

Wednesday, October 21, 2009



This blog will be brief. It is actually the second incarnation but my computer has been acting up. Unfortunately, I'm starting again from scratch. Sorry for anyone who had hopes of my actually maintaining a weekly entry. It seems I have already failed in my attempt to achieve consistency...

We're having a blast! Amy and I have headed into the city several times already and we love our own neck of the woods. The piano in my office is great (although it could use a tuning). The cats seem happy and untroubled by the biggest travel day of their little lives.



Last week, we took a trip to see the Grand Palace, which involved our first river taxi ride. I really enjoyed that form of transportation because 1) it didn't involve the traffic hell that is typical of Bangkok and 2) it's actually a really fun ride if you don't end up in the drink (and luckily we didn't).

The trip to the pier did involve a little detour into an unintended neighborhood. I thought I knew where we were and my sense of direction did not fail me. However, I completely mistook the route of the bus that brought us in. As a result, Amy and I wandered around a humble neighborhood for about an hour before hailing a cab to get us to the pier. Oh well, we got to see another part of Bangkok, in spite of ourselves.



The meandering did confirm one of my suspicions about the infrastructure of the city. It's a strange and subtle observation, perhaps, but roads just sort of end here. Other than a few really strange areas of Pittsburgh (I'm thinking of you, weird neighborhood of Greenfield wedged between the parkway and nothingness...), the majority of the roads in the states connect with something on both ends. That's just not true here, as evidenced by the roads we traversed, which seemingly lead to the river. At their termini, I could actually see the river. But the brambled wasteland between us and our goal was an actual deterrent...



In any case, we did actually make it to the Grand Palace eventually. That is a really spectacular place (and I do mean one that embodies spectacle). I doubt that Wagner ever made it to Bangkok (in fact, I'm quite certain he didn't) but he would have been able to check off "visual arts" (✓) from his little dream of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* had he come and staged an opera amid and before the gold-leaf walls of Bangkok's tourist hotspot. That's just my really cheesy way of saying that the place is visually stunning.

Speaking of visually stunning, if you want to see more pictures, go to my Facebook page... I will post links to Amy's albums.

What else. Yeah, so, learning Thai is really hard. I just can't seem to get the vowels right. Of course part of it is the tonal aspect but I'm having trouble with even the basic shapes. Someone please send a translator!

I'll post more antics in a few days. Next week is my first work meeting. Maybe I'll have something to say in the wake of that...

...ellipses...