

REPORT AL RIENTRO DELL'ESPERIENZA DI SCAMBIO - A.A.  
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**Testo**

Exchange report

It has been a great honor and one of the luckiest things for a student , especially for one studying aboard, to get the change to anticipate the NEW YORK FIT exchange program held by Politecnico di Milano. The whole semester I spent in NEW YORK city went far beyond my anticipation. The city that never sleeps also has never stopped surprising me. The harvest I acquired during this wonderful journey is so inspiring to me both professionally and academically. So allow me to present at least some of the most impressive pieces of the exciting experience I had in the Big Apple.

Let's begin with the course I have taken in the FIT.

1, Draping 3 Soft Silhouettes, Professor: Colette Wong

As the name of it speaks for it self, this course turns out to be necessary to my major and even more useful to my potential career. the course is design to teach students how to master the basic draping skills and is aimed to give students a comprehensive knowledge on how to use soft fabric when it's needed. With too many things to be taught and way too inadequate time, the curriculum has to be very compact. However, the homework was much enough to keep our hands and minds busy. I had some difficult time in taking this course, especially at the beginning part, mainly because I was unfamiliar with the draping skill, lacked the advanced skills in sewing and my experience in using softer fabric was also short. Though I had tried my best to overcome all the difficulties I had to faced, the final score of the class was not satisfying, even to myself. But it doesn't mean that I didn't not learn anything. In contrary. In the contrary, thanks to the class and thanks to Professor Wong's continual guidance, support and courage, I am now capable of applying multiple draping skills in my own design.

2, Draping 4 Advanced Techniques, Professor: Karen Michelle Middleton

This course is one of my favorites in FIT. It starts with a project and ends with an exhibition. Without any preparation or any kind of basic introduction, the course began with a project that was a serious challenge to all the students. At first place, the tensity I was in only brought more obstacle to the the course. However, with the gentle help and advice from Professor Middleton, things smoothed up. Communication with the professor gave me the courage to face the problem I thought I could not deal with by myself and made me realize that this course is nothing but



breaking the limitation you set for yourself, being more confidence about your own idea, trusting in your own talent and letting your spirit fly. Though the critics were along with us throughout the whole course, they never discouraged you in any form or made you feel insecure about your talent. All they had offered was truly enlightened suggestion that helped you to fulfil your own design. Openness, freedom and trust is what I loved about this course and due to all these things, I was able to finish my final work that was selected to the FIT graduation exhibition.

### 3, Fashion Art & Design 4, Professor: Michele Wesen Bryant

All that I can say about this course is amazing. Both the professor and students were so talented and amazing that I felt so proud just aware of being among them and being a part of the project. The classroom is a ticket to a talent show. Things I had ever pictured as what a real fashion designer should do were already on stage waiting for the applause and exclaim. And it went beyond that. Unlimited imagination, inspiring creation and unprecedented yet harmonious combination of different elements, all the things from unique perspective came into reality with the help of high level skills and they opened your eyes, allow you to embrace them as close as you could and most of all, lighted the path to joining them. The teacher in the class always follow your idea, understood what you were trying to built. Instead of judgment, they chose respect. They offered key advises crucial to your design which made you feel that you are the way to do something better all the time. This course was not only about inspiring you but also it actually taught to how to use the and woods to built Rome. Though the course, my capacity of collecting original image, making mood board, finding swatches, drawing figures and flats , and draping were lift up to a new level that could match my design and they wouldn't tie my mind up like before. I believe this very course, to me, definitely would be an important and solid step towards my dream of being a professional fashion designer.

### 4, Model Drawing 1 For Fashion Design, Professor: Steven Stipelman

The reason why I chose this course is quite simple-to improve my drawing skill and to stop it from being an obstacle on my way of pursuing a professional life. Honestly, sketching had always been my shortcoming. Good sketching skill could be the bridge that connected your mind and the reality, it allows you to express yourself to everyone with minimum cost. However not like other skill necessary to a fashion designer, the process to acquire this skill is rather monotonous. The basic content of the course is very regular, even dull sometimes. Students drew the model standing in front them. As uninteresting as it sounds, the class is not as fun as others. However, a valuable lesson I learned from the class is sometimes you must be patient and pay certain price to achieve your goal. Besides, even I was not confident at what I would accomplish after the course, the result was pleasant. The gap between the first picture I drew at the first class and the picture I drew at the final class told me all the effort had been paid and it was worthy. The professional help from the professor was also impressive me.

The four courses I mentioned above are quit relevant to my major-fashion design, some of them even curtail to it. The two course coming next seems irrelevant to my major at first look. However, I didn't chose them purely base on my interest. Both of the two courses were from the fabric design. Fabric is the fundament to any fashion design. Lacking of the thorough knowledge of fabric could be a disaster to any fashion designer, To know fabric is to know the original of fashion, as least that's what I always thought.

### 5, Woven Design, Professor: Ellen Hess

the essential key of this very course is to particle. Only though practice, only though your touch on the fabric, could you understand what conformation means to fabric, otherwise it was just some lifeless word on the book. The most exciting thing I learned from the class is how to use a loom. It's both ancient and modern. Though it had been modified many times, it kept the basic design form the word's earliest fashion designer. People all said that fashion is pop culture and only lives



at current moment, However, when I use the loom to spin my own textile, I realized that the same thing people could do a long time ago and fashion didn't only live at one moment it lives as long as we still on the journey of searching beauty. The shape, the color and the visual effect are all the ways people try to liberate themselves from the humdrum of life.

The professor and TAs were so generous and patient, they helped us finish 13 different samples each of which was made of distinguished weaving skills. Also, we made 5 products by ourselves. The 18 samples were selected to the collection as final work.

#### 6, Painting on Fabric, Professor: Eileen Mislove

Definitely fun and interesting, this course showed pluralism and the comprehensiveness side of New York City again. Compared to other subjects, this course seemed like more causal. The teacher here taught us how to use different tools, different materials such as stamp, wax to paint on the fabric, to feel the the trace of materials expanding on the fabric, to create something new, to integrate everything we got just like the American culture. The class was full of students with different backgrounds. We got students who majored in art, we got owners of dye houses, professional designer in the Broadway. Back then, the classroom seems more like a prism to me. All the colors were equal and shining here, they seemed separate but in fact they are integrated. Our little temporary society taught me so many things that I could never learned on other classes. I can't say enough about how amazing and wonderful these courses were. They present top level in the art academy area. However, there are still something need to be improved. I was so interesting in the draping 2, but subjected to the existing rules I couldn't chose it because I already in another tow compulsory courses of draping. I have to say that missing the draping 2 course is a pity to me.

Besides, I think the difference between the curriculum in Politecnico di Milano and that in New York University should draw enough attention to who wants to participate the exchange program because it could affect how you chose your courses. My draping and sewing skill was not solid as I wish they would be, which made my early days a little bit difficult especially at the courses. Thanks to the one week DRAPING WORKSHOP in Politecnico di Milano, I didn't attend classes with empty mind. I am really grateful about that. The only suggestion I have is to have more classes like DRAPING WORKSHOP in Politecnico di Milano.

Now let me talk about the impression FIT gave mu during my short visit.

1. Safety. Perhaps it's the American thing. FIT has the most stick and advanced secure system that I have never seen in any other school. Security were at almost every gates of each building in the compass. No one can entry the teaching building without an ID card and the security system has made it impossible for anyone without one to break in any building. As a return, stealing never brother people in the compass and the sense of security is so strong that people even become careless about their personal belongings.
2. Availability. Night seems shorter in New York, but it is not because the sun or any other geographical reason. The city always has light on, and people don't arrange their schedule according to the sun. it seems like students in FIT share the same habit. All the classrooms and libraries don't close until it's midnight. Students have plenty time to study at school. The school also offer classroom with loom and form to all the students to finish their homework or simple practice their skills. Students can access the resource of library and digit data any time they want. The procedure is quit simple and easy to learn. It is really important to have all these availabilities for a student especially when he or she faced a forthcoming final presentation.
3. Resource. As mentioned the school has already made sure that all the students have equal right to access the school's resource and made it very simple to fulfil. The resource FIT offers to its students is astonishingly rich. Even we put the teaching resource away (which is extremely



impressive by the way) , focusing on the space and equipment it has provide, it is still surprising. For a school with so many students, FIT makes it easy for every student to find a free classroom and equipment he needs in compass. Students there are never bothered by such question.

4. Effective. Determined and ambitious, students there seem always know what they want and trying their best to make it happen. Idleness is intolerable and laziness seems like a cancer that can end your school life. If we say chasing perfection is a disease, then students from FIT are all infected. Weekends, night never keep the students here from working and studying. They know what talent means to a man who dedicate himself to pursue art as much as they know without hardworking all talent become in vein. Yes, they believe in genius, but they also believe that without perspiration they may never meet the muses of their lives. I enjoy the atmosphere there. I really do even if it makes so tried and exhausted. People call it being positive. Only I know that was simply act of a little girl trying her best to touch a dream she has always dreamed on.

5. Amazing museum. Like I said before, FIT is a big talent show. All the top brand products are on the stage right here waiting you to witness. The specific content of the show is always changing, from the top designer's newest work to excellent students 'products. Jewelry design, fabric design, fashion design, men's design, photography, painting, toy design, you can see them all in the museum. It never let you down. The spirit behind the stage is never changed. It is about talent, sharing and being on the stage.

6. Competition keep both sides vigorous. The long going competition show between FIT and Parsons provides it's right. Parsons is some kind of rival of FIT. Both of them have splendid history in art and fashion design, and neither of them have admitted the other on is better. So the competition show becomes a fight of honor. Every year, the competition is a big event to everyone in the two schools.

7. There are many communities in FIT. The whole semester I spent there tried yet full of joy. Language exchange parity, food party, things like these remind students it is important to make a break, relax and have fun. At he graduation party, the holder even invited one of famous rapper starts in USA-Flo Rita to perform. It was so exciting. The whole night, we dance along with music. With the light from the city, everything tasted like sweet wine. It's the night we say goodbye, but it' also the night we clearly saw the curtain covering our future was lifted.

8. Americans are obsessed with the idea to be fit. Gyms are everywhere in New York. And many New Yorkers share the same habit-working out. FIT is designed to be a hommization compass. To meet the need of its students, FIT offers free access to the gym built in it for all the students and stuff. The gym is always full of people. It also provides fitting classes with different purposes.

9. The school has been attempting to bring a multicultural perspective to its logistics services. Its canteen serves a variety of food, burgers fries, PIZZA pasta, sushi, sandwiches, etc, to fit into the multicultural backgrounds of its students. For students looking for economic life style, the canteen released a so-called meal plan.

10. Hommization designs can be seen in anywhere in FIT, as for the student who don't live inside the school. FIT set locker in compass for them to store their personal belongings. Officer even will arrange the locations of lockers to make it more convenient to students. Anyone who has a ID card can apply for a locker. The procedure is quite easy.

11. Purchasing fabrics and swatch in New York are very convenient. Near 38th Street, there are many fabric stores. I chose two classes about draping. I often go to the stores. And I like it. The philosophies behind the curriculum of Politecnico di Milano and the curriculum of FIT is quiet different. In FIT, Individualism dominates the whole compass. The professors there were never stooping trusting yourself, learning to believe what you were doing and exploiting your own talent. To be unique, to built your own aesthetic system, and not to make compromise were emphases



many times by different professors. They don't seem seek the balance between the individual and the collective for they always put individual first especially when it comes to artistic creation. What they really tried to balance is the classical art tradition and personal innovation. How to guide a student to be creative in making beauty, to think out of the box, to make something different from before yet to confirm what he or she creation is acceptable in aesthetic theory is the challenge presented in FIT. The most obvious evidence that FIT value individual very much is that most of the homework in FIT requires one person and one person only to finish. However, in Politecnico di Milano most homework requires teamwork. Teamwork has its advantage. It opens a person mind to another person. You have to learn how to persuade other people or learn to compromised if you can't persuade others or be persuaded. Teamwork avoids one person become paranoid about his own idea and keep one person humble. Personally, I prefer working alone to working with others. Only speaking for myself, working alone is more effective and efficient. Because I have to deal with other teamworker. I can be stumble sometimes, and insist on what I thing is better. When working alone , I can follow nothing by my own idea, I can make what I truly love and as a return , I can be so productive and creative. But it doesn't mean that I don't enjoy teamwork. On the contrary, I think teamwork with students form different major may bring incredible outcome. For example, we, studying fashion design could team up with students majoring jewelry design to work a series of outfits, it should look fabulous.

As life in New York city, I can talk it all day without repeating one thing. The city is complicated yet attractive. You will find it is hard to resist its charm. To fit the life style of New York, I didn't chose the dormitory FIT provided. Instead, I join my friends who rent an apartment in Manhattan. I was trying to life like a local person as I could. The jungle made of steel is aa adventure that constantly calls you to take step in. museum, concert, showroom, the city is like paradise to people who enjoy arts. The metropolitan and MOMA have many famous works of art. You can't believe how many galleries have squeezed themselves into soho. One of roommates graduated from the Manhattan School of Music, majoring piano. Thanks to her, I was able to have plenty chances to listen to concert held in her school. Even more, I could get the ticket provided by her school to other concerts.

New York is a racial melting pot full of different ethnic groups that live in parts of the world, different countries and different cultures of people. In there you can taste fries fried chicken burger, also authentic pasta, pizza, paella, Mexican meatloaf, French cuisine, Thai, Indian ... There are C-town, K-town, J -town, where I can find our familiar Southeast Asian flavors.

I am curious about the world, admire the life style of a gypsy girl. When you have the chance to see the world as much as you can, who will say no? So, when the spring semester was over, I packaged my baggage and took a journey. I went to Cancun, Mexico, and Washington, Boston, Miami, Orlando. Different countries, different cities have their unique culture and characteristics.

The one semester I spent as an exchange student is unforgettable. Again, I want to express my deep gratitude to Politecnico di Milano for making all of these happen. This experience improved my professional skills, more importantly, broaden my horizon. I like to throw myself into different cities just to feel or touch the culture of them. The exchange is very important part of my graduate life.