

EXCHANGE REPORT AMSTERDAM EMMA HERGART

Host institution:

Hogeschool van Amsterdam (Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences)
AMSTERD05

Time period:

Stay from 01.02.2023

Stay until 31.07.2023

Course: Immersive Environments

Explanation of the course:

Working creatively in teams to create Interactive Digital Installations for Physical Spaces. Some of the tasks in collaboration with a variety of companies, within a specific field of art or technical creative tasks, such as working with light, sound, projection, sensors and code.

Website: <https://ispace.amsterdam/>

Academic Experience

1. How helpful was the receiving school in the process of choosing classes and settling you in?

The receiving school was very helpful in the process of settling in. I received continuous emails with information, updates, and practical details throughout the whole semester. The teachers of the minor were helpful and very easy to reach whenever questions came up during the semester.

The information about the host school and the possible minors to choose from was available online. I received much help from the international coordinator at KEA to choose the right course and obtain the contact information for the host school. Since the minor was just one class, there wasn't much assistance needed from the receiving school to select classes; this was discussed by teachers and the international coordinator at KEA.

2. What classes/study experiences did you find the most rewarding? Why?

I found it very rewarding to have the opportunity to apply my experience in User Experience and problem-solving to a new field of creativity that was more open, less goal-oriented, and focused on senses and experiences. Working with students from a variety of study fields was a great opportunity to gain a broader perspective on what is possible within a design process and a great way to learn new skills and gain a wider overview of the different steps of a project, from conception to the final project/product. I also found it very insightful to apply the design thinking process to a variety of creative projects.

3. What classes/study experiences did you find least relevant or leastvaluable to you? Why?

There were some parts of the minor that required more knowledge in coding, which I found would have been more relevant if I had more knowledge in coding beforehand. However, as mentioned before, this was a great opportunity to dive into different tasks of a project for a more meaningful and efficient process.

4. What classes would you advice other KEA students going to thereceiving school to choose or not to choose?

I choose a more creative and project-based minor due to my interest in art and technology. I would not recommend this class if you are not interested in practical work and expect a more academic approach. At the minor Immersive Environment the students takes responsibility themselves and their own work and how much time you put in to a project, with guidance from teachers. We had the freedom to be creative with just a few restrictions.

Practical Experience

1. How was the application process?

The application process was fairly easy, and I received help from the international coordinator from KEA and, in some parts of the application process, from HVA (Host school).

a. What did KEA help you with?

Anne, the International Coordinator at KEA, helped me with the application process, obtaining all necessary documents, and guiding me through the application process in Mobility Online. When selecting the course, I received help from my teachers to ensure it would be a good fit and not too repetitive while still being relevant to my program in Digital Concept Development at KEA.

b. What help did you receive from your school abroad?

The Host school provided me with practical information about everything needed to be a new student at HVA, including registration, practical information, etc. The most important source of information was the Erasmus Network, where I obtained most of the information regarding practical life in Amsterdam and the studies.

2. Did you have any practical difficulties settling down in at your destination?

No, there was accessible information regarding student housing, student network, and practicalities, and it was easy to get in contact when any questions came up.

a. How helpful was the receiving school in this process?

Very helpful; the Erasmus Network was also full of information, and that's where I found most of the information regarding practical life in Amsterdam.

3. Where did you live?

I lived in a student accommodation (De Key) in Zeeburg, located 10 minutes by tram from the central station and 20 minutes bike ride from the University.

a. Was it difficult to find accommodation?

I found a student apartment through the application process, and for me, it was not a problem, as well as for most other students I met during my exchange. However, if you would like to find something on your own, the process is more difficult due to the renting market in Amsterdam.

b. Was it expensive?

No, I paid 5500 DKK monthly for my own apartment of 25 sqm.

4. What kind of expenses did you have in general?

I got a bike from Swapfiets and also used occasional public transport.

a. Did you spend more or less money than you budgeted with?

I spend what I budgeted with.

5. What kind of income did you have during your exchange?

Since I live in Sweden, I received Swedish CSN (equivalent to SU). I continued to receive CSN and also received the Erasmus stipendium.

a. Did you receive SU and/or Erasmus CSN & Erasmus

b. Did you apply for any grants and did you receive any?

Yes, I applied for and received the Erasmus Grant.

Cultural/Personal Experience

1. *What challenges did you experience culturally while being abroad?*

I have not experienced any cultural challenges.

a. *How helpful was the receiving school in this process?*

The Erasmus network is very helpful and engaging, providing all international students with a good experience.

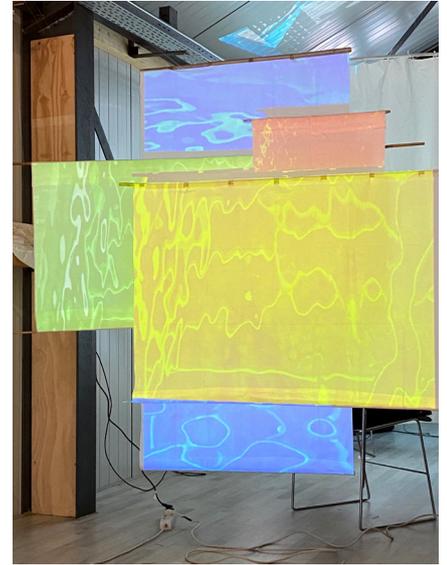
2. *What was the best cultural/personal experience during your studies abroad?*

Experiencing Amsterdam's art scene and making new connections as well as gaining new technical skills and find creative motivation.

3. *What advice would you give other KEA students going to study abroad at the receiving school?*

Make sure to utilize all the tools/technical equipment and opportunities the school has to offer (maker-space, sound lab, renting equipment, field trips, and exhibitions, etc.). I found HvA to have a lot to offer and it's a very creative school in many ways.

The next slides are some pictures of the different projects from the minor.



STORY GARDEN

"It takes a village to grow old"

"To Take A Village to grow old" is a community project by Digital Life Research Group Hegeheul van Amsterdam. The initiative is backed by the intention to merge social connection and storytelling in the neighbourhood Statuuryk Winkel/Heterenbuurt including the residents with dementia.

The Story Garden is a prototype of a physical interactive installation inspired by the connection fostered by community gardens. Within the immersive exhibit, participants of story categories will inspire neighbourhood residents to speak or write their story or message, and witness a flower grown and contributed to the Digital Garden. By touching each flower on the screen the connection to the neighbourhood will be able to take part of the stories and rich history of the neighbourhood and it's community members and plant a flower to the Digital screen thumbnail.

Immersive Environments Studios,
Dennis, Nabulsa and Jabab

Project Mentors:
Saskia Buijten, Mirrean El Moudani & Poulk Ochoa

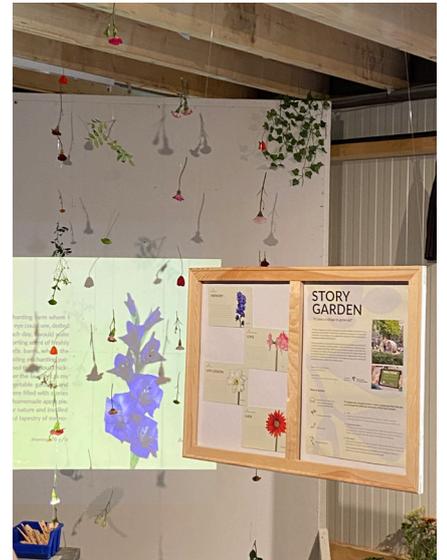
Local Partner:
Digital Life

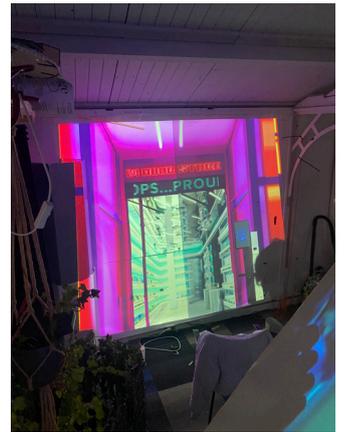
How it works:

1. Tap the flower in the post and listen to a story, every time you tap a new story is told!
2. Choose a flower card
3. Share a story
4. Hang up your card

To display the concept we have made a prototype that will take you through the different elements of the Story Garden.

1. iPad
Here you can see the thoughts behind the making of a display where the community members can choose a category for the story they would like to tell.
2. Interactive Screen
The Stories are activated by pressing the flower, today displayed in the post next to the display. This to spark the imagination of how the future display or the Story Garden can function and look like. (Keep in mind that it is a prototype)
3. Post Cards
We would like to show you our prototype, but really we want you to share a story. Pick a flower card of your liking





Instagram for the Minor:
[@immersiveenvironments](https://www.instagram.com/immersiveenvironments)