

Herro. I'm **Rahil**, and *this* is my resume. I tried to limit it to experiences that are valuable to people (regardless of economy) and whose length is at least one month. My portfolio at **rahilpatel.com** goes beyond those artificial boundaries. You can email me at **rahil627@gmail.com** or message me at **m.me/rahil627**.

### **me at home in nature (台灣東部)**

2012-foreva' 'eva?

Back to money, then, back to me (hopefully.): creating my own utopian community, with hippie income models (busking, village-style meal kitchen, traditional food making and vending, crafting / DIY technique sharing, etc.; all donation-only), personal digital projects (media), and all that other good-hearted stuff—take care of all of the life in the local area. East Coast American values on the East-Side of Taiwan, the natural-side. This should be the end for me.

### **Refugee in Thailand**

late 2021, late 2020

Cross-country via motorcycle 'n hammock :)

early 2021 at The Nomad House in Ko Phangan

Simple life on a beautiful island full of crazed people. I temporarily managed a hostel until the apocalypse (the pandemic) eventually took it, trying very hard to ignore said crazy people. Those northern Europeans and Southern Thais are *ice cold*. *Yeesh!* Turned out the manager was a psychopath scammer. Great!..

Yeahhh... I need to get back to Taiwan, and quick!!

mid 2020 in Chiang Mai

Escaped Japan's over-sheltered, extremely fearful culture during *the pandemic* to seek out some warmer refuge: Thailand. Another strange time: another state-enforced lockdown: going from native mind to city mind, with much resistance.

Lived a simple life in the city together with a group of persevering ethnic-minority (from Myanmar and Isaan) friends 'n families in solidarity cooking 'n selling food in the street markets, whose "sisters" routinely get duped by extremely petty-yet-rich Thai business-owners, get kicked out by corrupt border police, and who's children fall victim to alcoholism 'n drugs at a young age, forever living in a fragile state. Fuuuuuck! This part of the world is rough-rough!! Maybe Tainan was alright after all.. Chiang Mai is ugly beneath the surface. People here seek Bhudda to escape(!), not for the good-hearted ethics or spiritual reasoning Taiwanese people revere Buddha for. Off to nature I run... (update: Deep inside I have felt and still feel bad for not helping the people of Myanmar in a substantial way ever since my first visit to the massive refugee camps along the border a decade ago. This time, I guess I'll blame it on being poor. :/ )

### **Traditional Dweller in Kyushu [island], Japan**

early 2020 for 2+ months

Took a break after the horrendously slow court case in Taiwan before I settle there again. Lived with a farmer friend's family Japan! Winter time meant taming wild bamboo of a nearby forest, gathering fire-wood, mastering the tiny hearth, shepherding three ancient-alien goats, repairing a traditional-style home, and caring for their little princess (たけのこ!). My body was freezing numb by the cold, unable to adapt. Sadly, nearly all (98%?) original nature in Japan has been destroyed by past generations of ultra-instrumental Japanese-cultured dwellers, mostly for lumber-producing tree-farms... and uncontrollable bamboo.

### **me in a place where one doesn't belong (台南縣)**

~2018–2019

A strange time: a limbo: a prison: a spiritual time. Got to experience a very particular rough side of Taiwan: the conservative-side, where people are trapped

between old traditional life-styles and terrible business-men in tiring tropical heat without much choice. Did some labor work (alongside them), volunteered for (and ate at!) a Bhuddist free-meal-serving kitchen, gifted money to enable the few that have the ambition to escape the trap, lost faith in humanity (for the first time), especially the South-western strand of Taiwanese-Chinese culture. Spent much time taking care of my little island and hanging out with my friend's family. Kept my head up and my mind on my friend's children while I was stuck waiting for Taiwan's retarded, ancient bureaucratic legal system to finish a classic racist cop case on me. I survived, but not without my deepest traumatic scars. Trapped in Tainan, restricted from riding my motorcycle, restricted from leaving my residence, enforced to wait for red letters that merely inform the next court date, never knowing what each one entails, never knowing what will happen to my life: a terror that comes from constantly being reminded that my life in jeopardy, every two weeks, for 8 months. I need to re-watch *'Good Men, Good Women'*... In the end I missed one of the bajillion court dates, and so was judged guilty by default: 3 months worth of money. As it turns out, bureaucracy is my nemesis.

### **someone to talk to at a secret place in Hong Kong**

post-Factory for 2 months

Soon after the Factory closed, I visited a friend's community in HK. As it turns out, it's not easy to be a sensitive person in HK. This was the second time in my life in which I happened to become the closest person to someone on the brink of suicide. All I did was live, love, 'n *listen*. A past full of traumas—indigenous brain-washed devout christian family. Although she got better, I still left with a feeling of helplessness...

### **Regular Volunteer at 能盛行 ("The Factory") in 台南市，台灣**

January to February 2018, major events, labor projects, post-commune life

**The mother community of all communities in Taiwan** was closing down, so I headed south towards the sun (again) to it, to give and take what I can, before I venture on my own. A very traditional life: simple daily habits, motherly love, festivals, material awareness, emotional awareness, and other forgotten ancient values. Particularly good at living with other utopian-minded, peasant-minded, pure-hearted people. Very group-oriented, clique'ish even, in thought and action, which made real individual participation impossible (though still much loved!). Being nearly entirely female and nearly all from nearby villages, they were quite sensitive and keen to structural violence, power relations, etc. in social relations and in capitalist-development. The absolute opposite of my non-traditional personality and individualized culture; The traditional female is a mystery of eternal mystery!

After the commune shut down, many went their own way, building their own homes 'n gardens, continuing to make traditional seasonal foods, figuring out how to revive native bee populations, and figuring out how to grow native plants in a land full of pesticide. We'd some-times visit and share our knowledge of true nature, true health and medicine, true life. I hope to continue to share with them for the rest of our lives.

update: In late 2019, I spent a few weeks with the god-father of the commune clearing a field and planting endangered native tree seeds not far up a mountain, a sort of nature restoration project. Two people with just cheap local hand-tools and hard-work really *can* revive nature. After the project, he continued through the mountain range to collect native seeds and herbs in order to make herbal medicine (based on his own empirical wisdom) for people in need. He died shortly after. I believe he was the last person of his kind, as his generation of friends had all been previously jailed, then addicted (to cope), 'n then found dead.

**Resident Volunteer Organizer at 藝文樓 (Place of Arts) in 屏東市，台灣**

January to June 2017

**The second great community of my life.** Coop[erative] living and doing. Projects included: event-making (hippie stuff: all donation-based music shows, vegan potlucks, crafting workshops, spiritual performances, natural markets, etc.), experimental rooftop gardening, collecting and eating un-sellable vegetables and fruits of local farmers, motorcycle maintenance, stray animal care, stray human care, music-making, musical-instrument-making, overly-fermented fruit alcohol-making, overly-fermented fruit alcohol drinking. All of this was accomplished with just the two of us: him as a moral model and me as a shepherd. It proved that one person could indeed build a great community, but two leads to a more diverse community. By the closing date, we were sad to leave, yet also burnt out and in need of a break. It's his indigenous mother's home-town, close to her tribal home, so he'll be back! We'll be back... for sure! Re-united.

**Resident Friend at 背包地球 in 宜蘭縣，台灣**

5+? months in winter 2015–2016

A homely experience in a plain full of rice paddies surrounded by mountains. The simple, thoughtful, dull country-side life...in an unbearably humid climate. Some-times we made and sold food at the local weekly night market. Some-times we'd help surfer friends and diving friends with their teachings and tours. Most of the time we just made the hostel feel homely and lived cheaply. I also discovered you could put soil on top of cement and grow a garden to live off of!

**Support Engineer Cat at Catlard in 高雄市，台灣**

from May to July 2014

I helped make an augmented-reality application with Simon (aka Catlard) for a highly uncreative business contract. I don't know how Simon tolerated me during my travel-high, but it brought back some fond memories of childhood gaming and

New York game-making culture, which were severely lacking during the previous year of nomadic life.

In 2018–2019, we happened to live near each other in 台南 and became great friends. We'd often hang out, play games, play-test his art games, support him on crunch days, and baby-sit, always curious about his kids' minds. During the day, he works with a few people that make a suite of kid's language learning games for tablet devices; And at night, when the kids are asleep, he's quietly tapping away at his own art games which often involve his wife, his children, his friends, and his own childhood. He's quite the quiet poetic person.

### **Independent Philosopher at some cold place, somewhere**

beginning from at least March 2014, winter 2014–2015, winter 2016(?)

After a long period of travel and using another human language, I happened to stumble upon the Western philosophy section of a library, and then I attempted to write everything that I knew. My early philosophy was transcribed to web-site.

### **Resident and infrequent Helper at JV's Hostel in 台北市，台灣**

5 hot months in 2014(?)

Part capitalist, part community; mostly individualist: something that served as a stepping-stone to later, more egalitarian forms of community. A great compromise for the best location in the city (and the highest rated hostel in the country during my time there). I lived together with the hostel workers, some-times helping or substituting, always making the hostel feel like home. A solid community of long-term stayers formed, fell in love with Taiwan, and ultimately made it an important part of their lives.

While learning the language and soaking in the culture, I ran the Humans of Taiwan project, inspired by Humans of New York, driven by an insane passion to better

understand and share the infinite differences among diverse people.

### **well-intentioned Nomad in Asia**

October 2012–2013(?), summer 2016... until I learn to become independent

While living nomadically, I sometimes am able to create social contracts, exchanging my intentions for a place to sleep and eat. This includes: friends, CouchSurfing hosts, social organizations, and wherever else I happen to sleep in. Notable social organizations (not listed separately) include: a couple-run grass-roots org for refugees near the Burmese border in Thailand, a great group of young city artists (mostly indirect actions for sex worker and land issues) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and a volunteer organization that re-builds destroyed houses and schools for indigenous people in the mountains of Taiwan. Sometimes, just a little passion is enough for exchange. Applying the gift economy is more meaningful than capitalist wage labour, but manic-inducing, as one must constantly find a way that fits and pleases the constraints of others' values.

### **Exchange Worker at 達達美語補習班 (Dada School) in 中壢, 台灣 (Taiwan)**

from August to September 2012

This was my first gig during travel. One of the things I wanted to do while traveling was to try things that I value more than private sector work, such as, raising kids! It was a work exchange at an independent school (more of a daycare) run by a fantastic couple: John and Ching. I helped out wherever needed. I did some general work: house chores, cooking, and babysitting. It felt like living with a family that was strangely forced to teach and learn English. I had wished I had done more, a lot more. Perhaps it was the heat and humidity (no air conditioner), or the mosquitoes at night, or Ching's delicious food, or the lack of creativity and ambition in the minds of everyone (according to my perception at the time). Still, I managed to stay until my visa nearly ran out.

## **Volunteer Cat at Babycastles in Brooklyn, NY**

from January to February 2012 intense time, November-April(?) events Ahhh **my first love**. Amazing people doing amazing things. It was specifically what I was interested in but had no idea a community for it existed. It was what I was looking for all along. At the time I was just beginning to create things myself (art game prototypes), figuring out what games are, what it means to be an artist, where fine art fits, and just being real. The things these people accomplished on a daily basis was unbelievable. As usual, I just did what I felt was necessary and lived in the moment, every moment: merely helping with events (art game installations, game jams, performances, discussions), cleaning, ticketing: art life in Brooklyn (and I've kept doing this sort of community support my entire life since then). One installation had the Wu-Tang Clan perform along-side: hand-built hand-painted arcade cabinets coupled with hand-made controller inputs run by a hacked version of Auto-Hotkey, all created from junk with cheap old donated laptops running tiny recent locally-made art games. Another installation took place in a planetarium in the American Museum of Natural History: an immersive space game which requires a team of players to physically man the ship and interact with hand-made controlling devices. Dream after dream actualized at a hectic city pace. Near the end of my time there, part of the core group left to some strange museum in France to setup the a fantastic exhibition: a digital play-ground of sorts: Meow-Town; And soon after I left, the greatest exhibition took place at the Museum of Art and Design (after much grant proposal non-sense). Those two exhibitions are good representations of the group's child-like playful values, manifested. New York is special because even the people in their institutions have street smarts (they just live hypocritical lives...) and really are in tune with what goes on in the streets, perhaps a reflection of their own inner kid, which is all the org consisted of: a bunch of kid-at-hearts that deeply love games, yet equally deeply understand the social philosophies of playing, living, and growing up with games. Just... none of us knew



how to express it in words... And none of us knew shit about fine arts! I regret leaving New York because of these people, and I will come back, despite disliking the city.

The all-volunteer-organization taught me everything: the possibilities of games, the possibilities of new media, social organizing for art with an emphasis on inclusion, event organization, working within a powerful group (consensus decision-making), working with the institutionalized world (writing grants), DIY ethics, punk ethos, the infinite possibilities with social relationships within *the* city, and how to actualize dreams.

In fall 2013(?), after a nomadic year in Asia, I did indeed come back, as I knew that nowhere else in the world will I ever find another group of people I share affinities with *and* extremely specific interests with; Or, more simply, because my heart yearned for them during the past year. I had a half-scholarship master's program at Parson's (MFADT) planned, but, as it turned out, my mind couldn't see past the evils of NYC anymore; and anyway, my mind had become far too widened for any school, and within a week, I innately decided that the nature and simple cultures of Taiwan had something more, more than not just any school, but even perhaps the most creative, morally-upright punk street artists of New York. I went back home, to my parent's home, to do some deep deep soul-searching, and reading.

### **Intern at zdLLdz in Brooklyn, NY**

from January to February 2012

"Interning" with Zack, I "assisted" with a film shoot in the freezing cold and "researched" stereoscopy in games. In reality, I merely biked through dope NY communities to get to Zack's place, ate delicious local pizza, and hung out with the film gang at his apartment. Zack's ambitious, with the eye of a child. It was

inspiring to experience someone ambitious and *patient* enough to be make a 3D comic-book, a 3D film, and possibly a 3D game, which would take years.

### **Independent Gamemaker**

beginning from September 2011

I began making games. I started while isolatedly working at my Dad's motel one winter. With just a few inspirations (Jason Rohrer, Jonathan Blow, etc.) and Experimental Gameplay Project as a deadline, I made stuff meaningful to me [at the time]. I continued to make games as I moved to New York. After many finished and unfinished prototypes, game jams, and collaborations, I eventually helped my friends in New York create *Crystal Brawl*, a local multi-player easy-to-pick-up difficult-to-master sort of competitive sporty game. Unfortunately, one other game remains unfinished: *Pinkies Up*, a local multi-player multi-touch multi-device iPad game, co-created with a great friend's direction and love. I imagine game-making will be always be a part of my life. Some of the remnants of projects left from this wildly productive time might be on web-site.

### **QA and Release Engineer at Perfect World Entertainment in Foster City, CA**

from February to May 2011

From suburb to city, I picked up a new job too quickly, perhaps afraid of financial risk. I oversaw day-to-day tasks for the engineering department. The department creates and manages websites (and web servers) for a bunch of shitty Asian MMORPGs (except *Torchlight*). It was a cumbersome process in a large company. Unrealistic goals, constant overtime, hasty testing, shoving out "milestones", pacifism toward authority: the stereotyped horrifically inefficient software company. I knew and warned that I was going to leave within the first week, but I stuck to the job because I was still absorbing the experience of *living* in and *feeling* the city (of San Francisco). I tried to better the company as much as I could but I came to the

conclusion that my *far* more ideal values were meaningless in a large company, and my desire for something more meaningful, or at least more meaningful than managing websites for lifeless games, made me leave, promising myself to never compromise for money again.

### **Software Developer at Segin Systems in Virginia Beach, VA**

from February to October 2010

My first “professional” job. I chiseled at a web-based real-estate finance software product. Most of the time was spent understanding puzzling ancient third party title software (and puzzling ancient real-estate practices) solely from their databases (real-estate bank transactions) and then writing massive queries for them to be sent via web services. The rest of the time was spent extending the superbly coded web-site, completely written by a very special autistic lead developer who made *extremely fine* use of the then current .NET framework (C# 4.0). An amazing, even ideal first programming job, as there was only one coder who wrote everything with succinct perfection (considering time), whom was empathetic and holistic as he was pragmatic, and, because most of my time was spent programming on my own. I knew I was going to leave my hometown, but I thought it was best to have a little “experience” before doing so.

The company makes millions now, with a big team (compared to us two), and I pray that the original programmer left with a wealthy share, as it was all his, straight years of zen-focused, over-timed brain work, despite having an emotionally-unstable bigoted money-whoring boss to deal with every-day.

...And somewhere, in a distant, far off server room, my code can still be heard through the heatsinks: the surgical scraping of bank transactions from ancient machines and the strange sound of satisfaciton when Rynoh receives them...

### **Computer Science Student at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, VA**

from 2005 to 2009

Schools are stupid. I can only recall two useful classes: both were 'electives' run by a younger 'adjunct professor' Michael Nelson, one to build a web forum from scratch and the other to build a web server from scratch (using python), both having to adhere to web standards of the time. I think I just needed to get out of my parent's house, or a break after high school to allow myself to take self-directed action. I did, however, value the time I watched 'neorealism' and realist films (thanks to Netflix technology), listened to the past 50 years of music (thanks to p2p and torrent technologies), and hung out with my friends, chatting about the world while playing party or competitive games.

### **Assistant of the Manager at LaQuinta Inn & Suites in Norfolk, VA**

summer of 2008

This is my dad's second hospitality business. Franchises have so many rules; It makes having fun impossible.

### **Temporary Manager at Village Motel in Chesapeake, VA**

since birth, many winters, a few childhood summers, and one year

This is my Dad's motel. It's the shady road-side motel that's often depicted in Hollywood thriller movies. I'm often here during the winter, when the manager takes a vacation. 50-ish rooms, 3 maids, 1 maintenance-man, and me, at the front desk, feeling like an immigration officer, having to judge people within minutes to decide on who can come in, who really just needs a room to sleep in, and who really deserves a bargain price; sneaking in non-citizen Latin American construction workers; and pondering the morals of prostitution, drugs, and citizenship, all at the age of a middle-schooler. Immigrant life in America.