

ISSUE 2 | 02.2023

# ABRO D



# A

*Design processes and artefacts are locally and globally effective. KISD pursues a determined strategy of internationalization – cross-cultural phenomena and process covering projects with international partners and guests.*

Introduction Student participation and co-design of their own study environment is anchored in our study program at KISD. Students are systematically involved in the organization, self-administration and communication of KISD within the framework of various working groups (AGs). This moment of “co-responsibility” creates a high level of commitment among students and strengthens their identification with KISD, which is expressed in numerous activities beyond modules and compulsory events.

In 2022 one of these activities in the International working group (International AG) was the independent conception, design, and realization of this publication with the goal of telling international stories of KISD and providing insight into the various international opportu-

# *ABROAD highlights the university’s international affairs and tells important, personal stories.*

nities available during studies at KISD. The various options are presented here in short interviews as well as with specific projects.

With 82 active partner universities all around the world, KISD has an excellently developed international network. About half of our BA students take a semester abroad during their studies; alternatively, students can choose short-term international projects abroad or “at home”. International Exchange Projects, which are realized through the exchange of student groups, co-teaching by lecturers from both universities and joint blended learning phases, stand for particularly intensive cooperation. Join the KISDcommunity and learn about opportunities for studying abroad.

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A	aa	Austria	Vienna	University of Applied Arts Vienna
	ab	Australia	Sydney	WSU Western Sydney University
	ac	Australia	Melbourne	RMIT Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
	ad	Australia	Sydney	SCA Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney
B	ba	Belgium	Brussels	LUCA School of Arts
	bb	Brazil	São Paulo	USP Universidade de São Paulo
	bc	Brazil	Curitiba	UFPR Universidade Federal do Paraná
	bd	Brazil	Natal	UFRN Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte
	be	Brazil	Florianópolis	UDESC Universidade do Estado de Santa Catarina
C	ca	Chile	Valparaíso	UV Universidad de Valparaíso
	cb	China	Shanghai	Tongji University College of Design and Innovation
	cc	China	Hangzhou	CAA China Academy of Art
	cd	China	Shanghai	SIVA Shanghai Institute of Visual Arts
	ce	Columbia	Cali	Universidad Icesi
	cf	Croatia	Zagreb	UniZg University of Zagreb
D	da	Denmark	Kolding	DK Designskolen Kolding
	db	Denmark	Copenhagen	Royal Danish Academy – Architecture, Design, Conservation
E	ea	Egypt	Cairo	GUC German University in Cairo
	eb	Estonia	Tallinn	EESTI Estonian Academy of Arts
F	fa	Finland	Lahti	LAB University of Applied Sciences
	fb	Finland	Tampere	TAMK Tampere University of Applied Sciences
	fc	Finland	Helsinki	Aalto University
	fd	France	Amiens	ESAD École Supérieure d'Art et de Design d'Amiens
	fe	France	Nantes	École de Design Nantes Atlantique
	ff	France	Nice	Design The Sustainable Design School
	fg	France	Paris	ENSCI–Les Ateliers École Nationale Supérieure de Création Industrielle
G	fh	France	Paris	LISAA L'Institut Supérieur des Arts Appliqués
	ga	Greece	Mytilene	University of the Aegean
H	ha	Hong Kong	Hong Kong	PolyU The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
	hb	Hungary	Budapest	BME Budapest University of Technology and Economics
I	hc	Hungary	Budapest	MOME Moholy-Nagy–University of Art and Design
	ia	Iceland	Reykjavik	LHI Iceland University of the Arts
	ib	India	Pune	MIT Art, Design and Technology University
	ic	Israel	Holon	HIT Holon Academic Institute of Technology
	id	Israel	Jerusalem	Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design
	ie	Israel	Ramat Gan	Shenkar College of Engineering. Design. Art
	if	Italy	Milan	Polimi Politecnico di Milano
	ig	Italy	Rome	Sapienza Università di Roma
	ih	Italy	Venice	IUAV Università Iuav di Venezia
	ii	Italy	Bolzano	Libera Università di Bolzano
J	ja	Japan	Fukuoka	Kyushu University
	jb	Japan	Tokyo	MUSABI Musashino Art University
	jc	Japan	Chiba	Chiba University
	jd	Jordan	Amman	GJU GermanJordanian University
L	la	Latvia	Riga	LMA Art Academy of Latvia
	lb	Lithuania	Vilnius	VILNIUS TECH Vilnius Gediminas Technical University







Code	Country	City	University
M ma	Mexico	Mexico City	TEC Tecnológico de Monterrey
mb	Mexico	Mexico City	UNAM Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
na	Netherlands	Rotterdam	Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences
N nb	Netherlands	Utrecht	HKU University of the Arts Utrecht
nc	Netherlands	Den Haag	KABK Royal Academy of Art
nd	New Zealand	Auckland	AUT Auckland University of Technology
ne	Norway	Oslo	AHO The Oslo School of Architecture and Design
nf	Norway	Trondheim	NTNU Norwegian University of Science and Technology
P pa	Poland	Kraków	Jan Matejko Academy of Fine Arts
pb	Poland	Poznań	Poznań Academy of Fine Arts
pc	Poland	Warsaw	Academy of Fine Arts Warsaw
pd	Portugal	Aveiro	DeCa Universidade de Aveiro
pe	Portugal	Porto	ESAD Escola Superior de Artes e Design
ra	Romania	Bucharest	Universitatea de Arhitectură și Urbanism Ion Mincu
rb	Romania	Cluj	UAD Universitatea de Artă și Design din Cluj-Napoca
sa	Singapur	Singapur	LASALLE College of the Arts
sb	South Africa	Cape Town	CPUT Cape Peninsula University of Technology
sc	Spain	Barcelona	UPF Universitat Pompeu Fabra
sd	Spain	Madrid	UPM Universidad Politécnica de Madrid
se	Spain	València	UPV Universitat Politècnica de València
sf	Spain	Barcelona	BAU College of Arts and Design Barcelona, University of Vic
sg	Spain	Granada	EAG Escuela de Arte de Granada
sh	Spain	Barcelona	ELISAVA School of Design and Engineering of Barcelona
si	Sweden	Linköping	LiU Linköping University
sj	Sweden	Stockholm	Konstfack
sk	Switzerland	Basel	FHNW Fachhochschule Nordwestschweiz
sl	Switzerland	Zürich	ZHdK Zürcher Hochschule der Künste
T ta	Taiwan	Taipei City	USC Shih Chien University
tb	Taiwan	Taipei	NTUST National Taiwan University of Science and Technology
td	Turkey	Istanbul	Mimar Sinan Üniversitesi
te	Turkey	Istanbul	İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi
ua	UK	Glasgow	GSA The Glasgow School of Art
ub	UK	Kingston upon Thames	Kingston University
uc	USA	New York	Parsons School of Design, The New School
ud	USA	Providence	RISD Rhode Island School of Design
ue	USA	Philadelphia	Thomas Jefferson University
ab			
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# EXCHANGE

## Spending a semester abroad

In the BA “Integrated Design” degree program, in the context of the discipline “Integrated Studies in Design”, we offer the possibility of spending one or two semesters abroad, on a voluntary base, at one of our partner universities. KISD distinctly promotes and supports these international study semesters.

# A

Lara Carbonaro

LAB–University of Applied Sciences

*“It also helped me to clarify the design path I want to take after my bachelor thesis.”*

Country	City	University	
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Hello there, my name is Mohit Malhotra. I'm in my 8th semester studying at KISD.

Which university did you choose for your exchange and why?  
What type of design did you look into?

*In the winter semester of 2021/2022 I was doing my Erasmus exchange semester in Aveiro, Portugal. I could name a variety of reasons for studying there, but if I am honest there is actually one main reason why I went to Aveiro: Surfing.*

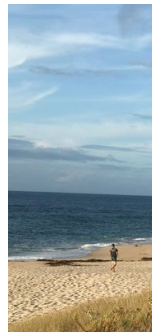
I wanted to use this special chance and the cultural exchange so I could live by the ocean but also live in a slow-paced city and being more focused on living, rather than just filling some personal boxes and being burned out by "fomo" (fear of missing out), the university and the private life which can be quite an obstacle in Cologne.

I started with my trip in the beginning of August, went down to France with my camper van and was on the road to Portugal for two months and drove around 2400km before I arrived in Aveiro in the beginning of October. I ended up staying there for about four months and drove down to the Algarve afterwards for another 1 1/2 months to enjoy life and nature before heading back to Cologne.

Since I had the feeling I was missing on some fundamental basics of design and the theory behind it, I chose a lot of first semester courses which proved to be a bad decision. The information provided in the course was more a brief overview and a more superficial sketch of what design is, rather than a fundamental course with an objective to give the students the tools to work with in their later career.

Can you tell us a bit about your way to Portugal and your stay there?

How did you choose your courses? Did they hold up to your expectations?



Can you share some struggles and how you overcame them?

So, the university was a challenge of itself. I didn't speak the language, was surrounded by students who were about 6–7 years younger than me and – which was the biggest challenge of it all – I had a torn ligament and had to do the work of a whole semester within the last three weeks before the semester ended.

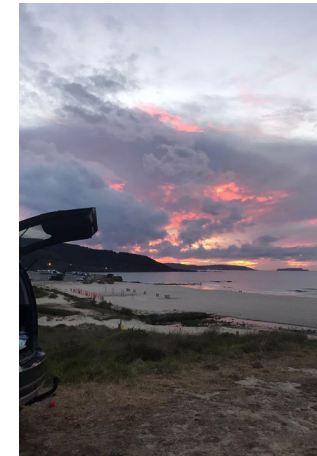
The life apart from the university was great though. The town of Aveiro was very cute with a lot of cafes and bars. The ocean was around ten minutes from home, and the sunsets were just so beautiful and will be one of my treasured memories for a long time.

Being back, what influence did your semester abroad have on you?

In the end, though not everything was exciting and even bad times occurred because of my injury, I am super grateful for the time being there. The slow time of

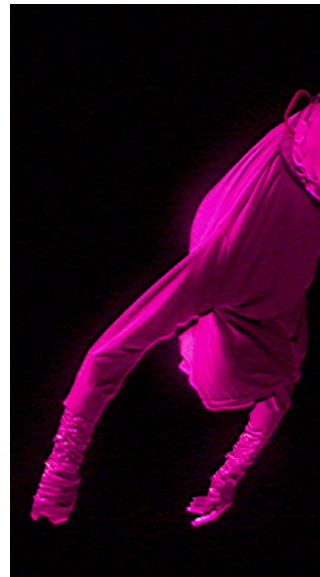
*“Having less to do rather than a fast life with a lot of responsibilities can give you a way bigger sense of a healthier and happier life.”*

the city of Aveiro inhabiting only 50.000 people and the time apart from the university gave me a big lesson in life: Having less to do rather than a fast life with a lot of responsibilities can give you a way bigger sense of a healthier and happier life.



Going abroad is not only about broadening your horizon academically. You also have the chance to make the best of all the cultural opportunities too.

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Hi, I'm Max! I went abroad to Budapest, Hungary, in the winter term 21/22, my 5th semester. I was there for five and a half months.

I'm from Berlin and came to Cologne in 2014 for an apprenticeship and then worked in the film industry a while before I started at KISD. I actually wasn't always that keen on going abroad, but after a few online semesters and because I had developed a feeling for where I was heading design-wise, I was motivated to experience a different place and check out the vibe and possibilities there.

Which university did you choose for your exchange and why?

What type of design did you look into?

*I chose the MOME because it is a very renowned University and seemed pretty well equipped. Especially the course of studies Media Design seemed like a perfect fit for me. Also, I went Budapest because I wanted to explore a place in Eastern Europe.*

Can you tell us a little more about your favorite project?

Most definitely, my favorite project was the Music Video course in which we produced exactly what the title says. Every student was supposed to find a not so popular Hungarian band or musicians and produce a music video for them.

Because the MOME has this huge film studio with all kinds of cameras, lights, and other technical equipment, I wanted to try a pure studio shoot. Through a tip of a classmate, I got in contact with a band that does an indie/punk/rock mix. I was proud of this project because I conceptualized, directed, filmed, and edited the whole video by myself. Not to forget my brave actors and actresses who were other very kind Erasmus students. As always, I wasn't 100 percent satisfied with the outcome, but I successfully pushed my creative boundaries and was happy how close the result actually came to my concept work.

How was your work and workspace structured?

There were a few rather scientific courses with regular meeting hours and papers or presentations as outcomes and the practical workload was mostly structured by ourselves. In between we got to spend time on the huge and nice campus and canteen of the MOME.



How did the meaning or the role of design differ in your exchange country or university in comparison to KISD?

I guess the biggest difference is that at KISD every course is selectable by students of all semesters and the courses aren't only based in one field of design. At MOME the classes are fixed, so the curriculum is the same for every student and their year of studies and the courses don't drift away too far from the chosen field. In the end everybody needs to choose which approach fits them the best.

Being back, what influence did your semester/ year abroad have on you?

The everyday social experiences where the biggest influence. Being in a shared flat, getting to know other Erasmus students and the local students and people. And by exchanging thoughts and concepts learning more about other points of view and one's own strengths.

*“At MOME the classes are fixed, so the curriculum is the same for every student and their year of studies and the courses don't drift away too far from the chosen field.”*

What was the best experience?

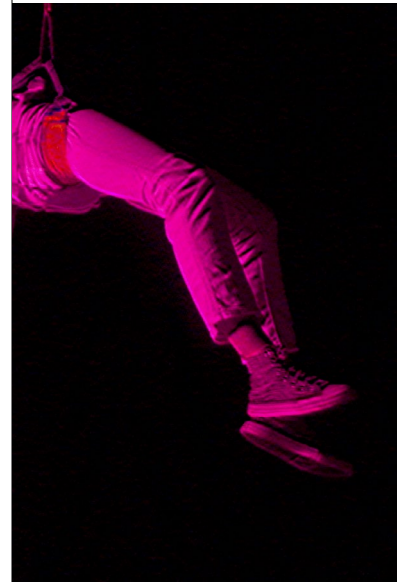
Meeting very nice people with whom I could even travel together to Slovakia, Czech Republic and Austria and celebrate New Year's Eve together in the grand buildings and streets of Budapest.

Can you share a struggle and how you overcame it?

This city is loud! So, I often went running in the big city park, which was calming.

How did you prepare?

I didn't prepare that much but I tried to somehow figure out as good as possible which district would be the best to live in. It shouldn't be too far away from the university but also near to the socially and culturally important places and not too central and hectic. I guess I was lucky because I found the perfect shared flat for my taste!



Scenes from the music video course.



I am Lara Carbonaro, 25 years old and I am studying in my 6th semester of Integrated Design. I am half German and half Italian, so I feel very international and that's why it was important for me to do a semester abroad.

Which university did you choose for your exchange and why?  
What type of design did you look into?

*For my exchange I chose LAB, Finland and more specific the area of Packaging Design and Branding. I was looking for a university which offers Packaging design. Therefore I chose LAB. Packaging design unifies most of my design interests like materials, product and graphic design. I was open to every European country with a university offering this field of study. In the end I am very happy with the choice I made.*



How long did you stay in the exchange country?  
What was your favorite project?

I spent 5 months in Lahti.

My favorite project was "Information design for product graphics", which was about designing a board game: from the idea to the mechanics, the graphics and the packaging. It was a big project and I appreciated to work on so many different design aspects to create a full-functioning product in the end. I liked the combination of desk research, group work, hands-on work in the workshop and working digitally on the design.

How was your work and work-space structured?

The projects I chose during the semester were both individual and group works, so it was quite balanced. LAB University has so many different and versatile work-spaces, so I could take every space to work and take the room I needed. For the work on packaging design,



How did the meaning or the role of design differ in your exchange country or university in comparison to KISD?

I had to go into a specific computer room because the license of the software was only available there. I mostly worked at university since it was a very warm and creative atmosphere.

LAB gave me the freedom to practically test things out because the materials and the equipment could be used for free, so I experimented a lot with cardboard and corrugated board, as well as with the laser cut and the big kongsberg machine for packaging cuttings and folding. Different from KISD, lots of projects are client-based, who set the requirements for the projects. In comparison to KISD, I had less desk research and the interdisciplinary aspect was completely missing.

How did your understanding of design change?

My understanding of design didn't change a lot, but it was useful and interesting for me to experience a new design perspective from another university and another country as well.

Being back, what influence did your semester abroad have on you?

The area of packaging design is a field I wanted to explore more, that's why I am currently doing an internship at REWE Group for the private labelling of their packaging. It also helped me to clarify the design path I want to take after my bachelor thesis.

What was the best experience?

The best experience for me was to find very special friends in the design exchange group and to have spent unforgettable experiences together like seeing the northern lights, ski together, travel together as well as having a lot of fun.

Can you share a struggle and how you overcame it?

The thing I was struggling about was in the beginning and in the end of my stay. First, I arrived in the apartment, which was completely empty. I needed to buy basics like, light bulbs, blankets, cutlery, and tools to cook, as well as some furniture for example. In the end of my stay, I needed to empty the apartment again, so it became a challenge to find a secondhand shop who was willing to take the furniture as a donation. I was very lucky, and a university friend took the furniture for herself, so I could get rid of them before returning the apartment keys.

Which cultural custom amazed you in your exchange time?

The cultural custom, which amazed me the most is the love of Finnish people for sauna. Almost every house or apartment has a sauna, and it is a very common practice. The sauna by the lake amazed me the most, since you can take a cold ice-bath right after and enjoy the warm and relaxing sauna again, while enjoying the nature all around.

I also really liked how the Finnish celebrate the first of May, which is some of the most important days to celebrate during the year and it's called "Vappu". This day marks the beginning of the summer and by that also the

How did you prepare for your stay abroad?

end of a long winter. Vappu also symbolises the graduation, so everyone in the city will wear a cap, similar to a skipper cap, but most importantly it's a massive party all around the city.

How well did you speak the language of your exchange country?

I spent some time before my exchange by conducting research on the city I was going to live in, as well as checking the temperature multiple times a week, since I wasn't used to that cold and that amount of snow. I also started to check places I could travel to during my stay and started to learn the language on the app "Duolingo".

I consider Finnish as a very complex language since it is so different from the other languages I speak. That's why I decided to not attend any language courses



Did your fluency or language skills improve during your stay?

and instead I focused more on design-related courses. Of course, I have learned some basics while living there and even if I was afraid in the beginning, I really liked the language towards the end. Despite that, I attended a course about Finnish culture. Eventually my English language skills improved since it was my main language of communication during the last five months.





Outcome of the class "Information design for product graphics", which was about designing a board game. Participants designed every detail, from the idea to the mechanics, the graphics and the packaging.

My name is Carla, I'm 23 years old and I studied one semester abroad in Milan.

Which university did you choose for your exchange and why?  
What type of design did you look into?

*I chose more the city and not the school, so I ended up at Politecnico di Milano because it's our partner university there. I was able to look into fashion design at Polimi, which was the main reason why I chose to go to Milan.*

What projects did you choose?  
And what was your favorite project at Politecnico di Milano?

My favorite project was a sewing class where we learned how to sew a traditional Italian Man's Jacket. I also enjoyed a fashion Illustration class where we met famous fashion Illustrators who gave us feedback on our weekly tasks.

In another course we designed a collection for a collaboration between the Italian designer Colina Strada and the diving brand Mares as a group project. During the lifestyle and fashion course we worked together with a traditional Milan (furniture) textile company. Our task was to create a creative advertising strategy for the Milan design week.

Can you tell us a bit more about how your work and your workspace was structured?

Our work and also the workspace was very structured. I enjoyed in the sewing course because I never really learned it before and the structure gave me the best surrounding to learn it professionally. In general, at Politecnico, for every weekly meeting we had to present a powerpoint presentation of our work to the professor, where we got feedback in a monologue. The workspaces are also very structured and watched. To get access to the labs is very hard and you have to do three different safety courses before.





How did the meaning or the role of design differ in your exchange university in comparison to KISD?

I don't know if it's everywhere in Italy but here at Politecnico di Milano the students learn how to become a good employee in a design company. In the hall study they always work with existing companies and learn how to design everything digital and get an understanding how to get the products on the market.

The topics and problems we worked on are not really deep and are not in the focus, it's always more about how it looks. At KISD everything has a meaning and it's super necessary to deal with real problems.

Sustainability is also not a question and I feel we are much more creative. The communication with the professors are very different. At KISD, we are getting into dialogues with the professor but also with other participants of the project and bring ideas together. It's also allowed to express ourself and present our own style which is very important in my opinion.

*“The semester abroad was the best decision! I would recommend it to everyone, because you learn to step out of your comfort zone and see your own world from another perspective.”*

How did your understanding of design change?

I wouldn't say that my understanding of design really changed in general, but I learned how Italians understand design in their traditional way. They are very proud of their design history and the long existing brands and companies. In Italy design is more connected to aesthetic which I somehow love because the people pay attention to it in so many ways. But sometimes for me it's a bit too superficial than it should be.

The semester abroad was the best decision! I would recommend it to everyone, because you learn to step out of your comfort zone and see your own world from another perspective. It's also super nice to live in another culture and become friends with people all over the world.

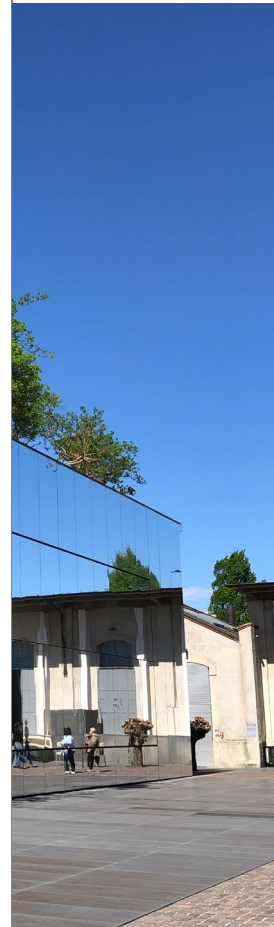
My best experience was just to live in Milan, to soak in the atmosphere and the lifestyle of the people. Everywhere in the city there is so much inspiration, a lot of exhibitions and design everywhere, which the people also value very much. All over the place, the people are super friendly and it's very international.

The biggest struggle for me was the system of the university in general but I just accepted it after some time. Also, sometimes the language was a struggle for me, because the university is very proud of their native language and some of the people in Milan don't speak English. Sometimes even the younger generation had problems communicating in English with me, which surprised me. But after some time, I understood more and more Italian, so I was able to communicate somehow. Although I understood

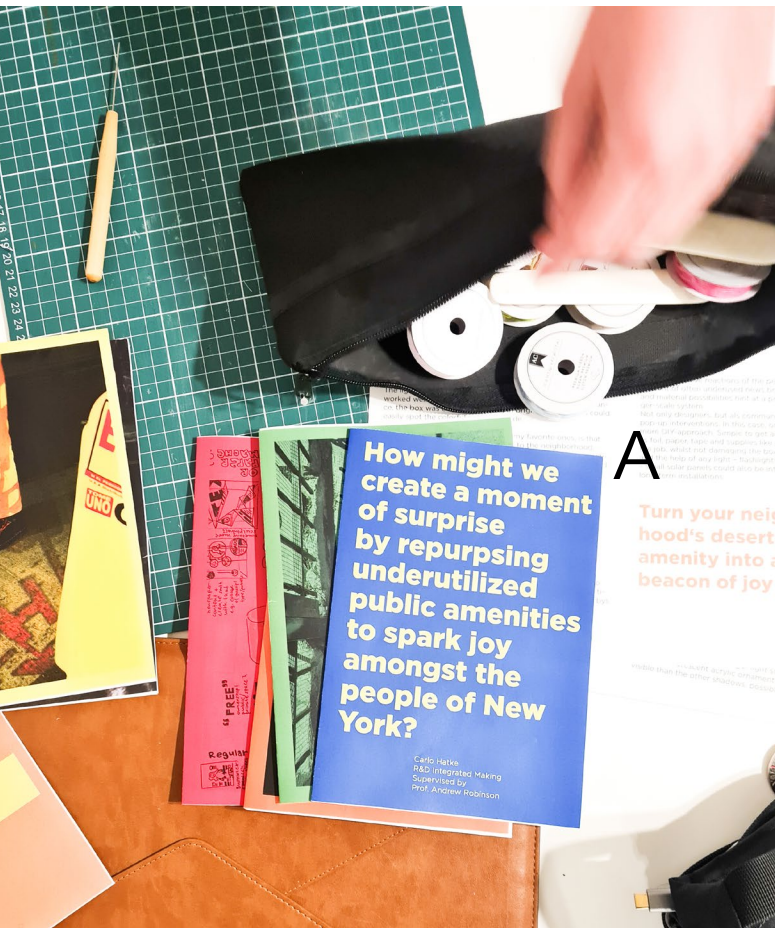
How did you prepare for your stay abroad?

more and more with the time passing, unfortunately I still speak Italian in the A1 level.

I have not prepared myself in any ways, but I wished I would have learned Italian more intense before I came here. I believe if I would have been able to speak more, my life in Italy would have been different. The language is a big gap to overcome to really get in touch with the Italian people here. It would also make studying easier. I would also recommend to not go to a technical university during the exchange semester. I think it would have been nice to study at a more free and creative university and to use the semester abroad in order to try something different without that many limitations.



Politecnico offers courses that enable you to look more into fashion design. Here you can see some outcomes of the sewing class.



Hi! My name is Carlo. From January to May 2022, I studied Integrated Design at Parsons School of Design in New York City.

It is part of the The New School, has a high proportion of international students and is globally renowned for subjects related to art and design.

Which university did you choose for your exchange and why?  
What type of design did you look into?

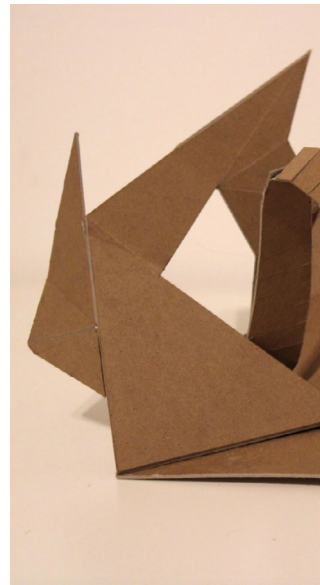
It took me quite some time to figure out where I'd like to apply. And I was not sure how to prioritize: Should I choose based on a city I gravitate towards? Or should I focus on the curriculums to find my "perfect match"? There are so many promising partner universities – and spending time in a buzzing megacity sounded equally as interesting as in a Scandinavian forest off the beaten path.

*The key motivations that made me choose Parsons in the end: A huge range of fields of design and classes dealing with highly contemporary topics, state of the art workshops and a great faculty. It was a great fit with my own interests, and I found it pretty exciting to get to know what Parsons understands of Integrated Design and how that would influence myself. Furthermore, the interdisciplinary possibilities of being able to take classes in different faculties sounded intriguing to me.*

Last but not least it's a university situated in New York City – a vibrating metropolis infamous for art and design. I wanted to visit its cultural venues, meet people, and get a glimpse on how life must feel in such a big city.

The programme started in January and ended in May. In total I've spend about six months in New York City.

How long did you stay in the exchange country?





What was your favorite project?

One highlight was a neighborhood design class in which I teamed up with a fellow student to work with a local NGO. Buy Local East Harlem commits itself to strengthen and develop the historically underserved neighborhood's economy. They closely work together with small local businesses – from bodegas to print-shops, restaurants and artists.

Yingying Hong and I designed and proposed a conceptual and visual system that enables Buy Local to curate and promote local businesses to a larger audience. Its core is a campaign consisting of maps and itineraries. They promise desirable experiences in a striving and diverse neighborhood appealing to young New Yorkers.

How was your work and workspace structured?

At Parsons I've had a thrilling schedule spanning several fields of design. I did not choose any theory or

*“Certainly, many new perspectives have opened up for me. For example, I feel encouraged to pursue an internship or master's degree abroad.”*

literature-based seminars and stuck to hands-on design projects. With each class we met once a week in Parson's facilities to share and discuss classwork. It was thoroughly documented in and accompanied by the New School's Intranet – the classes felt a bit more structured compared to KISD's but at the same time more like school.

In all my classes I followed a more or less set schedule and explored different topics, ideas, methods and materials. After some months, each student developed and presented an independent project according to his or her interests and pathways.

How did the meaning or the role of design differ in your exchange country or university in comparison to KISD?

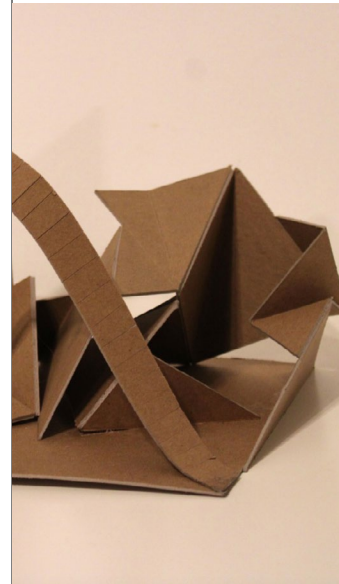
I've got the impression that there are many overlaps between KISD's and Parsons' “Integrated Design”. One of the big differences I've encountered was being able to choose classes from different faculties. While not only sharing classes with students from different semesters and individual pathways I've also taken classes together with art, illustration, film, design and (design) management students from all over the world. Since we all shared some common ground, it was a highly enriching experience to see and understand that many different perspectives on every day's classwork. It's not really a difference to KISD but in my classes students were strongly encouraged to pursue highly contemporary topics. Recurrent themes were for example technologies and media as well as current developments in society.

Being back, what influence did your semester abroad have on you?

What was the best experience?

Which cultural custom amazed you in your exchange time?

How did you prepare?



How well did you speak the language of your exchange country? Did your fluency or language skills improve during your stay?

We will see! Certainly, many new perspectives have opened up for me. For example, I feel encouraged to pursue an internship or master's degree abroad.

Exploring Parsons and finding great friends while living in a crazy city in which a simple stroll can mean an art and design information overload.

The small talk. It happens all the time and is very casual. To me it felt great and horrible at the same time. On the one hand it is really tricky to figure out which conversations were genuine. But on the other hand, you experience a lot of nice spontaneous interactions in your everyday life.

Klara Golzer went to Parsons the same time as I did. So, we teamed up supporting each other organizing our



big trip. We also spoke to KISDies who previously did the exchange.

While my English was already decent before the exchange, speaking definitely started feeling more natural than before and I think I've softened my accent a bit.



Several outcomes of some design classes at Parsons.



Hi, I'm Klara, 25 years old and in my 7th semester. Before studying at KISD, I completed an apprenticeship as a graphic designer at taste! food & beverage GmbH. I stayed for 5 1/2 months in New York City.

Which university did you choose for your exchange and why?  
What type of design did you look into?

*I chose Parsons in New York City for my semester abroad. I chose communication design because I have always had a great interest in visual communication and wanted to dive deeper into the purely graphic world, as well as editorial design.*

What was your favorite project?

My favorite project was part of my favorite class. The class was called "Multiple Edition" held by the teacher Prin Limphongpand (MoMa Senior Art Designer) and was all about editorial design and different binding and printing techniques. Within this class, we had to complete four assignments with two outcomes each. My favorite project out of this was the final project. We were able to choose our own theme and create two books from it. I chose a bilingual, revolving book that was all about inspiration. Through my time in New York, I had an incredible amount of photos and new ideas that I could incorporate. So, I decided to write only about my inspiration and include my pictures in this book. Through the abstract image editing and the attached self-written text, I tried to describe to the reader how my way of inspiration works. Within this book, I have developed another book about the inspiration of others. This one differs from the other book by size, color, and different binding technique. Another gadget in the book is the 4-page photo inserts. These serve to give the viewer the opportunity to compare the original image with the edited image to see what can be brought



How was your work and work-space structured?

out of a – at first glance, boring – image.

I had four classes a week and was able to schedule my time around those. To work in the workshops you have to reserve a spot beforehand. This must be done early enough because there are only two hours scheduled per slot. You could sit in the library or in other seating areas. Besides the classes that went every two hours and 40 minutes, you had to schedule about another eight hours per class at least per week.

Since I studied communication design at Parsons, the focus was exclusively on this area of design. Many basics were explained and tried to deepen through small exercises. You have more than one project at a time and have to deal with 4–5 classes and their assignments at the same time. This was a challenge at the beginning, but you quickly get into the system.

I learned more about the rules of typography and graphic design. I understand the grid system and the meaning behind it much better since then. What seems simple needs a lot of knowledge and practice behind it.

My semester abroad helped me to structure myself better and to try new things. Since I'm back I'm more into bookbinding and want to try more different printing and bookbinding techniques in the future as they make the design even more unique.

The best experience was learning from all the different professors and getting their input on my own projects. The input in general combined with the city was a unique experience. Meeting people from all over the world, including their cultures, inspired me a lot.

There were some initial difficulties starting with the course selection. I had to get in contact with my supervisor again and again, because I was not activated for the courses, and we did not get an introduction. Despite a Zoom meeting with the International Office and the other international students, we were not introduced to each other in the beginning. We had to ask and organize this ourselves. This was also reflected in the first weeks. You had to understand the system first. It got better after getting in touch with others and approaching people with questions. Everyone was very helpful and took the time to explain things to you and help you with the problem.

Due to the large number of different nationalities living in New York, I can't say that. Carlo and I lived in Bushwick, a borough of Brooklyn. Most of the people who live there are Mexicans, Colombians, and Puerto Ricans. This was represented on the streets by countless food stalls where you could buy fresh empanadas, tacos,

How did the meaning or the role of design differ in your exchange country or university in comparison to KISD?

How did your understanding of design change?

Being back, what influence did your semester abroad have on you?

What was the best experience?

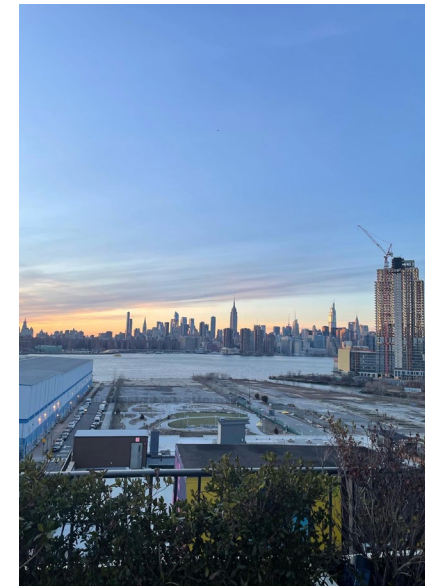
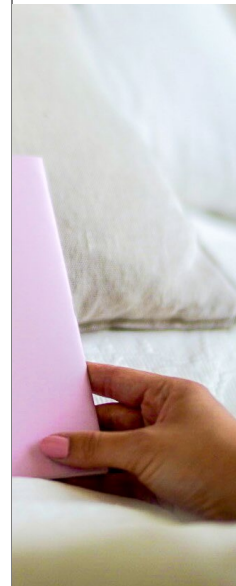
Can you share a struggle and how you overcame it?

Which cultural custom amazed you in your exchange time?

How did you prepare?

etc. Also in the small supermarkets sometimes only Spanish was spoken and national foods were sold. In summary, the cultural custom that I experienced was that many different cultures live together, and you can get a small insight into everything.

To start your semester abroad at Parsons it takes a lot of preparation. Starting with the application for a visa. This takes about two months, including the processing time. After that, you have to find accommodation. You can live in the dorms at Parsons, but they are very expensive. In addition, you need health insurance and the flight. You have to take care of your courses, possibly a scholarship, etc. But as soon as you are on-site, you are quickly rewarded.



How well did you speak the language of your exchange country? Did your fluency or language skills improve during your stay?

I had to take an English test before my stay. I passed this with level C1. However, I would say that my vocabulary and familiarity with the language has improved. Speaking every day, as well as describing my own design work has helped me feel more comfortable with the language.

Parsons not only has to offer a renowned academical programm, but New York City itself is a great city to spend some time at while being abroad.



Hej, my name is Charly and I'm in my seventh semester. I spent the last semester abroad in Stockholm, Sweden.

Which university did you choose for your exchange and why?  
What type of design did you look into?

*For my semester abroad I chose to go to Konstfack in Sweden. I was in the department of Industrial Design and the program is named "Industrial Design with focus on sustainable development". I did choose this school because of the focus on sustainability and social issues.*

Also, I'm a huge fan of Scandinavian design. I really liked the open and more "artsy" approach to design. It was exciting for me to see how industrially manufactured products are combined with the topic of sustainability.

How long did you stay in the exchange country?

I stayed in Sweden for 5½ months. The semester was 4½ months long and I travelled around for 1 more month in the end.

What was your favorite project?

My favorite project at Konstfack was within the module "Design for sustainable development – Focus on biomimicry and design from nature". This module opened my view on working for another species than the human. I learned a lot about sustainability and how to integrate it in my projects. The module was structured in a theoretical part in the first two weeks and a practical section in the last four weeks. During this time, we had different lectures from people working in the area of sustainability.

Our final project in this module is called "Be and Bee". It was exhibited at the rooftop of "Kulturhuset" in Stockholm. For the project we had to choose one species that is listed on the red list of Stockholm Stad and we had to



use a multispecies design approach. For our project “Be and Bee” we decided to work for the Reseda bee. By analyzing the species, we developed a self-sufficient system, where the bee can eat, drink and nest. On top of that we were inspired by the reuse of nature. That is why we came up with the idea of reusing straws from the rooftop bar to create little nesting places. So not only the bee is integrated in this design but also the human starts to interact with it and sees more value in their waste.

The biggest difference to KISD is having a class and a classroom. There were 14 people in my class and everyone had an assigned table to work on. My workdays were every weekday from 9 to 16 o'clock. Every day at 12 we had a break for one hour where my class would sit together and eat lunch. In total, I had five modules that were accomplished one after the other. I have always worked on only one project and never had several things at the same time. Another big difference to KISD: At Konstfack you could not choose your modules, but the school structured everything beforehand. However, this had the consequence that I had the feeling that the teaching was more successful.

I would not say that Konstfack and KISD use a different concept of design. Unlike KISD, at Konstfack you choose your focus through different study programs before you start. Possible areas are Industrial Design, Interior Architecture and Furniture Design, Jewelry and Corpus Design, Graphic Design and Ceramic/Glass.

I wouldn't say my understanding of design changed in Sweden. My time at Konstfack showed me how they approach the area of industrial design. I got to know how you can connect industrial design with a sustainability approach. Getting to know the tension between the terms, which are actually completely contradictory, was very interesting for me. Also, I had to accept the fact that the field of industrial design is larger than I thought and still presents itself with many directions in which I can go.

The semester at Konstfack showed me that I want to go towards the direction of industrial design. It helped me to dedicate one semester only to this design area. It also showed me how inspiring it can be to go abroad and break out of your normal routine. Also, I feel influenced by the Scandinavian form language. I hope to incorporate this knowledge in my future projects. Another aspect that hopefully influenced me was the way of working at Konstfack and especially in my class. My classmates were incredibly good at finding appropriate methods to support our design process. It was ex-

How was your work and workspace structured?

How did the meaning or the role of design differ in your exchange country or university in comparison to KISD?

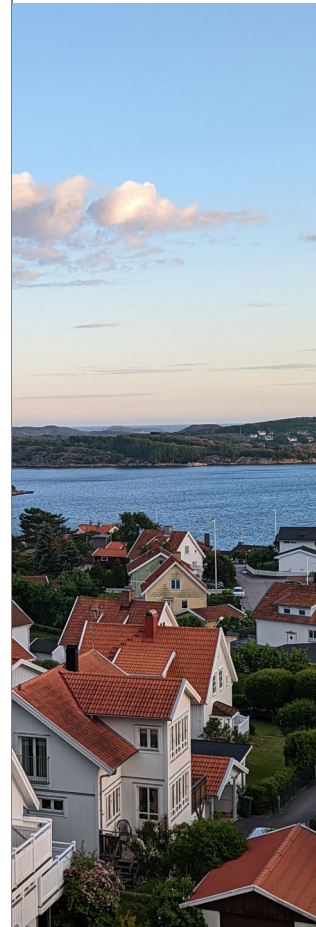
How did your understanding of design change?

Being back, what influence did your semester abroad have on you?

What was the best experience?

citing to see how quickly they could come up with ideas for a wide variety of workshops. I was very impressed with the amount of drawings and small prototypes I made in only one week. I hope to continue working this way or at least be influenced by it.

It's hard to decide what was the best experience I had. For me as a person it felt good to get out of my Cologne “Hamsterad” and as a design student it opened my horizon on design and studying design. Nevertheless, when I think about that question a little longer, I feel like the possibilities I had in Sweden were pretty amazing. I could go to school at any time, workshops were open and I could use every machine I got an introduction to. Also having the possibility to talk to my classmates in person helped a lot. I got super lucky with the people in my class. The class was very mixed in their interests and abilities, which gave a lot of inspiration for conversations, at the same time there was a cool exchange, and everyone could learn from each other.



Besides some impressions of the Konstfack and Sweden you can see the outcome of the project “Be and Bee”.



My name is Esther Kantorek. I grew up in a small village close to Bad Neuenahr-Ahrweiler. I am 22 years old and started studying at KISD in 2019. I have spent my last semester abroad in Tel Aviv, Israel.

Which university did you choose for your exchange and why?  
What type of design did you look into?

*I chose the Holon Institute of Technology in Israel. I was interested in learning more about product design and spending some time in the workshops to get more practical experience. Through the students who already spent their semester in Israel, I found out that it was very popular for industrial design.*

The projects at Holon Institute of Technology interested me a lot. They are about including different abled people, sustainability and putting more focus on a produced outcome in the end of the project.

How long did you stay in Israel?

I stayed from the first of February until the 19th of June – four and a half months.

What was your favorite project?

My favorite project was my industrial design studio course. This is the main course for the students over there with meetings once a week. Our task was about small-scale growing. Due to the Covid changes people were forced to stay home and some people started gardening, planting their own vegetables, herbs, and flowers. Thus, it became our assignment to create a tool for small-scale growing at home. After finding a topic of our interest and defining our user, we decided on a product and started sketching, building models and in the end a working product. In addition, we had to create a product book about our product, finances and marketing, posters and prepare a presentation. I produced the Spirulina Twister, a glass in which Spirulina algae can grow and easily be harvested.



How was your work and work-space structured?

ted through the filter. The function can be compared with a French press.

We had weekly meetings and received feedback on these. I worked in the workshop in HIT together with other students and did the laptop work in my apartment from home.

How did the meaning or the role of design differ in your exchange country or university in comparison to KISD?

I had the impression that the students in Tel Aviv took their studies very seriously. At KISD they are also taken seriously but it is more about exchange, creating a concept, and having a good process. And due to a bit more pressure the role of design is evolving more into actually building something and having a final outcome. The interesting thing about Israel is that many people with different backgrounds live there. In one project students rebuilt old kitchen devices they found in their

*“It was very important to me to learn about design in a different context with different people, who had other influences in their lives.”*

grandparents' kitchen. For example, one participant built a Persian baking form. But there were also influences from the Netherlands, Egypt, Morocco etc.

How did your understanding of design change?

It was very important to me to learn about design in a different context with different people, who had other influences in their lives. I think I learned that no matter what experience you have, what age you are, or what language you speak, design is a way of communicating that is much more international and impactful than I previously thought.

Being back, what influence did your semester abroad have on you?

I will be less afraid to create something, to try to implement ideas and less afraid of failing. I somehow managed there without speaking Hebrew and being 4 years younger than everyone. That strengthened me.

What was the best experience?

Apart from all the experiences in the courses, the best experience for me was the friendships I made. Being on your own in a foreign country and discovering everything brings people together in a different way. The community, hospitality, and this escape (in a good way) from “real” life in Germany was the best experience.

Can you share a struggle and how you overcame it?

One big struggle was the language. Most of the courses were held in Hebrew. Since I don't speak Hebrew I did not understand much. So, in the beginning the professor asked one of the students to translate the whole lesson to me. Listening to the professor and then translating to me was not that easy. Throughout the semester we did not really find the perfect solution, but I became friends with some of the students so they would

Which cultural custom amazed you in your exchange time?

take turns with translating. In addition, some students started holding their presentations in English so I could follow them.

On Friday's families come together to have the Shabbat dinner and celebrate the Shabbat. They turn off their electronic devices, cook, sing, talk and spend time together. Some more religious families go to the synagogue. I got invited to several Shabbat dinners and it was always a very warm and welcoming atmosphere. It felt right to have a tradition like this and take the time to be together. Even the students who moved out from their families continued doing the Shabbat dinner in a more modern way, but it still created the same comforting and safe space.

How did you prepare?

I think one can never fully prepare for what you will learn and see abroad. But in my case, I watched YouTube videos, contacted students who already did their semester abroad in Israel and read the website of “Auswärtiges Amt” a million times.

How well did you speak Hebrew? Did your fluency or language skills improve during your stay?

Before traveling I knew how to say “hello, thank you, sorry”: “Schalom, Toda, Slicha”. During the stay I learned a few more words, some sentences. But I think living in a country is not enough to learn the language. I would have loved to take a language course but sadly it was not possible.





Left: Class at HIT  
Right: Outcome of the industrial design studio course with the task of small-scale growing.

# MED S E

## MEDes

The MEDes is a unique network of seven leading European design schools. During the five year program, students are integrated into three design education systems and join a strong international community. The best design school is not just one school.

*“The best design school is not just one school.”*

Country	City	University	
Portugal	Aveiro	DeCa Universidade de Aveiro	50 – 53
Italy	Milan	Polimi Politecnico di Milano &	54 – 59
France	Paris	ENSCI–Les Ateliers École Nationale Supérieure de Création Industrielle	



My name is Elena, and I am a KISD student since semester 2018/19. After two years of studying, I decided to start the MEDes program, so I went abroad to study for two years.

Which university did you choose for your exchange and why?

What type of design did you look into?

*For my first year I decided to go to Aveiro, Portugal. Why did I choose Aveiro? I was always very interested in the Portuguese language and the course there were just halfway in English. It was the perfect opportunity to “jump in the cold water” and learn Portuguese. Furthermore, I always had the feeling that at KISD they don’t teach me any basics and the study plan of the University of Aveiro sounded very structured. Finally: It’s sunny, warm and you get to live close to the beach.*

What type of design did you look into?

The university of Aveiro offers one Design course: Integrated Design. But it couldn’t have been more different from the way we learn at KISD. I’ve got many, many grades, professors prepared lectures, I had to write exams... And we worked on the same project with the view of product design, communication and identity, business, and technical skills.

How long did you stay in the exchange country?

As I am a MEDes student I stayed for two semesters which equaled ten months.

What was your favourite project?

My favorite project was “NATAM”. The task was so-



How was your work and workspace structured?

How did the meaning or the role of design differ in your exchange country or university in comparison to KISD?

How did your understanding of design change?

Being back, what influence did your year abroad have on your design praxis?

something like “create a product, a startup and set up a “kickstarter” campaign. The focus was on the material and techniques we would use.

We created “NATAM” – a fair fashion brand using local linen. During the process we also visited a linen factory. The special thing about NATAM is that we produced clothes without scraps. The sewing patterns were square and every centimeter was used in the clothing. As a prototype we created a dress, but I think the principle has a lot of potential. I especially liked to rethink traditional way of sewing and pattern making and see how new styles appear from that. We also experimented with natural coloring of the linen in the end.

The main part of the project took part in the subject “Projecto”, which we had two times a week for four hours. The first weeks had to be online, because Portugal went into a short lockdown. We were a group of three and worked a lot with Miro and presentations. Afterwards it took place in the room of my class, so we could also use it as our workspace. During these times professors from different design fields were strolling around the classroom and we could stop them, talk about our progress and ask for advice. Additionally, we had subjects like Gpo (Gestão De Projeto e Orçamentação) in which we learned to write a project plan and calculate how to make a business from the project.

I have the feeling that when we start at KISD we are kind of all in a same level. During study everyone finds their own strengths and interests in the big field of design and becomes more specific. In comparison to that in UA you are always with the same people in the same subjects learning the same things. When they graduate after three years they have a lot of skills – more than most people at KISD – but everyone has the same skills and a similar understanding and style of design.

I gained a lot of basic skills, which are useful in the everyday work of a designer. But my overall understanding didn’t change so much.

I always have a notebook with me and try to start working on my computer later in the process. At UA they put a big focus on drawing classes. While you are in a group most people use their paper notebook – not the electronic one notebook. And they draw amazingly! Being back at KISD I appreciate a lot that we do not get grades and don’t feel a comparison between our peers, because we all do different stuff.



“NATAM” – a fair fashion brand using local linen was created during a project. Here you can see some impressions of its outcome.





E



Hi I am Lilly, a MEDES Student from KISD.

Which university did you choose for your exchange and why?  
What type of design did you look into?

*I went to Politecnico in Milan because of the huge fashion design department and to ENSCI because of its hands-on learning approach. I am especially interested in working with textiles and fashion, so Ensci and Politecnico were the perfect match for me.*

It's a bit tricky to get into the textile department of Ensci, but Politecnico in general is very open when it comes to interdisciplinary learning and switching design fields or courses.

How long did you stay at each school and what were your favorite projects?

I stayed for two semesters at each school.

One of my favorite projects was my thesis project, which I finished at Ensci. I designed a sustainable burial object and its ritual. The topic of burial and dealing with death was super interesting for me, because it was very out of the box and a topic that I didn't pay a lot of attention to before.

My main focus was to support the relatives of the deceased person in the mourning process by using the coffin as a central element of representation in burials. I created a sustainable alternative to regular coffins by working with natural fabrics and minimizing the amount of wood used.

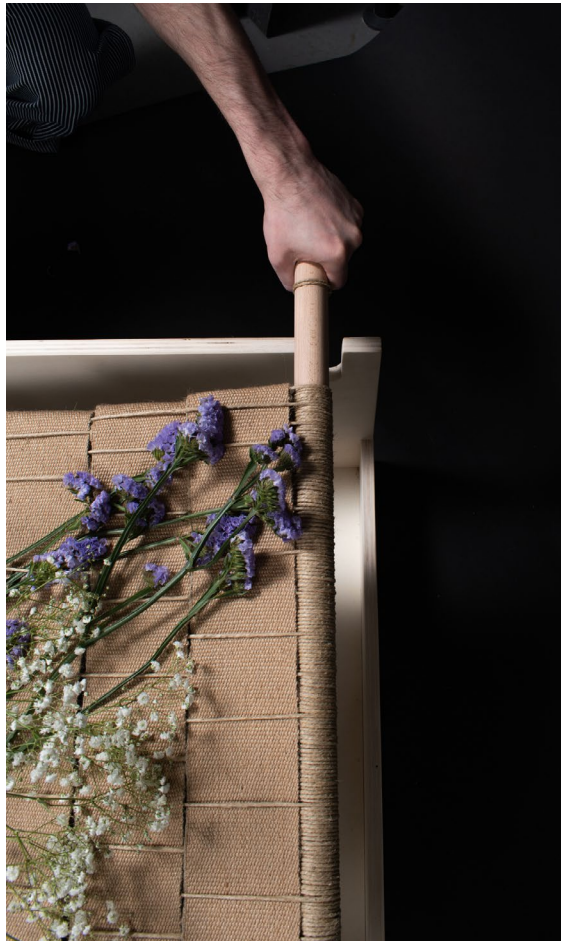
How was your work and workspace structured?

I was lucky to have my own workspace at ENSCI which was a big plus considering Parisian flat sizes. There is a lot of room to experiment and "get dirty" in

How did the meaning or the role of design differ in your exchange country or university in comparison to KISD?

the space and workshops. Because the school is open 24/7 it can be quite easy to forget what a normal work/life balance looks like, but in stressful times it was a blessing.

I had the impression that design, especially in Politecnico, was seen from a more technical point of view than from a speculative one. It is really project focused and prepares students very good for their professional design careers since the big projects are mainly in cooperation with an organization.

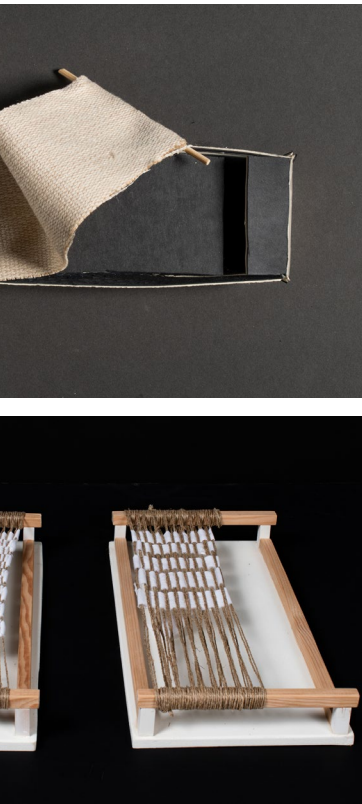


*“I was lucky to have my own workspace at ENSCI which was a big plus considering Parisian flat sizes. There is a lot of room to experiment and “get dirty” in the space and workshops.”*



Outcome of the thesis, which was a sustainable burial object.







# SHORT MOBILITY

## Short Mobility

Sometimes, for a variety of reasons, a semester or year abroad is not an option. Short mobilities, like a summer or winter school a joint workshop or blended intensive ERASMUS program are the easier way to jump into an international experience while studying. It could also be a nice way to get started before actually going abroad for a longer period. Within a short mobility, students collaborate in international teams and make their (first) intercultural experiences. The time spend abroad is usually short, experimental and intense.

## Blended Intensive ERASMUS program

Blended Intensive ERASMUS program (BIP) is a new format within the ERASMUS program. Within this project at least 3 ERASMUS universities and 15 students are involved. You start online and meet up at one of the universities for about a week. The travel is founded through ERASMUS and the host university gets ERASMUS funds to realize the program.

## International Exchange Projects

The International Exchange Projects designate a special form of projects in which students experience intensive cooperation in a bilateral exchange with a foreign partner university. The topics of these cooperation projects are located in both universities and thus also address intercultural aspects. They are chosen in such a way that they can be worked on in both countries.

## Seasonal Mobility

Summer or Winter School for example. Hybrid or on-place for one or two weeks.

Bea Timmermann

VILNIUS TECH

*“It is always nice to have this kind of exchange projects, from which not only the end result benefits but you can also learn a lot and gain new impressions.”*

Country	City	University	
UK	Glasgow	GSA The Glasgow School of Art	62 – 67
Italy	Milan	Polimi Politecnico di Milano	68 – 73
Lithuania	Vilnius	VILNIUS TECH Vilnius Gediminas Technical University	74 – 79

Hi, I'm Ela and I'm currently in the sixth semester of my bachelor at KISD.



Which university did you choose for your exchange and why?  
What type of design did you look into?

*I found the topic “Non-human centered design” interesting and always wanted to be part of the winter school. From the beginning, I thought it was great that everything was so well organized.*

How did you prepare for GSA?

We had to write a motivation letter and there was a brief meeting to prepare everything.

How long did you stay there and what did the overall trip look like?

We arrived in Edinburgh on Saturday and spent one evening and one morning there together before taking the bus to Forres. The GSA had organized everything for us: We stayed in small farmhouses, two at a time, which were super nice. The next days we always spent on the campus. At the end of the week, there was a closing party with everyone together (i.e. GSA + KISD + Elisava), where we ate traditional Scottish food and danced the céilí (a traditional Scottish dance).

What was your favorite part of the project? Please introduce the project a bit. How was the trip structured?

The whole project was about addressing the relationship between humans and nature/environment. Our task was to create an artifact for a living encyclopedia, in which we combine technological and natural elements and place them on garment. In addition, we should film a video that shows the experience and get the artifact 3D-scanned, so one is able to see its relationship to the body.

On our first day we were to explore the Highlands and each group was given a different route. As a task we were supposed to collect things that described our route. Many groups collected rocks, twigs, moss, leaves... etc. Then we chose a garment and applied our findings on it

How was your work and work-space structured?

as a way to make the experience wearable. The next days, we worked on our concept, included different kinds of sensors into our work and specified the triangle between technology, textile and forest souvenirs. Every group prepared the video and on the last day, all the different outcomes were shown. It was such a nice diversity of projects; every group interpreted the various “ingredients” so differently!

We were on campus every day from 9am to 5pm and were picked up and driven there by buses. There was a large workroom, and each group had their own table to work at. Besides the project work, you could attend interaction design workshops or make seed bombs.

In addition, the prototyping workshops were all very close and there were contact persons for the individual topics (interaction design, prototyping) that you could ask at any time.

There wasn't that one particular influence, but it was interesting to learn about a new school and a campus that is very different from KISD's: The GSA Innovation Campus in Forres is located in the Highlands and is completely surrounded by forest and farmland. On a personal level, it was exciting to work with people from different countries: India, China, Scotland, Spain, Ireland...

The evenings together and the intercultural exchange. Everyone was super nice and open, and I was able to meet great people.

I don't know much about interaction design, but it had to be integrated into the artifact and time was limited. Luckily, it was a teamwork task and my teammates were very strong in coding.

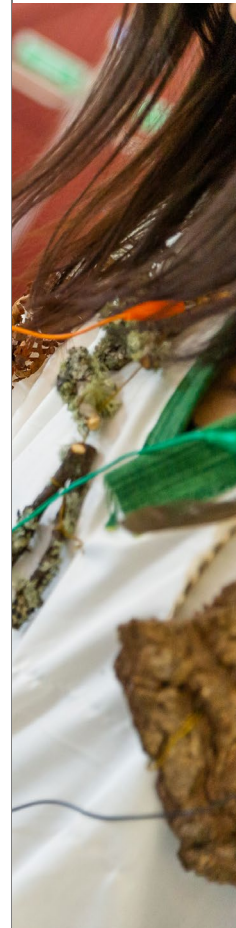
The people in Scotland are very sensitive to food intolerances. Everything is labeled, so if you have an intolerance, you can still eat at restaurants and find something! Also: Céilí! So much fun dancing in a big group.

Being back, what influence did the GSA have on you?

What was the best experience overall?

Can you share a struggle and how you overcame it?

Which cultural custom amazed you in your time during GSA?







Impressions of the created artifacts for a living encyclopedia. Here, technological and natural elements were combined and placed on garment.







Hello, I am Robert Hartmann, I started my studies at KISD in 2020. Last Semester I decided to join the MEDes program, therefore I am now in my first MEDes year which I got accepted for at ENSCI – Paris.

How and why did you decide to participate at MEDes Workshop?

*In order to participate in the MEDes program you need to attend the MEDes Workshop. The workshop is being hosted by one of the seven design schools, which constitute the MEDes Network. In the workshop itself you get in touch with other MEDes students and their respective schools. The first-year students finish their application prior to the workshop, student who are applying for the second year, are asked to present themselves and their work in front of the MEDes board.*

How did you prepare for MEDes Workshop?

There was one online meeting prior to the workshop – a digital get-together on “Wonder”. Here, you had first chats with the other MEDes students, got to know their motivation for the program and got some first insight into their schools.

How long was your trip and what did it look like?

The trip was a five-day short trip. The first day was a city tour through Milan, the other four days we attended a workshop and worked in teams.

What was your favorite part of the project? Please introduce it a bit

One program item was an interview with MEDes alumnus, we had the chance to ask them all sorts of questions, from the design field that they ended up working in, to the income they make. It was interesting to see



How was your work and work-space structured?

Being back, what influence did the workshop have on you?

What was the best experience overall?

Can you share a struggle and how you overcame it?

Which cultural custom amazed you in your time during the MEDes Workshop in Milan?

in which way they have benefited from the MEDes program and to feel the family atmosphere within the MEDes Network.

We started the workshop with a “MEDes creature”. The idea was to create a fictional creature with certain traits which meant to represent the different attributes students of the MEDes program acquire or need in the MEDes program. For our second task every group created a small project that was meant to facilitate the decision process for the MEDes schools. For the two exercises we worked in groups of five. In the end each group presented both their creature and the small project regarding the MEDes facilitation itself.

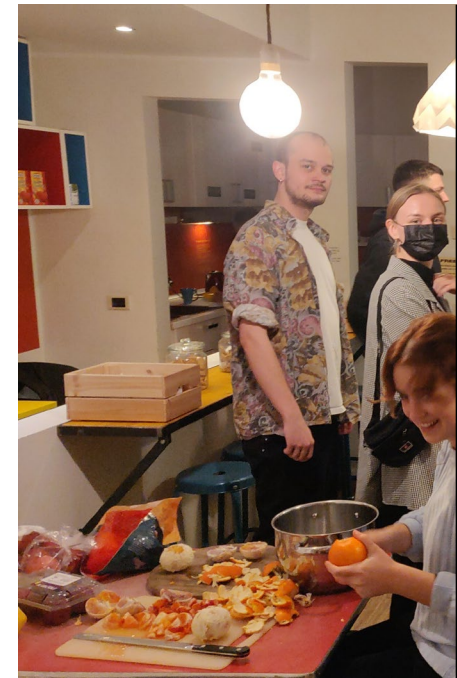
The MEDes workshop is a great example for the core idea of the MEDes: Studying at different universities, benefiting from different educational systems and a cultural exchange between Europeans. Prior to the workshop, there was uncertainty about the school that you will be studying at, as well as a very vague image of the MEDes itself. Afterwards my motivation to study abroad was growing bigger, and I felt ready for my first destination. Speaking with other students makes you realize, that moving abroad for two years is a big step, being accompanied with doubts and uncertainty.

The best experience of the workshop was the exchange with the other MEDes students. You find yourself in a context with people that like their design schools and yet seek the opportunity to get a different inside and a new cultural experience. Everyone is facing the same uncertainty and perspective which is truly bonding.

Although you can prioritize the different schools for your MEDes years, you never know which school you will be studying at. When I considered the program, I felt that any school will have its advantages and downsides as well as the respective cities. Right before the placements were announced, I did get a little anxious because this very moment is deciding where you will live and study for the next year.

I realized that the whole decision process is a rather vague one, since you can only take so many aspects into account and finally you do not actually know what you are deciding for.

Due to the shortness of the trip and the MEDes context we stayed mostly in our group, every now and then though the Italian culture glanced through. Cappuccino and all sorts of coffee beverages were shockingly cheap. Also, the Aperitivo culture was more present than in Germany.





Middle: A street in Milan  
Left and right: Impressions of the social aspects  
of the MEDes Workshop.





Hi, I'm Bea and I'm in my seventh semester at KISD! Since most of my studies took place during the Corona pandemic, the Summer School in Vilnius was my first project abroad and I was therefore pretty excited about it.

How and why did you decide to participate in the Summer School?  
What type of design did you look into?

*In my case, the Summer School was a (selectable) short-term project on the expanded field of animation with focus on creative artificial intelligence. The project took place in cooperation with three other universities from Lithuania, Finland, and Germany. I was particularly interested in working with AI and the novel text-to-image approach, but I also found it very exciting to work on an international project with other universities.*

How did you prepare for the Summer School?

I did not prepare for it at all and ended up paying way too much money for an apartment because I did not bother to organize it earlier. 0/10 – cannot recommend!

How long did you stay there and what did the overall trip look like?

We spent two weeks on the project in Vilnius at the hosting university Vilnius Gediminas Tech. During our first week on site, we mainly participated in different workshops, some of which took place via Zoom and some in Vilnius. The goal of the project was to create a projection mapping for the city hall for the 700th anniversary of the city. Therefore, there were workshops on motion capture, projection mapping, sound production and creative artificial intelligence. Each university brought along a certain know-how, which was shared with all other participants of the summer school.

during the workshops. In the second week, we used the knowledge and techniques learned in the workshops and seminars to substantiate and realize our ideas for the project.

Especially in the first week, we went out and explored the city after the workshops. Together with students and sometimes also teachers of the hosting university we visited the city and got a lot of great tips about museums and cultural events, where to go out for dinner and so on.

What I really liked was the exchange with students from other universities. We basically worked as foreigners on a project about the anniversary of a city that all of us had visited for the first time. Due to that we had a great cooperation with the students from Vilnius Tech, who shared lots of valuable knowledge about (pop-)culture and other things worth knowing about Vilnius and Lithuania. Of course, this also allowed us to get to know the city in a completely different way, as we spent several afternoons and evenings together. It is always nice to have this kind of exchange projects, from which not only the end result benefits but you can also learn a lot and gain new impressions.

The project work was structured in such way that we participated in workshops during the first week and implemented what we learned during the next week. There were also a few pre-meetings beforehand, where we shared our early ideas with each other and had the opportunity to form small groups.

On site in Vilnius, we were provided with workspaces and equipment to work alongside the other students. We students from KISD arrived already one week earlier than the students from KHM and Tampere University, so we collaborated particularly a lot with the students from Vilnius Tech. Since each university approached the project with a certain focus, most of the small groups formed within the respective university. For example, the Finnish and Lithuanian students worked on a game, which they had already been working on in advance. Nevertheless, we exchanged ideas with each other, gave each other feedback, and some students from other universities also worked with us KISDies on AI animations.

It is hard to say after such a short time, but at Vilnius Tech, for example, the program is much more focused on teaching technical skills than it is at KISD. As a result, the focus in terms of design was on technically correct implementation. Compared to other universities, you always notice that studying at KISD is less strict than elsewhere.

What was your favorite part of the project? Please introduce the project a bit. How was the trip structured?

How was your work and workspace structured?

How did the meaning or the role of design differ at the Summer School in comparison to KISD?

How did your understanding of design change through the project?

What was the best experience overall?

Which cultural custom amazed you during your time in Vilnius?

Being back, what influence did the project have on you?

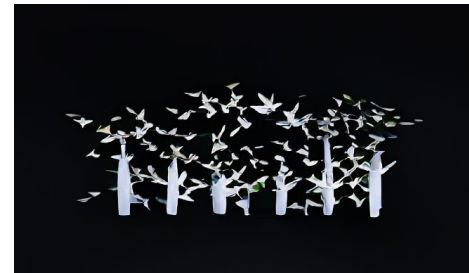
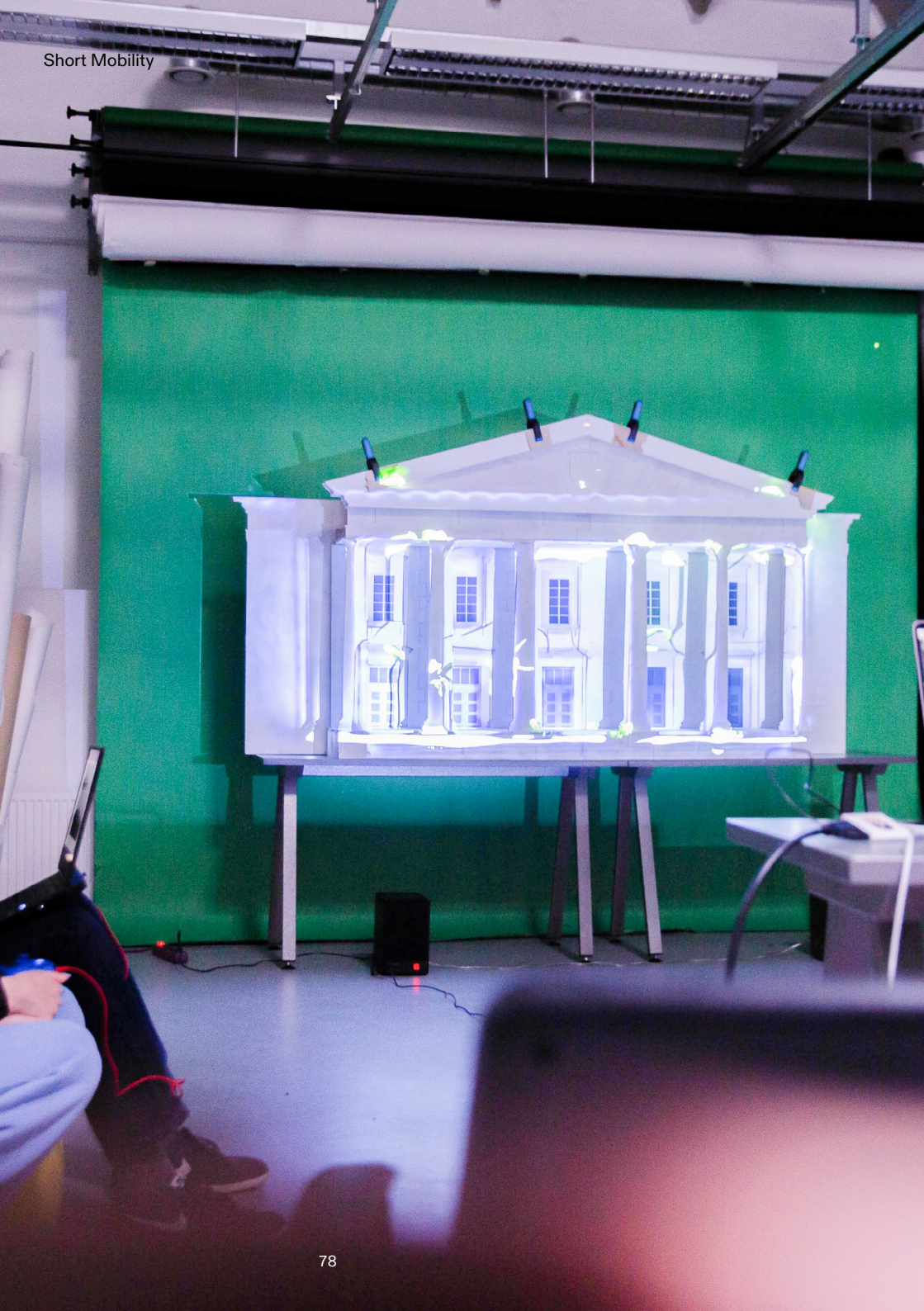
Working (together) with AI is a quite new field and by working on the project I was of course able to expand my design scope a lot. During the project, I learned a new “tool” which I can use in many ways and in many different projects. In terms of understanding design, the use of AI naturally raises a lot of questions, which were also mentioned during our final project presentation in Vilnius. These mainly relate to whether AI can replace things or not, and to what extent a work generated with AI involves a creative contribution of its own or not. Without getting into this discussion, however, I can say that my understanding of design has at least broadened.

My personal best experience was walking around the city. The campus of Vilnius Tech was located a bit outside the city center but was within 30–40 minutes walking distance from my accommodation. Vilnius is a very green city, and it is really beautiful! But another part of it was also the people I met in the project and with whom I spent lots of working hours and free time there.

I will always remember the incredible hospitality and helpfulness from everyone. The faculty and staff of the host university were of course very friendly and made a great effort to provide us with plenty of cultural opportunities and did their utmost to ensure that we had a good time at Vilnius. This may be a small thing, but we were provided, for example, coffee and cookies every morning; then some homemade (!) snacks at noon. Also, the students organized various activities and took part in them with us in their free time and showed us around the city, even despite their exam period.

I would say that the stay was definitely very enriching, and I was able to broaden my perspective on various things. Through the in-depth work on AI and the text-to-image approach, I was also able to improve my skills and opened up a new field of topics that I continued to work on afterwards and that I was able to integrate into my workflow.





Left: Outcome: the videos are based on AI-generated images, which were adapted to a 3D model of the city hall using Blender and enhanced with classical animation techniques.

Right: In Užupis (an independent republic in the middle of Vilnius) the unofficial mayor is a cat.

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