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Politecnico di Milano

February 22' - July 22'



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I had been my intention to take a semester abroad since we heard about it at my very first semester. Reasons why it became the fifth semester was out of my hands, since at both my third and fourth semester was occupied by covid.

My name is Frederik, I was going abroad in my fifth semester from February 22' till July 22' - destination Milan, Italy, school Politecnico di Milano. At KEA I attend the program architectural technology and construction management. During my stay I had several classes: Building Technology Studio, History of Architecture, Energy Law and Environmental Sustainability and Timber, Membrane, Glass structures, which gave me a total of 30 ECTS points for the semester.

I was arriving in Milan on the 10th of February, while there was still a few weeks till semester start. My fellow traveler and colleague from KEA had found an apartment with much difficulty through a portal suggested by the institute we were there to attend. It was a jungle of way too expensive, old/dirty or very far away apartments. Not to mention a sea of scammers trying to rob us of our money with fake advertisements. But it all ended well. The school itself had some student apartments, but before we had been told that and looked into it, they were all gone....

The days went by as if on vacation at first and suddenly the day we had been waiting for was there. Start of a new semester at a new school even. Finding our way around campus and buildings wasn't the easiest of tasks, and it took a while before really understanding the layout of the school.

At first all classes were very interesting, a lot of new people and in my case new words and a terminology I hadn't been used to, since my program at KEA is in Danish. This was somewhat of a challenge, but not something that would completely restrict me. I didn't take me long before I had found some colleagues, who I could ask, what exactly was meant by certain words or phrases. Many of my chosen classes was so-so difficult. With the fact that I had my winter start at KEA meant, that I practically was a semester ahead of the appropriate level of education. When it comes down to the educational experience I could have hoped for better and more. The mentality of the Italian people is very important to take into consideration. The teachers would always be at least 45 minutes late and one time they didn't even show up to class and left us with

their assistant, who was just as confused as us. And they didn't mind if they left us hanging for hours, because the days was so long anyways...

So, for me I wouldn't say, that I have learned a lot from the school itself. A lot of my classes, the teachings and the final exam was much of what I had already learned at my home institution BUT used in another context. And that's the important thing to emphasize. Because what I can take with me back from my school experience in Milan is how to use my knowledge in other ways and work alongside architects (or in this case architecture students).

When it comes to choosing classes I was fine with what I got. And that really means what I got. Because as KEA global also states is, that there's a limited amount of English taught classes with limited space in each class. But should recommend something then it would be to attend workshops, which are more practical and hands on, so less sitting down for lectures and still rewarding with ECTS points.

Enough about the school, even though it took up way more of my time than I anticipated. Therefore, I didn't really have any time left to go see more of Italy than Milan. Luckily, I didn't encounter any cultural challenges. The Italians are proud people, who loves everything Italian, whether it actually being good. First thing I bought, as the good Dane I am, was a bike. It was my fellow companion on all my endeavors and obviously it also had to come with me back to Copenhagen.

I had countless cultural experiences both meant in a positive and negative way during my stay in Milan, too many to mention and not any that really sticks out as individual. But in one of my classes, architectural history, our teacher took the initiative to do fieldtrips every Friday, when the weather was warm enough (and later also became too warm). This was an amazing way to see the city with a "guide" even though it was all about the buildings.

Overall, I had a good trip abroad, and I would recommend everyone with a dream of going abroad to do it. I'm not sure I whether I would recommend Milan as destination. I still need some time to really chew on it and settle back into my old surroundings.

A last remark is what really stands out as I was living and studying in another country. A few things came to mind during my stay; How privileged we are in Denmark for our educational system, how

high of a standard there is in Copenhagen whether it's food, going out, education, grades, etc. etc. and how alone you can feel. In my case on being alone I had a roommate and was in a very good project group, so it wasn't really an issue. But I heard about many groups, which didn't work out and of people living alone. So that is a big thing I would like to give on to others. Remember to be a little more open to the surroundings, because the people you would usually spend time with is not around, and it does take energy and time to establish relations and hopefully friends.

Under the report is few selected pictures that shows the trip through my eyes.



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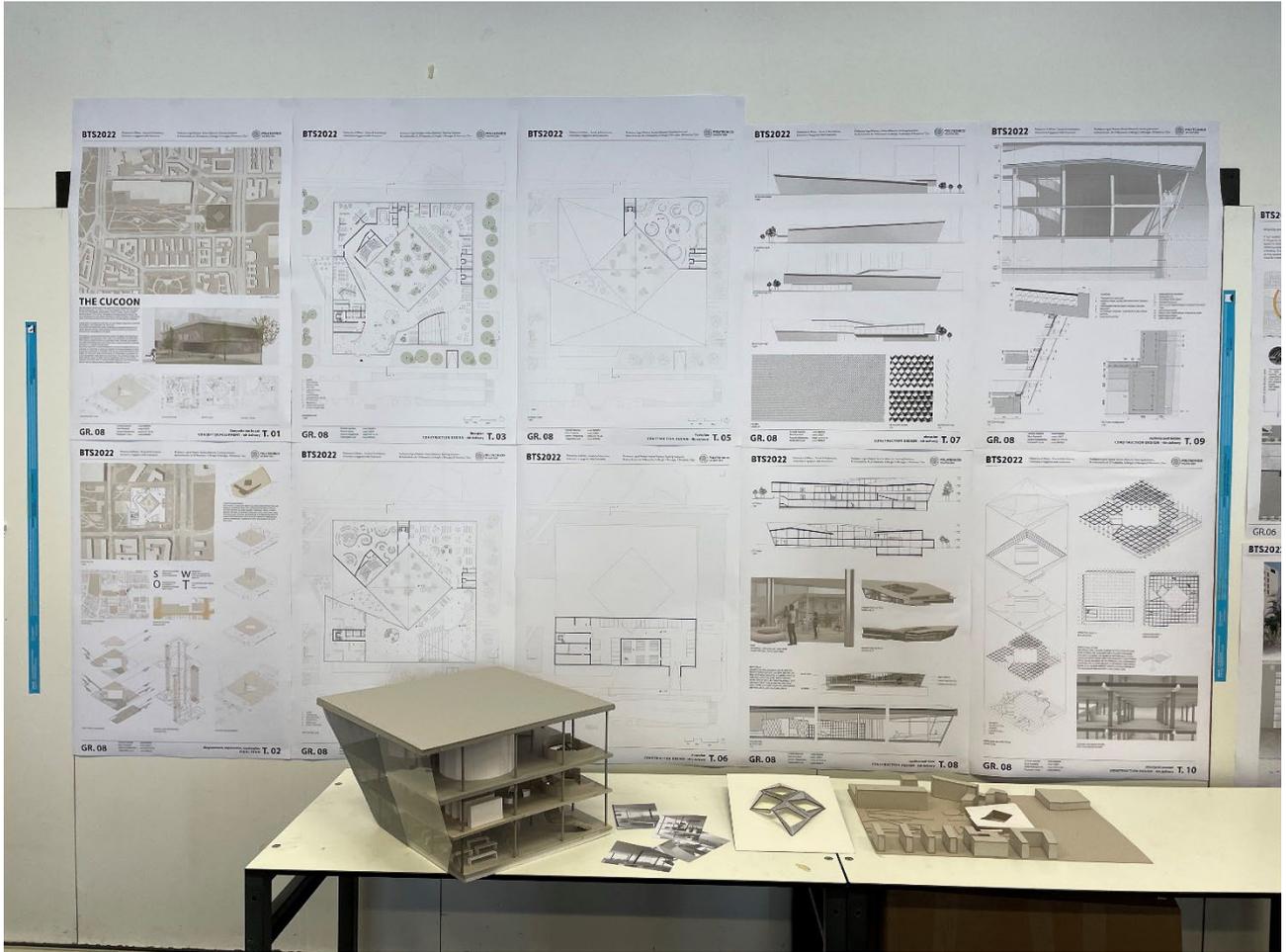


A picture of my lovely bike, which I found used through facebook marketplace - a good 80's vintage Italian racing bike.

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From one of the old buildings on campus overlooking the park area.



Here is my final exams project from my biggest class; Building, Technology studio.

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