

2020, Architecture, Caius College

Travelling to Bhutan I enjoyed visiting traditional farmhouses and monasteries that have been in use and well maintained over centuries. They seemed to be well integrated into nature providing physical and spiritual shelter. Later, when I visited Seoul, I noticed that regeneration projects can give back a megacity a human scale and make it more intimate, such as Seoulo 7017, an elevated walkway and Cheonggyecheon Stream, an inner-city river. I am excited about the diversity of our built environment and how architecture shapes people's lives. I wish to be part of its creation to serve both individuals and the public.

J. Pallasmaa writes in his book 'The Eyes of the Skin' that in architecture vision tends to dominate and suppress other senses. To become more aware of how we experience architecture with 'our entire body and sense of self' as it is mentioned in the book, we made recordings with a friend in Budapest documenting sounds like a smashing vehicle door or the chirping of birds. These auditory experiences helped us realise that the effect of sounds is often neglected in architecture although it is much more than a visual experience.

When working at Archiplan, an architecture studio, I got introduced to ArchiCAD and saw how a building was designed for a hierarchical institutional community: the police. When job shadowing and attending meetings with government officials at Teampannon, a leading urban planning company, I could see 'in-action' how many factors were considered when making decisions about redesigning the capital's main square, and how great planners manage push backs and rejections.

When visiting the Pompidou Centre I particularly liked its unusual inside-out design expressing values of openness and transparency. We were driven by the same philosophy when choosing the product material for our student company 'Nothing to Hide'. We designed and produced transparent bags to combat social isolation and encourage openness. I played a leading role in this Young Enterprise program, where I was responsible for logistics and general management gaining insight into teamwork and the delegation of work.

Joining KEK, the Hungarian Contemporary Architecture Centre, as a volunteer of the "Budapest100 - In the Footsteps of Bauhaus" event further fuelled my passion toward architecture. We searched the archives about the history of selected buildings. The findings were shared with present inhabitants via an exhibition. It was compelling to see how proud residents became of their home once they knew its history. I realised how such a small-scale project can create a community within our alienated society. What appealed to me in the Bauhaus principles was how simple, user-friendly and socially inclusive design can be.

Later, I decided to look into the history of the building where I spent my childhood. After depicting documents, I interviewed residents about the house built in 1897. I realised each house has a history and life cycle. Residents and functions constantly change, and so do expectations towards the building. Driven by new needs, these unique types of buildings of Budapest with interior courtyards and hanging corridors are currently repurposed by covering them. I find it creative to make room for community spaces in these areas otherwise closed to the public.

Most housing blocks however tend to be simplified structures built for the many, making them lifeless. The first large-scale housing unit I found welcoming was Walden 7 by R.

Bofill. It is pleasing for the eye due to its symmetry without being monotonous. Also, I liked the way the overlapping indoor pathways are designed so that residents can interact.

In my view, great architecture combines traditional and modern elements, effects positively the social and natural environment, and is not only visually pleasing, but highly functional. These are the challenges I wish to learn how to undertake as an architect by studying in one of the UK's best universities.