

opusdei.org

Roman Rush

I was in Rome to represent the Philippines in the UNIV University Congress. On its 40th year, UNIV welcomed hundreds of passionate and energetic young people all over the world to take part in fora, discussions, and oral presentations on its theme, “Being, Appearing and Communicating: Lifestyles and Role Models in Film and TV.”

06/03/2007

Nothing beats the thrill of discovery. With modern lifestyles' continuous

blow on the ancient Roman scene, visitors should very well expect to be caught by surprise. No amount of reading travel guidebooks, asking around, and Googling prepared my friends and I for what Rome had to offer. Rome imported everything and anything—from gladiators to artistry from the most far-flung crooks of the empire, leaving future generations a legacy of law, order, and culture. Yet ancient Rome's cache is only an element of the spectacle. The Vatican, the world's hub of religion and fine arts, is a whole other riveting story.

A roman forum

Along with 14 friends composed of professionals, university instructors and students, I was in Rome to represent the Philippines in the UNIV University Congress. On its 40th year, UNIV welcomed hundreds of passionate and energetic young people all over the world to take part

in fora, discussions, and oral presentations on its theme, “Being, Appearing and Communicating: Lifestyles and Role Models in Film and TV.”

Noteworthy discussions on Film and Media aided us in understanding the present industry under the direction of top professors and practitioners from all over the world. As a whole, UNIV thrives to forge connections and inspire young people to set off sparks in their chosen fields in life.

Dr. Jeffrey Langan, a professor of Philosophy at Notre Dame University discussed “Hollywood and the Soul,” challenging artists to foster a sense of responsibility concerning the effect he or she can have on the audience. Likewise, he encouraged audiences to be conscious of the prospective effect that art has on the soul, by the way it impresses images on the soul that can lead the person to acquire

either true or false expectations of happiness.

“Digital Media: Social Networking Websites,” one of the most well-attended discussions, was led by Reynaldo Rivera, the senior consultant of Intermedia Consulting Rome/Chicago and Ciaran O’Connell, a law student from Dublin. The presentation focused on the implications of social networking websites to their users in terms of relationships, learning, future technologies and advertising.

Lost / ‘Perdidos’

A personal favorite was an open discussion I attended called, “El poder creciente de las series de television,” which was yes, entirely in Spanish. Thanks to last semester’s Spanish 10 class, I was able to follow (with immense effort) the lecture given by Jorge Milan, a professor of Audiovisual Communication in the

Pontificia Universidad de la Santa Cruz in Rome.

We screened and tackled different TV series from around the globe, including familiar ones like *Lost*, *24*, *Joan of Arcadia*, *Grey's Anatomy*, and *Prison Break*, which were all conveniently (for them) dubbed in Spanish. At the end of the enriching discussion, Milan posed an interesting question, “Does art imitate life or does life imitate art?”

Other discussions tackled rousing subject matters such as personal identity in fictional narratives and a film festival featured audio-visual creations on new technologies and social sensibilities, led by Pablo Cardona, a professor in the world-renowned IESE Business School.

More than talk

Within the UNIV Forum and now on its third edition, the Forum of Social

Initiatives directed towards university students who would like to present their social interest initiatives to the rest of the world. Ideally, this meant bridging the various social disconnects and values, and breaking new ground.

Universitas, the national organization which I and most of the Philippine delegates are a part of, presented a paper in the forum entitled, “Universitas: A Social Initiative for Youth Solidarity.” Our presentation encouraged the audience composed of diverse nationalities to help our quest in effecting positive change in society while armed with energy, enthusiasm and commitment.

Oral presentations of participants regarding the theme of UNIV 2007 also occurred simultaneously in various rooms, giving the students a chance to share their insights,

discoveries, and future visions on Film and TV.

Way beyond all the knowledge, experience, and loads of friendships we acquired, UNIV enabled us to have a deeper sense of faith. Joining Pope Benedict XVI for Mass and celebrating Holy Week right at the heart of Christianity's just too awesome for words.

A dash of Rome

Lucky for us, we were able to engage with Roman culture in our own terms—no to tour buses and guides, yes to public transportation and getting lost. It really is more interesting that way.

But we knew that Rome wasn't built in a day and we weren't likely to see it in a day either. So based on knowledge, past experience, and instinct, we toured Rome the best way we knew how. And like a true

Pinoy (or Korean), we took a photo of everything we saw. What was there to see? A unique combo of beautiful architecture, fountains, sidewalk performances, and a whole lot more.

James Gabrillo // Philippine
Daily Inquirer

pdf | document generated
automatically from [https://opusdei.org/
en-ph/article/roman-rush/](https://opusdei.org/en-ph/article/roman-rush/) (07/15/2025)