify Hutu and Tutsi by the stereotypical features. Upon reading and researching for this trip, the unbelievable stories of cruelty that reached the depths of human depravity made me inclined to search for the impact of this evil and tragedy on this beautiful country. I saw it first in the eyes of many of the Rwandans with whom I first came into contact. There seemed to be something weighing them down, something heavy on their souls. This again, was my initial reaction, and was heavily influenced by severe bias of an outsider's perspective. It was after dinner when Dr. Barz and I met Eric, the hotel manager for the Hotel Auberge la Cavernes that my opinion concerning this country began to change. The bartender, our waiter, and the hotel manager, were some of the kindest staff I have ever encountered. The hotel manager gave us a special price on a room for the duration of our stay because he remembered Dr. Barz from the previous year's trip. Eric sat down for a lengthy and casual conversation. This encounter gave me a different feeling when I departed our dinner. I walked the street looking at Rwandans, not for their scars, but for their humanity. After being in this country for a mere few hours, I am already beginning to question how such monstrous acts against humanity could be perpetrated in a country as beautiful as this, populated by such kind, gentle people.

Day 2

Friday, May 13th 2010

10:48 a.m., Hotel Auberge La Cavernes

Today Dr. Barz and I woke up and enjoyed the luxury of coffee and breakfast at the Bourbon Cafe, a restaurant and coffee shop that had, to my surprise, free wireless internet. We also got SIM cards for Rwandan cell phones. I got to experience the city in the daylight for the first time. The most striking sight was the mist on the hills and the homes extending for miles on the sloping hillsides. The streets, barren last night by 7 p.m. were crawling with people early in the morning.

I was not surprised to already hear the call "Muzungu, Muzungu," meaning "white person, white person," from local children. The term literally describes a sort of "whiteness" or difference in that it basically means, "you are not from here." I have traveled before to Costa Rica and Peru, where I was obviously a foreigner, but something about being foreign here has a completely different feel. I do not feel unsafe, for all Rwandans have been very kind and hospitable, but it is difficult to shake the knowledge that anti-colonialist sentiments remain strong in almost every African nation. Also, the knowledge I now have of the abandonment of the United Nations and indeed all Western nations during the genocide makes me somewhat embarrassed to be an American.

After coffee, notably some of the best coffee I have had in a very long time, the extremely hospitable owner of the Hotel the Auberge La Cavernes, Eric, picked us up from Hotel Isimbi and moved us into the room in which we will be taking residence for the remaining thirty days here. The new hotel is slightly off the road, and is contained in a quiet and quaint courtyard and will be an extremely friendly location for us to stay and complete our research.

I look very much forward to the remaining time I have here. I am hoping to take this experience to complete much reading and writing that I have put off during the school year. Dr. Barz and I are going to meet with our colleague Pierre at one today, to hopefully get a tour of the city and discuss further research plans

5:48 p.m., Hotel Auberge de la Cavernes

Since my last entry, Prof. Barz and I met with Pierre Kayitana at the Bourbon coffee house to discuss our research plans. For now, Prof. Barz's plans for research are focused in two areas with four smaller projects. The first three smaller projects are focused on documenting the *inanga*, a traditional Rwandan chordophone. The idea of filming is intended for academic classes and is something Dr. Barz and I have never pursued before. Having contact with a filmmaker like Pierre also spurred the possibility of making film a part of our research. The first project will involve interviewing, filming, and analyzing the female *inanga* player Sophie Nzaisenga. Sophie lives in Kigali, and is described by Prof. Barz as a powerful musician. The second project concerning the *inanga* is the filming and interviewing of Sophie's father, Thomas Kirusu. Unlike Sophie, Kirusu lives in a small village very far from the city. The combination of these two small projects will hopefully make a connection between both father and daughter, creating the story of a traditional instrument crossing a generational and gender gap. To complete this story about the *inanga*, the final small project will involve finding an *inanga* maker that could possibly allow us to document the creation of the giant chordophone. Much to our pleasure, since we previously thought that we may have to travel to the mountainous Northern region to find an *inanga* maker, Pierre said that there is the possibility

that a shop makes *inangas* in Kigali. After discussing these plans with Pierre he called his friend and possible cameraman Christian. We set up a meeting for tomorrow afternoon with Christian to discuss the possibilities of filming the human story of the *inanga*.

Further discussion involved the possibility of finding the one percent minority population of Rwanda, the Twa people of the Northern Rwandan jungles. The Twa have been described in literature and personal interactions with Rwandans with the derogatory term “pygmy” and have historically been known to be performers. Attempting to find Twa came from the difficulty in even mentioning the ethnicities of Hutu and Tutsi in this healing country. Prof. Barz believes that this small ethnic tribe that stood on the sideline of the genocide could give us an impartial judge rather than attempting to rile an impossible past for these native Rwandans. In response to this research possibility, Pierre told us that his colleague Christian knew of local groups of Twa, but they unfortunately did not focus on issues related to reconciliation. As Pierre put it, “they are not singers, they more make (signals a round shape with his hands) you know... pots.” Good news did come, however, in the form of another group known by Pierre and Christian that was a mix of all three local ethnicities, which had their main focus on the topic of reconciliation. This group was told to us to be led by a Twa that was teaching some of the Twa dance traditions to Hutus and Tutsis. This group, with which Pierre had direct experience, could prove to be an excellent example of exactly what we would be looking for in our research and in finding an impartial Twa connection.

9:35 p.m., Hotel Auberge de Cavernes

This afternoon passed quickly with some short resting time followed by an excellent buffet meal. The restaurant at which we ate had a cozy atmosphere of tables within a garden. I know now that the buffet is a staple of the Rwandan diet, and consists of an array of meat stew, potatoes, rice, soup, and vegetable dishes. Prof. Barz and I had a great conversation over dinner, and I feel very confident that I will be able to have a very personal and educational experience with such a brilliant man.

My impressions for today have resulted in further changes in my opinion of this country. After walking around all day, I began to notice several unifying aspects about the crowds on Rwandan streets. First, I stuck out like a sore thumb. This became very apparent by the stares I would receive on the street. Then all too obvious late in the afternoon when a group of seven children walked behind me pointing and yelling “Muzungu, Muzungu.” This does not bother me, in a strange way it is enlightening coming from white suburbia. Still it is strange being a spectacle rather than just a foreigner. Second, a demographic trend I began to notice was the lack of an older population. By this, I do not refer to demographics above fifty years old, but rather anyone above thirty. The effect of a generation completely wiped out is certainly apparent by a general consensus on the average Rwandan street corner. Counting back sixteen years to the genocide can explain why the population of Rwanda will be stuck in their mid twenties. Also, the general bottom heavy bell-curve seen in underdeveloped nations plays an intricate role within this already diversified trend.

My overall opinion of this country continues to be torn between historical cruelty and modern kindness. Every personal interaction I have with Rwandans, besides panhandlers, is as cordial as I have ever experienced. Yet, I cannot help but be pierced by the deep sadness in the eyes of the legless amputee on the street corner. For now, I ask myself, how could this have happened? Rwandans are, on average, more polite than most populations with which I have come into contact. Tomorrow morning Prof. Barz and I are going to visit the Genocide memorial here in Kigali. The visual of a memorial will hopefully allow me to more accurately internalize the reality of genocide, which will give me more direction in the following month of research.

Day 3

Saturday, May 15th, 2010

4:49 p.m., Café Bourbon

We have just finished a meeting with our cameraman and new colleague, Christian. In the meeting, we learned much while explaining our prospective research plans to Christian. He said he certainly would be interested in working with us, and, to our delight, he had already filmed Sophie for American music filmmakers. Dr. Barz explained his vision of documenting both the lives of Sophie and her father Kirusu Thomas separately, then somehow bringing them together for a father-daughter story that crosses a barrier for female musicians. Unfortunately, Christian informed us that Kirusu Thomas died two weeks ago. This news changed the focus of our research considerably, but Christian had other good news for us. He spoke of two other *inanga* players with whom we could connect. They also are old men, therefore giving more hope to the contrasting images of Sophie’s young generation versus her father’s older traditional generation. Also, there was a brief mention of a possible Twa *inanga* player. This would be an unbelievable connection of our two research topics. Near the end of our meeting, Christian called Sophie who remembered Dr. Barz and excitedly asked Christian if she could speak with the professor. They spoke for half a minute, due to an English language barrier, but the verbal interaction gave hope to her support as our primary focus for this research project. We agreed to meet with Christian in the morning, and lend him our recording equipment and discuss our opportunities after he had a chance to talk to his contacts.

6:53 p.m., Hotel Auberge de Cavernes

I cannot believe that it is already Saturday. Thinking back to when I left on Wednesday morning, I recall how differently I felt about this trip, this country, and research. Wednesday morning could have been five minutes ago or several months ago; it is impossible to place.

This morning we visited the genocide memorial in Kigali. The experience was one of the most emotionally taxing events I have experienced. I began to feel the gripping reality of the world and human nature when passing through the memorial. The Rwandan genocide had a main focus in the memorial with a walking tour through the history and future implications of the Rwandan genocide.

The first aspect of the memorial that jarred me was the utter silence. A group of schoolchildren stood in front of a portrait of the pre-history of the genocide, quiet as the dead. I moved through the memorial, reliving the full history of the genocide through moving histories printed on photograph clad walls with accompanying videos. One room that particularly stuck in my memory contained piles of skulls.

I remember clearly one printed quote: “If you really knew me, and you knew yourself, you would not kill me.” The quote was from a victim of the genocide, directly before her death. Since this, I have mused on the nature of our species and how we can let vicious crimes against humanity continue in our modern age. The memorial contained an upper floor that depicted all major world genocides: The Balkans during the 1990’s, Cambodia under Pol Pot, Herero tribe of Nigeria in the early 20th century, Armenians during World War I, and the German Holocaust. The globalization of the memorial struck me, not quite as emotionally as the more detailed Rwandan genocide portion, but in seeing the repetition of human depravity throughout history around the world. It is a hard truth to grasp that the slogan “never again” will most likely never be a reality as long as it applies to the human race.

The memorial ended with a walking tour of beautiful gardens surrounding the mass burial sites of tens of thousands of Rwandans. I began to notice a Rwandan motif: great shadows of evil amidst outward beauty.

Many of the exhibits in the memorial will stay with me. In one video, a survivor remarked that “I believe about ninety percent of the *interahamwe* were evil.” Prof. Barz brought this quote up later in the day, expressing that he believes that people inherently have inner demons, and the basis of humanity is fighting the evil within. Thinking about this now, I must agree, but from a scientific point of view. I believe that people are in a battle against our basic animal minds with our evolved higher order thinking that has allowed us to build artificial structures of society and defined ethnic boundaries. As history shows, the ability to use thoughts rationally declines when people are struck with poverty, starvation, and oppression. When diminished rational of thought combines with artificial ethnic boundaries, maybe anything can happen.

I concluded this day going out to another great meal and conversation with both Dr. Barz and some friendly Rwandans. I remain conflicted about what I should believe concerning the nature of humanity and how I should about outward kindness and beauty.

The biggest change that came today was accepting the reality of genocide. No matter how much extra reading I could have completed concerning the Rwandan genocide, it would never have felt completely real until I have come here and felt the shadow of genocide. I am glad that I am here in a time that is still only 16 short years away from the genocide, so one of history's greatest evils can become a reality, rather than disappearing into an article in a textbook. I feel that this reality will benefit me in not only being much more grateful for my privileged life, but also have a much more genuine heart for worldwide human suffering.

Day 4

Sunday, May 16th, 2010

2:32 p.m., Café Blues

On this slow Sunday, Prof. Barz and I woke up at a leisurely 12:30 in the afternoon. Last night I had a lot of fun watching some live music at the end of the night but still had strong memories of visiting the genocide memorial. I couldn't help but think about the Rwandans that surrounded me and Dr. Barz in the music club the night before. Everyone there was over the age of 16, so they each had to have a personal account of the genocide. Prof. Barz brought this up later at night in discussion. He told me that he hoped I enjoyed the time relaxing, because things had gotten pretty intense earlier that day. This made me think about how maybe everyone in that bar needed some type of release in the same way. Yet again I face the impossible questions of "How could this have happened?" and "Where is the evil in this place with these friendly people?"

11:10 p.m., Hotel Auberge La Cavernes

Our meeting with Christian went well, but was full of surprises. The meeting was supposed to be a short meeting in which we gave Christian our camera and discussed if he was willing to work with us. At first, he examined our camera and brought up an option of renting a professional camera. Unfortunately, this option is out of our budget, when we are simply documenting with the idea of a traditional Rwandan instrument, not producing a film for an American production company. Next, we had the awkward money discussion about payment for Christian working with us. Christian mentioned his normal working price, and we eventually agreed on a price that was in our budget, or rather, Dr. Barz pocket with VUSRP sponsorship. We asked him to sleep on the offer, in case all we had to offer was offensive, but he agreed on the spot. The meeting affected Dr. Barz who really hated having to discuss money issues when dealing with scholarly pursuits, especially if Christian felt we were undercharging him. We agreed to meet tomorrow morning to talk with Sophie and possibly start working on our project.

Dr. Barz and I ate dinner at a pizzeria and had a brainstorming session to record some basic ideas we have concerning the project. We were able to record pages of possible questions for both Sophie and the older *inanga* players, in addition to a full scope of the major themes we hope to accomplish, given that the artists we have chosen to record and analyze are cooperative and able to answer some of the personal and difficult questions. At one point, Dr. Barz complimented my idea about using a modern rapper named Rafiki. We could use him to demonstrate contrast to Sophie. Both are artists of a younger generation but producing different music. I was very pleased that my ideas are blending into this project, such that I feel that my time spent on this project is more collaborative than my initial assistant role.

We finished the night by visiting the famous Hotel des Milles Collines. We sat out by the pool and soaked in the beauty of yet another place that was famously stricken with conflict.

Day 5

Monday May 17th, 2010

10:09 a.m., Bourbon Coffee House

This morning we got up around 7:30 and had breakfast at our hotel before posting up, yet again, at Bourbon Coffee shop. This place has become quite the hot spot to meet since it has free Internet, great coffee, and a central location. We wait here now for a meeting with Christian to discuss our plans for a script that we wrote last night.

The discussions Dr. Barz and I have had here have been personal and mentally stimulating. We have had an excellent rapport, in my opinion, and have spent time laughing and discussing serious issues. We have also discussed deep topic such as politics, humanity, and my future. Everything has been a very deep learning experience for me. Dr. Barz is an exceptional scholar, and I can learn much from his rationalist views of mankind.

5:45 p.m.: Auberge La Caverne

Dr. Barz and I waited in Bourbon for an hour for Christian before leaving. We assumed that something was wrong and were a bit concerned because we had also given Christian the camera equipment the previous day. I spent the rest of the day running errands and getting to know Kigali. The most difficult venture was finding a map of the city Kigali, which took around two hours. Upon my return, Dr. Barz informed me that Christian had sent a message about injuring his leg and getting a severe headache. He said he had visited the hospital and was ready to join us that afternoon, but Dr. Barz decided to let him rest and give us a day to catch up with our research.

In my time running around Kigali, Dr. Barz had made a new friend, Helen Groit from London. Helen was a 27-year-old structural engineer that was in Kigali for the night on her way out of Rwanda after spending two weeks in a small village helping build homes for displaced Rwandans. We ventured to Ramera to eat dinner at Dr. Barz's favorite restaurant, Sola Luna. The restaurant boasted unbelievable pizza and a spectacular view. We had fun getting to know Helen as we listened to what is "brilliant" versus what is "rubbish." Apparently, cricket and port are both "brilliant" while American football and bourbon and "rubbish."

Day 6

Tuesday, May 18th, 2010

7:15 p.m., Hotel Auberge La Caverne

Today was a huge day. We woke at 7:30 to get ready to meet Christian at 9 o'clock. He was doing fine after his injury the day before and was ready to get a move on our project. Christian had called Sophie beforehand and we went to visit her in the outskirts of Rwanda late in the morning. On the drive, Christian got us a cab for a "non-Muzungu" price with a cab driver named Alex. On the way, Christian told us that Alex had been a soldier before starting a cab company. When I asked Christian later, I affirmed that Alex was a RPF soldier during the genocide. I couldn't believe that this cab driver was part of the force that stopped the genocide.

We arrived outside of Sophie's village around 11 in the morning. She met us outside her house clad in a bright green traditional African dress. Dr. Barz, Christian, and I walked into her home and sat down in the four chairs in the entry room of her modest home. The discussion was perfect for our plans, confirming that Sophie would be the perfect focus for our view into traditional versus contemporary Rwandan music connected to Songs of Reconciliation.

With the time constraints of a few weeks, the narrowed focus of our research is aimed on traditional Rwandan music rather than the genocide. I understand completely that focusing on a topic as broad and personal as music and reconciliation with the genocide would require, as Dr. Barz phrased it, "a complete ethnography" which consists of strenuous research for years. So, with our time we hoped to focus on an artist that plays a traditional Rwandan instrument while representing a younger generation. We foresee a short film as the best product from this narrowed focus.

Dr. Barz and I had brainstormed a list of topics and questions to discuss with Sophie to get a good idea concerning the basic outline of a potential film. I had hoped that many of the questions that we proposed would be answered by Sophie in a way that would be able to flesh out several themes we hoped to present through this research. A few main themes are the power of women in music, the role of women in post genocide Rwanda, the connection of traditional and contemporary Rwandan music and

the process of keeping traditions alive. Sophie aided greatly to these topics. She not only teaches younger children the *inanga* twice a week, she described with surprise that she was able to be an influential instrumentalist as a woman. Also, we played her a film taken last summer of her late father, and she expressed interest in giving us his full story in addition to finding her two uncles that are also traditional instrumentalists in remote provinces in the south. This was very exciting news, along the potential that Sophie would be having radio interviews and recording sessions this week that we could possibly attend and document. Near the end of the preliminary questioning, Dr. Barz told Sophie that I was impressed by her music since he had presented a short clip of her *inanga* performance in African music class back at Vanderbilt during the spring semester.

We left our meeting with Sophie excited at the potential that this project now possessed. After a buffet lunch, I went around Kigali with Christian taking “location” shots of the city that will be used for transition and scene setting in the completed film. I took pictures while Christian took video, and I kept a log of the location of all of our shots with the times taken. We began at a Catholic church that was very close to our hotel. Christian told me that this specific church was famous, and I knew before he continued with the story that this church was the final resting place for thousands of Rwandans in 1994. During the first days of the genocide in Kigali, the Catholic priest heading the church in my camera’s lens promised refuge to thousands of scared Tutsis. With his entire congregation in the church, the priest informed the *interahamwe* of their location. The killers threw grenades in the windows, and then surrounded the building to catch anyone that managed to escape with machete blades.

After filming the church, Christian and I moved around town, taking pictures of buildings, traffic, street hawkers, and locals. I was very happy to be walking around with a Rwandan that was able to interpret and keep many of the people on the street from hassling the Muzungo (or Buzungo, as I quickly found out) with a camera. A common attempt to get cash from a camera-clad Muzungo involves Rwandans excitedly calling for a picture, and then demanding cash afterwards. I made this mistake twice before realizing that it is improper to take pictures of a single person without giving any money.

Christian took me to a part of town that I would never have ventured without a Rwandan guide. In this part of town, being white was much more uncommon, and after about an hour I began to turn my head to the call of “Muzungo.” We concluded our venture at a construction site, where Christian had me introduce myself as a filmmaker from America to the foreman that promptly approached the foreigner taking photos of his work-site. The construction site provided very vibrant and interesting pictures, full of the true Rwandan working man. One station that I most vividly remember was the traditional Rwandan method for heating metal for molding. A pile of heated coals sits to the side of a worker that holds a large, burlap sack. As the worker opened the sack, the heated coals shot a burst of fire, resembling an erupting volcano. I realized that under the coals was a short underground tunnel leading to the sack. Opening the sack creates a stoking of the fire with rushing air that caused extra heat to shoot up from the coals causing metal to heat to bendable temperatures. After being on the street, where I had to be constantly telling off street vendors and beggars, I was very refreshed by the working men that were happy to get a picture taken and write down their name in my journal. One man gave me his phone number, telling me “I have a number, send me that picture!” Only a few of the Rwandans working on the site hassled me for cash, one specifically telling me he had an illness of alcoholism (expressed by a drinking motion) so he needed money. Any time I was hassled here, the foreman would forcefully tell them off in Kinyarwanda, apologizing to me with “sorry, they assume Muzungus have money, you know, because of history.” That specific phrase made me think even more about something the accident of birth that Dr. Barz and I have discussed over much of our time here. What if I had been born to a Tutsi family that had their parents taken during the genocide? How would you feel about a camera clad white man?

I got back to Auberge la Caverne after walking in the city for about five full hours. God knows how much I have walked here, but we were told about the Rwandan marathon coming up this weekend. I intend to run the modest 5K portion of it.

Today was a very successful day, and I can honestly say that I have found a new interest in photography. I am starting to improve manipulating aperture and understanding the value of placing the subject of a photo according to thirds of the picture frame. Dr. Barz has complemented a few of my shots, and told me that he hoped I would enjoy my time learning by myself, as it was not only the best way to learn, but how he learned himself. I also found a surprising amount of joy when Sophie expressed interest in becoming the subject of our film. I felt, somewhat like a mini-producer, with the anticipation of “will this project actually work?” being positively affirmed.

Day 7

Wednesday, May 19, 2010

12:20 p.m., Bourbon Coffee Shop

Last night, after the long day of shooting, Dr. Barz and I set out for the fabled Ethiopian restaurant that was supposedly across from the entrance of the national football stadium. After four faulty, nonsensical directions from locals around the stadium and a hearty hour walk, we accepted that the fabled Ethiopian restaurant was actually a fable. We settled for pizza at Sole Luna, the restaurant at which we had eaten the night before with our British friend Helen.

Today I write before we begin filming the initial interview of Sophie, where we hope that she will give a comprehensive life story.

12:30 a.m., Hotel Auberge La Caverne

Dr. Barz, Christian, and I took a cab out to the outskirts of Kigali to Sophie’s home for our first session of interviews with Sophie. We had visited this same place the day before, but this day was very different. Sophie knew us, and was ready to start making a movie. After greeting Sophie and her family, we searched around the vicinity for a good place to film that would have the best lighting with minimal outside noise. The search yielded no results, partially because we could not escape noise interference but partially because the camera was not charged and would not begin filming when we had Sophie in exact position for an outdoor interview. We settled for an indoor shoot, where we covered five sections, each section containing approximately four questions. The questions formulated by Dr. Barz were perfect for the scope of the project and covered Sophie’s history with the *inanga*, her relationship with her late father, and her opinion on Rwandan women in music.

The experience was surreal. I was amazed at the preparation required behind the scenes to get a clear audio and video recording. Christian set up a main shot with the video camera focusing on Sophie while asking questions from behind the camera. I sat on either side of Sophie, getting different video clips with a smaller portable video camera. Dr. Barz sat directly in front of Sophie with his high-tech audio recording equipment. After completing about forty-five minutes of interview, we recorded the daily life of Sophie with the HD video recording feature of the D90 camera. The D90 is the “prosumer,” or professional consumer camera that I have used to take all my photographs. Sophie expressed interest in demonstrating how she cooks for her family and does laundry for our documentary. She walked around her house to scrub laundry in a soapy bucket before hanging it up on a clothesline. This was not an uncommon way to do laundry in Kigali; the only washing machines are in the few dry cleaning establishments. However, the method by which Sophie cooked food for her family showed me the humble life of a famous traditional Rwandan artist. Sophie built a fire in a small brick fireplace to begin cooking. At this time her whole family and several neighbors were surrounding the production. Between shoots, and the entire time during set-up I was taking snap shots of the village, Sophie, her family, and friends. I became quite good friends with a few of the local children that came to watch us film Sophie. They had more fun than I could imagine playing with my ray bans and tripod. We left the village with our next meeting set for Saturday morning, when we will film Sophie teaching *inanga* at a local school.

I reflect back and am completely amazed that a week has passed in this country. Similar to busy months in school, time has flown by, but when I look back more has happened in this last week than I could have fathomed. Though this first week was rather slow in terms of setting up for filming and formulating a research plan, I have grown to find an interest in photography and a complete respect for Rwanda. I have thought at great length about the nature of human beings. I question daily, how could monstrosities occur in this country of kind, friendly people? Is it simply the madness of group mentality or is it a deep darkness inside every person? As much as I will seek the answers to these questions, it may be better that they are left as questions without answers.

Day 8**Thursday, May 20, 2010****9:08 p.m., Auberge La Caverne**

As I embarked on my second week in Rwanda, I unfortunately became ill. While eating breakfast this morning, a nice couple gave me some milk for tea, saying it had just been opened. I inspected it and figured that if these Muzungus were drinking it I probably could too.

About an hour later we met a man named Eric that hosts a show on Rwandan Radio 10 on Rwandan culture. Eric was also known by the name Gibraltar, a nickname from his acting role in the Rwandan movie *Gibraltar*. The meeting was immensely helpful with our research, as Eric was an expert on Rwandan culture, especially traditional Rwandan instruments and the role of women in Rwanda's history. We discovered through the conversation, the historical tracings of poetry and spoken word in Rwanda and the three categories of Rwandan instruments. Even more exciting, and the initial purpose for our meeting, Eric expressed interest in having Sophie on his show this upcoming Monday to perform some music and speak about traditional Rwandan music. He also plans to open up phone lines for listeners to call in and talk about Sophie.

Unfortunately, I was starting to feel queasy throughout the course of the meeting. When I began feeling dizzy as well, I excused myself to the restroom just in time to vomit. I spent the rest of the day in bed, napping and recovering from this small bout of food poisoning. Dr. Barz was absolutely amazing in taking care of me. He showed his caring parental side by spending the day getting me juice, crackers and water.

About an hour ago, the nice couple that gave me milk this morning came over to talk to us. They were young Belgians driving from Brussels through Africa. I could not believe how adventuresome these Europeans were after listening to their stories about traveling through Mongolia, the Sudan, Egypt, and the majority of East Africa. The encounter left me with a bit of wanderlust, envying a couple that can travel for a year in-between years of working. I now feel a new enjoyment in being abroad, having put myself more deeply into this culture than I would have on a family vacation. I absolutely want to spend the next summer completely abroad; I just need to find the best way to plan a trip.

Day 9**Friday, May 21, 2010****5:51 p.m., Bourbon Coffee shop**

Today I awoke feeling considerably better. I felt slightly nauseous in the morning, but the feeling quickly subsided. Christian came to Auberge La Caverne this morning at 8:30 so we could translate the video we had taken of Sophie two days before. The process was a bit taxing; requiring me to frantically write for two hours in an attempt to record everything Christian was translating. The process called for Christian listening to the video with headphones, stopping approximately every 30 seconds, then relaying the meaning of the Kinyarwanda spoken by Sophie. I recorded corresponding times with the sound clips, and hopefully got the full story from the interview. This project looks very promising, especially when Sophie specifically emphasized the vast importance of continuing Rwandan traditions by teaching younger generations.

After completing the translation, Christian and I set out in the city to find an electrician he knew that might be about to help us fix the battery in our video camera that was refusing to hold a charge. We passed through a cramped electronics store in downtown Kigali and emerged in a bustling marketplace in a spacious courtyard. Around this courtyard people were selling food, t-shirts, electronics, chairs, fabrics, and any other goods one could imagine. I recognized from intensified stares that a muzungu had most likely not been in this marketplace for some time. Christian walked up to a man that was taking apart a microwave and a younger man inspecting an open motherboard. After a thirty-minute discussion about the camera, the electrician named Condor decided that one battery was broken, but our backup worked. We paid him to place an order from Uganda to get a replacement battery of the same kind. Dr. Barz and I are very skeptical that Uganda will have this battery, but it's worth a chance.

While waiting on the electrician, I noticed that one working man in the courtyard was wearing a Tyler's sporting goods store t-shirt from Austin, my hometown. I was taken back that Tyler's brand had made it all the way to the back markets of Rwanda. The reminder of home also caused me to remember a time when Dr. Barz and I were eating dinner and B.B. King came on the radio, causing us to discuss Nashville. It is amazing how easily one can transport one's self home and forget that they are in Africa.

On an exciting note, Christian informed us that tomorrow Rwanda will be playing the D.R.C. (Democratic Republic of Congo) in a match at the national football stadium of Kigali. I have never been to a soccer game and am especially excited to witness two African teams duke it out on a Saturday night. After getting this camera problem fixed, Dr. Barz, Christian and I journeyed to the Kigali School of Music, to ask permission to film Sophie both tomorrow morning and Tuesday afternoon as she conducts a class on the *inanga*. The school boasted a respectable facility donated by an American woman from Texas who had spent 25 years in Kigali. A man named Joshua took us on a long tour of the facility, showing us every room and every instrument the school possessed. As we were leaving we met the director, Aimable, who gave us permission to document at his school.

9:05 p.m., Auberge La Caverne

Later in the day, we parted ways with Christian, gathered our things and began to walk up to the center of town. On the way, we saw Christian walking towards us accompanied by a small boy holding an instrument called an *umuduri*. The *umuduri* resembles a one-string small bow with an open gourd attached that the performer holds against the body to mute and produce different sounds. Christian explained that he had found this boy performing on the street outside a shop and brought him down to perform for us. The boy said his name was Patrick and "had nine years." He was tiny, standing slightly above my waist. We brought Patrick off the street into the front of our Hotel so we could hear his performance. I was absolutely stunned when I captured the performance on the HD video feature of the D90 still camera. This little boy was amazing. He danced while he sang and played this stringed bow with a small stick. Prof. Barz paid him some money for his performance and we walked away to finish some work and have dinner.

The young Patrick never smiled once, not even when I showed him his performance on video. I saw a deep sadness in the small boy and I could tell Prof. Barz noticed it too. We spoke about how this boy was most likely an orphan, singing for around ten cents for a three-minute performance.

A part of me feels that I need to offer some type of help immediately after seeing many of the orphans on the street. I feel I should join the Peace Corps or dedicate my life to helping African nations. But Dr. Barz gave me excellent advice at dinner. He told me to take these experiences to help myself become a more compassionate person in my future. He explained that if I took these experiences to improve myself, the indirect effect will be worth enough to help boys like Patrick.

Day 10**Saturday, May 22, 2010****11:24 a.m., Auberge La Caverne**

We woke this morning at 7:30 to film Sophie at the Kigali music school at 9 o' clock. Before walking to the school with Christian, we headed to a local sporting goods store to buy a Rwandan soccer jersey for the game against Congo that we will attend later today. I became aware of differences in the sizes of Irish Americans and Rwandans after the store's largest XL fit me like a small.

After arriving at the school, we waited for an hour before accepting the fact that Sophie was not coming. We hoped that everything was all right; her phone was off and the director of the school could not contact her. I am starting to get used to the concept of “Africa time,” which is very similar to family vacation time. Anyone we have met with has shown up at least thirty minutes late, and simple chores, like visiting an electrician or buying a map, seem to take several hours. It was a bit frustrating at first, but I have gotten used to this and find that it is good for me to move slower and relax. I feel that this “Africa time” is an accepted part of Africa culture. Apart from generally moving slower, Rwandans never see someone they know on the street without a conversation. I think this is great and partially wish that everyone was this friendly on the streets in American cities. Christian once told me, “It is not like America, you know, in New York there is no stopping.”

We dismissed Christian for the day after leaving the school, giving him the day off. We would see if he wanted to meet us at the soccer match later in the day. For now, Dr. Barz and I have decided to spend our day walking around the Muslim district or market district to get some good location shots and hopefully some souvenirs.

We hope to make contact with Sophie this afternoon and are able to get some film of her going to church and possibly attend an African church service ourselves. Dr. Barz did warn me that this could be a six-hour ordeal, but I am prepared to indulge in the culture. Unfortunately, I found out yesterday that the Kigali marathon is on Sunday and registration ended Friday at five. It is unfortunate, but we most likely would have been filming during the marathon anyway.

11:01 p.m., Auberge La Caverne

The rest of this Saturday was spectacular. In the afternoon, Dr. Barz and I visited an Internet café before jumping on motos to get to Nyamirambo, the Muslim district of Kigali. We began our trek at the district’s mosque before walking around the district examining different shops and the spectacular views. This area in town had a completely different feel than the center of the city. It was much less urban, resembling something closer to a neighborhood than a city square. I noticed there were few beggars. Usually it is difficult to walk more than half a block without someone running up to the muzungu asking for money, but here I cannot remember ever being asked for money on the street. The other noticeable aspect of this district was the decorations on the public busses. Every bus had a theme that usually centered on a rapper or pop singer. I was very pleased to see a Lil Wayne bus, a T.I. bus, a Sean Kingston bus, and a Ne-Yo bus.

We were happy to find an electronics store that also sold music. We have heard the auto-tuned brilliance of a popular musician named Meddy in many different restaurants around town and decided that we need his music and need to record him. The store did not have Meddy in stock, but they told us to wait five minutes and they would burn us a copy!

We returned to the Auberge, Meddy in hand, to rest for a minute and get ready for the futbol match at six. At around 3:40, Christian called and said that the match was rescheduled for four, so we quickly made our way over to the national stadium. I was sporting my yellow Rwandan soccer jersey and was surprised to find the crowd wearing white or blue. Dr. Barz and I bought tickets at the front gate for 3,000 rwf. The tickets for sale were 1,000, 3,000 or 5,000 rwf, so we decided to shoot for the middle in case the price difference changed anything about seating. It, of course, didn’t change a thing.

Upon entering the stadium we took seats a bit away from the main crowd, close to the eight other Muzungus in the entire stadium. I noticed that we were watching a double-header that was a part of the Kagame Cup (named after Paul Kagame) with the first game starting at 3 and second at 5. The first game, Mafunzo vs. Rayon, was near its end when we entered the stadium. The most entertaining part of this game was the section of Rayon fans clustered directly to our left. Many Rayon fans had their shirts off and were covered in blue paint and what appeared to be chalk. Several of them wore masks that appeared to be American Halloween masks. I remember a particular individual that was dressed in a blue dress stuffed to imitate pregnancy then decided to dawn a large wolf mask. The rest of the Rayon crowd did not stop chanting an African anthem the entire match. Many had great dances emphasized by rattles on their feet. I looked to my left and saw that a few of these Rayon fans were holding large drums, lit torches, and flares.

The game concluded with Rayon victorious three to nil. The next game, APR vs. Mazembe, was the Congolese vs. Rwandan game we had come to watch. APR was Rwanda’s army team clad in striped white and Mazembe were the Congolese rebels dressed in striped blue. We couldn’t tell who to cheer for until the first APR goal coincided with an eruption of the crowd. Soon after, at about 30:00, the game took a nasty turn. The Congolese team felt that one of their players had been tripped and began harassing the referee for a yellow card. The Congolese were harassing the official with such ferocity that he threw a red card on one of the Congolese players. This set the offending player into quite the riot, and he began to rile up the rest of his teammates. Soon enough, the Congolese team began to chase down the official, who was running for his life. Police began to storm the field and the stadium went wild. Soon enough, the Congolese team caught up to the referee and the captain gave him a firm flying kick in the chest. The referee went down hard and the police surrounded the Congolese team. After about thirty minutes of standing around on the field, the team was forced to forfeit and the stadium cleared out with a victorious Rwanda.

We left the stadium and headed back to the hotel around our hotel. The evening concluded watching the International vs. Bavarian championship match at a local sports bar. We found out later that the player that attacked the referee was the team captain, causing the team to become disqualified. This led me to question what would happen if it was another player other than the captain had landed a flying kick to the chest. Even though the game ended promptly, I found the events to be vastly more entertaining than the game would have been otherwise.

Day 11

Sunday, May 23, 2010

7:07 p.m., Auberge La Caverne

We awoke this morning at 7 a.m. to film Sophie as she went to church in the morning. The experience was overall my favorite in Rwanda. Christian showed up at a leisurely 8:30 and we grabbed motos over to Sophie’s house. Sophie was dressed in a vibrant yellow patterned African dress with matching headwear. She was headed to church this morning with her eldest son and friend that was a woman that appeared slightly older than Sophie.

We filmed Sophie on her walk down to the bus. The local transportation was absolutely chaotic. One bus would show up and the local people would pack into it like sardines. After waiting for about five minutes, a motocyclist drove by on an extremely noisy bike. I turned and noticed it was an older white man, clad in Fox racing gear. The crowd of Rwandans stared in amazement as this muzungu slowed and revved his engine. Dr. Barz and I looked at each other and shook our heads. “Who is this guy” and “Are you serious” were a few of the less colorful expressions that we shared towards this man that was now popping a wheelie to a cheering Rwandan crowd.

After about twenty minutes we were beginning to be late for service, so we decided to get a taxi. When we arrived at the church we asked permission of a few higher up individuals before we began taking pictures. While Christian was talking logistics with the pastor and other church folk, I was beginning to be swarmed by children. Unlike kids in the more urban parts of the city, these children had probably seen only a few white people before, and they wanted very much to touch the skin of the mzuungu. I attempted to follow Prof. Barz closer to the church, but I had a sea of children in my way, waiting to hold the Muzungu’s hand.

One church official introduced himself and led Dr. Barz and I to the Sunday school classrooms. We visited two different classrooms, one of six-year old students and one of eight-year old students. I watched the children singing a song counting to ten in English then gave us a high pitched “Good Morning!” in unison. We gave a short speech expressing our gratitude and left the classrooms.

At this point, the man presenting us in front of the classroom led us to the church and sequestered us in a large room on the second floor of the main church building. We were told we were waiting for the pastor, but we really had no idea what was happening. Not knowing exactly what is happening has become a common state of mind when a language barrier stands in the way of most of our friendly colleagues. Soon enough, the pastor of the church came out to us, introduced himself, and listened to our plans of documenting Sophie in church. He nodded and led us into the crowded worship space.

The church was Pentecostal and boasted a congregation of 1,800 Rwandans. We entered the church and were ushered to front row seats, directly in front of the flower clad altar. I took a quick scope of the crowd of over 1,000 Rwandans, all inspecting the muzungu with a camera. I was seated next to the pastor and a translator promptly took a seat between Prof. Barz and me so he could clearly understand the service. On the stage a full choir was singing and dancing on a large stage in the front of the church, vibrantly worshipping with the spirit of the lord. After a few songs, the choir sat down and another choir took its place on stage. Throughout the service, I noted that four separate, thirty-person choirs interchanged constantly. I was surprised that only one song during the entire service included the congregation, the rest were performances by respective choirs.

After thirty minutes of entrance songs, one deacon began the introduction of the service. After some words in Kinyarwanda, a few Rwandans would stand in the congregation and shout "Halleluiah!" and the entire church would respond with "Amen!" After a few rounds of this call and response, I heard the words "Muzungus from America" from the announcer. I sat scared for a moment before a woman poked me and whispered "Stand up!" I jumped up with Dr. Barz; we exchanged a quick glance and shouted "Hallelujah" with raised arms. The crowd responded with a resounding "Amen!" The same ritual occurred with Sophie, who proudly stood with a loud "Hallelujah!"

The church service lasted a modest three hours. The pastor's liturgy was especially entertaining. Over the course of forty minutes, his voice slowly rose until he was yelling in a style reminiscent of a southern Baptist preacher.

I enjoyed noting that the collections in church included a separate collection for genocide victims. By the end of the service, the church poured out into the courtyard with many Rwandans shaking our hands. One man came up to us and described that he was in the choir and asked about if he could come to music school in America. He did not speak great English, but was disheartened that music school at our University costs around \$50,000 American dollars per year.

We were approached by one man that asked us to go up to the same room in which we had been sequestered before the service. The room now filled with people, tables and a buffet lunch. We graciously accepted the free meal from the request of the pastor, and ate, conversed, and laughed with the leadership committee of this church. During the meal, the pastor offered to baptize both Prof. Barz and me. I said that my Catholic mother would kill me, but Prof. Barz hopes to return in the following weeks to take the pastor up on his word.

We dropped Sophie off at home and waited for Christian to get a ride out of her neighborhood. We had planned to film Sophie as she played at Radio Rwanda from nine to ten on a show, but bureaucracy stood in our way. Apparently, Radio Rwanda required a letter ten days in advance of a visit to film. The culture of Rwanda of formally asking permission to take one picture causes filming to progress at a snail's pace. This has been a bit of an annoyance, but has taught me patience in a way I would not have known before. Still, the night was not completely a loss; Christian sent us Meddy's number and said he is available to meet any time the next afternoon.

Day 12

Monday, May 24, 2010

10:45 a.m., Auberge La Caverne

We awoke this morning to Christian showing interest in going to the market before meeting an *inanga* player he had contacted at about one. Expecting a late arrival, I was pleasantly surprised when Christian arrived at the Auberge at 10:30 a.m. ready to go to the market.

We are about to set off with the day's plans including getting market scenes, speaking with the old *inanga* player, then meeting Meddy to discuss the possibility of an interview.

8:20 p.m.

Today was a day of meetings and logistics. Christian and I departed for the market at about 11 a.m. and decided to take a bus. The bus took over an hour, though the market was just on the other side of town, next to the national futbol stadium. I embraced patience and accepted that the Rwandan cultural pace is indeed slower than American culture.

We arrived at the market and I was immediately amazed at the size. Food was stacked on tables to the ceilings of warehouse proportions, and a maze of clothes reaching even higher stood behind it. Anything you could possibly want was for sale and pricing was heavily negotiable.

Per usual form, we asked permission to film. We first talked to the president of the market, who was seated behind crates of potatoes in a small shop. I waited as Christian spoke in Kinyarwanda for about fifteen minutes before we were sent to visit the radio head of the market, to make an announcement that we were filming. Again, a lengthy conversation concluded with me paying 2,000 rwf for an announcement that we would be taking pictures. At this point, the cultural aspect of permission giving was giving me a headache, but I again, embraced the lessons in patience I am receiving.

The market resulted in a lot of great shots, both for me on the still D90 and Christian on the video camera. Still, the Rwandan crowd at the market was reluctant to be on film. Christian spent most of our time in the market arguing with the locals about filming, trying to tell them we were doing a documentary and they were not being exploited. I could tell that we were again in a part of town not used to cameramen or the press.

We left the market and jumped on motos to meet the old *inanga* player, Sibomana. He was a goldmine for our project and we were very lucky that Christian contacted him. We met with him in a separate part of town, and made our way over to the UTC (Union Trade Center) to meet with Prof. Barz. We began a quick meeting to see if Sibomana would be able to interview on the history of the *inanga*. Christian worked as an interpreter because Sibomana only spoke French and Kinyarwanda, like Sophie. He was very serious and difficult to read, but he agreed to an interview and much more. He told us that he was able to make *inangas*, and we jumped at the prospect, asking if he could make two. He said it would be possible, but would be expensive, because the *inanga* is made from a specific tree in a forest far outside of town. The creation of this large *inanga*, he said, would cost approximately \$180 dollars. We were pleased to pay this price, since they would be only of about ten large *inangas* in the world and we are centering a film on the instrument and its importance to Rwandan culture. Sibomana also told us he could perform *inanga* for us, but we would need to go outside the city because "it would be a dishonor to the *inanga* to perform in the city." It was a bit hypocritical, since he plays in the city all the time, but we set aside Sunday morning as a time we would venture outside Kigali for a shot of him playing the *inanga* and interviewing on its history in a natural setting.

We left the meeting very pleased; at this point I do not expect everything that was proposed to actually happen, but if we left our encounters with Sibomana with handmade *inangas*, it would be a great success. By now, it was 3:00 in the afternoon and I was starved. We ate a buffet and called Meddy, the Rwandan pop star and Akon equivalent in Rwanda. He spoke English and told us he would be happy to meet at Bourbon at 4:30. Christian said he was beginning to feel ill, so we let him go get some rest as we waited for Meddy. Barz and I waited, enjoying coffee and some Internet until Meddy showed up at 6. We had a twenty-minute meeting, and Meddy

agreed to meet for an interview giving us a popular hip hop artist's opinion on traditional Rwandan music the following Thursday. He also gave us permission to use his most popular song that we have become quite fond of in our Rwandan time during the credits of our film. We thanked him, added a quick conjecture that I would like to go out on the town with him on the weekend and parted ways. I stood very amazed that in this country we could meet with an artist as popular as Meddy. To put this into perspective, it would be the equivalent of coming to America, hearing T-Pain on the radio, thinking his music is great, calling him up, and then getting a meeting.

We concluded the night settling at home digesting the prospects of the day. With an *inanga* maker, an interview with Meddy, and a village visit, the project is beginning to stand on its own. If everything we have set up thus far gets filmed, we will have more than enough for a story that fully encompasses our goals in coming to Rwanda. Tomorrow morning I plan to join Christian to ask permission to film Sophie's son going to school. We hope that footage of her son in a local Rwandan school will give a wider and more intimate perspective into her life as a Rwandan mother.

Day 13

Tuesday, May 25, 2010

8:42 a.m.; Auberge La Caverne

It is pouring rain this morning as I wait for Christian. Last night Prof. Barz and I took a few hours to write a rough storyboard for this project. It was an exciting process and a chance for me to write in a style I never had before. I was especially pleased with our collaboration. The story's outline was just as much my thoughts as Prof. Barz's. The initial draft, though compact, gives this project a solid form. Before typing this outline, we were letting everything simmer while waiting for a story to emerge from initial interviews and meetings. Now, I see a complete story that has depth and meaning that satisfies our research goals for this trip.

10:47 a.m., Blues Café

I waited at the Auberge for over an hour and a half before calling Christian. He spoke about his uncle being sick, him talking to the headmaster of the school, and being very sorry for not texting me. I have grown accustomed to Africa time and customs and was not at all bothered that Christian had not shown up this morning. Greg and I now often just exchange looks, shrug and say "hey, it's Africa." Dr. Barz woke up and informed me that he was not feeling well and had a sore throat. I asked if there was anything I could get him, but he said I was too kind and went back to bed. I decided to grab some coffee before we film Sophie teaching children at three at the Kigali music school.

I thought now, that I have stumbled upon a bit of free time; it would be a good to comment on two aspects of culture I have enjoyed. The first aspect of Rwanda, and indeed Africa as a whole, in which I have found great enjoyment is transportation on motos. The easiest, cheapest, and most fun way to get around town is on the back of a motorcycle taxi. The first time I rode on a moto I was quite frightened by the prospect of getting on the back of a two-seated bike, clutching only the bar on the back of the bike. I was placed at ease when the driver handed me my own helmet to wear during the ride. I spent the first ride grinning like a five-year old on a rollercoaster as the bike wove through traffic at high speeds. I have become used to motos now, and rarely hold on to my seat. Dr. Barz expressed the experience of moto transportation the most clearly when he told me "Sometimes, when you are worried about dealing with too much work or things at home, you just jump on the back of a moto and realize that you are in Africa; so you naturally relax."

The second entertaining aspect in Rwanda (I'm not certain about the rest of Africa) concerns transportation for babies. Rwandan babies are carried on their mothers' backs, supported by a thick piece of colorful cloth. The most common position for a baby is straddling their mother, head on her back, tied to her waist. The sight was surprising at first because it seems that you would want to see your baby when walking around town, but I could tell by happy or sleeping babies that the position must be quite enjoyable for an infant. It gives a baby the perfect surface to rest their head and take a nap as their mother walks around with her hands free. I am convinced that, with the right type of marketing, the trend could catch on in the United States.

11:25 p.m., Auberge La Caverne

Today was a bit of a disappointment. Late in the afternoon, we got a call from Christian explaining that the students that were planning to learn from Sophie had canceled and no one would be at the school at three. I spent the day completing a book on music from a neuroscientist's perspective called *This is Your Brain on Music*. I found the book to be quite enlightening and right up my alley, especially during this musical research project. We finished the night by meeting Jocelyn, the editor from Rwanda Cinema, at Bourbon. She came with two friends and we had a great time, chatting and joking. She said that she would be interested in editing for us, and we are excited about someone very professional completing our product.

This day was a bit frustrating; having been canceled on twice, but again is a simple fact of Africa. There is much that is lost in translation and much of culture that I will not understand. It is something that is unavoidable and can only warrant the response "Hey, it's Africa."

Day 14

Wednesday, May 26, 2010

8:16 p.m., Auberge La Caverne

Today was, fingers crossed, the last day of setting up all of the necessary items to produce a film. A little frustrated from the communication breakdowns yesterday, Dr. Barz and I vowed to be a little more firm with our Rwandan colleagues today.

Christian showed up at the Auberge around 8:30 and we began to review the storyboard and take down all the shots that we needed. Below is the initial storyboard, for reference and clarity.

WORKING TITLE: **Inanga: Rwanda's Traditions**
One Woman and the Touch of Her Father

Opening:

Shot of Rwandan hillside with Sophie far away. Slowly focus in on Sophie and her inanga, looking away. The sound is only of wind; no music. Sophie's voice enters.

Sophie's voice with subtitles:

Kinyarwanda audio with English subtitle: "The way we learn traditions is by passing them down. We all have a responsibility to teach younger generations."

Segue:

Sophie playing inanga in public. Clips could come from Christian's tapes or Jocelyn. Very short clip with an explanation on the bottom of Sophie playing at event.

Video fade:

Music playing continues

Fade into Pierre listening to headphones, silent with Sophie's music playing:

Pierre takes off the headphones, sound stops, manipulate sound to appear as if it is coming from headphones.

Pierre:

1. Talks about pre-genocide traditions in Rwanda.
2. Talk about how the genocide ended many cultural traditions
3. Explains the importance of maintaining traditions, the government initiative of Hope, Unity, and Reconciliation, and the reclaiming of everyday life in Rwanda with emphasis on inanga.

Fade away

Fade into Sophie clips of everyday life:

Could either be cooking, getting kids ready for school, waking up, church scenes, etc.

After awhile Sophie's voice begins with subtitles. Stays for short duration before cutting to a clip of her face interview.

Sophie's voice in Kinyarwanda: [Subtitled in English] "My mother died when I was very young. I went to live with my grandfather. I had my first lesson on the inanga from my uncle. After my father heard I could play, he encouraged me to learn and perform the inanga and I moved back in with my father. Before I started P1 my father began to compose for the inanga. I learned to read and write for the inanga before P1. I remember a journalist coming to my father when I was six and he learned that I could play. It was at this time that I began to play on the radio. At age seven I began to play the inanga competitively. I remember the first competition I attended had the theme of proper management of a harvest. I won an award at this competition and began to play competitively."

Enter the sound of village music slowly increasing

Direct break:

Scenes of Sophie traveling to the village with village music at full volume. Scenes of busses, taxi park, Sophie carrying the inanga.

Music stops

Direct break:

Her uncle and entire village greet Sophie. There will be raucous sounds and activity

Segue:

Sophie and her uncle sitting quietly with no music.

Sophie and her uncle:

1. Conversation about her father, his brother.
2. Talk about what he represented, what needs to be passed on, and talk about a specific piece of music closely associated with Kirusu. How they played it individually.
3. Possibly discuss Music and Reconciliation to foreshadow a reconciliation song.

Segue:

Village performance of that piece by Sophie and the Uncle

[Sophie introducing one of her own pieces about unity and reconciliation to the group; the rest join with her]

Segue:

Sophie 2nd half of the interview, standing quietly alone in the village

Sophie: Reflecting on how she feels she needs to keep this tradition alive. The importance of the tradition of the inanga.

Segue: Sibomana

Break from Sophie to a scene of Sibomana walking through a forested area discussing which trees are used to make the inanga.

Sibomana:

1. Discusses the deep historical meaning of the inanga in Rwandan culture.
2. Covers the importance of the instrument as a symbol of Rwandan culture.
3. Covers the importance of the instrument in the royal court.

Demonstrates the construction of the inanga, how it is strung and how it is tuned.

Sibomana: Discuss the importance of the inanga styles of Kirusu Thomas and older players

Demonstration of an older song; Kirusu Thomas's style

Segue:

Scenic takes of the area with Sibomana's music in the background

Sibomana discusses the role of inanga in pre- and post-genocide [English subtitles will be needed].

Segue:

Direct to early in the Radio Interview at Radio 10.

Sophie and Eric: Back and forth discussion on musical traditions.

Have Eric play Sophie some of her own music

Close up on Sophie's face in reaction to her own music

Interaction with callers

Segue:

Meddy walking through traffic close to where we will interview, people greeting him, music in background is one of his songs

Break:

Meddy interview

1. Popular music in Rwanda strays from the roots, but it is very important to maintain these traditions.
2. Modern inanga players like Sophie need to be valued and appreciated.
3. Talk about any of his songs that help preserve any aspects of traditional culture.
4. Talk about any of his songs that have to do with Reconciliation.

Segue:

Sophie walking down the street with everyday soundscape to Kigali Music School.

Break:

Scenes [several] of Sophie interacting with students [teaching inanga and dance]

Segue:

Sophie holding her inanga looking into the school [profile shot, not looking into camera]. Fade into her voice talking about tradition.

1. My names are ____ Sophie and I am a player of the inanga.
2. Re-state the importance of keeping traditions alive.
3. I am the daughter of Kirusu Thomas.

Break:

Clip of Kirusu Thomas playing and singing.

Fade

Black-and-white photography of Kirusu Thomas

After a few seconds superimpose the name Kirusu Thomas

After a few seconds add on "Father of Sofia" (or "The Touch of the Father")

After a few seconds add on "In Dedication, Died 2010" with music still playing

Fade into credits**Fade in Meddy's song****Segue to Sophie's song at end of Meddy's song**

Outlining the story helped get us a clear picture, and I believe it helped Christian get the picture as well. He has come to us with the potential to interview an old poet in Kigali that is an expert of Rwandan culture. We decided now to prioritize, and our first priority was to get the village shot with Sophie and her uncle. I was about to find out that this would require much preparation and running around town. And this would need much preparation and, as I was about to find out, running around town.

Christian expressed great interest in renting a more professional camera to make this film, and we obliged for a maximum of three days, due to the daily renting price of the camera ranging from 80 to 100 dollars after heavy negotiation. The two shots that needed this camera were the village and Sibomana piece on Sunday. Dr. Barz and I decided that the best use of the third day would be filming Meddy's interview next Thursday and decided to push Pierre's interview to this day as well, to get it on a better camera.

We immediately called Sophie and expressed that we needed to make the village trip this Friday.

Christian and I took off to meet with her, and plan for the village trip. We found her far in the city and made our way to Bourbon for a meeting. Through Christian we discussed the logistics of traveling to her Uncle's village on Friday. The discussion took a great deal of time, nearly two hours, but accomplished locking Sophie down for all day Friday. She did cancel a radio program we had set up for her tomorrow on Radio 10, for a commissioned job she was offered the night before. The radio show (on Radio 10 with Gibraltar/Eric) was then rescheduled for Monday. She did, however, surprise us with extremely good news. She will be performing for the First Lady of Rwanda next Thursday, the same day we are scheduled to interview Meddy. With this lucky break, the professional camera rental will correspond with three important shots next Thursday.

During the meeting, I was prompted with the question, "Why are you doing this? What is my benefit?" from Sophie through Christian's translation. I explained that we were not commercial producers and we were doing a film for academic purposes out of interest in her life and the life of her father. I hoped my explanation would suffice for our star as Dr. Barz was still sick and unable to attend the meeting. She happily agreed to continue with the project in full regards, now understanding more clearly who we were and what the project was about.

Visiting the village involved getting a taxi for a two hour drive, renting a camera for the day, and paying Sophie to buy gifts for her uncle and cousins in addition to paying for her phone time (also called "air time" here). I graciously accepted this and bid Sophie farewell until Friday morning.

Christian and I then headed to a small, hot, film studio to discuss the different cameras for rent and negotiate a good price. After another two hours on Kinyarwanda arguing we had decided on an HD DV camera that looked extremely professional. This was a bit taxing on me, now having listened to hours of a foreign language with the few words translated back being confusing or long-winded. Christian always has a lot going through his mind. For example, when discussing the type of tape to use in the camera, he discussed eight different types of tapes, only three of which would work in the camera we planned to rent.

We left the office now having a camera set up, plans with Sophie set up, and a broader schedule available with shots planned for Friday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and next Thursday. After lunch, Christian and I headed back to the studio for some other issue to inspect with the camera. On the way, a friend of Christian's in a car stopped us, so we joined him and parked to discuss if he could give us a ride. After a confusing hour-long conversation, I had the driver, Ernest, taking all of us (that's me, Christian, Dr. Barz, Sophie and her two sons and baby) to the village in the southern provinces for one hundred dollars. The car is a small four door Toyota Camry, so it's going to be a tight two-hour drive, but it beats the bus and hours of walking.

I finish this day exhausted, but feeling a bit accomplished, having spent the day setting up this trip on my own. The culture is frustrating at times, but knowing that we have everything set is a good feeling.

At the end of this second week, I can only reflect back with the same “where did all the time go?” feeling. This place feels so normal to me; I find it absolutely amazing how easy it is to adjust to a new culture. I do get the sense that I have fallen out of the “awe” stage, where everything in this country is so new I couldn’t help but wander deep in thought about any of the sights on the average street corner. Now, that Dr. Barz and I are well adjusted with a clear plan, creating a film is consuming most of our time and energy. I couldn’t be more excited.

Day 15

Thursday, May 27, 2010

11:55 a.m., Auberge La Caverne

This morning I woke prepared to join Christian to get an interview with a poet and obtain our good camera equipment for the trip to Sophie’s village tomorrow. Rather, I received a message that Christian had tooth problems. I was not concerned, the poet is not a priority and we have a huge day ahead of us tomorrow, so I am spending this time getting caught up on this journal and planning all of the shots tomorrow in the village.

11:03 p.m., Auberge La Caverne

We did not manage to meet with Christian all day, so Dr. Barz and I spent our time preparing for the shooting tomorrow and doing some research. At around three, Joselyne, the editor from Rwanda Cinema, called Prof. Barz to inform him that she had read the script and wanted to have a meeting about her ideas before we began shooting the tomorrow. The Professor decided that the meeting would be best if only I attended, to get my perspective without his intervention. Joselyne and I set a meeting for seven.

Before the meeting, Dr. Barz and I completed an article we had been asked to write for Vanderbilt. The article will appear in the handbooks given to every freshman student during orientation in the fall. Here is the finished product sent to Vanderbilt earlier this evening.

Student/Faculty Research in Africa: A Commons Experience

Gregory Barz, aka PBarz, associate professor of ethnomusicology (Faculty Head of North House)

Patrick McGovern, Vanderbilt Class of 2012 (former North House resident)

As I reflect on two weeks in Rwanda doing field research with PBarz, I begin to think back to when he proposed going to Africa at the beginning of my second year at Vanderbilt. At the time, I thought I was merely going to lunch with my Faculty Head of House from my first year to chat about my summer and the upcoming year. I wasn’t expecting to be offered the opportunity of a lifetime that would strengthen the bond I had developed through living in North House during the inaugural year of the Commons—*Patrick*

Walking through the streets of Kigali I am more startled by young Patrick McGovern’s head constantly turning and craning through the crowd in order focus more intently on his surroundings—beggars missing limbs, police armed with heavy artillery, vendors selling trinkets. Immune (perhaps jaded?) to the everyday aspects of life in an African capital after living and working in the continent for almost 20 years, I am struck by the ability of Patrick’s youth and enthusiasm to ignite my own curiosity. I begin to “see” my experiences through Patrick’s eyes and am convinced that this fresh approach will lead to brilliance—*PBarz*

Initially surprised that PBarz chose me, a neuroscience major, to collaborate in a research project on music and reconciliation in Africa, I spent quite a bit of time reading up on the topic of the Rwandan genocide of 1994. I was drawn to the question, “how could this have happened?” Looking now into the scarred Rwandan culture for an answer causes me to ignite a passion in a field that I would have never have expected. In the time I have spent in Rwanda, I have noticed dramatic changes in the way I view humanity and have experienced unimaginable personal growth. Do I have advice at this point in my summer research? Get to know faculty in every academic discipline at Vanderbilt! You never know where it will take you—*Patrick*

I collaborate with students not because they keep me young. No, such experiences further extend my classroom to include my research sites. I sit with young Patrick in the evening and we discuss issues first raised in African Music class that now make better sense “on the ground” in Rwanda, or we work through musical ideas presented while he was a resident in North House. Expanding the boundaries of education at Vanderbilt from classroom, to service site, to House, to Africa makes sense to me. My research benefits from my interactions with students such as Patrick and while such experiences may not keep me young, they certainly keep me on my toes—*PBarz*

I met with Joselyne at UTC slightly after seven. We walked about five minutes to a very cool coffee bar called Shocola for our meeting. She discussed the script and sections of the story that should be added or shifted to help the film flow. During the meeting, I learned a lot about storyboards and editing. I left the meeting feeling good about where we are going with this project and extremely excited to spend tomorrow outside of Kigali getting our most important shots.

Day 16

Friday, May 28, 2010

6:20 a.m., Auberge La Caverne

This morning we woke to an eerie moment. We had set our alarms for 5:30 a.m. to get a jumpstart on this day. The lights in our room came on at 5:29 a.m. Dr. Barz asked how I managed to turn the lights on at the time we were supposed to wake up. I replied that I didn’t and was very concerned that someone else might be hiding in our shower. I slowly opened the door, empty Fanta bottle in hand, to defend myself against any attacker. No one was there, so the lights must have just turned on by sheer coincidence, causing me to look like an idiot.

We now await the arrival of Christian and our driver, Ernest, to head to the South Provinces to film for the day.

10.05 p.m., Auberge La Caverne

Today was an exceptional day for our project. The shooting went flawlessly and hopefully will result in every shot that we wanted from the village.

Sophie was accompanied only by her baby, so the car was not as cramped as we were expecting the day before. Her baby and I became good friends during the car ride over through games of peek-a-boo. The drive, however, was rather hectic. Ernest, our driver, stopped to do some chores on the way out of town, drove on the wrong side of the road most of the way and hit a motorcyclist doing a U turn on an impossibly skinny road. The motorcyclist was OK, thank God, so everything was ok.

After two hours of driving, we made it to the Nyanza province, south of Kigali. When we approached the village, we spotted an old man standing on the side of the road. The grassy landscape adjacent to the paved road immediately dropped off into a steep hill covered in banana trees. Dr. Barz recognized the old man as Mushabizi Vianey, Sophie’s uncle. We immediately began filming with our rented HD DV video camera. Sophie greeted her uncle with a smile, showing him his one-year-old grand-niece and presenting the gift she had purchased the day before. The man wore a striped button up shirt with black khakis and a black full-brimmed hat. He looked older than seventy, and I quickly learned to use the term *muzee*, meaning elder in Kinyarwanda, when addressing the village leader.

We parked the car in the grass and began the steep trek down to the village. Since we wanted some natural shots of Sophie returning to this village, Dr. Barz and I lagged far behind as to not ruin the shot by having the villagers yelling “muzungu” rather than greeting their relative and friend.

I began to feel the style of living before seeing any Rwandans. The land was terraced for farming and all the homes were built from a combination of mud and cow dung. The main types of crops being farmed, that I recognized, were bananas and coffee. Cows and goats stood adjacent to the mud homes, harnessed to the ground by a leash on a driven stake. The cow could easily have escaped her meager constraints, but she didn't seem to mind standing next to the house, as long as there was plenty of grass to eat.

We walked for about a quarter mile down the slope, passing three different traditional Rwandan homes and adjacent farming land before stopping at Sophie's uncle's house. This place, where she had grown up, was considerably larger than the other homes, with Spanish tile roofing rather than thatched straw. In front of the house was an open space with tree cover that appeared to be this village's equivalent of a town square. On one side of the clearing a short wooden bench was perched next to a large oak tree. Two other *muzees* sat on the bench, holding two traditional Rwandan instruments. Mushabizi sat between the two men and grabbed his *inanga*. To his right, the tallest elder, Rusatsi Yerd wore plaid dress pants and a particularly bright green sport coat. He held an *umuduri* in his hand, the same musical bow played by the child Patrick. Dr. Barz later remarked that, including Patrick, he has only seen three *umuduri* players in twenty years of African music research. To Mushabizi's left sat Ayiwanda Godefraid the shortest elder, wearing a vest and holding a small traditional Rwandan thumb piano called an *ikembe*.

The three *muzees* immediately began performing. The sound was surreal. Something about the landscape combined with the presence of the village elders gave the acoustic sound a powerful meaning. Yimmiu and Yerd exchanged verses of deeply sung poetry. It was later explained to Dr. Barz and I that the lyrics for these verses were difficult to translate because they were from the "old language" or a highly poetic style of Kinyarwanda.

The population of the village began to gather, and soon, thirty to forty Rwandans were enjoying the performance with us foreigners. Sophie joined the trio for the next song. I realized that after two weeks of setting up shooting, attending endless meetings and researching on this woman and her music, I had never actually seen a live *inanga* performance. In this setting Sophie powerfully plucked her *inanga's* strings and sung with a strong and steady voice. Seeing this live, I could finally understand why Prof. Barz came to Rwanda with a strong interest in documenting the *inanga*. It is a beautiful instrument with a timbre that perfectly matches the atmosphere of a terraced farming village on a remote hillside. It expresses something about an old Rwanda that I believe should be preserved.

During the second song, one of the younger women in the audience began dancing a traditional African dance, stamping her feet to the music and thrusting her arms in the air. Sophie jumped up and began dancing in step with her friend with a wide smile on her face. This footage was exceptional, and my personal favorite of the day. I later learned, from Dr. Barz, that the dance is imitating a cow, with arms resembling the cow's horns. Cows are extremely important in Rwandan culture and I hope that someday I can own enough cattle to be a respected man in society.

During the next song, Sophie's young nephew (technically cousin, Sophie's uncle has had many wives) joined the group with his smaller *inanga*. We got some footage of Sophie helping her nephew place his fingers on the correct strings before stopping all other music to give him a solo performance. He was an exceptional *inanga* player and singer and I noticed the pride in his father's face as he performed.

We stopped after two more songs and recorded an interview with Sophie's uncle. We asked him questions about his late brother, Sophie and the importance of the *inanga* in this village. I was amazed at his ease around a camera and the hospitality we were being shown by this elder, since the village stops the day's farming work when *Muzungus* come to visit.

We continued the day's filming with the second half of Sophie's interview and some scenic shots for the beginning of the film. Dr. Barz and I were very surprised when Sophie began to act out her answers, dramatically answering with arm movements and changes in speech patterns. I suppose she was finally used to the camera and felt like quite the celebrity in this return home.

As some of these shots were being filmed, Sophie's nephew-cousin gave me a hard, green fruit. I had no idea what it was, and began to attempt to peel it with my finger. After a minute of struggling, the village began laughing in unison, so I took out a key, and bore into the fruit. I failed in an attempt to get some of the orange insides of the fruit into my mouth to the amusement of the village. Eventually, I had enough open that I was able to take one taste of the bitter fruit that I politely discarded.

Our filming concluded with some shots of Sophie's grandmother's house, the smallest of all huts on the hillside village. I noticed the house was full of rabbits; around seven I spotted in the doorway.

Considering that having pets would be pointless in this simple village, I assumed that they were dinner that did not think about running away. Sophie gave us a tour of the hut and informed us that it was the location where she had first learned to play the *inanga*.

The trip back took awhile. We took a long pit-stop to get lunch, after going to two restaurants that did not have food. We were a bit exhausted after the journey back, but we were very pleased that we had gotten a day's worth of footage. We stopped by Rwanda Cinema Center to give Joselyne our footage for storage and editing.

When we got back home we sat down and began to discuss the day's events. Soon Dr. Barz and I were discussing the product that we hoped would be the final result of our efforts this month. I was surprised when Dr. Barz informed me that he has his own record label, *Limepulp Records*, and the production of a DVD and CD combo would cost approximately five thousand dollars to publish. Since we already have enough audio recording for a complete CD, if we returned from this trip with a complete story on DVD, this would not be an impossible goal. Unfortunately, the market for *inanga* music is not strong, and would certainly end in a loss of money. Still Dr. Barz thinks the academic worth of a published product with the title "*Inanga*" is worth the possibility of a slight loss. Plus, if this is produced, it could easily become assigned material in Vanderbilt's African Music class. I am excited about this idea and I expressed my interest in supporting the production of the *Inanga* CD/DVD combination.

This day was especially meaningful for me. It was refreshing to be out of Kigali and getting a glimpse of the typical lifestyle of most Rwandans. I have never been that up-close to poverty in the form of subsistence farming, but after some discussion with Dr. Barz, we Westerners found envy of this simple life. All day these villagers get up and farm their plot of land, eat, then play music at night. They seem to be at a peace that is unreachable by a life muddled with problems.

Especially confusing after today's trip is the question I have contemplated this entire trip, "How could the genocide have happened?" How could these simple and apparently peaceful farmers take up machetes and hunt their neighbors? This area was known especially for brutality, but it seems impossible when looking off into an endless valley and standing on fertile farming land.

Day 17

Saturday, May 29, 2010

2:00 p.m., Bourbon Coffee Shop

This morning I woke up at six thirty to join Christian in location scouting for our shoot tomorrow of the old *inanga* player and cultural historian, Sibomana. We took the early morning venture to a village forty minutes outside of Kigali that appeared as equally remote as Sophie's home village. On the way, we gave a ride to a female police officer headed in the same direction. We dropped her off at the local police station with an extended farewell.

We began driving off road for fifteen minutes before stopping at our proposed shooting location. The views were absolutely breathtaking. The hillsides around us, terraced for farming, were the steepest I'd seen in Rwanda. The surrounding landscape appeared to stretch infinitely with lush valleys. We visited two different traditional Rwandan homes on opposite sides of the valley and decided that the second had the best views for our shots.

As we spoke with the *muzee* that owned the property, all the children of the valley began flocking to the muzungu in their camp, and we were soon followed by an entourage of twenty Rwandan children for the remainder of our scouting venture. The house owner had no problem with us coming to film the following day, but we went to find the chief of the region to ask his permission, to advertise and make certain everything would be set up for filming.

The chief was a fifteen minutes away by car. He was much younger than I expected and was happy we were making a film on Rwandan musical traditions. He even asked if we wanted to come back and film the village in the following week when they were having a presentation for the community that included a traditional Rwandan dance.

On the drive back to Kigali, we stopped by the police station to inform our cop friend that we would be coming back tomorrow. She was happy to hear this and offered to help us if we needed anything when we got back.

When we entered town, Ernest took a wild turn, and began driving the opposite direction. I was not surprised and did not question the driving, having grown accustomed to African transportation. Christian informed me that he had seen police and he could be arrested for driving us. Before jumping out of the car on the whim that Ernest is a convicted felon, I realized that today is service day. One Saturday of every month, Rwanda has a service day that requires the entire country to stop working to perform community service. I think it is a brilliant strategy to bring together the community, but I remain surprised at the severity of punishment for getting caught.

Plans for the rest of the day involve meeting Joselyn to translate our footage from yesterday. There is a lot of material, but Joselyn is considerably better at English and Kinyarwanda than Christian, so it will hopefully move faster.

1:30 a.m., Auberge La Caverne

We met Joselyn in Bourbon around five. We decided not to complete translating when she showed us the footage she had put together from our filming the day before. We realized that translating all of the footage would be a waste of time, since only a small portion of it will be used. Joselyne had cut twenty minutes of usable footage from the hours of footage, which is still probably longer than needed in the final product. Seeing the footage from the rented camera edited was extremely exciting. Seeing the footage materialized a product in my mind. We made a deal with Joselyne to work with us for the next two weeks; she said that she likes the project and would be happy to help. I concluded the evening by going out with Joselyne and some of her friends to dinner and a Rwandan night club. It was nice to get out with peers for a Saturday night.

Day 18

Sunday May 30, 2010

9:47 a.m., Auberge La Caverne

We are up and ready to film Sibomana Athanase, the old *inanga* player. Christian called and said he would pick him up before meeting us. As fully expected, we are lagging behind, but Joselyne is joining us this morning to help with translations and shooting, so the entire process should run more rapidly and smoothly with extra help.

12:30 a.m.; Auberge La Caverne

Today's filming went extremely well. Sibomana was very serious about his music and the traditions of Rwanda and gave us some excellent performance footage and hours of footage on the history and construction of the *inanga*.

Ernest picked us up about ten thirty. We drove from our hotel, the car already full with Dr. Barz, me, Christian and Sibomana to pick up Joselyne at UTC. We squeezed in and began the thirty minute journey out to Buseke village. On the way, we inadvertently entered a Rwandan bicycle race that was underway on the same route to Buseke. Rather than turning our short drive into an all day ordeal, Ernest turned on the car's flashers to pretend that we were supporters of one of the leading riders, before speeding ahead of the entire race to our site.

We arrived at the site and began our trek down to the small hut we had scoped out the day before. We had brought a considerable amount of equipment, but luckily, the village was expecting us. Since it was a Sunday, the town had no work and immediately grabbed our gear to porter down the hillside.

When I arrived at the site, I noticed that it was different. The day before, we had simply asked the house owner if we could film his house and the surrounding landscape for a scenic shot. Today, we saw his courtyard cleared and lined with benches and chairs. The small, brushy area below his house intended for a scenic shot had been completely cleared with grass laid as a carpet in a traditional Rwandan fashion. I was appreciative of the preparation they had accomplished for our visit. We had not asked for the farmers to clear the land and lay natural carpet so the gesture was simply an act of the highest hospitality.

The village began to gather around the filming site. Within fifteen minutes, I counted a crowd of seventy surrounding the small, hilly area. The immense size of the crowd caused difficulties in moving around while shooting and the excess of babies within the crowd was frustrating when attempting to get silence on the set. Still I noticed that Sibomana loved the crowd and fed off of the audience to give an interview like a traditional history teacher for an entire village.

On the ride to the site Sibomana had been dressed in normal street clothes. Before, he had expressed interest in wearing traditional Rwandan attire. I could not fathom what traditional Rwandan attire entailed and was pleasantly surprised when he emerged from the hut after changing with no shirt, a leopard skin cap, and shiny leopard skin skirt. The appearance would be comical if it weren't for his absolute serious nature, with an unchanging look on his face somewhere between pensive and angry.

Judging by the position of the sun, we decided to get two shots of Sibomana in front of the traditional Rwandan hut before having him perform with the background of the spacious Rwandan hillsides. The shooting began with me holding the boom, Christian manning the camera and Joselyne holding a screen to reflect light on the target of the shot. Dr. Barz recorded the whole show with his powerful equipment. Sibomana pulled an unstrung *inanga* out of a large leather bag. The first shot consisted of Sibomana stringing and tuning an *inanga* while lecturing on the basics of the instrument. This shot was exactly what we wanted from the start of this project. I was also happy to find out that the *inanga* he was tuning was the one I would be taking home.

At the completion of the tuning process, we rearranged the set for an interview and history of the *inanga*. We shot more than enough footage of Sibomana answering questions about Sophie, Kirusu Thomas, and the history of the *inanga*. Prof. Barz and I had no idea what he was saying, but Joselyne assured that the answers he gave were perfect for our project.

We concluded the interview and shifted below the small hut. By now, about one hundred villagers of all ages were surrounding this courtyard. While we attempted to move, they made a massive and slow shift below the house to watch the performance. Sibomana is a celebrity in Kigali's surrounding regions, so all the villagers had shown up for a free show. As Christian put it, "can you imagine? This is like Michael Jackson, you know? They have no TV so this is a big star visiting."

When we finally pushed through the crowd and cleared some space, we began setting up a dolly for some moving shots. The dolly was a portable metal track on which a special tripod with wheels can connect and roll. The idea is to get a moving but steady shot, something that would be perfect with the scenic background. The set up was a bit like a camping tent, slow and involving many metal poles. Once it was all set up, it looked like a professional movie set on a mountainside.

Sibomana played three of his own songs. He was a good performer, not as powerful as Sophie, but he kept his audience captivated and, to my surprise, laughing. The village audience burst out laughing on several occasions making me hopeful that Sibomana was using the *inanga* in a new way, creating something different than the old poetry of most *inanga* music. Innovation on old traditions would be an excellent theme to enforce through an old traditional historian.

Before we wrapped up shooting, Sibomana offered to play us an instrumental piece as a gift to us. We obliged and were quite happy to get some pure acoustic work to place in transitional scenes of our film. We wrapped up filming with some extra scenic shots and a shot of the residents of the traditional house. On the way out, the village helped carrying all of our equipment. Per Dr. Barz suggestion, I ran around to get shots of the procession leaving the location with the video feature of the still camera. I was entertained when hordes of children sprinted behind me as I ran across the mountain to get ahead of the departing parade to get a clear shot. It was quite a sight to see a single file line moving for fifteen minutes across a small mountain trail.

We completed the evening by going to dinner with Joselyne and her friend also named Joselyne that goes by Jojo. Jojo is a peer from Rwanda Cinema Center, and today was her 29th birthday. She invited us to her birthday party later in the evening and Dr. Barz and I were happy to attend. The party was a small gathering of friends and family, with a traditional Rwandan meal. I was very grateful of the hospitality we were shown and surprised by the similarity of culture, not in terms of cake and candles, but party games like ten questions or “never have I ever.”

Day 19

Monday May 31, 2010

12: 17 p.m., Auberge La Caverne

After a long day followed by a late night, Dr. Barz and I woke leisurely around ten o’ clock. Unfortunately, my phone had not been charging and I did not receive Christian’s calls at eight in the morning, informing me that he was at our hotel. We met with him and began to discuss the plans for the day.

Christian has expressed interest in interviewing a poet for more information on the traditions of Rwandan culture. I think it is a good idea, but perhaps not completely necessary for this particular project. Still, it would be nice to have the footage, in case it can be beneficial to creating a women empowerment theme in the film. He has been calling three poets to set up a meeting before the Sophie’s appearance on Eric’s (Gibaltar) radio show tonight at Radio 10.

11:04 p.m., Auberge La Caverne

Today culminated in much more useful footage than Dr. Barz or I could have ever imagined. After finishing lunch at the Auberge, Christian, Dr. Barz and I set out to interview a poet that Christian knew and felt would be helpful to our project. He had been calling a certain poet for a week, looking for a meeting, but finally got fed up and called another that was able to meet today. Dr. Barz and I were skeptical, not seeing the direct relation of a poet to the tradition of *inanga* and Sophie, but we hopped on motos anyway.

We got off the road and began driving down a dirt road. I had no idea what part of town we were visiting, only that it was somewhere between Ramera and our hotel. Christian directed us to step off our motos and meet an older man standing on the side of the road. He introduced himself as Augustine, a French teacher, poet, and author of children’s books that worked down the road at a French school.

We walked down the road and discussed our project with Augustine before entering the school grounds. The school grounds had several basketball courts and soccer fields, both areas with many visiting cows and goats. The location with the best light for an interview was under a tree on a hill, overlooking the school grounds.

We set up all the equipment and began the interview. Augustine spoke English and his interview proved to be extremely helpful with our project. Dr. Barz asked questions concerning the history of the *inanga*, Kirusu Thomas, and Sophie before getting a history of Augustine and an oral example of his poetry. He was well acquainted with Kirusu Thomas, and gave some insight into the tradition of the *inanga* in relation to poetry that will be very useful. His biggest contribution was small quotes like “an *inanga* player must be a poet first” and “poets can say what other cannot, because it is art.” His poem, in Kinyarwanda was eloquent and Christian expressed that it was truly brilliant poetry.

After exchanging contact information, we departed the school. Dr. Barz separated from me and Christian to complete some work before meeting us at Radio 10 for Sophie’s interview. Christian and I grabbed motos, stopped at Rwanda Cinema Center for a few equipment items, and then headed to Sophie’s house to get more footage of her home life.

This was my second time to film in Sophie’s residence and I could tell that many of the village children recognized me. Sophie’s baby, after all of our bonding time in the car, now smiled and let me hold her without any fuss. We let some of the children take pictures with my camera, under my supervision. They, yet again, had more fun that I could ever have ever imagined.

We gave Sophie two thousand Rwandan Francs for the supplies to cook and feed her family and her neighbors. This amount of money, equaling about three American dollars was enough to feed eight mouths. I watched as she lit a fire to heat three fires with coals stacked high, one to heat a pot of rice, one of beans, and one of peppers. The sun had set, so cooking was lit by three candles on a chair. The act would have seemed impoverished, but having seen the living conditions of majority of Rwandans outside of the city, I realized Sophie is respectively very well off. I could tell now that living in a house with multiple rooms and plaster walls is a sign of wealth.

The recording began with cooking and concluded with Sophie serving food. The best footage taken, in my opinion, was of her oldest son, Paciance, giving a blessing. When time approached eight fifteen I hailed a cab so we would not be late to the Radio 10 interview at nine. Sophie quickly changed into a shiny blue dress with matching large shawl. When we boarded a taxi, a boy that looked about my age joined us in the cab. He introduced himself as Daniel an *inanga* player that would be accompanying Sophie in the studio.

When we arrived at Radio 10, Eric (Gibraltar) met us out front with a smile. He led us to the studio on the fifth floor of a nice office building where we met Dr. Barz. With only ten minutes until air time, we scrambled in the small studio to set up recording equipment and lighting. The studio was small by U.S. recording studio standards, but we found enough room for all us to be in the room for the show. We went on air seconds after the camera and lighting were placed in the correct positions. Eric (Gibraltar) was joined on the air by another radio announcer with a scratchy, low voice that perfectly accented Eric’s rapid, higher pitched radio personality. Together, they had exceptional rapport. Though I didn’t understand a word they were saying, I could tell that the recordings we were getting would be perfect for our film.

Sophie played three songs with Daniel during the course of the hour long program. At one point, Daniel played a solo song. Dr. Barz and I were very pleased to finally get clear audio recordings in a sound proof studio without crying babies or mooing cows.

The session ended and we slowly packed up. Dr. Barz and I were both very impressed with Daniel's *inanga* playing and were surprised that no one had introduced us to this young player. Dr. Barz began to talk to him in limited Swahili to get his story and contact information. We were both ecstatic when he said that he was a student of Sophie's and that he would be interested in giving us lessons on the *inanga*. If Sophie's student was an accomplished *inanga* player, then the theme of passing down traditions we hoped to display in the documentary could be effectively demonstrated. We discussed with Sophie about her plans to teach at the Kigali music school the following afternoon at five. She said she would be teaching two students, one being Daniel. Having footage of a student of Sophie's both being taught and performing on the air would be excellent for the conclusion of the documentary.

On the way out, the owner of the Studio introduced himself and asked if Dr. Barz and I would be guests on his radio show about cinematic production this Saturday. We said we would be happy to share our work with the public, even if we would speak in English.

We concluded the evening with a meal at the Auberge. Dr. Barz and I discussed this new break with a student and I suggested that we should get an interview of him to get a student's opinion of a teacher and an even younger generation's voice. The idea stuck, and we looked forward to revising the script in addition to filming the music school tomorrow.

Today was a great day for the progress of our film. We not only got excellent recordings from the radio show and Sophie's home, but we were pleasantly surprised by a student of Sophie and a knowledgeable poet.

Day 20

Tuesday, June 1, 2010

12:50, Blues Café

This morning Dr. Barz and I awoke at nine to revise our script based on shots we have filmed and advice from my meeting with Joselyne last week. The process was collaborative, filling in the gaps with Augustine the poet and rewording the title. Surprisingly, the title took some of the most thought and creativity. Dr. Barz expressed interest in having a title that encompassed Rwanda, traditions, *inanga*, Sophie, and Kirusu Thomas. Avoiding a paragraph long title, we landed on *Inanga: The Touch of a Father* with the subtitle *Music and Traditions in Post-Genocide Rwanda*.

We realized that we have an open day tomorrow before our last day of filming on Thursday, so we made a plan to visit two genocide memorials outside of Kigali. We planned to take a bus and to get out of town to the smaller villages of Ntarama and Nyamata.

Having completed the morning's work, we now set off to shop at the Caplaca market, a bargaining market perfect for souvenirs and gifts.

4:34 p.m., Auberge La Caverne

Our motos pulled up to Caplaca market around noon. The market appeared small, but stretched through a back hallway lined with shops. Overall, the market boasted forty small shops, each overflowing with African gifts, art, and clothes.

Each shop contained basically the same items, with some variation. Some of the most common items in every shop were wooden statues, soapstone carvings from Kenya, and traditional Rwandan baskets. My first impression, having shopped in bargaining markets in Italy, Peru and Mexico, was the vast difference in the goods. Most of these crafts were not mass-manufactured and appeared to be good quality. Rather than ask myself if each item will fall apart in a few months, I was finding myself impressed with ebony wood for a great price.

We left the market weighed down heavily by souvenirs for friends and family. We are about to head to Kigali Music School to film a lesson of Sophie and her student Daniel.

10:30 p.m.

Dr. Barz and I approached the school at five and greeted Christian, Sophie, and Daniel. The light was starting to diminish, so we worked quickly. Christian shot Sophie staring in at Daniel for a slow scanning shot with which we hope to end the film. Slightly fake, it was still a nice shot and effectively shows what we need with the theme of passing traditions to younger generations.

The rest of the filming went with as little intervention as possible. The sound recordings were fantastic with slightly any outside noise. Dr. Barz and I discussed the possibility of one track of the audio CD being this lesson with hopeful aspirations. Daniel was an excellent player, and we were more than pleased when he agreed to give us lessons on the *inanga* the following day at four.

We left the school happy about our shots and headed to Sun and Moon restaurant for pizza. I had made the connection after eating at Sun and Moon that it and our favorite pizza restaurant, Sole Luna, had the same name in different languages. I realized the menu was the same, and we both found out that the restaurant was owned by the same person as Sole Luna. Through the restaurants, I have fallen in love with anchovies; probably the last thing I would think would have happened in Africa.

Joselyne met us towards the end of dinner to show us some of the shots from Sunday and to discuss our updated script. We locked her in to our plans of creating a DVD/CD set, and she said that the following week she was free and would be able to, most likely, create a thirty minutes film from the footage we already have. We have discussed different lengths of film, and under an hour seems to be the best fit.

Day 21

Wednesday, June 02, 2010

8:42 a.m.; Bourbon Coffee Shop

I woke this morning at seven to meet Joselyne at Bourbon to give her all of our new footage with the camera. Today is a very good morning. I have taken on the side project of getting pictures of all of the pimped out busses from Nyamirambo. It began when I took a picture of two busses pimped out with Lil Wayne paint and graphics. I thought it may have been just one crazy bus driver, but soon saw the pimped out Kanye, Rick Ross, and Rhianna busses. Obviously this is a common appearance for busses in the Nyamirambo district of Kigali. Now, I have made it my personal mission to get pictures of all the busses in the city with American pop star graphics. But, in my ventures, one bus has eluded me. I have seen it three times and have never had my camera on hand.

This morning on my way to the meeting I had my camera at the ready when the big purple beast rounded a corner behind me. With a few snaps I had done it, I had finally captured the Kobe Bryant bus. My picture album and life are now complete.

We plan to visit two genocide memorials this morning, one in Ntarama and one in Nyamata. Dr. Barz told me to prepare for the most intense memorials in the country. The one here in Kigali is mass produced, while in the country the bodies are preserved as they were when the Rwandans fell to machete blades. It should be an intense experience, and one that I feel is good for me to fight the complacency I am beginning to find with Rwanda.

Prof. Barz also wrote a nice article called "The Tale of Two Patrick's" for Vanderbilt's Commons website. The article concerns the little boy Patrick we had met last week and me. Here is the article copied:

Reading *Three Cups of Tea* in Rwanda

Gregory Barz, Faculty Head of North House

Welcome to The Commons! I greet you from Central Africa where I conduct the majority of my field research these days. I am a medical ethnomusicologist at Vanderbilt and have focused much of my time the past few years on issues related to music and health (HIV/AIDS in Uganda and the genocide in Rwanda). I have been working in Rwanda this past month on a film and recording project related to the musical instrument called the *inanga*. I came to work with an elderly *inanga* player named Kirusu Thomas, one of the last players known to have been associated with the royal court of the former *mwami*, the king. Imagine my disappointment as I found out upon my arrival last month that Kirusu had died only weeks before I arrived. Flexibility! I have adjusted my research agenda to focus on Kirusu's daughter Sofia who now stands as one of the strongest voices of traditional music and culture in contemporary Rwandan society.

I choose to share with you ways in which I am challenged by Greg Mortenson, ways in which I am both moved and called to action. And I look forward to creating further dialogues centering on any and all of these issues once you arrive in your new home—The Commons at Vanderbilt University. Even if you do not end up living in North House (a very special home to a very special group of residents), I will welcome you into our conversations. Mark my words. North House Rocks! I begin with a blog entry.

Blog Entry No. 1—"A Tale of Two Patricks"

Kigali: A City of Survival

It seemed silly at first to pack Greg Mortenson's book in my carry-on bag rather than my luggage as I headed out the door to catch my Brussels Air flight to Rwanda. Shouldn't I instead be spending time with NGO reports, grant applications, and the book proposals of colleagues? With apologies to *Reading Lolita in Tehran*, I wondered if "I" would read *Three Cups* differently the 2nd time (or is it now the 4th?) in Africa than in Nashville. That question alone motivated me to give it pride of place in the outside pocket of my bulging equipment bag. As I settled into my long first flight to Brussels I began to make tick marks on the inside cover of the book, unconsciously counting the number of research trips I have taken to Africa, both short- and long-term. What started as a single, hesitant mark surprised me as I tallied the number—16. I hefted Mortenson's book and began to wonder what difference "I" have made in all of this effort. What possible effect have I had on the people of Africa? None likely. What changes have resulted from the results of my field research? Was change even an expected deliverable? What I was confident in, however, was acknowledging the effects that Africa and African communities and individuals have had on *me*.

This, my first blog entry on *Three Cups of Tea*, is a tale of two Patricks—one from Vanderbilt, the other from Rwanda. Both have affected how I (re-)read *Three Cups* and why I continue to engage the book's central issues.

Young Patrick

As Young Patrick McGovern and I plan our research agenda for the day in Kigali I ask if he is yet comfortable venturing out on his own on tasks in the busy streets of the capital city. Patrick, a Vanderbilt sophomore and former North House resident in The Commons (and one of my strongest students in class), shrugs off the importance of my question. Yet he takes a deep breath as he steels himself before heading off. He searches for an elite music school in Rwanda's capital city that can only be accessed by making his way through one of the city's poorest areas, ironically a network of interlocking schoolyards. The geography and political climate of Rwanda allow for a variety of such educational settings. Schools have infrequent walls, holes for windows, missing teachers, hordes of students, and frequent lapses of electricity, yet all have a football pitch in regular use. Young Patrick kicks a soccer ball crudely constructed from plastic bags wrapped with string back to a group of young primary school students as they continue with the intensity of the visiting team from the Congo. Patrick looks around and notes the intensity with which the children seize their school activities. He sees missed opportunities. He responds to the English greetings of passing students as they adopt a national shift away from the former French language. At the end of the day Young Patrick and I chat about local vs. global educational disparities and my mind drifts back to the end-of-year activities at the private school attended by my own children back in the States. We discuss the gift of education? I challenge the usage of the term "gift" in regards to education. Is education really a gift? A privilege? Or, might there also be a way we could understand education as a basic human right? Chatting through these issues with Young Patrick helped me understand my own position on education in a variety of global contexts. I am not as confident as I once was of that position. I knew that I would be drawn back to Mortenson in the evening...

Younger Patrick

Christian Gakombi, a Rwandan research colleague, comes down from the Kigali city centre to find me at my *auberge* accompanied by a young street musician who plays the *amaduri*, a traditional one-string, struck bow found in several East African countries. When I ask the young man his name he responds, "Patrick." *Younger* Patrick is 10 years old—in fact the same age as my daughter—yet he is quite small for his age. I ask him about his musical instrument and he tells me that he goes about town after his long day at school in order to make a little bit of money to feed his brothers and sisters. A child-reared family. Younger Patrick was trying to stay in school, trying to take care of the needs of his siblings, and reaching out in the only way he could, through a traditional musical instrument that maintained the historical memory, the historical stories and roots of the Rwandan culture. I asked if this young man would play his *amaduri* for me and he launched into a strong performance of an historic folk tale. My mind wandered as younger Patrick sang and played. I found it somewhat ironic that he would leave one "school" behind, change clothes, and then participate in another "school," one containing the traditional history books of a culture. My mind didn't linger long on such intellectual machinations, however. I had a young boy in front of me who was working for his dinner, and the dinner of his brothers and sisters. I filled his hand with coins. He neither smiled nor thanked me, but instead walked away with all the troubles of a 30-year-old, tightly clutching his sagging pocket full of Rwandan francs as if in fear of losing the coins. OK, I remained squatting on my heels for quite some time, in the position I adopted for talking with him and saying farewell. I did not know what I was supposed to do with this interaction, how to recover. The musical performance, its strength and conviction, impressed me. The fact that younger Patrick was committed to both his institutional education and his traditional cultural education impressed me. The need for this boy to hit the streets with his *amaduri* in order to put some rice on the table for his brothers and sisters impressed me. So...I remain full of *impressions*.

5:22 p.m., Auberge La Caverne

We have just finished a lesson with Daniel. He taught me a small lick before spending most of the time tuning our *inangas*, adding a bridge from small sticks to create a more accurate pentatonic sound. Dr. Barz decided that the best use of time was to record him playing a few easier jams that we could watch and practice later.

The memorials were, as expected, an intense experience. Dr. Barz and I met our driver outside of the Auberge at 10 a.m. He introduced himself as Bosco, and agreed to drive us to both memorial sites for a very good price. The driver had been a personal request of Eric, the manager of the Auberge.

We drove into a countryside I had not yet explored. The hilly geography changed to vast swamps, an area known to be the site of some of the worst massacres in 1994. The region surrounding Nyamata was known to be heavily populated with Tutsis before the genocide, from an order by the Hutu government in the 1970s displacing Tutsis in the seemingly inhabitable geography. Still, the Tutsis thrived in the swampy region. Before the genocide, the area was fifty percent Hutu and fifty percent Tutsi. After 1994, there were less than five percent Tutsi.

I had read about the horrors of the swamps, of Tutsis hiding for days in the mud, hoping not to get found by the militia that combed the region day and night. Many had died in these muddy waters, but not as many as in the two sites we were about to visit.

We entered Ntarama around eleven. The memorial site was inside a brick wall with purple ribbons strung from three brick buildings. I soon realized that the purple laced ribbons were the sign of a memorial site and the ground we viewed was a church. A nice woman greeted us and took around the site.

The first building we visited was the main sanctuary of these church grounds. Our guide explained that within these small brick walls, five thousand Tutsis had been killed. In conflicts past, churches had been a refuge for fleeing Tutsis; a sacred place that the Hutus would not dare to spill blood. In April, 1994, all humanity left Rwanda and churches became the sites of the worst massacres. In this place, five thousand Tutsis were inside the small space when militia began throwing grenades in through the windows, blowing holes inside the church allowing machete-wielding Hutus to enter and begin “the day’s work” as it was called by the Hutus that month. A large metal rack held hundreds of skulls with accompanying pelvic bones and femurs on adjacent racks. The cloths of the victims were hung on the walls, torn to tatters, an eerie reminder of the work of the machete. Coffins full of bones lay near the altar, closed and draped in the ceremonial purple and white.

The next building on the grounds was the Sunday school building the site of the massacre of hundreds of children. The bones had been cleared from the room, but a dark stain remained on the wall. The guide told us that the stain was from throwing babies against the wall. I approached the wall and examined the permanent reminder of the deepest sickness of humans. In my time here, this was the only thing that turned my stomach.

I went outside into the burning sunshine. Gardens over mass graves had bright flowers vibrantly in bloom. A stone wall with the engraved names of the deceased stood next to the gardens, another reminder of the shadow of darkness masked by beauty.

We signed the guestbook and made our way to Nyamata, the site of a famous church massacre of 10,000 and the burial ground for 45,000. This site has been featured in several movies and books, and was the site one of the most concentrated mass killings in 1994.

The car approached the church after a short ten-minute drive. The church had a large sanctuary with mass graves and catacombs in behind the main building. We entered, telling the attendant that we did not need a guide.

Every pew and wall was covered in the dirty, tattered clothes of the deceased. Looking at the mountains of clothes sewn with dark memories, I could see the ten thousand bodies piled here less than 16 years earlier. I saw the alter that was notorious for being the site of rapes, just so the Hutu killers could ask Tutsi women if they still believed there was god. A Virgin Mary statue overlooked the pews. She had her hands together in prayer with a gaze down at the sanctuary. I imagined the scene that has passed in view of this statue before I headed down steps in the center of the sanctuary before the altar.

I stepped down the white tiles and into a room filled with bones in a suspended glass case. I examined them, looking intently at the writing on just one of the skulls. It was the only writing I had seen on any bones and it still remains burned in my memory.

I then walked into the back of the church. Dr. Barz stood outside giant mass graves. “Unfortunately, you need to go down there.” I stepped down into the ground and felt the cold air and smelled the overpowering musk of dirt.

To my left and right were long hallways with shelves and shelves of skulls and bones. These two hallways, with matching graves behind it contained 45,000 bodies. I looked around taking photographs of the dim light illuminating the ghastly reminder of the darkness of humanity. I have never been claustrophobic, but down in the tomb I had a moment of fright, as if all the skulls were looking at me, reminding me of what had happened here.

We left and drove home without a word. Both Dr. Barz and I took a rest before our *inanga* lesson with Daniel. The experience was somehow much more real than the Kigali memorial and much more haunting.

As I finish this third week, I am glad to have given a reminder of the genocide. It is strange; I cannot believe that three weeks have taken place. In the terms of work, the first week was adjustment and thought, second week was logistics and meetings, and this past week has been filming. Of all weeks, this has been the busiest and has flown by the fastest. We will wake tomorrow to film Pierre’s interview and Meddy hopefully completing filming and starting to make a product.

I knew that I had grown complacent of this place and stopped asking myself about the questions of evil here. I had settled on the fact that humanity is inherently both good and evil, and a variety of factors, including mob mentality can cause people to become monsters. But I see good people here like Joselyne that lived in Kigali as a six year old in 1994. Her demeanor, positive and mature, sends me questioning this country again. Deep scars are everywhere and any person over the age of 16 has a story from 1994.

I am grateful to have been shaken again by the memorials. The skulls gave me a strange feeling. I have been to catacombs before and seen volumes of the dead, but this was different. Every bone in those dark corridors belonged to a victim of murder.

I cannot help but remind myself of the accident of birth and young Patrick the *umuduri* player after looking into that one glass case and read the only word I had seen all day. The word, carved deep into the skull sent a cold shiver down my spine:

Patrice

Day 22

4:56 p.m., Hotel Impala

I write now while waiting for the pop star subject of our interview this afternoon, Meddy to arrive for an interview. Today, I have become frustrated with “Africa time” because it has made a trip out to a lake for some scenic shots we need impossible, because the sun has begun to set. We had to cancel a driver and lose important shots. The morning’s shootings went very well. Prof. Barz and I woke up at eight in the morning to grab some coffee at Bourbon before getting to Rwanda Cinema Center at ten. We arrived at the center and were greeted by Pierre, Joselyne, and Christian. Dr. Barz and I began to set up the shot of Pierre with Christian and Joselyne. The two shots we needed from Pierre were a shot of him sitting at his desk, listening to Sophie’s music for transition and an outdoor interview with him discussing the importance of traditional Rwandan culture and Sophie’s role in maintaining the traditions of Rwanda.

During the shoot I was the grip, or holder of the giant boom. The outdoor interview went extremely well. With Dr. Barz guidance, Joselyne asked Pierre two simple questions, “talk about Sophie” and “talk about traditions in Rwanda” with the hopes that he would cover the topics that we would want to cover in English. Dr. Barz and I were especially excited when Pierre began to discuss the Rwandan identity and the importance of music in maintaining a culture’s identity.

We left the shoot pleased, but disappointed by the rain clouds quickly approaching. Dr. Barz left Rwanda Cinema Center to do some work, saying he would meet us at three for Meddy’s interview. Unfortunately, the rain made outdoor shooting impossible for the time, so we hoped it would let up by four so we could head out to get scenic shots (now impossible because of Meddy’s Africa time).

Today is Joselyne’s 23rd birthday and her friends, Jojo and Fiona, have planned a surprise party for her tonight at eight. I will hopefully be in attendance, but Prof. Barz has just set a meeting tomorrow morning with a man named Ayuub to complete Kinyarwanda transcriptions and English translations for our audio CD. Ayuub is a professional man around Dr. Barz’s age that was recommended by Pierre to be excellent with language and translations. With the meeting being tomorrow morning, it means that a very rough draft of the tracks we want for an audio CD titled “Inanga” needs to be completed tonight.

1:30 a.m., Auberge La Caverne

I have just returned from Joselyne's surprise birthday party. Because Joselyne is a hard worker, her friends had her surprise party at Rwanda Cinema Center, where she remained working until 10 p.m. Before returning to Rwanda Cinema Center, we completed the Meddy interview. He arrived at 5:30 with the interview lasting a quick thirty minutes.

Meddy apologized for his tardiness, blaming the rain causing his driver to not show up for hours. My frustration with Africa time dissipated and I shook Meddy's hand, thanking him for doing our interview. We explained what we wanted for his interview and he asked if he could do the interview in French. Dr. Barz and I would have preferred English, to help out the English speaking audiences in America that will view the film, but we conceded, with the assumption that it would help get much more clear answers from the rising pop star. The location we had chosen has an excellent backdrop. The hotel had some of the best interior design and art I have seen in Kigali, an amazing feat considering some of the modern restaurants around this city. The set up looked classy but casual, the perfect set up for Meddy's interview.

With Joselyne relaying in French, Meddy answered our questions and more. He interviewed for about twenty minutes, and we trusted Joselyne's decision that he had addressed everything we needed for our film. Directly after, Joselyne asked another question in French and Meddy burst into song. I was impressed. The guy can sing; a feat that is refreshing given the false talent of some American pop stars.

We said goodbye to Meddy after grabbing a few pictures. I hailed a cab as Dr. Barz headed back to the Auberge to begin sifting through hours of audio to find a set of tracks. Christian, Joselyne, and I arrived at Rwanda Cinema Center around 7 p.m. where I watched Joselyne work and watched movies until her surprise at ten. I was on the distraction committee for the surprise and can honestly say that she had no idea.

The party was very similar to Joselyne's with traditional Rwandan food, games, and dancing. It was nice, but I wanted to get back to the Auberge to help Dr. Barz with the CD for part of the night, but it began to rain, halting most motos that would come to this part of town. Also, by the time dinner was over, it was midnight, stopping most Rwandan transportation. I eventually got a ride into town from a moto and took a wet ride back in the rain.

Today was a long day, but culminated in the completion of filming. It is a good feeling to make the shift into post-production. It is also a relief that the massive headache of simply dealing with setting up some of the shots is completed. I found immense satisfaction during shooting and set ups, but with this culture, and our cameraman, there seemed to be problems with just about everything related to filming. The project coming to a close feels great. We accomplished something great here that will be hopefully be published in the fall. With another week of work, getting translations, and Joselyne's superior editing and work ethic, we should leave with an almost completed product needing only design and some sound editing to complete.

Dr. Barz also asked me over dinner last night if I wanted to make an academic contribution to the film. I said I would love to share this journal in any form, but he did not seem interested (probably because I haven't shared this journal with him yet). He specifically asked if I would be interested in writing an academic article about the *inanga*, its history, role in cultures, etc. for the booklet in our completed package. I of course was more than willing to contribute this piece to this project, especially if it means that I will have a published article in addition to being an associate producer of a film and audio CD.

Our schedules are open for the rest of our time, so we hope to help out Joselyne as much as possible and explore around Rwanda for anything that could help us with this project or simply be interesting for academic interests, such as finding some Twa.

Day 23**Friday, June 4, 2010****3:32 p.m., Shokola Restaurant and Coffee Bar**

I awoke this morning late after getting back from Joselyne's birthday party late last evening. Dr. Barz had already headed out earlier in the morning to deliver the audio CD to Ayuub to complete the transcriptions and translations of the selected audio tracks. I felt bad that I was unable to get back in time to help Dr. Barz with picking the audio tracks, but the rain last night got the best of the moto drivers.

When Dr. Barz came back to the Auberge, he gave me his computer to listen to the audio tracks he had selected for translation and the completed CD for production. I listened and took notes of time that many of the tracks that could be truncated or combined. The ideal length for the recording we hope to produce is about seventy minutes, and the total play time now is over ninety minutes.

The tracks surprised me with their quality. Dr. Barz completed all the recordings on a small, hand-held recording device from the company ZOOM. The device has two microphone heads pointed in different directions and a special wind-cutting device called a redhead covering the microphones to get more clear recordings. Dr. Barz usually places the device a considerable distance from performances. I was skeptical, but the recorders are extremely powerful and picked up some incredible tracks.

The CD contained four tracks from the radio interview, five from Sibomana, three from Sophie last year, one from Kirusu Thomas, and seven from the village venture. My favorite tracks were from the village. Often a cow would moo or a baby would cry during recording, making me wince about the quality of the recording when it was live. However, listening back, extra sounds of the village greatly add to the aesthetic of the sound. There is much more to discuss past my notes, but I hope to be highly involved in the production of the audio CD.

After taking some notes for discussion later tonight, Dr. Barz and I mused about our light day. Having completed filming yesterday, today is a day of discussion with nothing on our schedules. All we do now is wait for Joselyne to complete the editing process and hopefully we will have time to add any additional thoughts.

For the day, we decided to attempt to locate the Twa group in Kigali called "Dancing Pots." After lunch, we headed to the supposed location on our city map, but had no luck. We asked a receptionist at a local hotel and she informed us that it had moved. Like the Ethiopian restaurant, the Twa have evaded us. We decided to stop at Shokola, our new favorite place that has the most artistic landscape of any coffee bar or restaurant I have seen in Kigali. Tonight we plan to go over the audio and eat some of Kigali's famous Chinese food.

Day 24**Saturday, June 05, 2010****12:13 a.m., Auberge La Caverne**

For the afternoon, I ran a few simple errands for our project that Dr. Barz and I thought might be useful. First, I revisited the Kigali Genocide Memorial. I had remembered several great quotes displayed in the memorial's exhibits that I thought would be an interesting addition to the design of the case of our final project. Cameras are not allowed inside the memorial, so I took a notebook to write down the quotes. My favorite of the four quotes I transcribed read:

There will be no humanity
Without forgiveness
There will be no forgiveness
Without justice

But justice will be impossible
Without humanity
-Yolande Mukagasana

I left the museum after taking a few more pictures of the stunning landscape surrounding the mass graves containing over 50,000 dead Rwandans. I hopped on a moto and joined Joselyn, Jojo, and Fiona at Simba Mart, a supermarket and café in the center of town.

I had a fantastic coffee and samosa before leaving to complete a few more chores with Joselyne. First, I went out to find a good African shirt, something that has eluded me this trip. At most of the markets, the shirts are gaudy and touristy with vibrant African colors but also a giant picture of an elephant or giraffe, something that an African would never wear. Having Joselyne help me locate a shirt was very helpful and she led me to a small market that had a perfect shirt for me and a perfect traditional African dress and head dress for Sarah, my girlfriend.

After shopping, we headed to Nyamirambo, the Muslim district and Joselyne's home. Dr. Barz had asked if I could return to the shop at which we purchased Meddy's CD and stock up on as much Rwandan pop music as possible. Rather than going to this shop, Joselyne led me to a production studio hidden on the second floor of a large building adjacent to Kigali's only movie theatre. We entered a dark room lit only by neon string lights. We greeted a few Rwandans sitting in chairs and Joselyne asked for a man named Omar. After a few minutes, Omar came out and greeted us. He was a nice man that looked in his mid twenties that spoke good English. Joselyne said that he works as a sound engineer and is used by Rwanda Cinema Center for sound production. He said that he had produced many of Rwanda's popular artists, such as Diplomat, a rapper that sounds much like Snoop Dogg but raps about politics. He said he would be happy to make a MP3 CD with hundreds of Rwanda's top popular artists for only 10,000 rwf. I agreed, and planned a return to the studio tomorrow to pick up the CD.

During this conversation, I thought about our project, and how Dr. Barz was at our hotel cutting and editing our audio to be prepared for sound equalization by a sound engineer. I took the opportunity and told Omar that we would return the next day with cuts of our tracks and see if he could help with our production. Using a Rwandan sound engineer will not only save us money, but will create a more authentic Rwandan product. He said he would be happy to give it a listen and took me on a tour of the production studio. I met other producers and musicians and the studio looked very legit. I informed Dr. Barz and he was happy to talk business tomorrow with Omar, and use him if the price is right.

I arrived back at the Auberge at about midnight. Dr. Barz had made a new hotel neighbor friend named Constantine. He was from Germany, and was a very polite and interesting fellow. He expressed interest in joining Dr. Barz and I tomorrow with CD production, meeting a sound engineer, and going out to take scenic shots. Today was great day with another excellent surprise with Omar the sound engineer. If he does good work and Joselyne completes the editing process, we could leave with two solid products, very near production quality. Post-production is nice and finding a connection on my own was another small victory as a producer. Life is good.

Day 25

Sunday June 06, 2010

11:13 a.m., Auberge La Caverne

This morning I woke at nine to do some work with Dr. Barz before meeting Omar, the sound engineer, at noon. Dr. Barz has produced a rough cut of the audio CD to give to Omar to see if there is anything he could do to equalize the sound. I spent the morning going over the audio clips from Augustine the poet and transcribing any quotes that seemed particularly interesting and could be used when designing the cover art and booklet in the finished product. I am hopeful that Omar will be able to help us, but again the price needs to be negotiated.

It is amazing that we have entered our last week in Rwanda. One week from now, we will be packed and ready to head to the airport. I hope this last week proves to be helpful in finalizing key pieces to this project.

10:18 p.m.; Auberge La Caverne

The meeting with Omar went very well. We approached the recording studio, called Line Up Records at noon. The place looked different with the daylight, not quite as shady as the night before. I recognized Omar and introduced him to Dr. Barz before we all entered the back studio.

Dr. Barz gave Omar a copy of *Singing for Life: AIDS and Music in Uganda*, his CD that was nominated for a Grammy. Omar was excited to work with a producer from America, shown by his repeated statements about getting his studio some press overseas. He called his producer that would be able to mix our tracks. I realized that Omar was the studio owner and businessman and the other men occupying the small studio space were the producers and engineers. Omar's producer arrived and Dr. Barz gave him our rough cut tracks. The CD was a total of 73 minutes with 22 tracks. The tracks all came from different locations, a radio station, a village outdoors, or a small classroom, but they all needed to sound together in the same CD. This is called equalizing and mastering, the final steps to completing an audio CD. He took the tracks and said he would look them over, with our notes, to see if it was possible for him to complete the equalizing and mastering in a week.

We noticed that the studio was producing many rappers, and Dr. Barz asked Omar if he thought it would be possible to produce a track that could combine the traditional sound of the inanga with some rap beats and rhymes to have a track on our CD. A melding of new and old would help to enforce one of the general themes of our project, the importance of maintaining traditions in newer generations. He said it wouldn't be a problem and something he would enjoy completing. We headed out of the studio with Omar promising to call with a quote for pricing once his producer got a feel for the amount of work that the recording would need to be mastered.

The rest of the afternoon, I spent meeting with Joselyne and driving out to Lake Muhazi, to get some scenic shots that she felt would be helpful in bridging some of the gaps in our film. She said the lake was forty five minutes away, but after an hour with a driver that drove like a very frightened bat out of hell, I felt that we were on quite a journey. We finally arrived when the sun was setting at six. The filming went well with perfect and beautiful lighting of a setting sun over a vast Rwandan lake.

Joselyne and I visited two different sites on the lake for shooting, one a beach bar and one a hotel. Both looked like great locations for a relaxing time. While snapping pictures, I met a group of Rwandans that began to joke with me in English. One was a dentist that had gone to Arizona State and another was the owner of our hotel, the Auberge La Caverne. I realized that our good friend, Eric, is the manager rather than owner of my beloved second home, so I recommended he get a raise from his rather drunk boss on the lake.

We made it back to our hotel to meet Dr. Barz with our new friend Constantine. Joselyne left to continue editing so we took the walk to dinner. On the way, Dr. Barz received a call from Omar's producer saying he could complete the mastering of our CD in three days. We were pleased, this was a short time, and we assumed a price that was fair for a few days of labor from a producer that was not professionally trained. Unfortunately, Omar got on the phone and quoted much more for the work. Dr. Barz raised an offer to counter, and they finally agreed on the project.

This is a problem that we have run into many times here. Since we are making a film, everyone assumes we are on a huge budget from a company in America, rather than academics paying out of pocket to make a product to preserve a dying aspect of Rwandan culture. Still, no matter how hard we try, many Rwandans simply do not understand our mission and assume that the white man is attempting to exploit them. This country still has some issues with trusting people and for good reason. The world abandoned them during the genocide then pried into their lives to get the horrible stories into books and movies for profit. For example, Dr. Barz and I watched

As We Forgive several nights ago. The movie is a short documentary about forgiveness in post-genocide Rwanda. I could have watched the movie before I came here and thought it was nice picture that told a few nice stories about victims forgiving the men that killed their families. After three weeks here, I found the film partially offensive, because it took an issue as impossibly difficult as forgiveness for genocide and gave it a simple answer. Just forgive! It frees your heart and the heavy heart of the killer. You cannot walk around with hate, let it all go and everything will be perfect. Right?

My reaction is cynical and single minded, I will admit. I do believe in forgiveness and I hope that all Rwandans can find peace. But post 1994 Rwanda is not as simple as forgiveness. Genocide is complicated and has no solution. The only prevention is time to recover economically such that a solid infrastructure can form, complete with a corruption-free government. I saw in this film, and many other reactions, Rwandans preaching forgiveness, which is not only completely right, it is also commendable. What I felt was not right was the apparently forced meetings of killers and victims children or siblings for the sake of an interesting and powerful film. Perhaps Rwanda has every reason not to trust white men making films, so I cannot blame some of the Rwandan that have demonstrated money issues with us.

Day 26

Monday, June 7, 2010

11:59 a.m., Bourbon Coffee shop

Dr. Barz and I got up at 10:00 this morning. He expressed a need to relax today, and detox from pushing everything into post-production. Over coffee, he told me that the audio CD was being mixed with a negotiated price. I was pleased, but knew Dr. Barz once expressed he was tired of difficult relationships being easily broken by money. I generally understand, but sometimes have to respectfully disagree, because of people like Pierre and Joselyne. In the car out to the lake yesterday, Joselyne told me that sometimes she doesn't get paid for working a job because she hates discussing money.

Today we plan to hunt down an ATM because we are out of money. This could be Dr. Barz primary source of frustration, having given and given so much while not getting anything in return. I feel that once we leave with some good products, however, it will make all of this frustration worth the momentary and monetary headaches.

10:05 p.m., Auberge La Caverne

At three this afternoon we called Joselyne to catch up and see how editing was going. She told us it was going very well, but she still did not have the Meddy footage. Christian had misplaced the footage from Thursday, leaving us without Meddy in our film. I tried to conceal this news from Dr. Barz who was already stressed from having to extend our non-existent budget. I eventually told him and told him not to worry and I would take care of it. I called Christian and thankfully he told me that he was setting up an interview with Meddy again today at four. I told Dr. Barz to stay home, not to worry, and I hopped on a moto to the Rwanda Cinema Center.

I arrived at Rwanda Cinema Center to meet our friend and colleague. I took the advice of Joselyne and kept calm and quiet. Christian took some time to apologize and explained that he would rent the equipment and set everything up for the Meddy interview. I waited patiently, happy that we would recover the interview. The car was packed with all video equipment, me, Christian, and two of his film students by five.

We arrived at a popular radio station. The complex was in an area deep in Ramera that I had not visited before. A heavily armed guard let us in through a large metal gate and we entered the beautiful landscape of trees with an artsy radio megaplex. Out front a group of eight Rwandans sat, sporting clothing like popular recording artists. A taxi carrying Meddy pulled up five minutes after we arrived. Today, he sported a striped yellow shirt with collar popped as far as possible. He wore a matching trucker hat complete with metal plaque on the front. We exchanged greeting again and I thanked him for re-doing the interview. He asked me what happened, so I explained that the first interview tape had been misplaced. Meddy replied with an understanding "Oh, I'm sorry. OK let's do it again." Dr. Barz and I mused over an equivalent scenario in the United States with Akon, appreciative at the understanding Rwandan star.

We moved behind the studio and set up the tripod and camera. Christian had manned up and rented the nice camera out of his own pocket to apologize for losing the tape. Today, Christian decided to shoot Meddy while standing outdoors. The shot was still good and we had plenty of light, so I set up the sound equipment and looked down at my list of questions. Today, I would ask Meddy questions in English and he would respond in French.

The interview went well and was the same length as the previous interview, if not longer. Christian concluded with a few questions in French before ending the filming. I relaxed a bit, the problem now solved. On the way out, Meddy asked when I was leaving. He is a very nice guy, a pop star that acts like a kind, twenty year old Rwandan. When he heard I was leaving soon, he expressed that it would be nice to get together on the weekend and he would be coming to America in July, and we should hang out. He will be in DC, but I told him of course, it would be no problem. I love this response from Rwandans, having gotten, "oh, you're from America, do you know John Smith?"

I returned to the Auberge late, after giving Joselyne the footage and pictures from other trips. I was happy to have taken care of this problem on my own, and that it was taken care of quickly. Tomorrow will be the day that we see a rough cut of the film. Before earlier tonight, I have been in the mindset that this will happen and everything will work out, but as Dr. Barz just explained, it is possible to see the rough cut tomorrow and decide that we should scrap everything because it would take years to finish. Now I am quite nervous.

Day 27

Tuesday, June 8, 2010

12:27 p.m., Auberge La Caverne

I woke this morning to Joselyne's call at nine. She was looking to meet us in town to show us the rough cut of the film that she had completed the night before. I instead told her just to go to work at Rwanda Cinema Center and we will meet her at one to watch the rough cut.

9:05 p.m.

Today was an empowering day. Dr. Barz and I arrived at Rwandan Cinema Center at one. Joselyne was outside lecturing a group of film students. We waited for her to finish the lesson then went to her office for the rough cut. Joselyne was nervous about showing us the film, a reassuring sign for me and Dr. Barz. For a rough cut, it was, in my opinion, exactly what we wanted. The transitions needed to be tweaked, along with some of the sound, but overall the important shots, of Sibomana and Sophie's home village looked as professional and complete as we could have hoped. The only problem, that kept Dr. Barz not completely sold, was the lack of subtitles, which will inevitably be the deciding factor in what story is being told. We agreed to work on the subtitles the following day.

When watching the film, we noticed two scenes that were missing, Augustine the poet and an interview from Daniel. In the completed film, he was in three different scenes, and we decided it was necessary to obtain an interview from Sophie's star student. We gave him a call and agreed to meet him at Kigali Music School in an hour. At the same time, Dr. Barz received a call from Omar's producer, Bizab, who informed us that the audio had been mixed. We decided to split up, Joselyne and I getting the interview and Dr. Barz heading to the recording studio to listen to the audio.

On the way to Kigali Music School, Joselyne's moto ran out of gas causing her to be lost without any air time on her phone. Eventually, we were able to meet up, but then I forgot the way because the roads had undergone construction since my last visit. We eventually made it to the school after being guided by a very short Rwandan that I could swear was a Twa. We greeted Daniel who politely shook my hand with a "Patrick, I very glad to be see you again." I appreciate Daniel's repeated use of English with me and scold my lack of using Kinyarwanda after four weeks. The interview went very well, with Joselyne manning the video camera most of the time. He

gave us more than we needed and even performed a few songs, one we had not heard before. We left the school, grabbed something to eat, and I bid Joselyne farewell before meeting Dr. Barz back at the Auberge La Caverne.

I returned home to receive excellent news from Dr. Barz. The recordings had ended up exceptionally mastered. Having listened to the completed tracks, I realized we have one finished product on our hands. In addition, Dr. Barz explained that he had negotiated the mixing of an *inanga* hip-hop track, produced by Bizeb and Omar. They said they would hire a rapper, create a beat, and sample Sophie's tracks for a reasonable fee. An *inanga* hip-hop track would be an excellent addition to the audio CD, and the producers said it would be ready by Friday.

Today concludes with much hope for publishing this as a CD and documentary film that could be released in the fall. With a completed audio CD and a film that is hopefully completed in the next few days, I cannot believe that four weeks could create something like this. As Dr. Barz said "*No one* does this. In field research *no one* ever comes back from a month with a product. But I guess we proved it's possible." I couldn't be happier and I feel ready to go home, with everything we can do in Rwanda almost complete.

Day 28

Wednesday, June 9, 2010

10:03 a.m., Bourbon Coffee Shop

We woke this morning to meet Joselyne at UTC to give her the footage of Daniel's interview from yesterday that Dr. Barz converted from the MTS video file format. I agreed to meet her at Rwanda Cinema Center today at five to complete the subtitles. For the rest of the day, Dr. Barz and I plan to create an outline for the booklet that will accompany the *Inanga* DVD and CD, including track descriptions for listeners to get a feel for the scene behind the music.

4:41 p.m.

Before settling down at the Auberge at noon, I took an extraneous journey to find the national post office of Rwanda, to send a few postcards. Feeling a bit like I was searching for a fabled Ethiopian restaurant, I passed through the directions of eight different people before arriving on the other side of town to find the post office, hidden quite a length off the road. I spent the rest of the day writing track descriptions for the four tracks on Sibomana. I found difficulty in completing the descriptions, not having the completed translations finished yet. I am now off to complete the subtitles with Joselyne at Rwanda Cinema Center. Hope it goes well.

11:30 p.m.; Auberge La Caverne

Creating the subtitles was a long task, with most time figuring out the best way to phrase some of the difficult phrases in Kinyarwanda. The translations ended up making sense, but definitely need some work in cleaning up. Dr. Barz and I planned to leave this to post-production in the United States. It eventually finished around nine, and I found my way home on a moto. Everything seems to be slowing down. With the end of the trip in sight, I am feeling nostalgic saying goodbye to my home of over four weeks. It is amazing how much Africa means to me now, and how much we have accomplished on this trip.

Day 29

Thursday, June 20, 2010

4:00 p.m., Auberge La Caverne

Post-production is good. Dr. Barz and I woke late and re-visited Caplaca market to finish buying all of our souvenirs. Today, the market was stocked with hand-carved wooden nativity scenes and many sculptures of *inanga* players. Dr. Barz bought two sculptures, one giant and one even more giant. I bought a giant one and continued to buy a nativity scene for my mother and a nice chess board for my father. Since the last visit to the market, I knew that I needed to buy one of these chess sets. They are hand carved piece by piece from Kenyan soap stone, and my ruthless bargaining got it down to a third of the original asking price. I couldn't believe that I was able to get a chess set worthy of an upscale home's entrance hall for about thirty five dollars.

Soon enough, we were weighed down with more crafts, statues, chess sets, swords, and baskets than we could carry. By some miracle, we managed to pile it on our laps as we hopped on motos and returned to our hotel. We spent the rest of the afternoon packing up for two reasons, the world cup starts tomorrow, and to decide if it was even possible to check all of the souvenirs we bought. By another miracle, everything seemed to fit into our bags, given that we will be able to check an *inanga* filled with gifts and wrapped in blankets.

For the day, I plan to meet Joselyne around six to complete extra subtitles for the film and Dr. Barz plans to meet Omar and Bizab to get the *inanga* hip hop track that they completed today.

7:51 p.m., Radio 10

I arrived at Rwanda Cinema Center at 6:30 to finish the subtitles for the film. The only scene we needed translated was Daniel's interview, so we finished quickly and moved onto bigger things.

I sit now writing from Radio 10, helping Joselyne get a specific effect for one scene in our film. In this scene, we needed the effect of music playing through headphones, for a segue from Sophie playing to Pierre listening. Dr. Barz was adamant on a visual trick of Pierre wearing headphone, listening to Sophie's music before his interview to create an effect that will connect the two in our film. To have the sound, Joselyne contacted a friend at Radio 10 that could change the scene's audio to imitate the sound of music from headphones.

I walked in, remembering the last time we were here. It seemed ages ago. The walls are all bright yellow, except for the studio, painted in a sky blue. The first fluorescent light above the entrance of the office flickers on and off, just as I remembered from two weeks ago. The studio owner, Jerome, and Eric (Gibraltar) greeted me with a handshake and man hug, and I showed Eric the scenes from the film and the audio tracks that were recorded in his studio.

Dr. Barz just sent me a text expressing his excitement with the *inanga* hip hop song. Just a minute ago Jerome said he was sorry to miss us on his radio show last Saturday, and asked if we could do it this Saturday at two. I agreed, not knowing exactly what we would be interviewed about or what language he thinks we are able to speak.

I am enjoying winding down this trip. I feel that I have accomplished a lot and have had a lot of fun. I didn't think I would feel ready to go home a week ago, but now, with most everything done, I feel like being back in Texas. I am happy these days are slow and am extremely excited to watch the first world cup in Africa while in the same continent.

Day 30

Friday, June 11, 2010

8:50 a.m., Bourbon

I sit writing in Bourbon this morning meeting Joselyne for coffee and a viewing of our film with subtitles inserted. Nothing much exciting is happening, post-production is good.

10:05 p.m., Auberge La Caverne

Today was the most relaxing day I have had here. The day has been dedicated to finishing my side project of getting pictures of every pimped-out bus in Nyamirambo. I spent the morning posting up in Nyamirambo looking for the two buses that have been the demise of my brilliant project effort; the Jay-Z and Beyonce buses. Dr. Barz gave me a difficult text message yesterday saying that he saw both busses together, next to each other like in life.

After no luck in the morning, I spent the afternoon filing the four hundred bus pictures I had already taken into each individual bus. I ended up with sixty-nine busses. So close, but yet so far.

The world cup started at four in the afternoon. The day was getting very hot so we made our own private cabana out of our portico by hanging a sheet over the entrance. The world cup's first two games were extremely boring, both ending in ties and one without any goals. Today was a great day with no worries.

Day 31

Saturday June 12th, 2010

10:00 p.m., Auberger La Caverne

Our last day today was a blast. We finished packing in the morning and Dr. Barz and I split up for the afternoon; he buying coffee and tea and me hunting busses. I stood in Nyamirambo all day with no luck. When I first showed up in Nyamirambo I encountered the only hostile situation I have had in all of my time in Kigali. As soon as I got off my moto, an older man with a broken hand approached me and started forcefully yelling. He spoke aggressively in Kinyarwanda, causing me to step back, not knowing what this man wanted. He looked angry and pointed at the direction that our moto had approached the Muslim region of town. While backing up, a nearby construction worker digging a ditch ran at the man, yelling in Kinyarwanda and waving his shovel. The crazy man backed off and a few Rwandans apologized to me for the man with "head problems," as mental illness is referred in Africa.

I had no luck all day on busses. I spend a few hours in the morning sorting my hundreds of bus photos and found I had seventy pimped out busses, with no Jay-Z or Beyonce. Luckily, I saw the Jay-Z bus in the dark about thirty minutes ago. I got a far off picture, but a picture none the less. It was ridiculous how happy getting one picture made me.

After meeting Joselyne for another screening and meeting, Dr. Barz and I went to Radio 10 to have an interview on air on a show called Angle 7. I got a call from Jerome, the host of the show, at about three, and he told us to come at about 7:30 p.m. for the show starting at 8.

We entered the studio and met a Canadian woman working for a German film project who went on the air before us. She spoke for about fifteen minutes and gave us the room. Dr. Barz and I settled down into two chairs across a large table from two MCs. I was a bit nervous, having never spoken on the radio before, but found ease talking after my first response. We were on the air for about twenty-five minutes. I had a lot of fun, but felt that I stumbled a bit in responses. We left the studio and got ready to watch America tie the U.K. in a one, one game.

I was under the impression that no one would be listening to a show on Rwandan music, but, on the way back to our hotel, my moto stopped for gas. At the station, the man fueling the moto was listening to us on the radio.

I can't believe the trip is over. I have wanted to go home much this past week, but now I'm having quite a strange feeling. I don't know what going home is going to be like but I've never felt this displaced from my home in Texas before.

The Journey Home, Days 32-33

Sunday June 13th

3:49 p.m. (U.S. time) Continental Flight 97, Houston to Austin

Here I am at the end of this journey. In less than thirty minutes, this flight will touch down in Austin and I will be home. I flew from Kigali to Nairobi first, a short two hour flight before taking on the two ten-hour legs of Nairobi to London and London to Houston. I am exhausted, but can't sleep. I feel a strange excitement coupled with anxiety in returning home. I don't know exactly what it is. I realized that the only thing I really missed at home were people. I didn't think of a comfy bed or American TV after the first week in Africa. The only reason I wanted to be back would be to spend time with my family and friends. I suppose I learned that more than anything. Home isn't a location, but a place with the people that are closest to one's heart. I feel that Rwanda became a home to me quickly because of the companionship of Dr. Barz and all my Rwandan colleagues. Without the people, I would never have felt settled.

It is hard to explain my feelings about returning home. I feel torn between longings for home versus the fear of returning. It is not that I feel I will not settle back in quickly; I know I will all too well. Part of me does not want to step back into the bubble. I am not sure if I really want to be back where life is so easy that I begin to take the simple pleasures in life for granted.

So, what did I learn in Africa? Did I get the experience I wanted? On the minute scale I found many new passions. I learned that I love photography and producing. I learned that I enjoy writing as long as I have something interesting to write about. Above all, both Dr. Barz and I learned that creating a project with documentary and CD is possible in a month, given the right combination of work, people, and luck.

Academically, this project will help me out immensely. Dr. Barz and I have discussed plans to continue this work in the setting of independent study or a senior thesis, something that I am highly interested in pursuing. On a surface level, the trip will help me to be a more serious candidate for any further programs or graduate schools with a history of producing and writing for a published work. More important than anything of this, however, are the changes this trip has helped me with personally.

Going into this trip one month ago, I didn't know what to expect. My initial concerns were set on not being able to exude scholarship to a level appropriate for Dr. Barz. I felt that I didn't know enough about African music and wouldn't be able to collaborate intelligently with my mentor. I also found myself scared of the wild and dangerous Africa that lives in the minds of all Westerners; a place of no laws and imminent danger for anyone that comes to visit.

Looking back, I can see how absolutely ridiculous all of these assumptions were. I grew up a lot through this trip, not in any ways that change my personality, but mindset. I feel like I am more part of the world community, having stepped out and joined it for a short amount of time. By simply knowing that some of the places on earth that are perceived by Americans as unbelievably dangerous are more friendly and peaceful than the rough parts of Austin makes me much less scared of the world and much more willing to explore it.

I suppose that I won't know about the long term effects of this trip until I have been home for a few weeks. I know I will experience some reverse culture shock, and a large part of me does not want to go back and sink back into the safety of my home bubble.

In the end, the most important result of this trip is my decision to return to Africa next summer, all summer. I'm not sure specifically what I will be doing, but the link to Rwanda will aid me in finding something along the lines of working in a Ugandan AIDS clinic for a few months. For some reason, Africa felt right. The pace of life and immense distance from everything I have ever known, both physically and culturally, allowed my mind to be at ease in a way I haven't felt in years.

Thanks—I dedicate this effort to Dr. Gregory Barz. Without him none of this would have been possible. Special thanks to all of our Rwandan colleagues; Christian, Pierre, Bizab, Omar, Joselyne, Ayuub Sibomana, Daniel, Meddy, Sophie, and Eric. Thanks to everyone at home who kept me going with communications through e-mail, especially my family, Mary, John, and Andrew McGovern and my girlfriend, Sarah Stroube. Thanks to Vanderbilt Research Grants and VUSRP to make this exceptional trip and project financially possible.