

Exchange Report

Paris College of Art, Fall 2022

Isabella Nicole Best

Exchange during 3rd semester of Entrepreneurship & Design @
KEA

For my 3rd semester studying Entrepreneurship & Design at KEA, I went on exchange and studied at Paris College of Art (PCA). This exchange took place during the past fall semester in 2022. The school is in the 10th district of Paris, France.

I took 6 different classes, each class took place once a week for the whole semester;

- **Sophomore Studio (Fine Arts)**
- **Sophomore Sculpture (Fine Arts)**
- **Graphics In Printmaking (Communication Design)**
- **Print Matters: An Introduction (Fine Arts)**
- **Time Records (Fine Arts)**
- **Motion Graphics (Communication Design)**



Sophomore Studio (Fine Arts)

- *Experimental take on painting class, where any media (video, sculpture, drawing, painting) is appreciated and there's more focus on concept, discussing/presenting your piece(s) and production rather than technique. Group critique at end of every project and a pretty autonomous class.*



Here are two (of the many) pieces I made in "Sophomore Studio"

Sophomore Sculpture (Fine Arts)

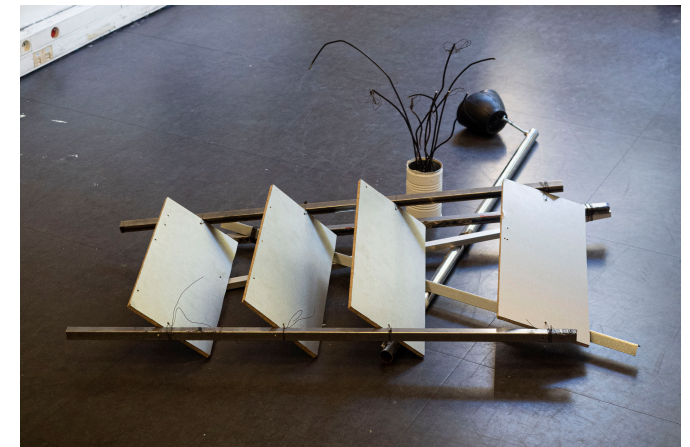
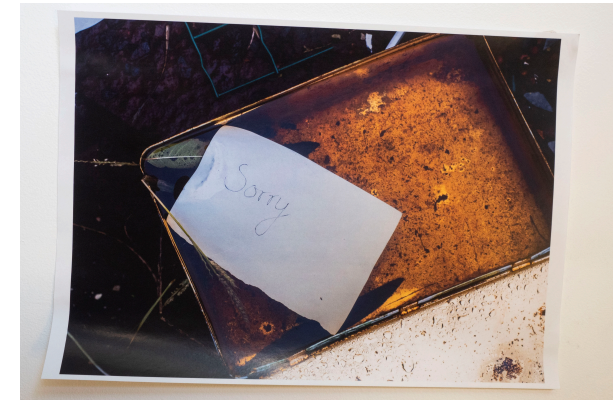
Also pretty conceptual. You get an intro to the sculpture lab and the machines, and after that very autonomous work on projects and concepts. Personal feedback and guidance offered throughout and group critique at end of every project.



Experimenting in 3D lab



Some sculpture pieces from my finals installation



- Graphics In Printmaking (Communication Design)

Most of class is guided. Very free in terms of your ideas and projects, mostly focuses on discovering and learning new techniques and then you are given creative freedom to practice. We did silkscreen printing, RISO and bookbinding. Group critique at end of every project.



Silkscreen and riso prints I made



Studio we visited with class

- **Print Matters: An Introduction
(Fine Arts)**

Very guided class meant for someone who has never tried printing before. I have taken a printing class before, so at some times I felt a bit restricted as we were not allowed to do things outside of the syllabus. I still learned a lot, since the class and professor were mainly technique oriented. We did monotype, monoprint, lino, drypoint etching. Bigger projects and also group critique at end of each one.

Mono prints I made



- **Time Records (Fine Arts)**

Very interesting and special class. We saw and discussed a lot of cool art history, philosophy, videos, exhibitions and text all regarding to time. We did some various excersices, and the form was very free and students have influence on some of the wished excersices which was pretty cool.

One of the exhibitions we saw with class



- **Motion Graphics (Communication Design)**

*Class where we were introduced to the adobe program **After Effects**. Each class the professor introduced one or several techniques and then we had a week to finish and upload a small project using these techniques.*



Some stills from one of my animations

Academic Experience

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

-They were very helpful! Very friendly and calming when we were all stressed about which classes to choose. There was plenty of help to get from the administration, and student life counsellors. Both in regards to classes and coordination and education, and also in regards to personal things, so you will always have someone to talk to and seek some advice and comfort in.

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

-I really enjoyed each class to be honest. I must say I REALLY liked my two sophomore classes because they were a bit more autonomous, and I have past experience from art school and studio work. I liked that we were given personal feedback and had big spaces to work in. It was cool to get a bunch of art references and work on our conceptual side. "Time records" was also really interesting and was a great supplement in regards to getting a lot of references. The printing lab was also great to have access to. And motion graphics was cool because I can use after effects now.

What classes/study experiences did you find least relevant or least valuable to you? Why?

- Honestly, I found pretty much everything very relevant for me. I chose some great classes and I was very openminded to learning and working hard. It was great to work on many different projects with deadlines. I had a really productive semester. The group critiques were great and I learned a lot from getting feedback from my professors and fellow students. I enjoyed learning how to put together research logs and looking at/collecting references to gain inspiration and elevate my work. I noticed some students being frustrated with the outcome of their work, but only if they didn't use their feedback constructively or if they didn't spend enough time in the studio, including time outside of the classes. So be ready to evolve and work and it will pay off!

What classes would you advise other KEA students going to the receiving school to choose or not to choose?

-I could personally recommend all of the classes that I attended, if you are interested in being very creative and free while also learning techniques. If you have little to none experience look for more technique oriented/introductory classes. But if you enjoy higher level and a more autonomous working process then I recommend the sophomore classes.

Cultural/Personal Experience

What challenges did you experience culturally while being abroad?

- *Paris is a very harsh town, especially when you are used to the safety and comfort of a place like Copenhagen. A lot of people don't speak English. A lot of people steal. A lot of people beg and sleep on the streets, and the city is very compact. But of course there are also friendly places and safe spaces, but this was definitely a challenging aspect. I had several phones and wallets stolen, and some pretty uncomfortable confrontations, especially one with the French Police, whom are quite scary and very different from the Danish police. I can recommend that you are very careful with where you go and who you talk to, and that you watch your items at all times and that you don't drink/party the same way as you do in Copenhagen, because it is just not as safe there.*
- *Another note on this is that PCA has students from all over the world. This is super cool and fun, but be aware that there sometimes might be clashes with cultural norms, and this can be overwhelming at times. I think us Danes are a bit more self-sufficient and independent, but perhaps the cultural shock is also less overwhelming when you are a Dane compared to being from the other side of the globe.*

How helpful was the receiving school in this process?

- *PCA was very helpful. I really enjoyed talking with the student life counsellor Simba, whom helped me with some personal issues and some clashes during my stay. It was comforting to have a very nice person to confide in. I also needed some extensions and had to visit Denmark during my stay due to sickness, and the school was very understanding and helpful. So as long as you communicate with the school, they are definitely there to help!*

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

- *I really enjoyed getting to know different people with different backgrounds, and it was really crazy to be reminded of how privileged we are as Danes, because we don't need Visa's (of course this counts for all EU citizens) and we get our tuition fee covered as well as receiving SU, whereas all other students paid for their tuition and don't get money from the government. I now have a larger and more international network of friends and people in the creative field. It was also interesting to have professors with different cultural backgrounds and experience as well.*

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

- *I would recommend that you be yourself and stay open-minded to different people, backgrounds and levels of experience. Try to attend different school activities to expand your network and make friends. And talk to your professors about your projects and common interests, as they are super helpful and really cool. I personally spent most of my time working in class and working at the school after classes and on days off/in weekends, as well as talking with my professors, which elevated my work and made me really enjoy my unique semester. I wasn't particularly social, because I was more interested in working on projects, seeing exhibitions, and discussing art with my professors.*

Practical Experience

How was the application process?

-It was fine. It took some time, but nothing unbearable with some time coordination. I recommend making some check-lists and to-do lists to keep an overview of all deadlines and information needed.

What did KEA help you with?

-Hanne Vang was a great coordinator and really helpful. If you have any questions don't hesitate asking your coordinator or your fellow students applying for exchange, especially if they are applying to the same school as you. And remember that the tuition fee is covered by the Danish government, you just have to apply early on if you don't want to wait too long on getting reimbursed.

What help did you receive from your school abroad?

-It was helpful to get advice from PCA over e-mail and info sessions over teams. I recommend attending any online info session that they offer, as it will save you a lot of time and future doubts/questions. If PCA is slow at getting back to you on e-mail, I recommend calling them on the phone.

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

- It was of course a bit of a challenge relocating your life to a different country. I took a bus, as it was cheaper and easier to transport some items. On the other hand, it was also hard to deal with so many bags when arriving to the bus terminal and the trip was very long. I recommend that you don't bring too many things. There are cheap thrift shops to get more clothes, and if you want to bring home artwork etc. from school when returning to DK remember that you want to have space for that. I was very lucky to have a sister living in Paris, so I had a place to stay until my apartment was ready. I recommend you arrive early if possible, perhaps at an Airbnb if your own place isn't ready right away. This helps with becoming familiar with the city before starting your semester.

How helpful was the receiving school in this process?

- Definitely attend orientation week that the school offers, it's super fun and you get to know people and see some of the city in a stress-free week before deciding on your classes. We had some fun activities and the school gave us lunch and oriented us on practical things.

Practical Experience

Where did you live?

- I lived in the 6th arrondissement, which is a pretty safe and a bit more posh of an area. It could be compared to the Kgs. Nytorv area of Copenhagen, as it has a lot of galleries, bookshops, cafes, bars, and tourist attractions.

Was it difficult to find accommodation?

- I was pretty lucky, as I found a place to stay one week before my departure. I spent a lot of time online, but there are so many scammers, people that don't speak English and people who prefer you to meet in person. I recommend using your network, as that was what eventually worked out for me. I met my old boss in Copenhagen randomly, and told her I was moving to Paris, and she happened to have a friend renting out her place, and linked us up. If you don't have a place yet and you are about to move, I recommend finding a Airbnb and going to Paris before orientation, to look for something physically to avoid scammers and extra hassle.

Was it expensive?

- I lived in a "Chambre de bonne"; a one room apartment with kitchen, bed, closet and a small bathroom with a toilet and shower. These are good to look for as they are cheaper and have most necessities. Luckily I rented a place fully furnished and equipped, which saved me a lot of time and money. I paid 750 euro a month (plus about 30 euro a month for electricity). This is a bit expensive compared to the size, but for Paris, this specific location, and a fully equipped place, it is a good price.

- I enjoyed staying somewhere pretty safe, but of course it was a bit more expensive to live there, and to find cheap bars/restaurants. I recommend using the app "toogoodtogo" for cheap food, and shopping in cheaper supermarkets like carrefour or markets. Get familiar with the area you live in as there are cheaper things scattered around, but also explore other areas to find your favorite places, if they aren't right around the corner of where you live. Most bakeries are pretty cheap in all of Paris, so they are also great for food on the go.



Decorating my apartment in Paris

Practical Experience

Where did you live?

- *I lived in the 6th arrondissement, which is a pretty safe and a bit more posh of an area. It could be compared to the Kgs. Nytorv area of Copenhagen, as it has a lot of galleries, bookshops, cafes, bars, and tourist attractions.*

Was it difficult to find accommodation?

- *I was pretty lucky, as I found a place to stay one week before my departure. I spent a lot of time online, but there are so many scammers, people that don't speak English and people who prefer you to meet in person. I recommend using your network, as that was what eventually worked out for me. I met my old boss in Copenhagen randomly, and told her I was moving to Paris, and she happened to have a friend renting out her place, and linked us up. If you don't have a place yet and you are about to move, I recommend finding a Airbnb and going to Paris before orientation, to look for something physically to avoid scammers and extra hassle.*

Was it expensive?

- *I lived in a "Chambre de bonne"; a one room apartment with kitchen, bed, closet and a small bathroom with a toilet and shower. These are good to look for as they are cheaper and have most necessities. Luckily I rented a place fully furnished and equipped, which saved me a lot of time and money. I paid 750 euro a month (plus about 30 euro a month for electricity). This is a bit expensive compared to the size, but for Paris, this specific location, and a fully equipped place, it is a good price.*

- *I enjoyed staying somewhere pretty safe, but of course it was a bit more expensive to live there, and to find cheap bars/restaurants. I recommend using the app "toogoodtogo" for cheap food, and shopping in cheaper supermarkets like carrefour or markets. Get familiar with the area you live in as there are cheaper things scattered around, but also explore other areas to find your favorite places, if they aren't right around the corner of where you live. Most bakeries are pretty cheap in all of Paris, so they are also great for food on the go.*

What kind of expenses did you have in general?

- *I needed a bike, which I found at a bike shop (they had used bikes which was cheaper, and before leaving Paris, I sold it to a student at PCA for the same amount that I bought it for!) I also used bolt's (a cheaper version of Uber) which I can recommend. I used a service called "send my baggage" when moving back to Copenhagen. This was helpful, as I could pack cardboard boxes with extra things and have them delivered to my parents home address in Denmark. I also spent money on food, but tried to make my own lunches often to save money. It is also good to go to free art openings (that also serve free food and drinks!) and most museums are free if you are under 25.*

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

- *I did spend more. I found most of my materials for school for free on the street or at the school, but I did spend some money on getting some of the things I wanted and needed. I also had some trouble with my French sim cards, so I recommend doing plenty of research on this before hand. There will always be some unpredicted expenses when travelling, so be prepared for this and save some money before going if you have the chance!*