

SCAN|DESIGN FOUNDATION - ENRICO HIPOLITO REFLECTION

I didn't have to apply for this program fortunately that allowed me to dance with the Royal Danish Ballet because instead, PNBS decides who they choose without students applying. PNBS decides privately who'll be suitable for the exchange and notifies the student. Having gone through this foreign exchange process I would like to reflect and share my reflection with the Scan|Design foundation and with PNB because I think it's important to reflect in order to retain my experience and what I've learned and I would also like to show you how meaningful my experience was.

I honestly didn't have any expectations going to Denmark besides that I was expecting the Royal Danish Ballet to be a dance environment that could help me prepare as a professional dancer and the company to be impressive. Which by the way my expectations weren't disappointed. I thought the company there was amazing and I was fortunate enough to watch new and classic ballets while I was there like La Sylphide and a new ballet called the Golden Cockrell. I came to Denmark open-minded and ready for a positive and fun experience in terms of dancing as well as outside the studios in the city of Copenhagen.

Prior to this exchange I have traveled to the Philippines but solely to visit family. This exchange was definitely a first time experience that was worthwhile and meaningful for me as a dancer and as a person learning about the world outside of the U.S. This would be the first time I'd go to Europe for a long period of time to actually experience a little of how life is in one part of Europe.

The training I received was definitely productive and given at a good amount. Enough classes to improve but not an excessive amount to the point where injuries may occur. The training in the classes were of high quality for sure in my opinion. The classes definitely helped me work on little touches and qualities in my dancing that make a significant difference in how my dancing is delivered so that it can be more professional and more exciting to watch. For example of things I've gotten better with is holding my upper body, being less tense and careful with my port de bras and rolling through my whole feet in my dancing. Those little things helped me dance with a more professional and controlled energy. It was the corrections and instructions I was given here by my teachers like Adam Luders that I was able to embody and use this corrections in my own dancing.

The thing I least liked about this exchange program was that it wasn't long enough because I liked everything about this exchange program from dancing with the company to doing modern with the apprentices. I enjoyed it all. But the thing I liked the most would definitely the technique classes with Adam Luders and having breaks during the day to explore the city. But another thing that I loved was making new friends in Denmark with dancers from the Royal Danish Ballet and basically just getting connected there.

I think the housing arrangements were wonderful. The housing dormitory was a nice, clean facility with an efficient system. Plus the food that was offered which was really helpful turned out to be delicious especially since they had their own cook. I wouldn't recommend any changes but that's just my personal opinion. I feel like it depends on the person whether housing with younger Royal Danish Ballet students at their dorms is preferable because a person might want to live alone. But I didn't mind and actually thought it was a cool experience to live as some Royal Danish Ballet kids live when they don't live close to the school.

Some things that I found culturally different from the U.S. were the way that people utilize their way of getting around using bikes. I loved how everyone bikes to get to where they want to go most of the time. I loved it so much that I personally rented my own back while I was there just to get the Danish experience. I also noticed that the majority of people in Denmark are fit and not overweight which I can understand since so many people bike and walk everywhere. Another thing I found different was how in Denmark most Danish people can speak very good English along with knowing Danish. I found that really cool. Also at the Ballet school everyone says hi to everyone and acknowledges each other which I found nice and I found myself smiling and greeting most people I walked by at the ballet theater. The thing that I really found cool was how appreciated ballet is there in Denmark and how the government gives so much support.

My favorite thing about the country was the biking and all the walking that's done and how beautiful the city is with the old and new architecture and with all the canals. The least thing I liked that I found about the country was nothing really important. I can only think of just shopping stores closing early and maybe not being able to find Dr. Pepper soda since I love Dr. Pepper soda.

I believe the assistance I received from the Scan|Design was okay but kind of vague when it concerned my arrival and my housing situation but it all worked out pretty smoothly. Hmm I think to improve assistance Scan|Design should communicate what the housing plans early and maybe actually meet with the exchange student. Besides that Scan|Design did a good job on making my stay in Denmark a fantastic experience.

I believe the student best suited for this would be for advanced level ballet dancers who are mature enough to live away from home and who are open minded to learn more in their dancing and to a different culture. My advice for future students would be to be open minded and to take advantage of the breaks during your day to enjoy and tour around the city.

I would give rate my overall experience with a ten in terms of a ten point scale because I loved the training, the people I met, and the city. My only general comments to improve the program would be to make it longer so the students get improve even more in their dancing and give them more time to look around the city. So that's the end of my reflection and I would like to thank both the Scan|Design and PNBS for giving me this wonderful opportunity to dance in Denmark.