

**ASA**

**2023-2024**

**INTERNSHIP  
REPORTS**

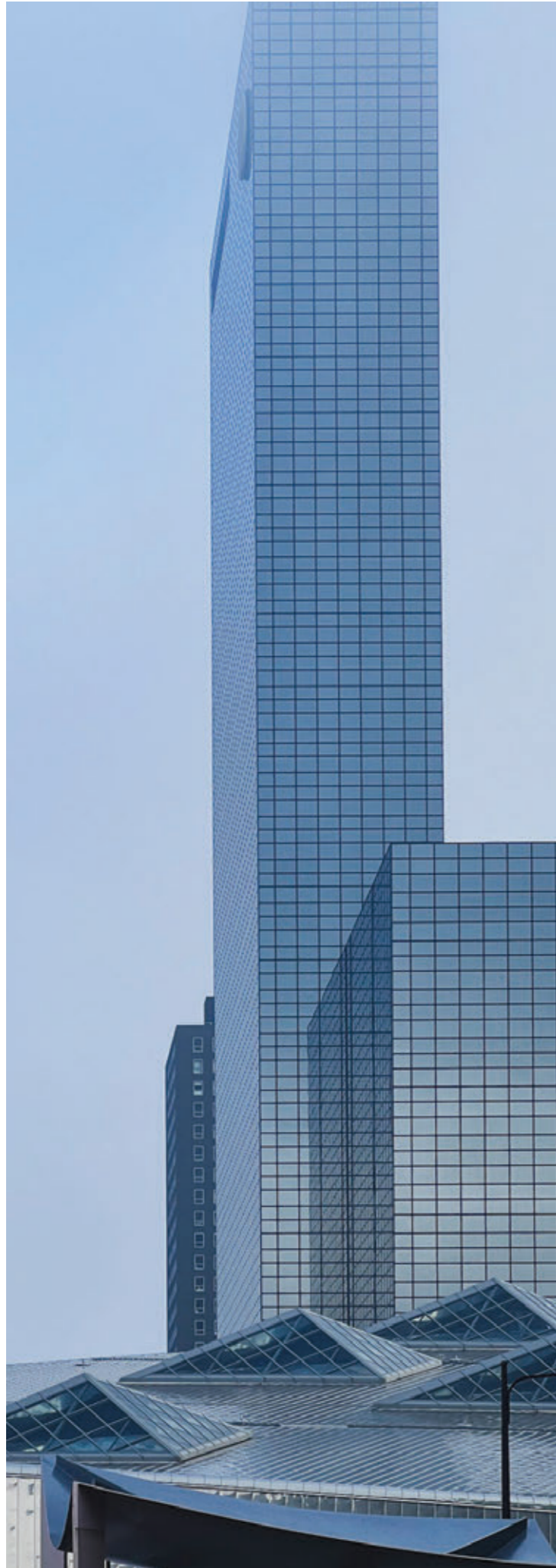


# ***INTERNSHIP REPORT***

***Denis Kapitanov***



# **POWERHOUSE COMPANY**

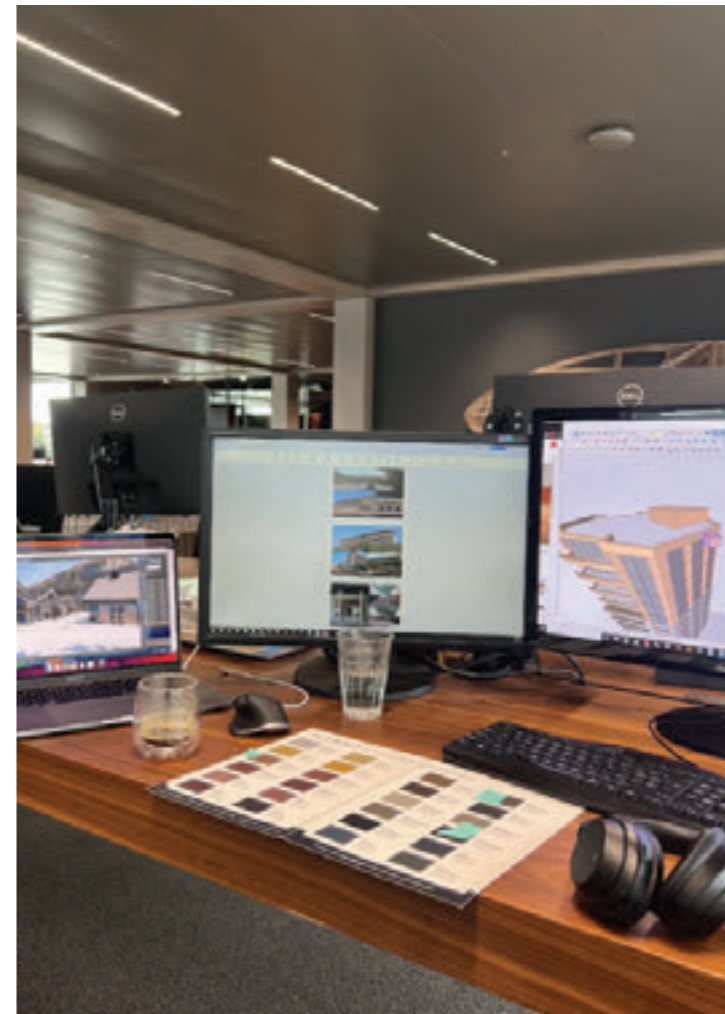


## **LIVING IN THE NETHERLANDS**

I embraced an exciting opportunity to pursue another internship prior to completing my studies in Milan. Having previously lived and worked in diverse countries and cultures, I was eager to further enrich my experiences in an unfamiliar nation. The application process, coupled with my personal aspirations, led me to Rotterdam, where I embarked on an internship journey with Powerhouse Company. Despite having visited the Netherlands in the past, this opportunity provided a unique chance to immerse myself in a captivating, experimental, and diverse context—both in the professional realm and the daily life in Rotterdam.

As the city undergoes a transformative rebuilding phase, it pulsates with contemporary architectural projects. Additionally, the proximity of Amsterdam, just half an hour away, facilitates easy weekend access to wander through museums or explore hidden corners of the city. Rotterdam and Amsterdam, despite their close proximity, exhibit stark differences, allowing me to reflect on and appreciate the Dutchies' courage and experimental spirit in their constant reinvention.

The remarkable aspect of this experience was the accessibility to other cities within a one-hour radius, including Utrecht, Amsterdam, Breda, or Tilburg. This accessibility enabled me to explore architectural masterpieces on a weekly basis, offering a dynamic and enriching perspective on the architectural landscape in the Netherlands.

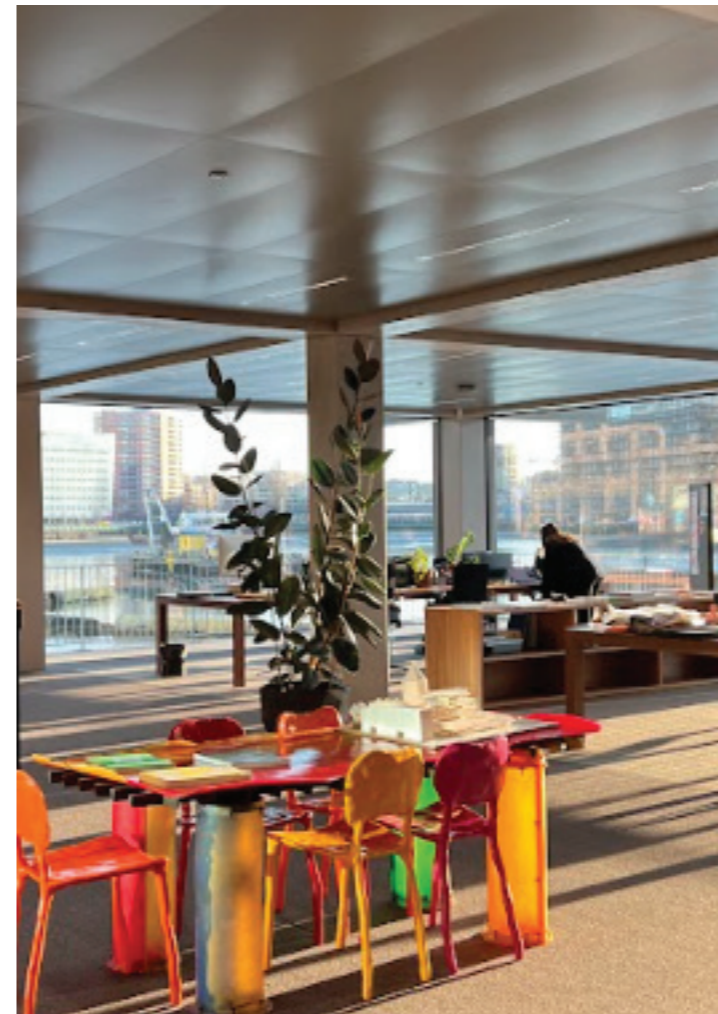


## OFFICE ENVIRONMENT

The studio's office was unlike anything I had encountered previously. Powerhouse Company's floating office is a two-story wooden structure resting on a concrete floating foundation. Describing the interiors and the breathtaking views it offers is a challenge unless witnessed firsthand, but the opportunity to work within such a sustainable and innovative structure was particularly exhilarating. The ambiance and the individuals within are remarkable, contributing to a studio with a notably international profile where English is the predominant language.

The office is organized into four teams, although there are no strict boundaries between them, fostering a collaborative environment. Teams frequently engage in cross-collaboration, enhancing the overall creative synergy. A typical week in the studio commences with team meetings, where everyone shares their upcoming tasks, and project leaders provide updates on project progress or any new acquisitions entering the office.

Following these team meetings is a Monday morning gathering, where the entire office congregates. During this session, the management and team leaders deliver updates on project news, internal company developments, or practical information. This structured yet inclusive approach ensures effective communication and collaboration across the diverse teams within the studio.

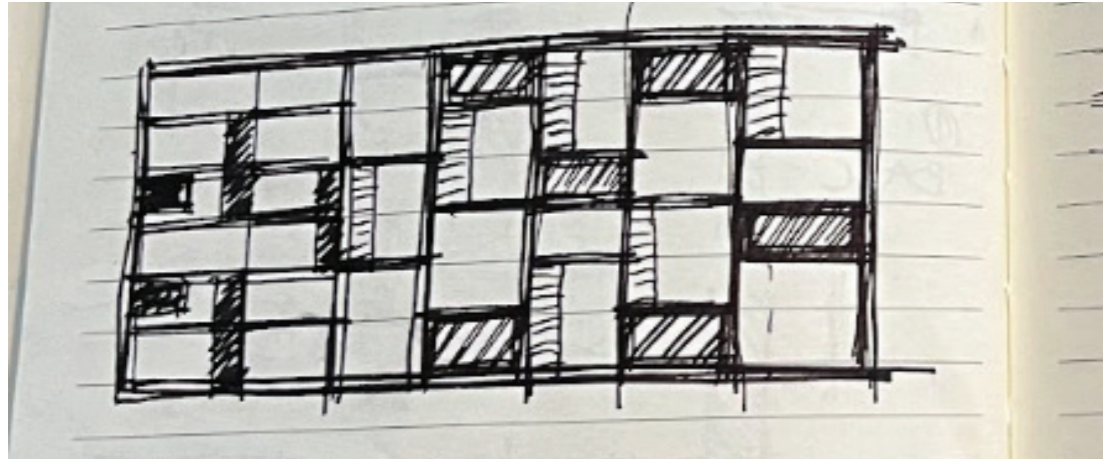


## **THE OFFICE**

What stood out prominently to me was the youthful vibrancy of the individuals in the office. The day-to-day atmosphere is remarkably laid-back, fostering an approachable environment for everyone. What particularly caught my attention was the presence of individuals in their early thirties serving as project leads, concurrently managing multiple projects. Over time, I came to realize that this aspect is at the core of the studio's ethos: assembling a team of talented and amiable individuals to cultivate a creative and cheerful workplace.

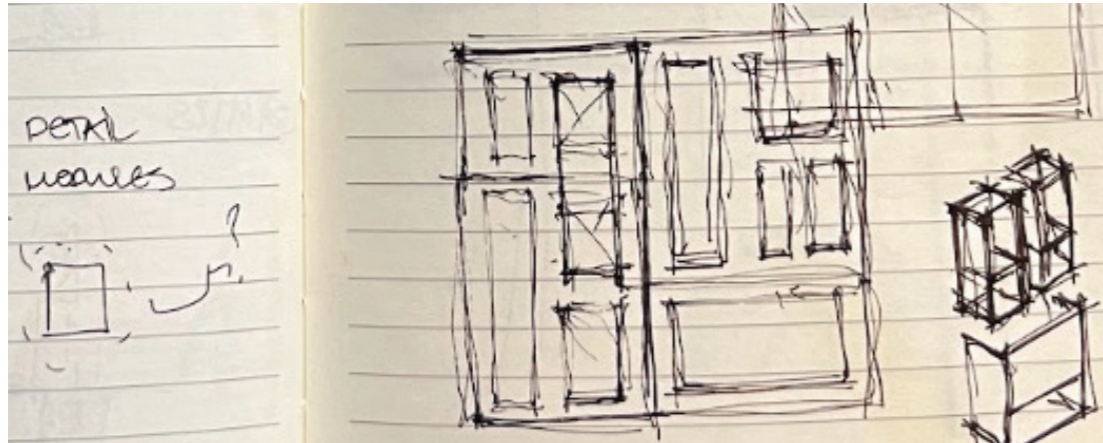
Powerhouse Company, true to its philosophy, is a space where initiative, reliability, and proficiency are swiftly rewarded with increased responsibilities and trust, even for interns. The office structure operates on a flat hierarchy, encouraging open conversations with everyone in the workplace. Fridays typically conclude earlier, creating an opportunity for colleagues to unwind with a couple of beers in an informal setting. During the warmer months, colleagues often bring swimsuits, and a refreshing swim next to the office is complemented by snacks and the enchanting backdrop of the sunset.

The studio boasts a cutting-edge model room where teams convene weekly to fabricate an array of models, ranging from conceptual 3D-printed prototypes to intricate 1:100 scale building sections, depending on the project's stage. Additionally, an expansive sample room and library offer a treasure trove of inspiration for those seeking it.



# WORK EXPERIENCE

The highlight of my internship experience unfolded in the context of a major architectural competition for a housing development in Amsterdam. Tasked with conceiving a vision for over 350 housing units, situated atop a monumental stone plinth hosting various public activities. The team was comprised of only three people including myself and this provided me with a great opportunity to take on diverse set of responsibilities in various disciplines.

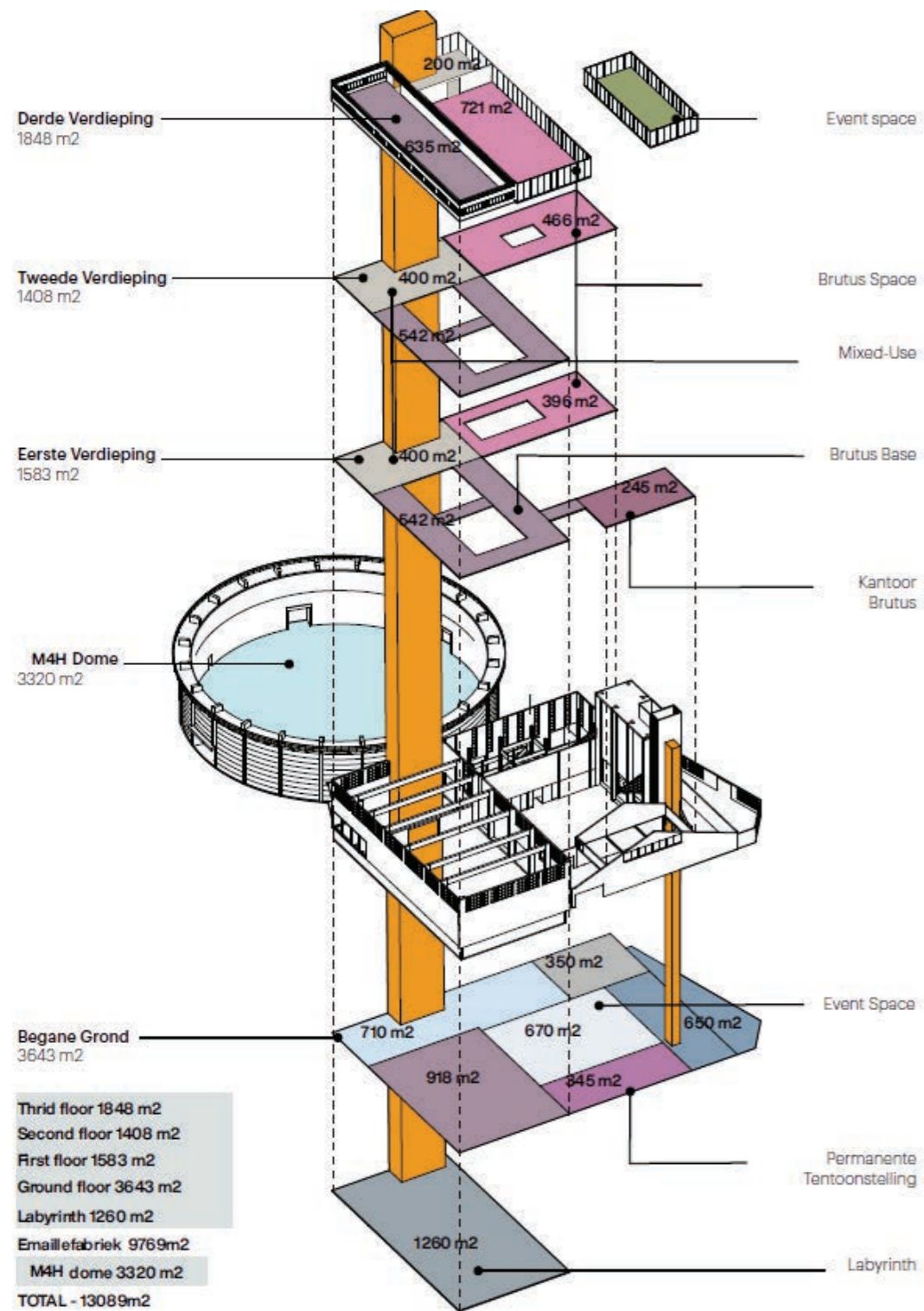


I was able to take part into this competition from its initial sketch phases, allowing me to experience every stage of the proposal. As an early stage contributor to the project, I actively engaged in design ideation, applying creative thinking to address the complex spatial requirements of the program. In addition, I was delegated tasks concerning aesthetic matters such as facade designs and overall material narration of the whole housing complex. The scope of the competition allowed me to hone my skills in strategic thinking and problem-solving, pushing the boundaries of my architectural imagination.



The concluding phase of my internship involved the meticulous production of all competition materials. This provided me with a platform to showcase and further develop my range of graphical and aesthetic skills, weaving together a comprehensive and compelling presentation that encapsulated the essence of our architectural vision for the Amsterdam housing development.

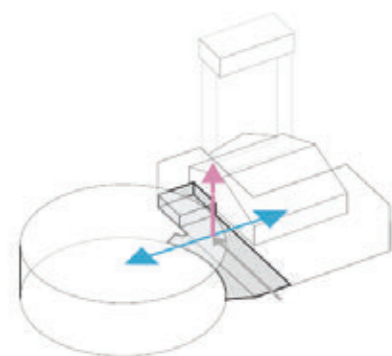




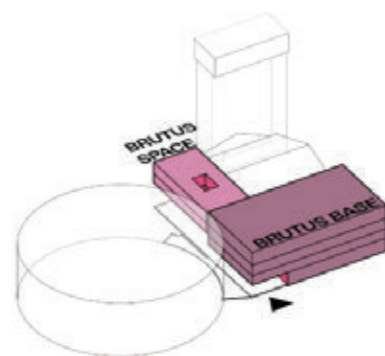
## WORK EXPERIENCE

Transitioning from the sun-soaked landscapes of Nairobi to the industrial backdrop of Rotterdam, I undertook the challenge of adaptive reuse. Tasked with transforming a disused factory into a cultural hub, the project required a delicate balance between preservation and innovation.

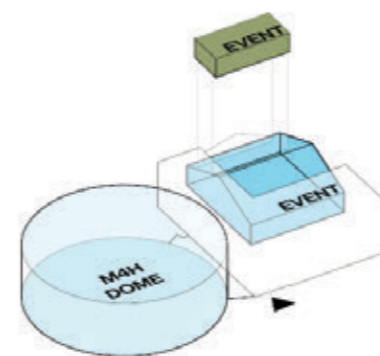
The project was part of a long-term vision of a private client for a large plot in Rotterdam West. The proposal was done together with a senior architect, having worked previously together I was granted an opportunity to work independently for the production of a concept for merging the existing industrial shell with newly carved out spaces. The program included a museum, workshop for a sculptor, exhibition space, several auditoriums and horeca. The spatial narration of such a diverse program presented me with a unique challenge, prompting an exploration of the symbiosis between history and modern functionality.



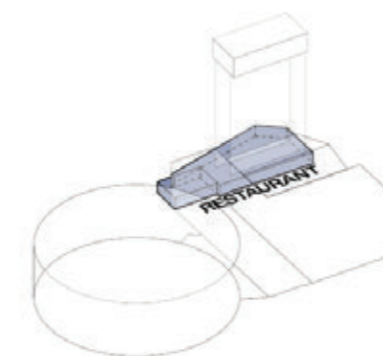
• Foyer  
Vanuit de entree en foyer zijn de verschillende functies binnen de fabriek afzonderlijk van elkaar te bereiken



• Museum  
De expositieruimtes van Brutus zijn georganiseerd in de twee betaande hallen van de fabriek en onderling verbonden



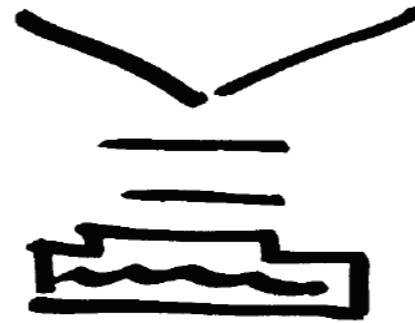
• Event Spaces  
Onder het schuine dak van de fabriek bevindt zich een conferentie ruimte die door Gemeente Rotterdam, bedrijven en voor



• Horeca  
In het lage deel van de fabriek bevindt zich een restaurant dat onafhankelijk kan functioneren, maar ook catering kan



GCA Rotterdam  
Protection from rain, floating on water



GCA Nairobi  
Capturing rain, gathering it in a waterbasin

## WORK EXPERIENCE

The Nairobi headquarters project was a testament to the company's commitment to sustainability and environmental consciousness.

As part of a three-member team, we were entrusted with devising a compelling architectural pitch for the Global Climate Organization. The design aimed to seamlessly integrate the highest sustainability standards, incorporating natural-based solutions.

The building itself emerged as a harmonious fusion of rammed earth and timber structures, creatively juxtaposed with a concrete basement/ground floor. This foundation served a dual purpose, not only providing structural support but also hosting a substantial water basin.

The innovative butterfly roof design facilitated rainwater collection, directing it to the basin. This ingenious system ensured a reliable water supply during the arid months in Kenya, aligning our architectural vision with the vital principles of environmental responsibility.

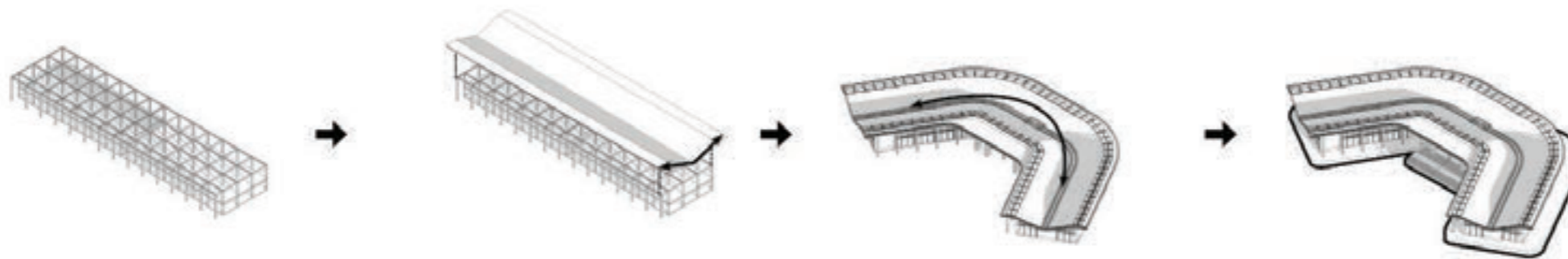
The project was brought to the office by private client, hence no extensive competition material was prepared. The whole project took about a month to develop from a sketch to the final proposal and my participation included early roof concept studies allowing for water collection, program distribution and preparation of concept architectural drawings such as plans, diagrams and perspective sections.

1: Applying a modular wooden grid

2: Adding a large roof surface

3: Embracing the landscape, creating views

4: Climate adaptation



The fully Cross Laminated Timber structure and floors helps us reduce CO2 emissions. Just like the GCA Rotterdam, we aim to become CO2 negative.

Rammed earth walls are a sustainable alternative to concrete / gypsum and the layers beautifully represent Kenya's earth.

Green walls are not only beautiful, they also create a nice interior climate.

Overhangs help maintain a comfortable climate within as the sun rarely directly hits the windows.

Green is applied on the edges of the roof, this helps cool the solar panels.

Solar panels generate enough energy to create an energy positive building.

The roof captures rainwater and lets it pass through the building to make the sustainable impact of the building visible.

Large windows allow for users to experience the weather outside and be in touch with the beautiful garden.



The concrete foundation also serves as a waterbasin that stores the captured rain water. This way we tackle Kenya's the irregular water supply challenge.





## **LIFE BEYOND WORK**

Beyond office hours, studio members actively participated in a diverse array of activities, spanning cultural events to sports engagements like the Powerhouse running club or the football team. Notably, our office secured victory in the Architectural Cup competition in Rotterdam last year, attesting to the team's prowess and unity.

Rotterdam hosts several marathons, and our studio consistently participates, often forming small teams to run collectively. Additionally, the studio's founder, a fervent football enthusiast supporting Rotterdam's home team Feyenoord, generously provides free tickets for games to office members, fostering a shared passion for sports within the team.

Moreover, the city of Rotterdam pulsates with vibrancy, offering a good blend of cultural and architecturally related events. The New Institute of Architecture frequently hosts architectural presentations, attracting renowned authors who present their books, contributing to the city's rich cultural tapestry.

A month prior to the conclusion of my internship at Powerhouse Company, the studio organized a Christmas-themed dinner, uniting the entire office in a charming villa in The Hague. Attendees were required to dress in a 20's theme, and the entire day was spent together on the estate. This event not only showcased the office's ability to deliver high-quality architectural projects but also underscored its capacity to foster a sense of camaraderie, akin to one big family, where the professional and the personal seamlessly coalesce.



# **Advanced School of Architecture**

II edition - 2022/2023

**Carlos David Arcos Jácome**

Internship Report

**PLH Arkitekter**

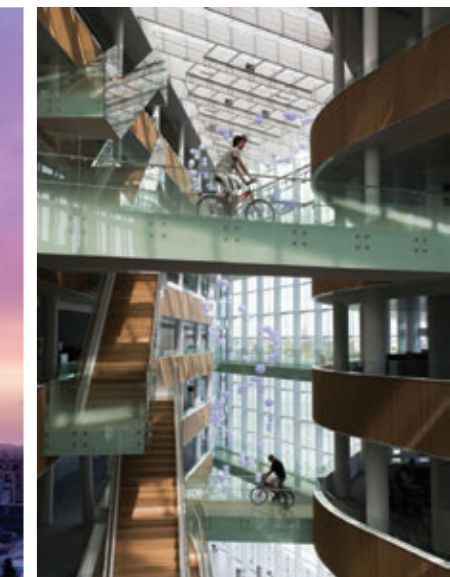
Copenhagen

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### I. \_ About PLH Arkitekter

PLH is an architectural firm founded in 1977 by Palle Leif Hansen dedicated to enhancing the quality of everyday life through design. Their mission revolves around creating architectural solutions that improve the way people work and live, ultimately delivering value to clients. With over 40 years of experience, PLH employs user-driven design processes, leveraging clients' identities and values to craft high-quality architectural solutions. They focus on achieving a delicate equilibrium between social, economic, and environmental considerations. The office thrives on creating positive change in each project, aiming to surprise and surpass expectations, with the pinnacle of success being the delivery of functional and inspiring spaces to users.



# PLH

## 2. \_ FIRST IMPRESSIONS

From the first day, my colleagues were very kind and provided clear information to make my initial tasks manageable. In fact, the office assigned a person to be my "buddy," who developed a closer relationship with me. In my case, my buddy was Ugur, a very kind and skilled Turkish architect who was always friendly and helpful when I needed information about office-related matters or any paperwork required for my regular stay in the country.

### First Steps

One of the first things they did was take a picture of me and register my data on their website and in the entire system, including email, licenses, and anything else the office needed to facilitate the workflow.



### Work environment

In addition to all the technical and professional aspects, I would also like to highlight that, initially, one of the most remarkable differences I observed, compared to my previous experiences working as an architect in other countries, is the prevalent attitude of utmost respect in the office. Since the office seeks ISO certifications, it is evident that they put a lot of effort into embodying essential qualities for a positive work environment.

This, I realized after a few months, is a promoted aspect in the Danish Architecture Industry, aligning with the Danish Architectural Policy: "Putting people first." Therefore, I would say that this commitment is evident in various aspects such as the work environment and design approach.



### Organization

I was part of the Competitions team, responsible for early-stage design proposals. Consequently, our focus was primarily on competitions, tenders, or direct client requests for proposals.

In this context, I would say that most of the time, I had interesting tasks to work on. However, it was somewhat challenging to understand the organizational structure behind each project. Comparing this with my previous experiences, it is essential to note that it was not entirely clear to distinguish goal settings, time management, or balanced task distribution. Tasks were often assigned based on each person's primary skills, such as visualization, 3D modeling, or presentations. However, the information I received about each project was limited.

Despite the democratic workflow, a discernible hierarchy hinders information flow, making it challenging to advance projects without approval from specific individuals. This, in my view, adversely impacts creativity and adds complexity to organizational management.

Conversely, across the entire office, there is a keen interest in keeping everyone informed about departmental activities. With nearly 200 architects engaged in diverse projects, the office conducts monthly meetings to disseminate information on projects, management updates, social events, and more. This commitment to transparency is also evident in digital communication, where all procedures adhere to a clear protocol, ensuring timely and clear internal office communication.

### Social aspect

This aspect stands out as one of the office's most noteworthy qualities. From the outset, it's evident that people are always willing to help, provided you ask. This aspect is so crucial that there is a dedicated group responsible for ensuring people feel integrated.

Similarly, the office has various groups of individuals who, alongside their regular duties as architects, focus on organizing social events. One notable example is the lunchtime gatherings held in the office's canteen, which also provides meals for its employees.

Furthermore, employees have access to a range of activities, including yoga classes, workshops, conferences, sports teams, leisure activities, and more.

### 3. \_ PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

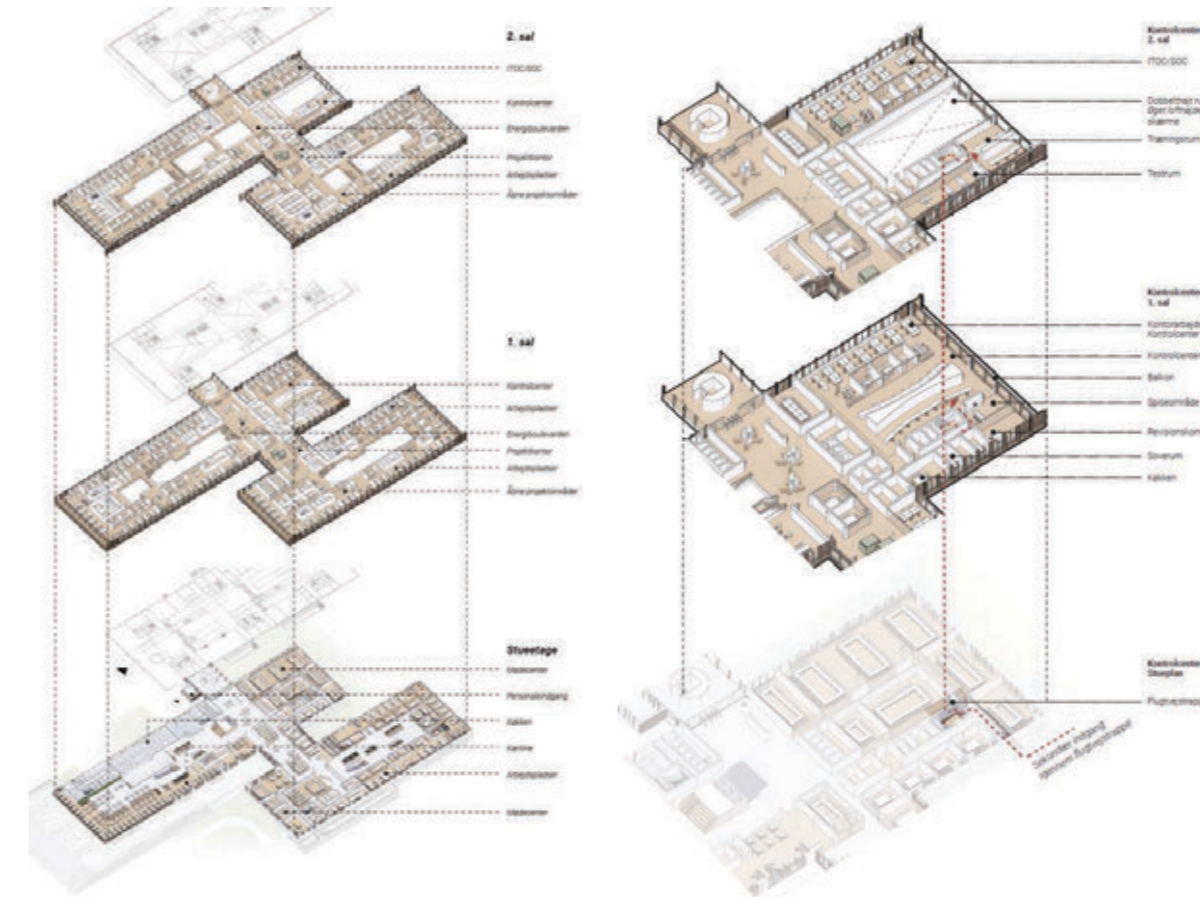
The internship extended from August 21st to February 20th, spanning 25 weeks with an average of 8.5 hours per day, totaling 1062.5 hours. As a part of the competition's team, the primary focus was on design and idea development. Initially, tasks centered on early-stage design using sketches and models, progressing to more intricate plans, diagrams, and renders. The concluding weeks were dedicated to devising specific solutions for building renovations, encompassing multifunctional buildings and offices.

The company facilitated educational activities, including site visits and workshops covering 3D printing and render visualization. In essence, the company provided a well-defined framework, fostering a respectful work environment through a close-knit team.

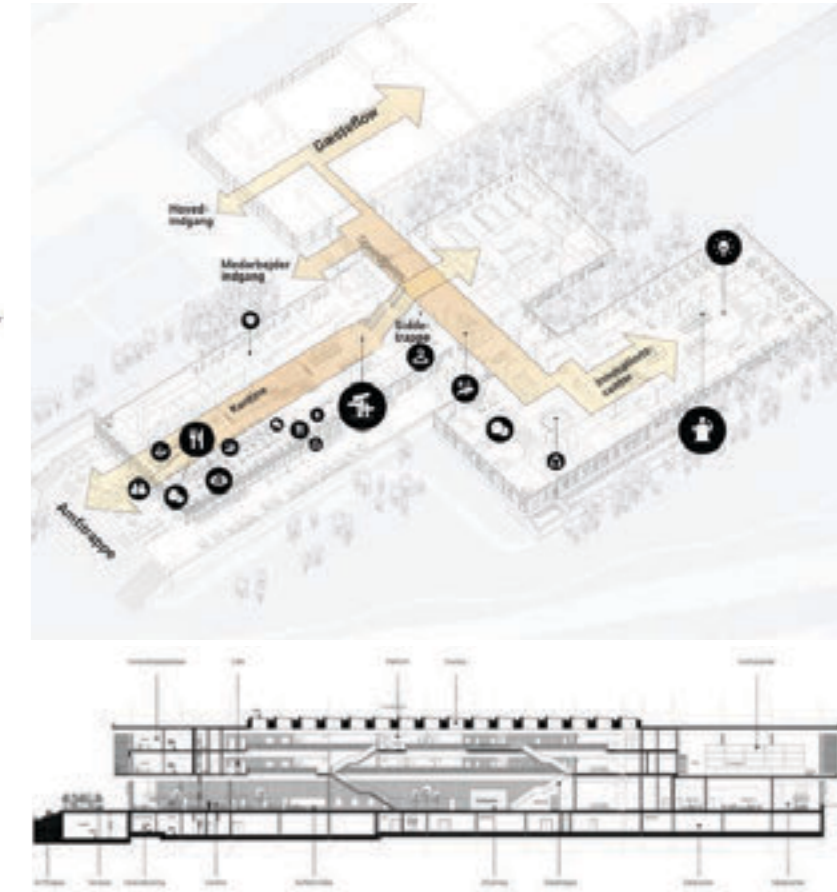


### Energinet Competition

The initial activities involved drawing sections, diagrams, and exploded axonometries for a project design that was under development. As I arrived in the middle of the process, the team asked me to contribute to finalizing the pending tasks. This first approach to the office's workflow was important for understanding how the team works and shares responsibilities. In this way, it was a good first chance to analyze who oversees specific tasks, given their specialization, such as 3D artists, designers, and idea developers.



Material production examples

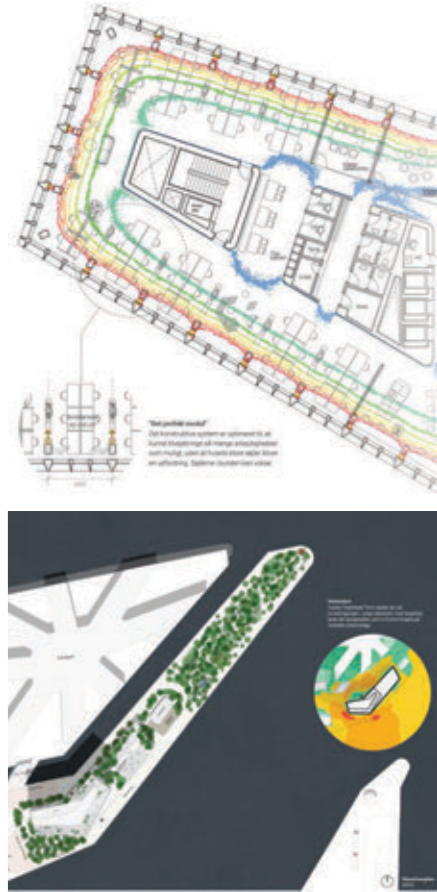
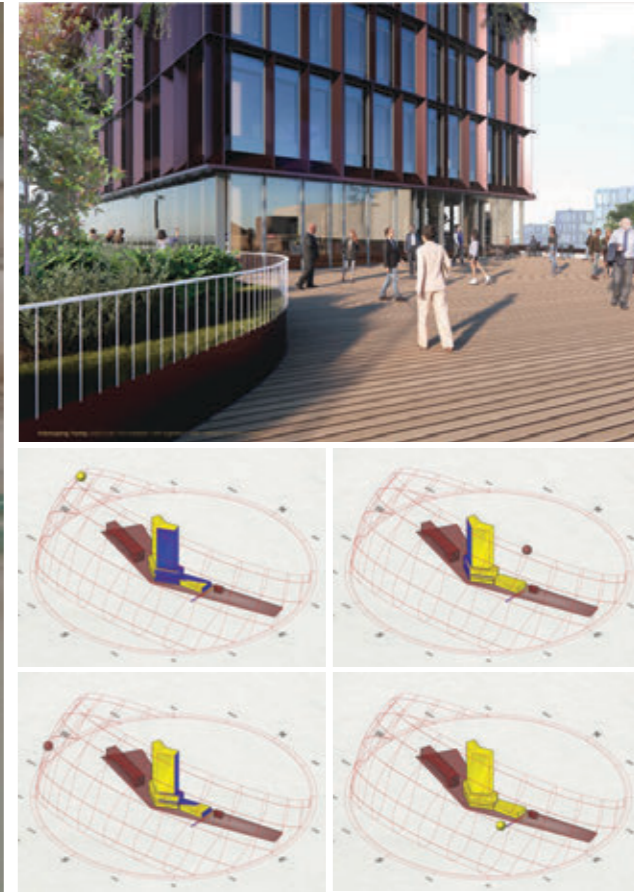


### Nordhavn Tower Competition

The team had already overcome the first stage, so I joined to support them for the second stage. Here, I developed a variety of workable solutions in the conceptual stage by exploring ideas through models and sketches. Later, some ideas were chosen, corrected, and improved to develop and adjust them to meet the client's requirements. In conclusion, after several design meetings with the design team and external collaborators, the production of material for the final presentation was conducted. In this stage, my role focused on producing diagrams for climate analysis, sections, and some renders.



Material production examples



### Jernbanegade Renovation

During a brief period, the visualization team needed help to post-produce images for an intervention in a hotel. I received an image and instructions about the mood and atmosphere the image must display. This experience was super useful because I improved my Photoshop skills and learned a variety of shortcuts and specific ways to enhance my outcomes and facilitate my regular workflow. Even though my post-production skills were in a good state, after this experience, they got much better by applying the little tips that the experts in the visualization team taught me.



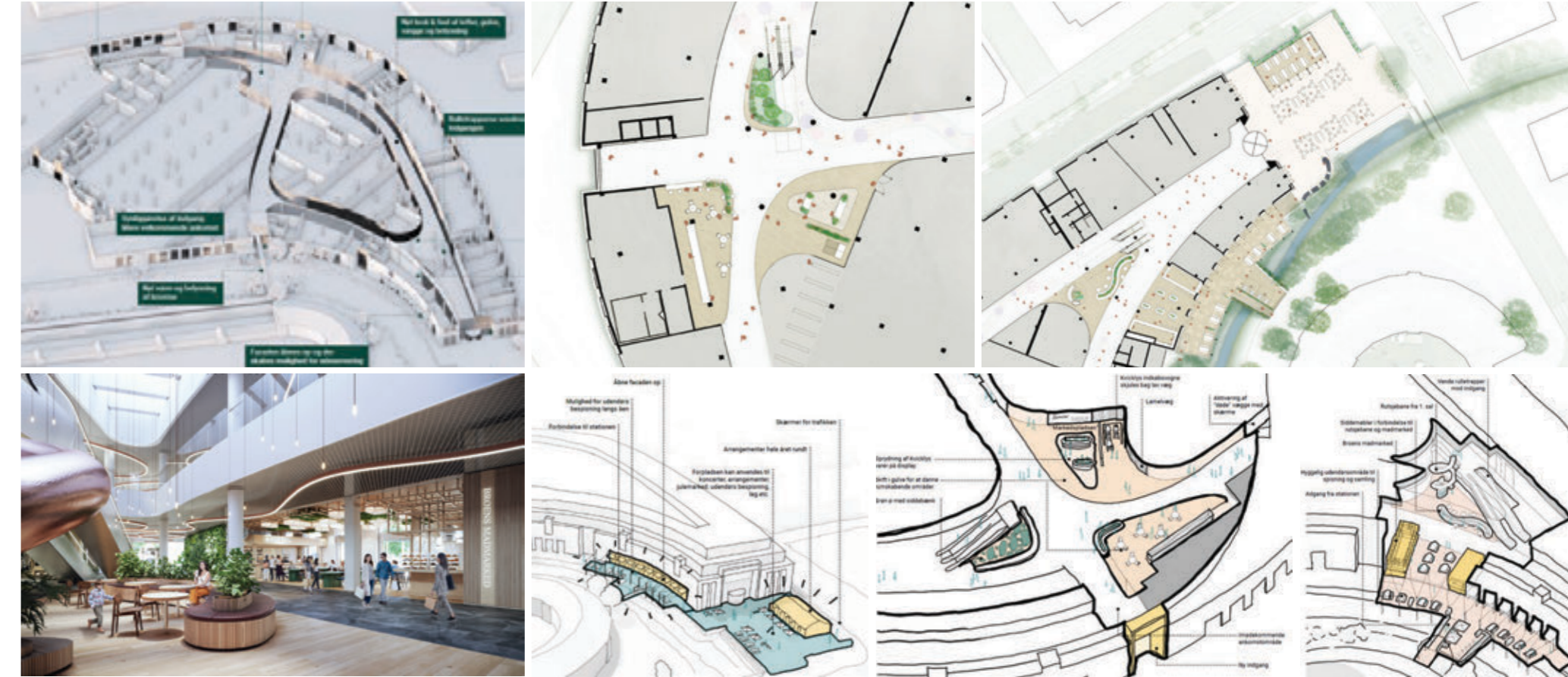
Material production examples





## Sillebroen Shopping Center

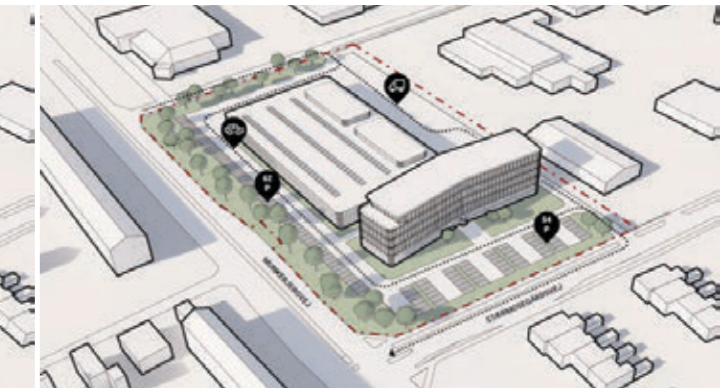
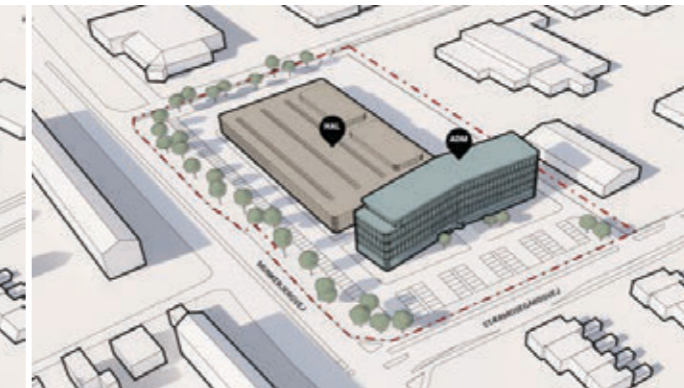
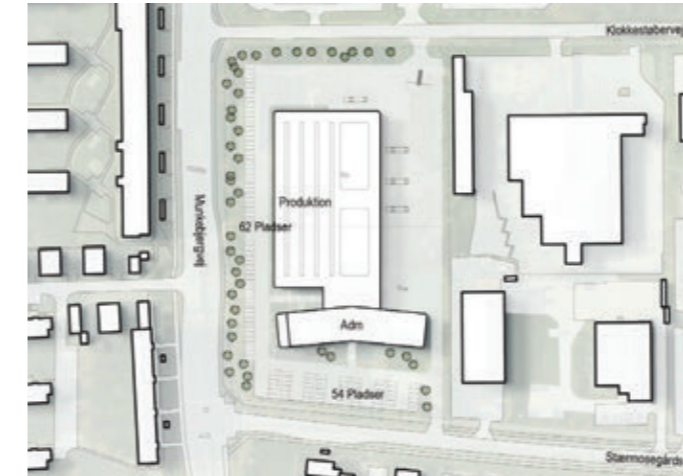
The client required a team to develop a comprehensive renovation idea for a shopping center. So, one teammate and I were asked to develop the project on our own. Thanks to several meetings with clients and internal decision-making within the team, we implemented several interventions that will ensure a completely new image for the shopping center. Under the statement "from center to centrum," the interventions focused on creating various spaces and activities to attract more people. The proposal ended up being an external intervention of the square, connecting the building with the river, an internal playful hall, and the overall look and feel of the general circulation in the building. Once these ideas were defined in sketches, I also worked on the 3D model, materiality, drawings, postproduction, and images for the final presentation. The project was a complete success and very well accepted by clients.



Material production examples

### Newtec Office Building

The request for this project was a result of one of the projects submitted a couple of years ago, winning the contract and needing approval from the municipality. To achieve this, some changes had to be made in a brief period before the Christmas holidays. Therefore, I was asked to independently develop all the corrections in terms of height, proportions, materiality, and area adjustments. Additionally, once the corrections were accepted, I worked on the entire 3D model and base images for the presentation to the municipality. This experience was one of the most challenging, but at this point, I felt confident, and my team trusted me to do it. The outcome was accepted by the partners and successfully presented for approval.



Material production examples

### H8 Site visit

The project is under construction and is planned to be completed in the following months. So, I was invited with the building architects' team who were working on similar projects in the executive plans stage. Therefore, we all went together to see how the work was advancing. Once we arrived, the construction company representative gave a brief introduction, and we walked around the entire building. This experience was super enlightening because it helped me to have a wider perspective about the construction stage. Several sketches and façade drawings we considered for contemporary design ideas were already applied in this building. Therefore, this activity enriches my understanding of how ideas come into reality.



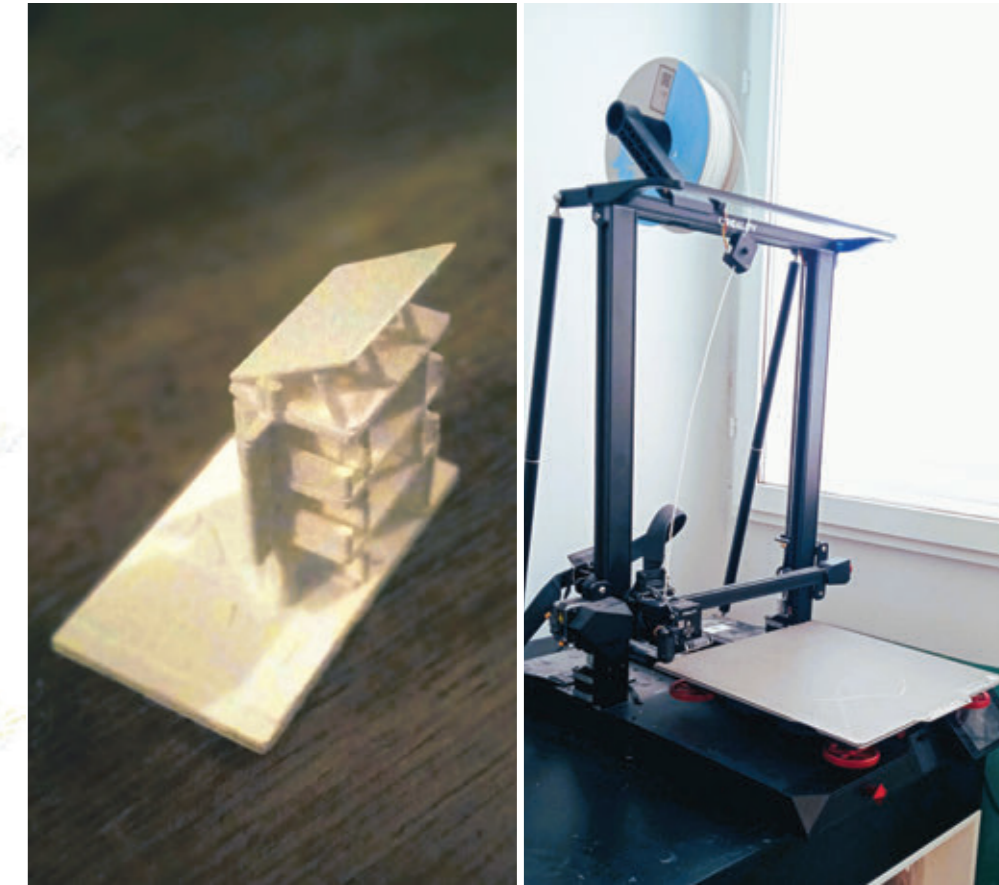
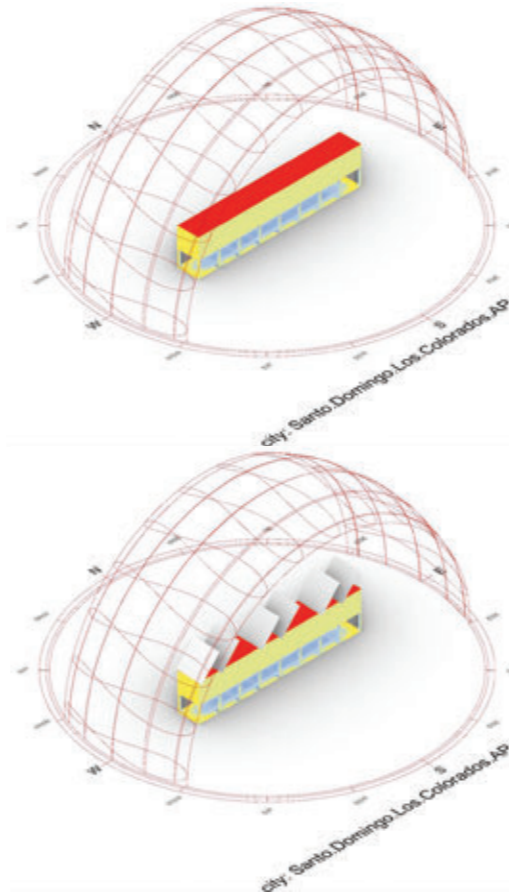
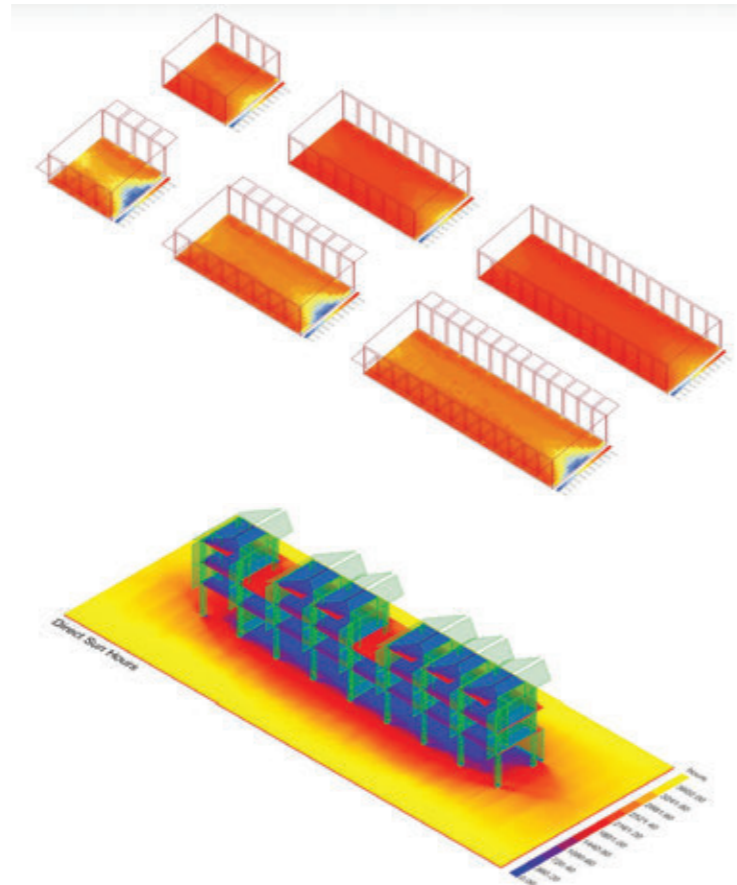
Site visit pictures

#### 4. \_ PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

##### Explorations

During certain intervals, I used my free time to explore and enhance my proficiency in various tools such as Grasshopper, Ladybug, Butterfly, Climate Studio, and those related to 3D printing. This self-directed effort allowed me to expand my skill set and gain a deeper understanding of these valuable tools.

In addition to this, I joined the sustainability team to further my knowledge on this subject. Our collaborative efforts involved regular meetings where we analyzed and identified the most effective tools to improve outcomes in early-stage design. This experience not only contributed to my professional growth but also emphasized my proactive approach to staying abreast of industry trends and best practices.



## Around the city

In addition to my regular responsibilities, I organized my schedule to include visits to various projects across the city. Adhering to a structured routine, I dedicated time each weekend to explore at least one noteworthy building, capturing photographs and reflecting on each project. This immersive experience proved enlightening as it deepened my understanding of Danish architecture, its influences, and the fundamental principles guiding their design decisions.

This exploration also revealed discernible patterns in their approach, primarily emphasizing the significance of solar radiation in response to climatic conditions. Light emerged as a crucial factor, aligned with their commitment to sustainability, innovative materiality, and, once again, the core tenet of Danish Architectural Policy: "Putting people first."

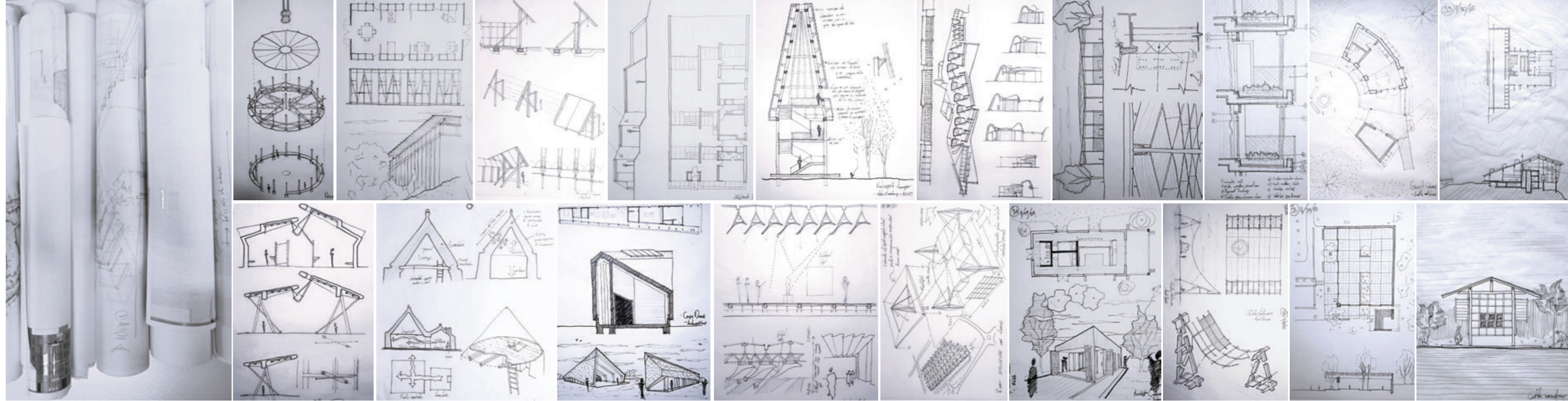


## Sketching

I embarked on a daily ritual, crafting drawings from inception to completion. This meticulous practice, facilitated by the generous availability of materials within the office, not only served as a means of artistic expression but also presented a unique opportunity to invest my time on my passion for architecture.

After the culmination of my designated work hours, I chose to immerse myself further in the architectural and construction nuances. Through each sketch, I sought to comprehend and articulate the profound principles that I wanted to understand better.

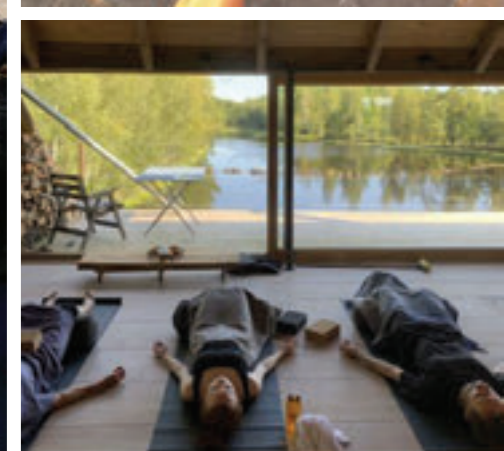
The disciplined routine, comprising a minimum of one sketch per day, resulted in approximately 100 sketches. Enclosed herewith is a portion of this collection, representing the cultivation of my knowledge during this valuable period.



## 5. \_ ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

The office fostered a vibrant social environment through events aimed at nurturing camaraderie among colleagues. Interns' gatherings and dinner meetings offered opportunities to share experiences within the office. Larger festivities, such as Halloween and Christmas parties, united the entire team of nearly 200 architects for evenings filled with dining, drinks, and dancing, playing a crucial role in building a sense of community and shared identity among the diverse group.

On the sports front, I was invited to participate in the DHL running event as part of one of PLH's teams, where we secured second place. Additionally, I had the privilege of attending free yoga classes, allowing me to spend more quality time with my dear colleagues.



## 6. \_ REFLECTIONS & CONCLUSIONS

The work environment is highly independent and autonomous, with each team member taking responsibility for their tasks, and a distinct lack of direct supervision among colleagues. Remarkably, the team has cultivated a level of trust where everyone is confident that assigned tasks will be completed punctually and presented in a high-quality state. Initially, grasping this level of independence presented a challenge for me. However, after a brief observation period, I gained a clear understanding of how work distribution functions. Subsequently, I consistently sought additional tasks, proposing diverse ways in which I could contribute and enhance my involvement in projects. This proactive and engaged approach allowed me to identify my role and contribute effectively to each project I participated in.

It's worth to mention that I believe I could have been exposed to more challenges and opportunities to further test my skills. While the internship presented challenges at certain points, my motivation to surpass my limitations and choose the most challenging paths drove my learning experience. I never felt that I fully unleashed my potential, utilizing only a part of my skills, tools, and capabilities. It's also important to acknowledge that large offices typically operate with a hierarchical structure where individuals play roles based on their tenure and earned trust over prolonged periods. Which makes sense because I was considered a newcomer in the office and the youngest team member. Despite my requests for additional tasks not being fully considered, I am

confident that I could have been integrated into projects aligning with my capabilities, given my experience in similar activities in other architecture offices. Despite these challenges, I am sincerely appreciative of the wealth of knowledge I acquired during the internship. Beyond the scope of my daily tasks, the experience became one of the most enriching periods of my life, primarily due to exposure to a different context and work environment. I am confident that this experience will significantly influence my future pursuits as an architect. PLH Arkitekter and Copenhagen, with its talented professionals, offer an ideal setting for deepening my understanding of design and architecture, providing a valuable and unique perspective.

## 7. \_ ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I extend my sincere appreciation to my colleagues at PLH Arkitekter, whose unwavering dedication to imparting knowledge has been invaluable, and to my counterparts at the Advanced School of Architecture, whose encouragement propelled me to transcend conventional expectations in the pursuit of a conducive environment for skill development. Both environments stand as vibrant hubs for talent and excellence within the architectural realm.

In concluding this report, I wish to convey that I conscientiously committed to the task of documenting my thoughts, reflections, and discoveries throughout my tenure in Copenhagen. Consequently, it brings me great satisfaction to state that this period stands as the period in which I have had

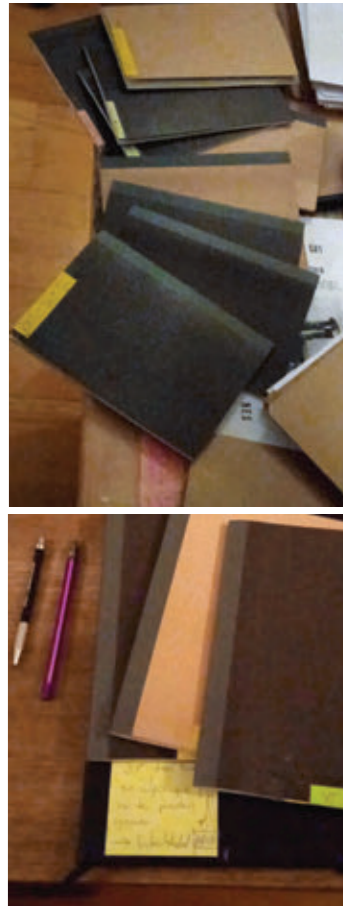
the richest production of text about my evolving philosophy but also a heightened self-awareness of my love for architecture and the aspirations I hold for my professional trajectory. The immersive experience in Copenhagen allowed me to discern, refine, and attain a more lucid perspective on better trajectories for my career.

It is important to acknowledge that this note serves a dual purpose, addressing not only the readers of this report but also acting as a personal commitment to introspect. A compromise to revisit these writings a decade hence to confirm the realization of every aspiration inscribed in my notes.



C.A.

20.02.24





# **Advanced School of Architecture**

II edition - 2022/2023

**Carlos David Arcos Jácome**

Internship Report

**PLH Arkitekter**

Copenhagen



**FUKSAS**

Alina Kim  
Internship at STUDIO FUKSAS  
September – December 2023

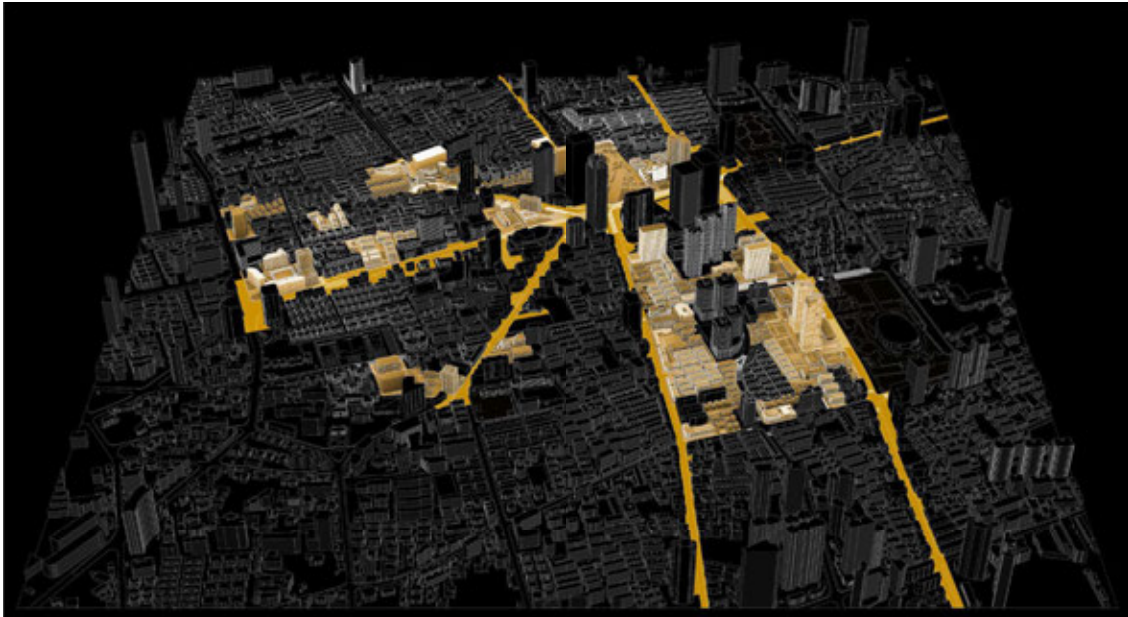
I have completed 4 months long-term internship at Studio Fuksas, an international architectural firm in Rome. During my internship, I had the opportunity to work on various projects ranging from large urban-scale development to luxury mansion design. I gained hands-on experience in different stages of the design process, including site analysis, conceptualization, 3D modelling, and visualization. Working together with different teams I could grasp the studio's organization and general work culture. Although I did not have a lot of overtime work I have seen how my coworkers stayed late frequently because of deadlines. One of the benefits of my internship was a chance to work on large scale projects with unique design, especially new to me was the use of parametric design and grasshopper tools.

*The office is located in the center of Rome, near Piazza Navona. Entering the building there is a courtyard separating a different departments of the studio which include Sala International, Sala Italia, Sala 3D, Sala China, Sala Design and Workshop rooms.*



*Figure 1 The office courtyard*

At the beginning of the internship, I joined a team that carried out international projects, especially in China. Working in a collaboration with Chinese studio and clients allowed me to gain valuable insights into intercultural communication and collaboration in architecture. Furthermore, I was able to collaborate with architects and designers from different backgrounds, which enhanced my understanding of the importance of teamwork in achieving successful architectural outcomes. The first project I have joined was the Hengfu Urban Development proposal, which was a competition about urban development and revitalization of the Old French Concession area in Shanghai. The project was ongoing during my internship, and I had the opportunity to contribute to the design process by generating various conceptual drawings, diagrams, and perspectives for the client presentations. Since it was an ongoing project I have mostly helped with the visualization and development of the details of the masterplan. Moreover, the project was a part of the exhibition at the venue in Shanghai and was presented to the local community and city administration.

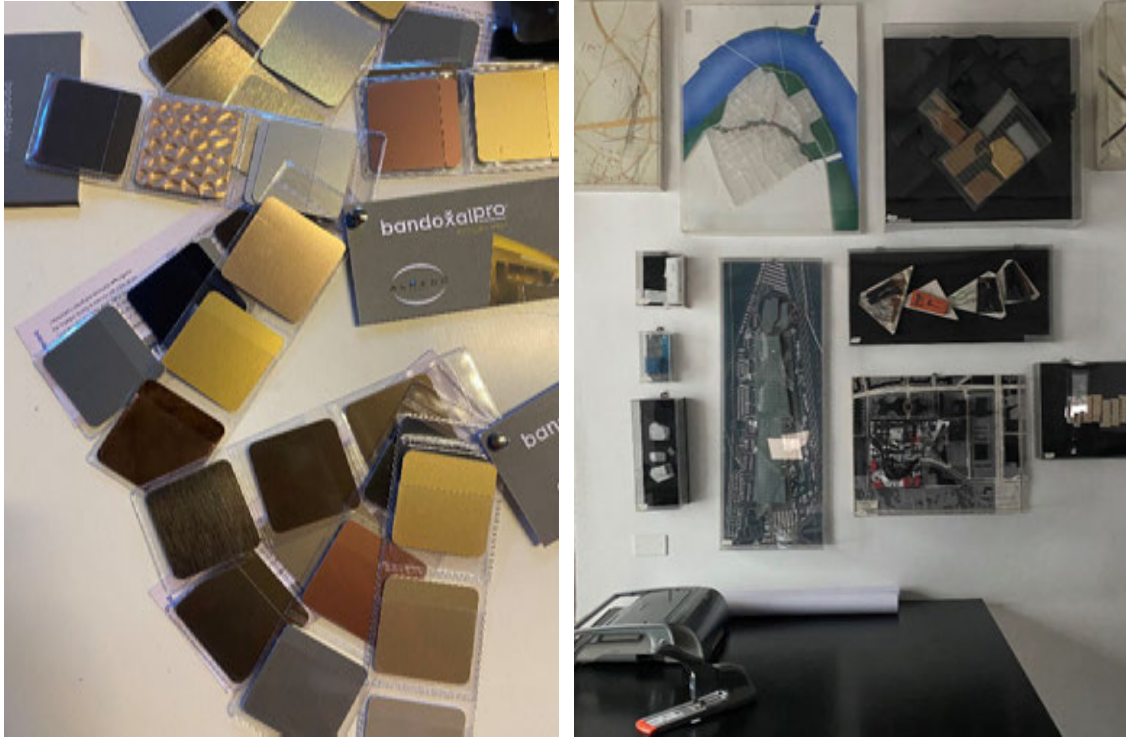


*Figure 2 Hengfu Urban Development masterplan concept drawing*

The next project that I was participating in at the same time as the Hengfu proposal was the Lujiazui Office Building, commissioned by Chinese clients. The project included a plot in the new development area, the plot included 3 buildings of mixed use of offices and public facilities. I have participated in the conceptual phase of the project where I worked on generating design ideas and creating 3d models and images to visualize the proposed architectural concepts. During my internship, I was responsible for assisting the architectural team in developing design drawings such as masterplan, plans, and sections for presentations with the clients, and researching building materials and local architectural styles. Moreover, while working on this project I have learned and applied the skills for environmental analysis with Ladybug Tools Grasshopper, which was useful for evaluating the environmental performance of the proposed design. I appreciated the chance to learn a new skill and to have a help from experienced 3d architects who were giving me tips and advices during this time. The Grasshopper scripts I have written was also used for other following projects which was a good contribution from my side and was highly appreciated by my managers.

The next project I worked on was the Aqaba Mansion “Monolith” project, located in Aqaba, Jordan. The project was a part of the competition for designing luxury mansions commissioned by NEOM. Within the context of mountains and seaside, the role of the architect was to create a design that seamlessly integrated with the surrounding natural environment while providing a luxurious and comfortable living space. The project won the first stage of the competition and further continued to develop the detailed design and structure of the mansion. My role in this project was to assist in developing the architectural drawings, including floor plans, elevations, sections, and other images for a better representation of the project. I have conducted the environmental analysis with Grasshopper and Ladybug tools, which included Ladybug sun exposure analysis and shadow analysis, Slope Steepness analysis, and Butterfly wind flow analysis to ensure that the design of the mansion maximized natural lighting, minimized heat gain, and utilized passive ventilation strategies. The diagrams and schemes were prepared by me to support the analysis. During this project, I gained valuable experience in designing for the integration of natural environments and sustainable design principles, while also improving my skills in architectural visualization with Adobe suite software. This project presentation and process

went especially well and as a result the firm received another contract for the similar Luxury Mansion in another area. I liked very much the result of the interesting parametric design and engineering solutions which were applied in the “Monolith”. In this case I also could see more detailed development of the project, including detailed façade design, structural design and material selection process.



*Figure 3 Material selection and Physical models*

While being a part of the teams working on the projects mentioned above, I was occasionally involved in other ongoing projects in the office to provide help for the architectural teams as needed. Some of my responsibilities included assisting with the development of design drawings, and visualization, such as the Masterplan for the Cap D'Ail hotel project in France, and the concept drawings for the Agadir Airport competition project in Morocco. In cases like that I also could work with teams from other Salas which was a good chance to get to know more people and learn different ways of working.

I was also shortly involved in the famous LINE project for NEOM in Saudi Arabia which started just before the end of my internship period. I took part in the initial concept development and form finding using Grasshopper. It was interesting to see the documentation and the previous presentations about this project and how this seemingly impossible idea could be realized in actual architecture.

During the work on competitions it was useful to see the organization and teamwork efforts required for the project. Competitions involved fast ideas, brainstorming, upcoming deadlines and overtime, which could be stressful but creative and stimulating experience.

*It was not common for the Architect (Massimiliano Fuksas) to see the regular employees, since he usually communicated with managers, but we could see him sometimes visiting the salas.*

*During the design development he would have meetings with manager and 3D architect (the employee who managed the 3D modelling) where he would sketch the initial ideas or manipulate the model to create the desired space.*

*Some of the ideas could look very conceptual and abstract, and afterwards with the effort of designers would be translated into architecture.*



*Figure 4 Sketches and Project development drawings*

In addition to my professional experience, I also had valuable experience working in an international environment and participating in the office activities such as team meetings, design reviews, and occasional Friday gatherings. During my internship, I have managed to develop close relationships with my coworkers who became good friends and mentors, and we continue to stay in touch even after the completion of my internship. My day would start with arriving at the office early in the morning and updating my task list for the day, around 11 am me and some of my coworkers would have a coffee break in the nearby cafe and discuss our current projects and share the daily news. At lunchtime, we would gather again to have lunch together and take afternoon coffee. Overall, I can describe the environment in the office as friendly and inspiring, with a strong emphasis on collaboration and learning from each other's expertise.



*Figure 5 Meeting for project discussions*

During my internship I gained valuable experience in teamwork, architectural design, and visualization, developed Grasshopper skills, and expanded my knowledge of large-scale architecture projects. This internship provided me with the opportunity to collaborate with international design teams and apply my skills in architectural design, visualization, and sustainable design principles. The internship experience provided me with a well-rounded understanding of the architecture studio work environment, the pros and cons of working in a big international firm, and the importance of effective communication and teamwork in delivering successful architectural projects. Furthermore, I have been offered to continue my work at the firm as a Junior Architect after the completion of my internship, which is a testament to the positive impact I had during my time there. Overall, my internship experience was incredibly valuable as it allowed me to work on high-profile projects, develop my skills in architectural design and visualization, and gain insight into the dynamics of an international architecture firm.



*Figure 6 Office Christmas party*

Although my experience was positive and I felt stable and friendly environment, it was quite unsettling for me to see how many people resign or get fired frequently. Every month of my work there 2-3 people would leave and new people would arrived, which made me question the overall stability of the job. In the end of the internship, I still consider coming back and start a position as a junior architect after my graduation, however, there are more aspects to consider in the future.

To add my impression about the city, Rome is a beautiful place to live in and even shortly to experience. The office location in the center of the city allowed us to go outside during lunch to enjoy the weather and go for drinks or dinner after working day, also including my favourite coffee break and gelato break in summer. Some weekend activities included architecture trips or museum visits with my colleagues. And in warm weather I usually enjoyed a long walk along the river from work to my home.





# GRACE

SARA IBRAHIM

Internship at GRACE

February – June 2023

I started my internship in this studio directly after finishing my Thematic Studio at Politecnico, whereas the visiting professor at the time, Ekaterina Golovatyuk, offered me an internship position at her office in Milan, GRACE. That is how I started my internship. The office is located in Via Garofalo, 31, in the area near Loreto, so it was very convenient to commute to and from the office for someone living in Milan.

During my 4-months duration at the office, I tackled two different projects: a housing complex in Istanbul for the first 2 months, then a commercial tower in Bangkok for the other 2 months. Obviously, I helped around the office with miscellaneous tasks when needed. My work on these two projects ranged from conceptual design of pre-schematic spatial arrangements, diagrammatic drawings to be shown to the client, technical drawing sets, model making, and 2D and 3D renderings.

The studio is moderately sized. A section for the dining/meeting area, a section for the kitchen/bathroom area, a section for the employees, and the section where the interns and the co-founders of the studio worked.



Fig. 1. My office space and ambience while using my personal



Fig. 2. Schematic Drawings of one of the

For the first housing project in Istanbul, Turkey. The project was a housing complex overlooking the Bosphorus. The team tackled an already existing villa that can not be demolished, only renovated, and the construction of new functions across the mountain scape: a gym, pool, hammam, staff housing, and a guesthouse. The latter which I was assigned to. I started to work with the architect in charge on identifying 3 design proposals to be proposed to the client, while working on schematic diagrams to show them the design ideas. I mainly worked on Autocad, Photoshop, Illustrator, and Rhino 3D. At that time, I and other interns also realized physical models of the different options. to be shown to the client as well.



Fig. 3. Physical models of the 3 proposals that were sent to the client

This phase of the work was interesting for me since my employer encouraged the interns to present their own ideas, not just apply what they are told. It felt like I was in a typical design studio, but applying my knowledge into a real project. My employer was extremely generous in that sense, working with the interns directly and giving advice and guidance. Once one proposal was approved, I was taught the guidelines of drawing sets that the office followed and how to organize the files in the server of the office. Even though I have already worked with drawing sets before, I learned how these details defer from one office to other, especially if the drawings should be designed to be read by foreign contractors and clients. Apparently, the project was of a high profile for the office, so sometimes we stayed after hours to realize some work before submitting for a deadline, which is something that is not appreciated considering being an underpaid intern that is not paid for over-time anyways. In any case, the office time officially ended at 19:00 but no employee left at that time. During the first weeks of working there, the interns indirectly took permission to leave at the agreed time but sometimes I was asked to stay more to approve the work with our employer before the next day.

During the second week of the internship, my employer invited the employees as well as the interns to attend the opening of an exhibition at MUDEC that the office has been curating before I came. The invite was appreciated and allowed the interns to get to know the different scopes that the office designs, as well as spending more quality time with the employees. Being an art-enthusiast myself, I enjoyed the evening.



Fig. 4 -5: Exhibition at MUDEC curated by the

The second project I worked on was in Bangkok, Thailand. It was a commercial tower project that was a co-operation between another architecture studio. Our team was designing the spatial arrangements while the other office was designing the massing and urban design of the project. This was an interesting opportunity to be working with another office and conducting meetings with them to prepare a coherent proposal to be presented to the clients in Bangkok. We started working from the schematic division phase, to eventually realizing 3D models and renders through Enscape. We also had to give close attention to division of areas in square meters and divide the spaces accordingly.

Regarding the work division, this project was a bit chaotic. Eventually, I was working on this project with another intern alone and having occasional supervision and corrections for the employers directly, there were no architects leading us at this point. I would say that they were understaffed... There were many instances where we would not be able to move forward because we have to wait for the employer's approval when they have time to work with us. Compared to the previous project, we spent more time outside of working hours trying to manage the work. Eventually, it seemed unfair.

During my work there, the office was also involved in producing a book collecting photographs of a photographer working on Tashkent Modernism, which was the topic of my Thematic Studio as well. Eventually, they also organized an exhibition at the Triennale where several of my colleagues works were exhibited. The photograph selection process as well as the printed panels for the exhibition were stuck on all the walls of the office, a way to show the process of the work. Even though I was not involved in this project, I was able to understand their intentions and see my case study of the Thematic Studio being addressed in their work.



Fig. 6. Prints of photographs for

As a final evaluation of the overall experience, the only aspect that would add to my experience there was the ability to visit the sites I'm working on, that was not a possible option. For any architect, it would be more memorable. However, I want to emphasize that I was taught in an organized manner and was able to present my work and have my employers hear my ideas and concerns. And for this, I am grateful.

In terms of the working atmosphere, towards the end of my internship, I realized that more work and responsibilities have been put onto interns that were supposed to be managed by employees working full-time and being paid accordingly. Not being able to always leave work after the official time prevents the employee from being able to organize their evenings and future appointments. These setbacks were one of the things that demotivated me from asking for a position at their office when I graduated. But the main reason why I would be skeptical about working there again as an architect is that, similar to most architecture offices in Italy, they hire their employees with Partita IVA, and for a foreigner this is not always the best option to consider since there is no guarantees to most things that are offered by a regular contract, and this sometimes affects the renewal of our residence permits. One final remark, when I started working at the office, my type of work was under 'prestazione occasionale' and not an intern, which I later understood as being a freelancer, so my salary was taxed and I did not receive any busta paga for the amount I was paid. I still don't know if that was the correct procedure for such circumstances.

**Advanced School of Architecture - ASA**  
Student: Alice Miloni (993649)  
Internship supervisor: prof. Pierre-Alain Croset  
Internship office tutor: ing. Carmine Spina

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**INTERNSHIP AT**



Advanced Design Practice  
Internship report  
April 2023 - December 2023  
Milan, Italy



*ATI Project Milan Office, via Imbonati 18 (Maciachini Station)*

## THE OFFICE



My internship at ATI Project started in April 2023. Initially, the internship was supposed to last 6 months and end in September, but during my stay I received a proposal from my Project Manager to remain for another three months, until December 2023.

The office where I did my internship, located on the ground floor of a large office complex in Maciachini, had just been opened. The spaces, wide and bright, housed about 80 workstations. The office is organized into two sectors: on one side, a large open space for the design team; on the other, a set of rooms for the tender teams. All the furniture and tools provided were fully functional and the spaces appropriate for the work. Each worker, including myself, was provided with a workstation with two screens.

The management of common spaces, including a large entrance hall, has always been carried out in a great spirit of cooperation and inclusion, leading to a relaxed atmosphere of enjoyable conviviality during lunch breaks.

The work environment in which I had this experience is characterized by a strong serenity and hospitality, which allowed me to feel immediately comfortable even though I was catapulted into a large office. I strongly believe that this work atmosphere is one of the strengths of the company, which is focused on building a young and inclusive environment.



## THE WORK

During my internship, I was involved in one of the tender teams in the Milan office. Entering the world of tenders was a great opportunity for me to discover and learn about the processes and different phases.

As a first step, I was explained how to read and interpret the call for tenders, in order to understand the project requirements. This phase is crucial to understand which aspects of the project are weaker and less efficient and need to be improved. From the study of these aspects comes the proposal of design, technical, environmental sustainability or site management improvements that can be drafted.

During this phase of reading and studying the tender material, I was always informed and guided, while maintaining the autonomy to make my own assessments and develop intervention ideas from my knowledge.

In a second step, after studying the documents, the organization of the work involved a meeting with the entire team to discuss and compare notes. At this point, the Project Manager was responsible for splitting up the different criteria of the competition, assigning each architect or engineer a specific issue to work on. Initially, in the first three competitions in which I participated, I was assisted by an architect, carrying out the criterion study and the required papers with him.

From the second half of the internship onward, as I developed greater awareness and critical capacity, my Project Manager felt that I was capable of managing a criterion independently, with the supervision of an architect who would occasionally check the validity and accuracy of my work.

The increased independence and responsibility I took on during the internship allowed me to develop a greater sense of initiative and problem solving.

In the tenders in which I have participated, the drafting of the papers required by the call has always been very different and specifically related to the criteria in question.

Starting with a technical-illustrative report, required in every case, explaining the chosen improvements and the criteria for evaluating them, in the various tenders depending on the criterion I had to handle BIM models of the construction site, graphic tables and drawings, estimated metric calculations, renderings to clarify the improvement proposals, etc...

I think interscalarity has been a strength of my experience, extremely appropriate to my urban design studies.

The Project Manager who supervised me gave me the opportunity to deal with a different criterion at each tender: in this way, I was able to gain experience not only with building solutions (finishes, cladding, facade systems, etc.), but also with the design of green and outdoor spaces and with the organization and management of the construction site.

Regarding technical skills, I was also given the opportunity to use software that I had never worked with before, such as Primus for metric calculations, Lumion and Enscape for renderings, CadNa to evaluate the acoustic impact of the construction site, EdilClima to evaluate the energy aspects of the project.

One of the most formative aspects of my internship is related to the management of the job assignment and the schedule of work. Thanks to the spirit of leadership and collaboration carried out by my Project Manager, I was able to observe and learn how work schedules are managed within a large international organization such as ATI Project.

At the beginning of each tender, the Project Manager was responsible for drawing up a shared calendar with internal deadlines, for reviewing the work, deadlines for delivering the materials to the company and the official deadlines for the tender. Having set work timelines has permitted me to learn what is the right amount of time to spend on each activity, which was calculated based on how many "points" the criterion in question was worth.

Since they are public tenders, I did not have a chance to take some of the drawings or reports produced by my team.

## OFFICE EVENTS AND SOCIAL ASPECTS



*Milan Office Hall*

One of the best parts of my internship experience was related to the office lifestyle and social life.

Daily moments of conviviality, during breaks or lunches, allowed me to interact with many young architects and engineers and have a discussion about their past work experiences.

I strongly believe that this has enriched me as much from a work perspective as from a human one.

In addition, in the 9 months that I spent working in the office, ATI Project organized a variety of corporate events and activities in Milan and Tuscany: a sports event in April (ATI Sport), the summer party in July (ATI Summer), a team building for tender teams and the Christmas party before holidays (ATI Christmas).

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to have such an experience in an international and progressive company like ATI Project!



*Summer Volunteering for Legambiente, July 2023, Pisa, Italy*



*Tenders Team Building, September 2023, Lucca, Italy*