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# INTRODUCTION

I knew that I wanted to go on exchange from the very start of my studies at KEA. But I had no idea of where I wished to go – this quickly changed when I looked at the partner schools on [global.kea.dk](http://global.kea.dk). Here I discovered Paris college of art and as I come from a background of fine arts, I saw this as the perfect chance to combine my entrepreneurship and design degree with art. I made my choice entirely because of the school and the classes it offered. Therefore, my expectations of the school were quite big, but my expectations to Paris pretty low.

## EXPERIENCES AT THE HOST UNIVERSITY

I had a lot of trouble choosing my classes – there were too many great choices but not a lot of info. The school sent out a list of all the classes and course descriptions, but its very hard to know what each class actually includes. The school was very helpful and they even provide individual online check-ins where they help you choose classes.

The other element that made my choice so hard was that KEA also has to accept all the classes. I thought I could choose freely, but I had to change my choices many times to get it accepted by KEA. This is mostly because I wanted many classes from the fine art department, but KEA wanted me to choose more from the Communication and Design department.

The school calls the first week of school 'and and drop-week', but don't be fooled by this. We were suppose to be able to test of classes and decide what we wanted. I tried to make changes to my schedual, but I had a lot of trouble because all the classes were filled, so it was very hard to make changes at this point. I would suggest being quite sure about your choises and not waiting for the add and drop- week.

With all this being said I still ended up with classes that I loved! And some of the ones I loved the most was the ones that I didn't really expect much from. I will introduce them all on the following pages.



## 1. MOTION GRAPHICS

This class was a great intro to graphic design. I had never worked with Aftereffects before, but the teacher made it very easy to follow along. In each lesson we would get a short introduction to a new method in the program and then we would have time to make our own version. This made it very hands on and gave me a very good understanding of a very complicated program. I do think that this class would be a little easy if you already have knowledge of aftereffects – but the teacher was great at adapting the assignments to each student.



## 2. SOPHMORE DRAWING 1

I was quite surprised by this class. I thought it would be a technical class where the teacher would give us a pretty clear assignment, for example trying different drawing styles, still-life, croquis or similar. But I was completely wrong. This class was much more experimental. The teacher would give us an introduction to a theme and then all the students had to produce works of art and make personal reference files. The teacher expected a lot, which really inspired me to dig deep and go into my own artistic development. During my semester I was especially happy with the themes I have mentioned on the next page.



- **Theme 1: Accumulations/repetition/horror vacui**

Here is an example of the brief we got from the teacher:

*The term "horror vacui"—coming from Latin and meaning "fear of empty space"—is the process in visual art of filling the entire surface of a piece, often with great detail. A number of artists create works which use drawing in the sense of assimilating the notions of accumulation and repetition, giving a certain dynamic, and even a sense of vertigo to their creations. We find these ideas in works from 'art brut' but also in those of contemporary artists.*



- **Theme 2: Secret as...**

This was the last and final project which all sophmores had to make. We had 4 weeks to create a piece. If you want you can choose to show your works to a jury – I saw this as a great opportunity, so in the final week I had 5 proffessors as my jury, taking time to evaluate my work and give great feedback.





### 3. EDITORIAL DESIGN

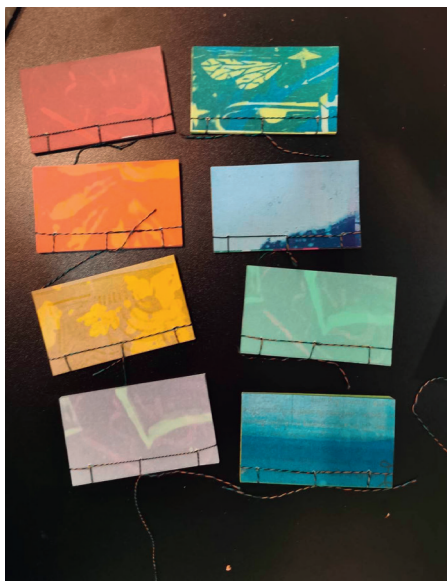
This was one of the classes that I did not plan to attend. I ended up in the class because most of my other wishes were filled. As I already had been working as a graphic designer in Copenhagen for 4 years, I feared that we would be learning all the basics of InDesign that I already knew. But this was not the case. The class offers a much more creative view on editorial design, it encourages students to experiment with paper, fonts, bookbinding and design. It was very inspirational and this ended up being one of my favorite classes. I also combined this class with other classes – using prints from Printmaking and graphic design to create very interesting little books.





#### 4. GRAPHIC DESIGN

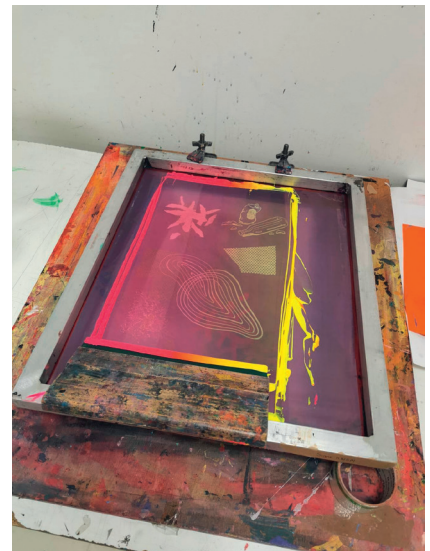
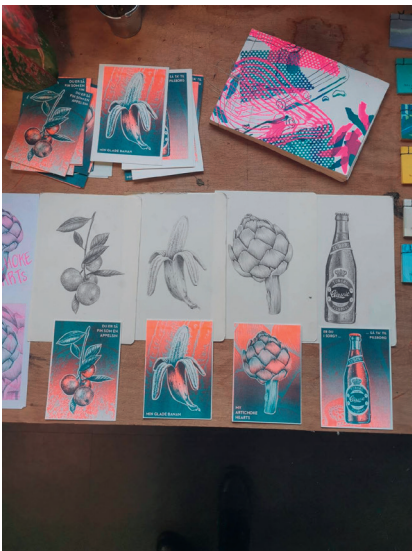
This was probably the most confusing class of them all. Just as I had feared that editorial design would be an intro to all the basics, I thought this would be the same – but I was very wrong. I would warn people not to expect an intro to the adobe package in this class. For people who wishes for this I would recommend a class in the foundation year where classes are much more technical. This class was very loose in the sense that I did not have a lot of direction. The teacher was very inspiring and took us for many great fieldtrips to exhibitions, meetings with artists, printshops and his own personal printing studio where we made our own offset prints. Its hard for me to say exactly what you learn in this class, but it is definitely the class that has given me most inspiration.





## 5. PRINT MATTERS INTRODUCTION

My favorite class! If you attend PCA I would definitely recommend taking a printing class. This class was for silkscreen and RISSO printing, but the school also offers linoleum and wood printing classes. At first I thought it was a little annoying that this class was scheduled at 17.00-20.00, because I was not used to evening classes, but it was the perfect end to a long day in school. In the course you learn every step to the process of silkscreen printing – it is very hands on, from creating your design to mixing colors and learning how to make a perfect print. At the end we had to display all our prints and even make little books from all the leftover prints we had. A very fun and hands on class!





## 6. PAINTING AT LARGE

In this class I had many of the same thoughts as for the drawing class. I also thought I would be thought more techniques and have assignments. But just as the drawing class this was very experimental. I suppose I should have guessed it from the name of the class – Painting at Large – the teacher encouraged us to try new methods of painting. You can paint with anything; on every material you can imagine. We went to see exhibitions and went to a place called La reserve des Arts where you can buy very cool and cheap materials. I would recommend going to that place if you need materials for all of the classes! The class was fun, but I don't think this class is for everyone – you should wish to work on your personal artistic language. It is not a class for someone wanting to learn how to paint.





## SOCIAL AND CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

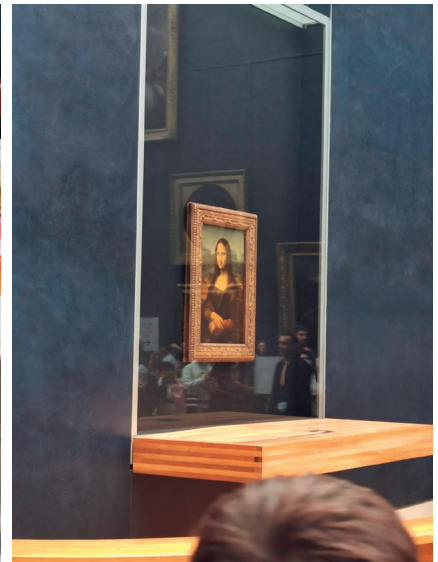
I had never been to Paris, so of course there were a lot of things I wanted to see, like the Eiffel tower, Sacré Coeur, Louvre and all the normal tourist spots. I went to see many of the sights, walking and running around the city and I even rented a scooter with a friend one day and cruised around. But all of that was not the most important for me. I lived in the 18<sup>th</sup> arrondissement, very close to the station Porte de Clignancourt with another student from KEA. Some people told us that this area was a bit rough and everyone we met told us to be careful. Honestly, we had no problems – the area was perfect for us and we never felt unsafe, but it was not the cleanest area and there were a lot of ‘interesting’ people around. Super cheap thrift shopping in ‘Guerrisol’ and ‘Frishop’, nice restaurants on every corner and possibility of finding cheap bars. My roomie and I often went to a bar where there were a pool table – this turned out to be a great way to meet people and we ended up meeting two great friends that we hung out with the whole semester! After meeting them they took us to concerts, parties, many bars and showed us the right way to play petanque – this truly was an amazing way to experience the city. I did not hang out with many people from my school, most of them were quite a lot younger than me and I didn’t really try to create many connections – but this was my own choice! I was simply too busy with schoolwork and all the people I had met around the city! I also continued to work freelance for my job in Denmark, so I always had a lot on the to-do-list.





## PRACTICAL EXPERIENCES

I travelled to Paris by plane one week before starting my studies and it was great to have some time to get settled before starting school. I was extremely difficult finding an apartment and many people warned me about scammers. Me and another girl from KEA decided to look for an apartment together. She was going to study at another college, which was important for us, so we would have some time apart and at the same time have some comfort from a friendly face at home. We ended up booking an Airbnb last minute for the whole period – we got a big discount but it was still pretty expensive! Its hard to say how expensive it will be to live in Paris – in general it is not a super cheap city. We mostly found cheaper restaurants, bars and tried to cook at home even though our kitchen was tiny. But it is was important for me to go out and experience the city and eat good food in the short period I was there. I was 27 years old when i went, this also made it more expensive, cause most of the museums are free or cheaper if you are 26 or under. Living in a place like the 18<sup>th</sup> arrondissement (or another outer part of the city) will definitely make it cheaper. It is also important to remember that you will not get Erasmus+ when you attend this school. This is very unfortunate, but you can easily apply for 'Udlandsstipendie' and SU will then cover the expenses of the school tuition. I made sure to save up the money that I did not get from Erasmus, and I definitely still think it is worth it if you love a more artistic approach to your studies.





## CONCLUSION

I loved my stay in Paris! The 4 months went by so quick and wish I could have extended my stay. The school was very unorganized and it took me a while to get the hang of things, but once I had settled it was nearly over, so the only thing I would change is to have more time. I am very happy that I made my decision because I was passionate about the school and not the place – it fulfilled all my expectations!

I think me and my roomie were very lucky to meet great people where ever we went, but at the same time I know that it is very much about the mindset we had. We said yes to most of the things we got invited to and went there with an open mind! We had a lot of friends and family visiting, but I thought it was a bit too much, it was way more important for me to have time to explore with the friends I found in Paris – so I would recommend not making plans for people to visit in every weekend! I have made amazing friends, expanded my artistic side, tried to live in a new country and had a lot of fun. I will definetly be going back!

