

Advanced School of Architecture

II edition - 2022/2023

Carlos David Arcos Jácome

Internship Report

PLH Arkitekter

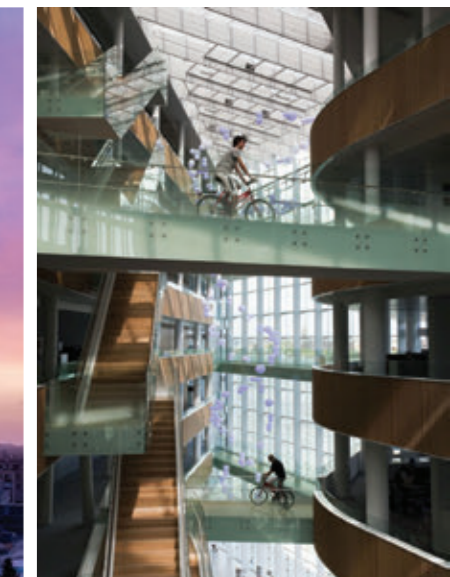
Copenhagen

INDEX

1. _ About PLH Arkitekter	3
2. _ First impressions	4
3. _ Professional experience	7
4. _ Personal experience	20
5. _ Additional activities	26
6. _ Reflections & Conclusions	28
6. _ Acknowledgment	29

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

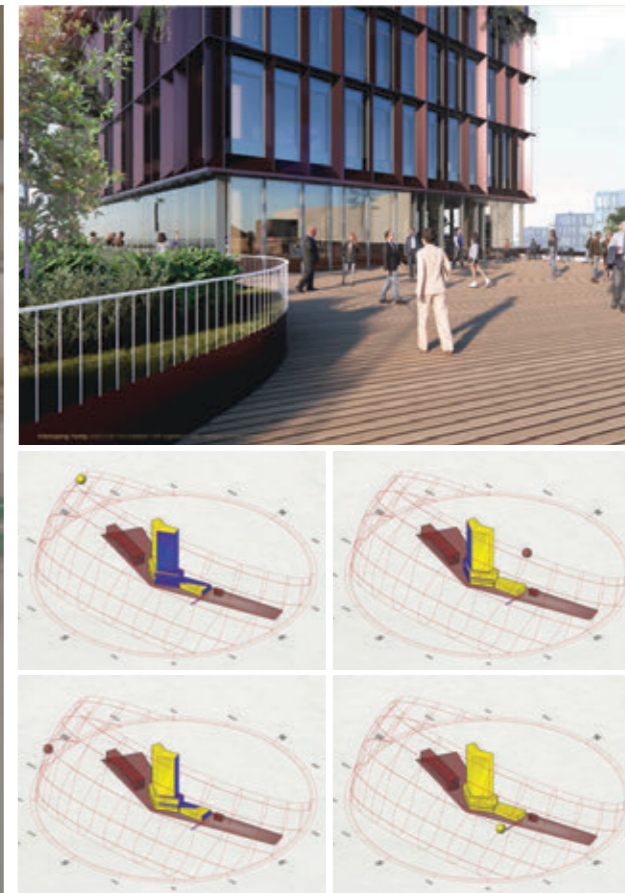
The internship extended from August 21st to February 20th, spanning 25 weeks with an average of 8.5 hours per day, totaling 1062.5 hours. As a part of the competition's team, the primary focus was on design and idea development. Initially, tasks centered on early-stage design using sketches and models, 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.



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.

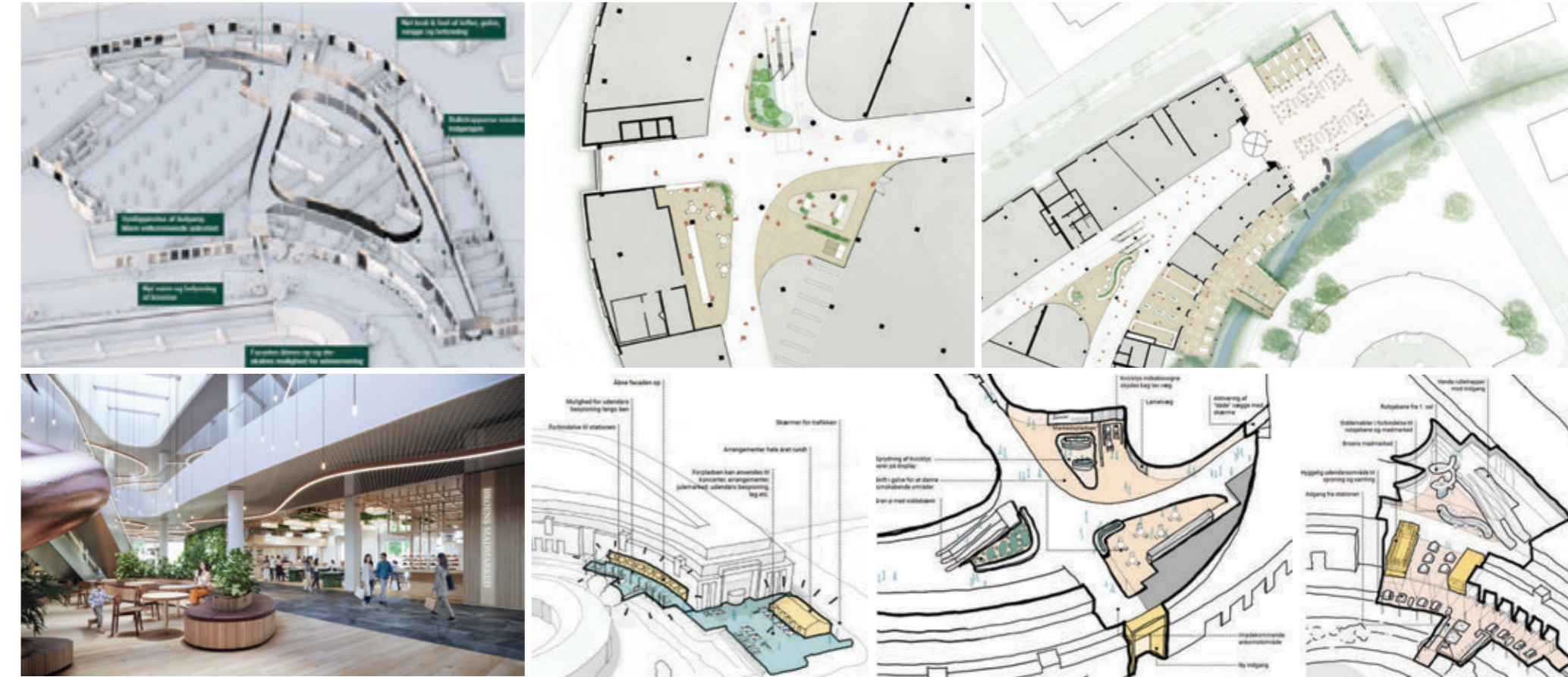


Material production examples



Sillebroen Shopping Center

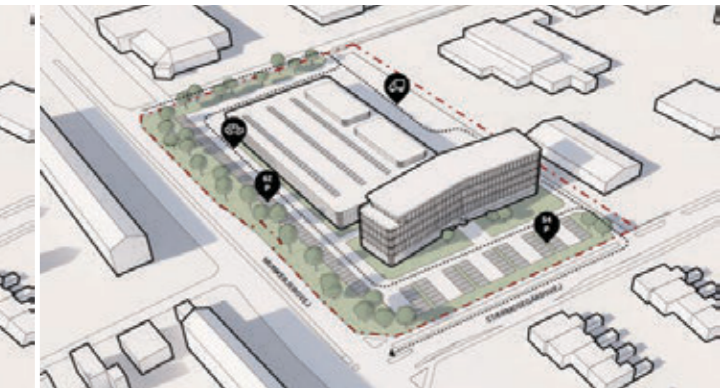
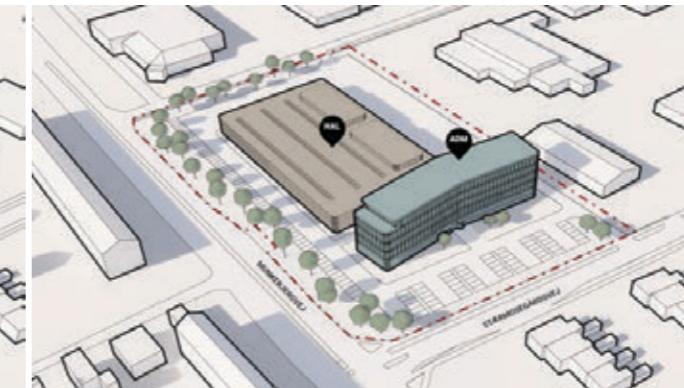
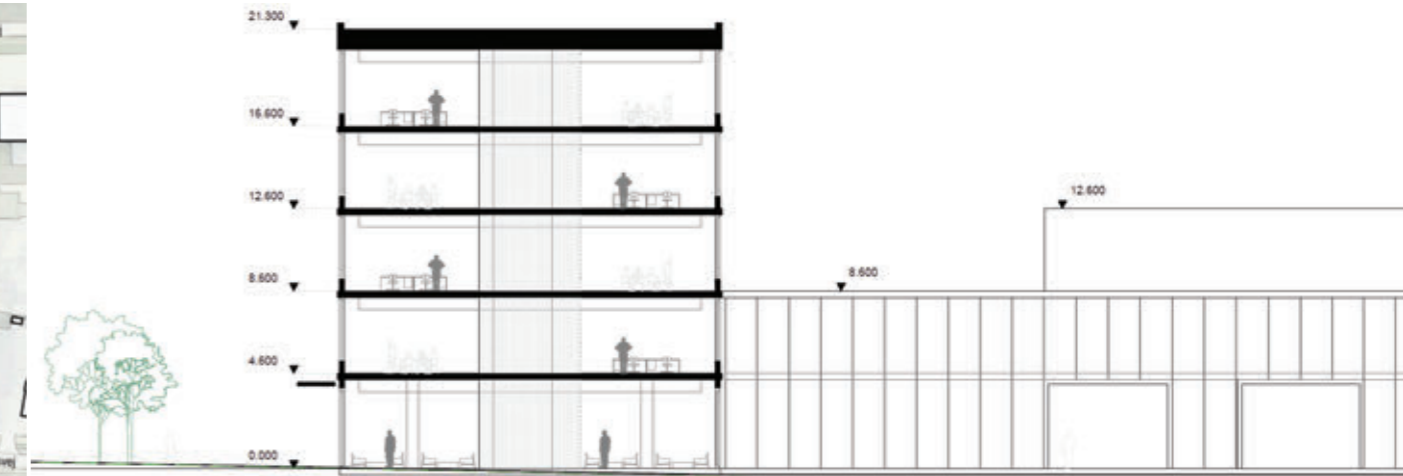
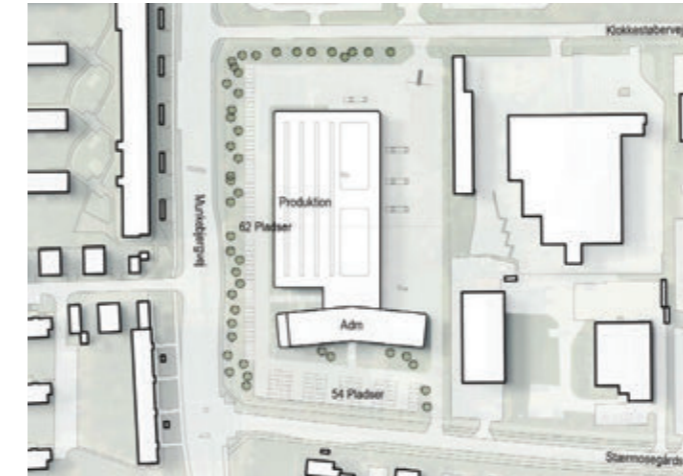
The client required a team to develop a comprehensive renovation idea for a shopping center. So, one teammate and I were asked to develop the project on our own. Thanks to several meetings with clients and internal decision-making within the team, we implemented several interventions that will ensure 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

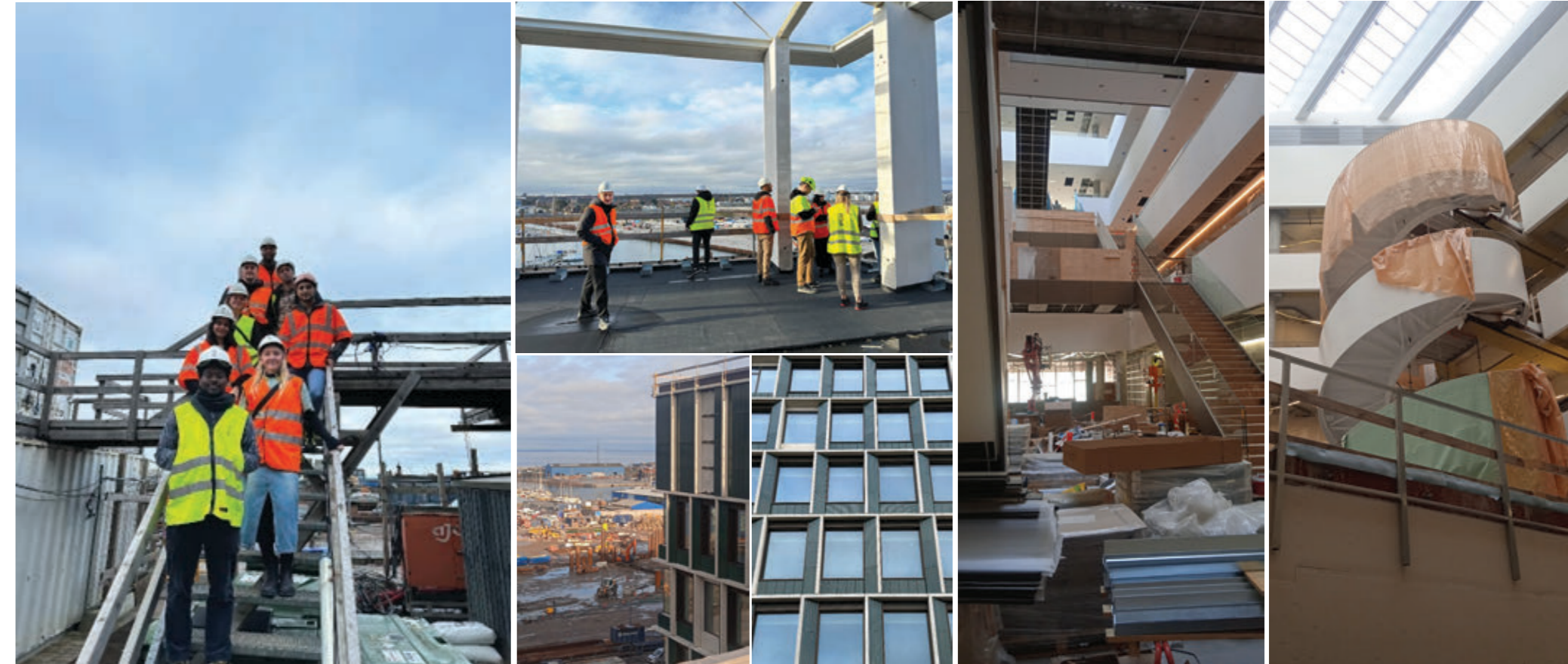
The request for this project was a result of one of the projects submitted a couple of years ago, winning the contract and needing approval from the municipality. To achieve this, some changes had to be made in a brief period before the Christmas holidays. Therefore, I was asked to independently develop 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.



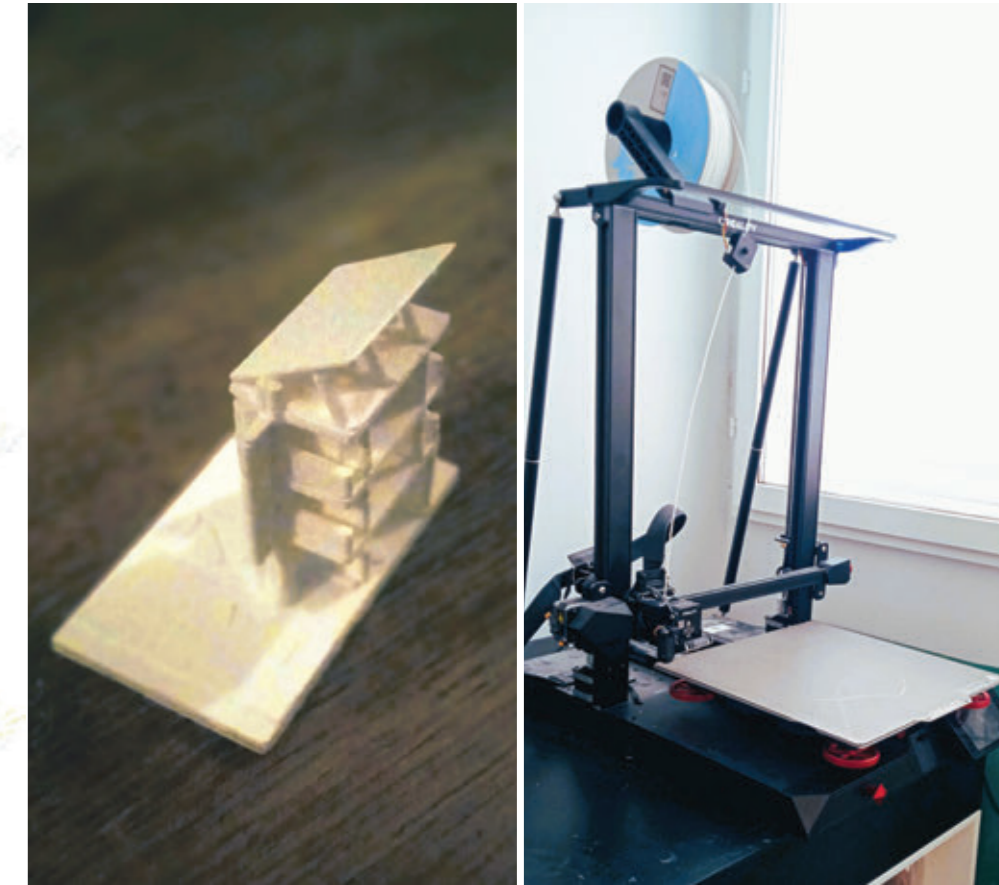
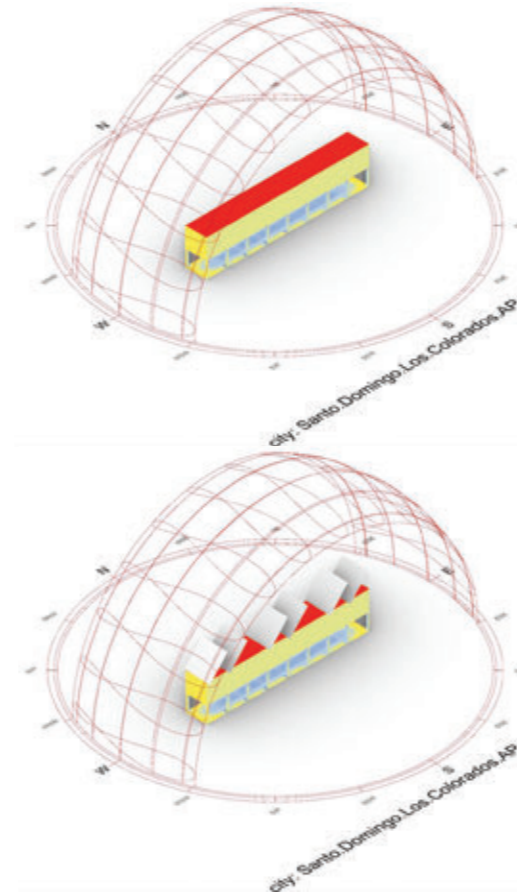
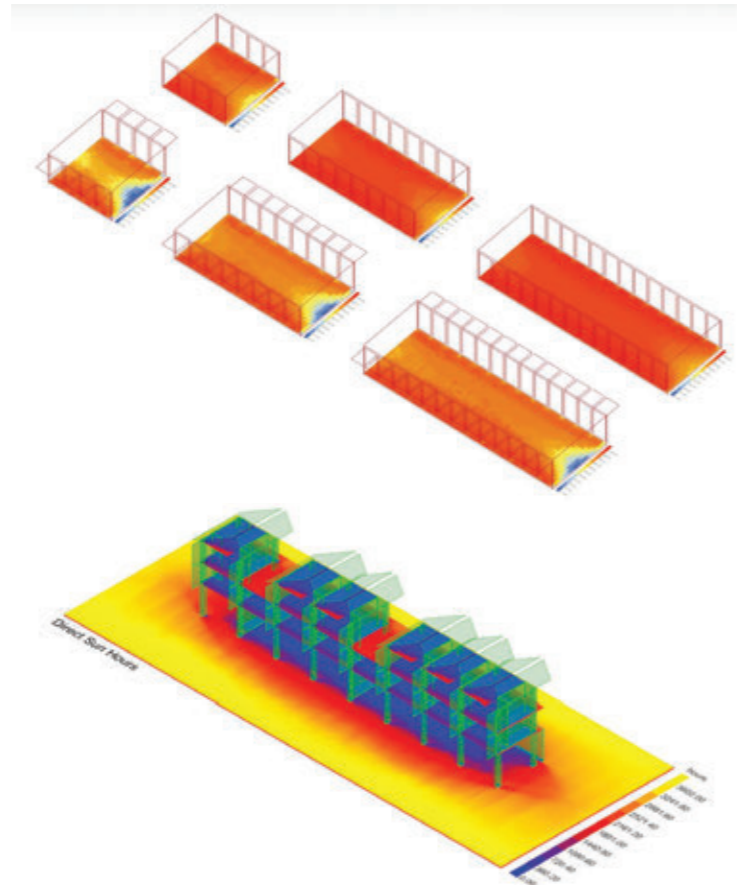
Site visit pictures

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."

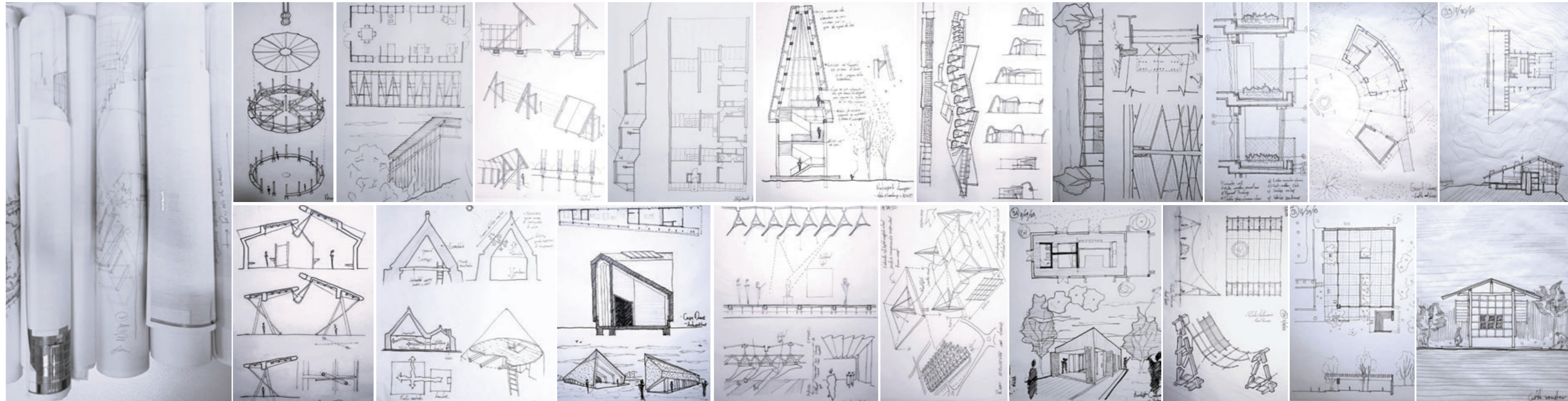


Sketching

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.

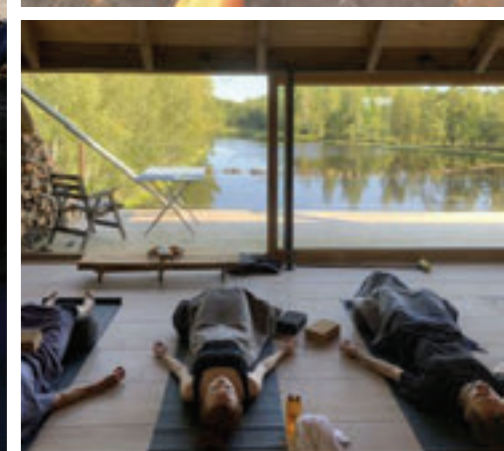
The disciplined routine, comprising a minimum of one sketch per day, resulted in approximately 100 sketches. Enclosed herewith is a portion of this collection, representing the cultivation of my knowledge during this valuable period.



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

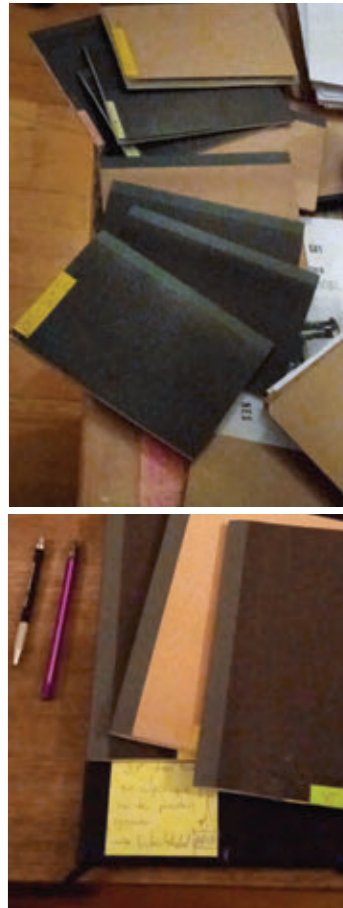
the richest production of text about my evolving philosophy but also a heightened self-awareness of my love for architecture and the aspirations I hold for my professional trajectory. The immersive experience in Copenhagen allowed me to discern, refine, and attain a more lucid perspective on better trajectories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