

Thanks to the ScanDesign Scholarship and the direct help of Anni Fuller, Marianne Stecher-Hansen, and Marianne Stolen, I had a wonderful time studying at the Royal Academy of Architecture in Copenhagen. I was lucky in finding a place near the center with a roommate near my age, but other international students had difficulties. The housing office at the Royal Academy did not actively pursue available apartments for students. Instead, the person in charge waited to be informed by interested renters and disseminated the list to international students. Since I had not taken a place before arriving, my choices were limited to an apartment by the airport a week before school was about to start. Future students should arrive early and *leap* at any chance of living within the center.

Education at the Royal Academy at the graduate level is very independent and self-guided. From my experience at Department 3 and what I heard from other international students, professors are laissez-faire, undemanding, and often absent. As long as work is completed on time, it is accepted regardless of standard. On a positive note, graduate students are not required to take anything beyond the main design course, so this gives everyone plenty of time to focus on the most demanding task. Being at the end of my student career, I felt I had a firm grasp of what I wanted to accomplish at the Academy. Had I been an undergraduate on exchange I would have felt lost in this environment. However, being among over 1000 architecture students in 11 different departments created an unparalleled social atmosphere. Additionally, the Academy's library provided a great collection and one of the friendliest places to be on campus.

As a place of architecture, Copenhagen is one of the finest cities to live, work, and study. Regardless of the instruction at the Academy, the city itself is like an intensive research course. The city and surrounding areas are full of some of the finest examples of architecture in the world. The Danish attention to detail, habitat, and craft are unlike anything I've seen in other countries. Much of my free time was devoted to photographing the city. I hope that ScanDesign develops a weblog requirement for its upcoming students. Although there is much excitement involved in discovering the city and its surroundings, it would be incredibly useful if ScanDesign recipients could draw on past experiences and pass new ones forward. With the help of several pre-made tools (most by Google) architecture students could simply map, photograph, and write where they found interesting places or buildings. Over the course of years, I can imagine a rich collection of sites, events, and places inspiring future students to explore even further.

The ScanDesign scholarship was more than generous enough to lead a normal student life in expensive Copenhagen. As Anni Fuller noted, socializing with Danes can be expensive and the scholarship certainly allowed for that without a problem. Apart from limits on American credit card use, I had no financial hardships and ironically the recent financial crisis improved the U.S. buying power halfway into the stay. The cultural stipend was welcomed addition, and our cultural liaison, Marianne Stoelen, tirelessly urged us to go on fieldtrip as often as possible. We had a physically demanding three day weekend on Bornholm, cycling around and taking in all the sites. Other times we went to museums or met her for dinner at her apartment. Without Marianne I would not have seen many memorable places that influence my architectural understanding of the area.

There is one terrible thing about the ScanDesign program in Copenhagen. It gave me a chance to study abroad in one of the most beautiful cities but it was over faster than I had ever imagined. Perhaps it's better not to offer a full year of study there; there is a good chance many students would not come back. As brief as it seems now in memory, my time there was tremendously important in synthesizing ideas about good design that I hope to use in the Northwest. I'd like to thank again the ScanDesign Foundation, Anni Fuller, Marianne Stecher-Hansen, and Marianne Stoelen for sending me on such a memorable academic experience.

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