



Dubrovnik, Croatia · Summer 2011



Dedicated to the birds in the courtyard of the University of Zagreb, Dubrovnik

Acknowledgements

Bringing a study abroad program to life, entails commitment, passion and support. I want to sincerely thank my students in the Croatia summer study abroad program. Their desire to have an experience that reached beyond what they already know drove their passion and tireless commitment to make this program a reality.

Without the support of my chair Eileen Bushnell and the efforts of my graduate assistant Katherine Marsh this course would not have become a reality. We are all indebted to Vlasta Brunsko director of the Centre for Advanced Academic Studies at the University of Zagreb Dubrovnik for providing us with a home and the assistance that made this project a success. Finally, we also extend our thanks to Katherine Marsh and Madison Mock for the production of this book, which brings our project together and serves as a summation of our shared experiences.

Roberley **Bell**

Professor of Foundations and Graduate Studies,
College of Imaging Arts and Sciences,
Rochester Institute of Technology

A Statement from the Chair

Everywhere is within walking distance if you have the time.

– Steven Wright

At a time in history when a vast amount of our experiences in life involve the interaction with the simulacra that permeates the media and the Internet, the simple act of walking as an essential aspect of understanding the world around us can seem superfluous.

The goals of higher education however, especially in those institutions that continue to be committed to a physical campus, remain grounded in tangible relationships with environments and people. Despite being enmeshed in and dependent upon the digital realm, institutions of higher education have come to understand global awareness as more than a virtual experience, encouraging their students to interact with international cultures on personal, physical and academic level.

At RIT, these goals have led to the articulation of synergy as a Guiding Principle of the Strategic Plan. Synergy calls for the permeation of global awareness and experience within the university and advocates for the connection of academic, extracurricular and interdisciplinary programs.

A Statement from the Chair

The City as Site embraced these goals as intrinsic aspects of student experience and work. This project brought together students from a wide range of disciplines within the College of Imaging Arts and Sciences to experience the land, culture and people of Dubrovnik, Croatia, actuating the concept of global awareness.

Students were asked to use “exploration as the seminal process for learning to see the world with the senses” and walking became the actual conduit for the achievement of this objective. As students roamed through the city of Dubrovnik, exploration revealed new insight and in turn became the motivation for creative enterprise.

The projects documented in this book exhibit the rigor, challenge and innovation that can come from educational experiences in which students walk through the world to learn.

Eileen **Bushnell**

Chair of Foundations and Art History,
College of Imaging Arts and Sciences,
Rochester Institute of Technology

Introduction

There is a city where you arrive for the first time;

– Italo Calvino, Invisible Cities

The city as site; Seeing as thinking: locale as inspiration for the creative practice.

The City as Site is a participatory course focused on field research and class discussion. The course seeks to bridge the gap between the creative studio practice and the locale as the source of inspiration.

The course utilized exploration as the seminal process for learning to see the world through the senses. Using the city of Dubrovnik students explored the physical, geographic and cultural character of place. Through systems of observation and methods of recording information they addressed personal and collective interpretations of place.

Students participated in the process of mapping as walking. This nomadic and transitory exploration involves the use of observation as a means of providing insights that can help the artist/designer to see the physical environment in new ways. It converts the familiar to the unfamiliar and vice versa. The essence of the project is to make students utilize all of their senses and to learn to see the non-visible. The act of decoding the cityscape through the senses challenges participants to “see” the landscape of the city through motion in real time and provides a means of interpreting and defining the city as a physical place full of sensory experiences.

A momentary encounter with something foreign – architecture, food, an object, or a scent – has the potential of crystallizing the experience of place

making it more than just a set of geographic coordinates. Inevitably the process of gathering and recording these experiences will provides the student with a reservoir of sensory codes stored for future use in the creative process.

Three stages of the project

Data collection: Field research was an integral and continuous part of the workshop. Students kept a daily journal as a means of sharing individual experiences and interpretations of place. Each day students provided the group with a pair of “stickies” – one which contained a single word association related to their daily experience and a second containing a statement on an unexpected encounter. Together, these served as a daily summation of each day for each of 21 days.

Sharing: Conversations in which each participant discuss their own experience with the locale. The relevancy of the individual eye and personal experience contextualized the follow-up conversations about the many ways in which we gain an understanding of place when we “see” with our senses.

Project outcomes: The final phase in which students took this information into the studio and to use it as the starting point for creating a project that reflects the essence of place.



Maps

A journey from one point to another, highlighting the skills of observation. From the experience of walking from point A to point B in the city of Dubrovnik, students were asked to create a "map" which serves as an expression of their experiential journey.

Understanding that observation is more than "seeing" requires learning to look beyond the obvious and the surface of information and to think of the path with ones' senses. What sounds, textures, smells did you encounter? When and how did you encounter them?

A map is a narrative, a sequence, a process and an action.

Transition from one place in time to another, requires a body in motion. Maps form interpretations of the outer world and our experience of moving from one place to another.

Heather **Alivero**

The map from the hotel to college is portrayed in a kids pop-up fashion. I experimented with all the major landmarks that stuck out to me along the way and used color to enhance them. Road maps are often confusing to me, so I wanted a simplistic map that would clearly help anyone of any age to find their way to the College of Zagreb, if they were staying in Hotel Adriatic.



The walk to College during my stay in Croatia was in summary pleasurable and morbid. The experience of walking the streets in Dubrovnik was incredible. Every aspect of what was passing me by was being analyzed and processed in a frenzy of thoughts. Forcing myself to be open to experiencing new things during my study abroad. I realized more and more that my thought process was chaotic at best. During the assignment of making a map of the journey from our college to our hotel I tried to capture every thought and moment of wandering I came across. To do this, at every one of those moments I took a picture and recorded my thought/emotion. To help visualize this I created a line depicting all the thoughts along way, while attributing one of the pictures I had taken to every "moment" of thought. At the end of this process I realized what a congested mess I had in front of me. During my process as a woodworker/furniture designer, I have fought a constant battle with myself of simplifying all my hectic thoughts and ideas down into the purest, simplest form necessary. This process at its origin is best shown in my Map Project.



Miranda **Flores-Salvaggio**

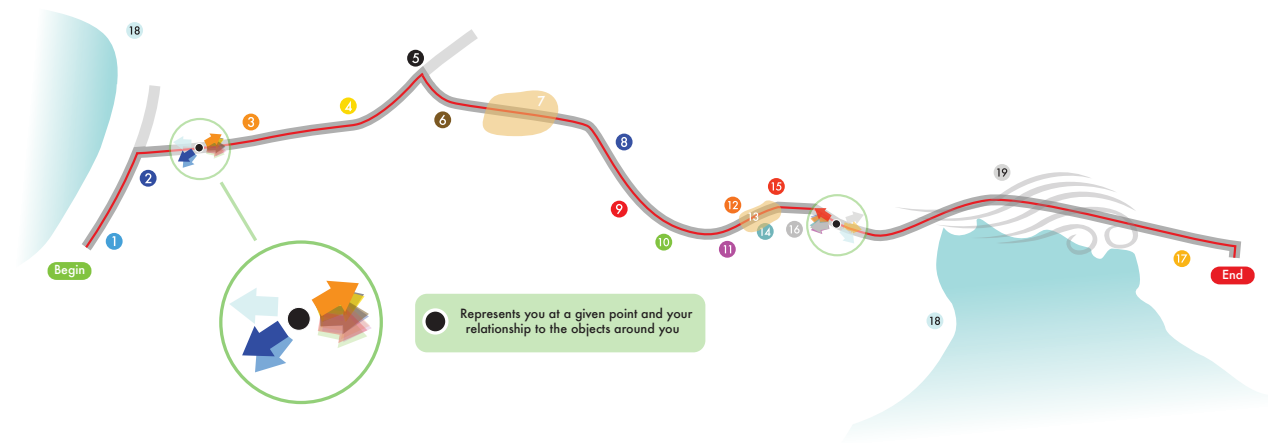
This map documents the things that I would remember to pass each time I walked from our hotel to ACMT. It does not display time, just snapshots my brain took of objects, buildings and views. Shown on paper as would in my memory.



One of the things I immediately noticed when I arrived in Dubrovnik was how green the landscape was. I chose to map the path from the hotel to the classroom through the foliage that I passed along the way. I collected leaves, flowers and seeds from each different kind of plant and arranged them on each panel of paper, moving top to bottom, left to right, so it can be read just like a document.



When I receive directions I like having landmarks rather than street names to guide me through the trip. They are easier to remember and I have a much better directional tie to them. For the map from the hotel to the school, I tried to present a route that used this method of guidance. I created small symbols to represent landmarks for the reader to follow.



Path starts at Hotel Adriatic and ends at the foot of the University of Zagreb

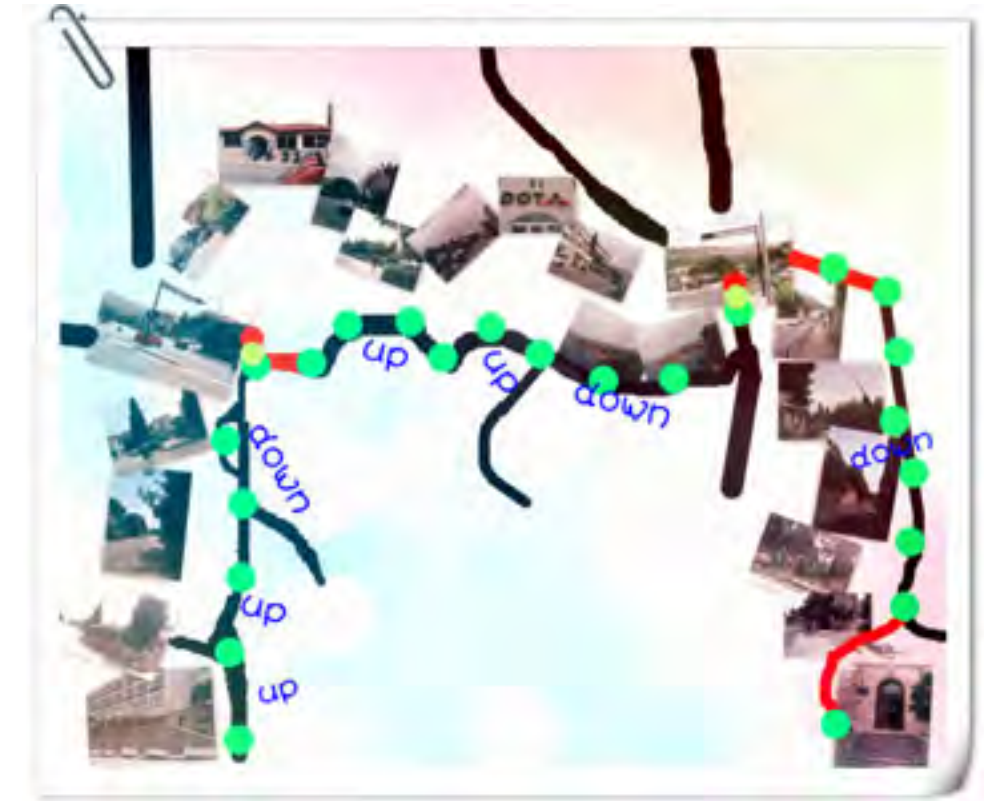
Numbers on the map correlate with the symbols to the right, a representation of what can be seen on the path

Water is indicated by (18) and wind is indicated by (19)

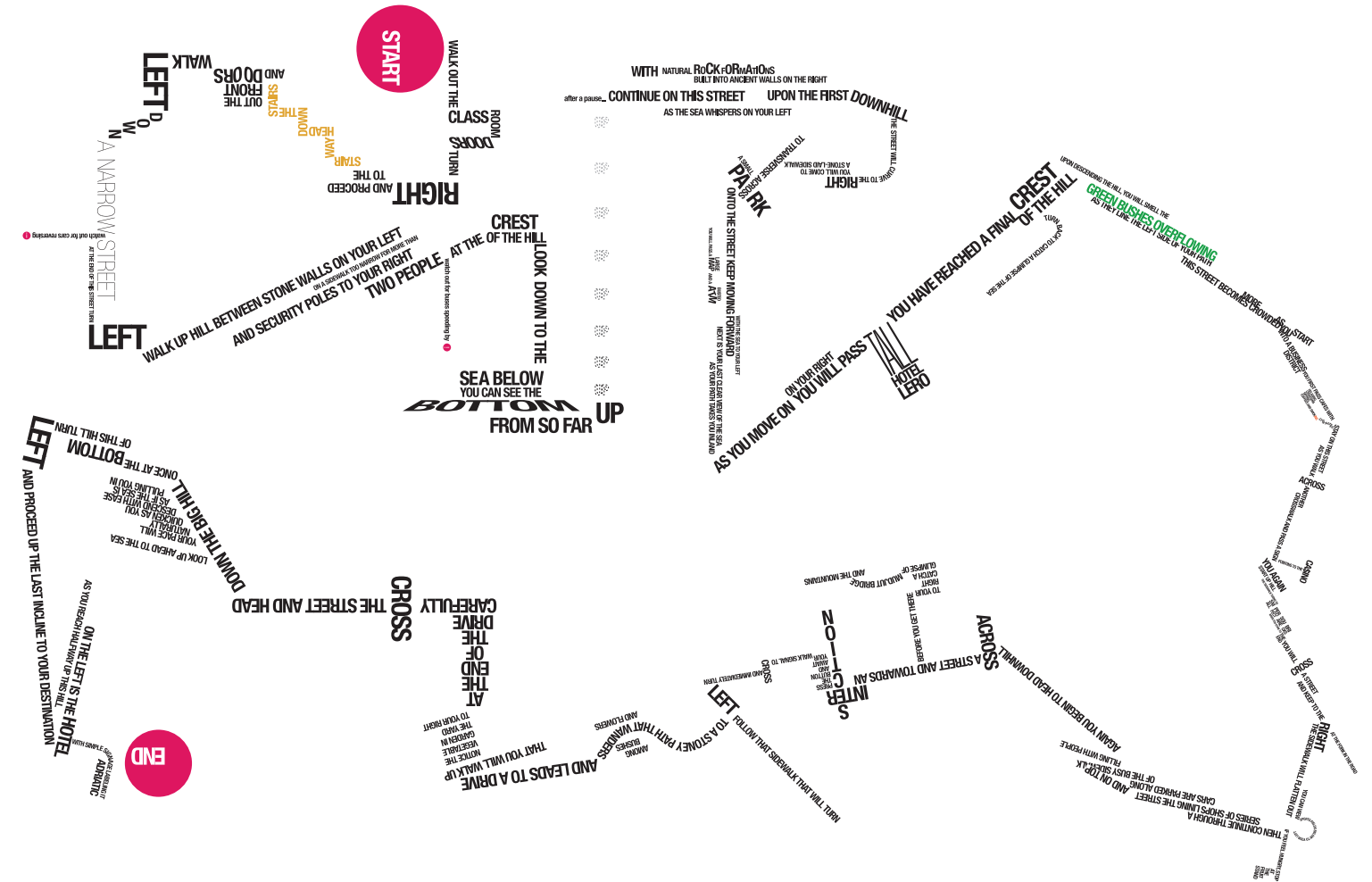
The bread smell at (13) is the same as at (7)

1 • Hotel Adriatic	2 • Hotel Komodor	3 • Apartments & Rooms	4 • Nemo Problemo	5 • Black Sheep	6 • Giraffe	7 • Bread Smell	8 • Belvedere
9 • Lisca Fashion	10 • Fruit Stand	11 • Baboon	12 • Hotel Lero	14 • Hotel Bellevue	15 • Tisak	16 • Map	17 • Crane

For this assignment, I walk alone from Hotel Adriatic to ACMT. I took several pictures if I needed to go across the street or turned to another direction. I made a dot at the end of every street and traffic lights at the cross road, and I also made a little sketching of map along the road. I divided my map into three parts depending on my mood and weather. It was rainy when I began to walk, so I made the first part of my map blue. Second part of my map is pink because the rain stopped and the weather became warmer, the sun began to show up, and the view I saw was very great. The third part of my map is yellow. After walking for about one hour, I felt tired. I had not arrived school. And it was really hot at that time; my mood was not very good. But I enjoyed my journey from hotel to school when I arrived school and made my map finally.



For my map, I represented the walk to/from the university through typography. The goal I set for myself was to create a nontraditional map that someone could find their way through a poem describing the walk. I attempted to capture the sights and tempo of the trail through words. I then designed the typography to further represent the text.



Madison **Mock**

For the map, I wanted to create a handheld guide that someone could use to help them in traversing from the hotel to the university. First, I took many notes on a walk from the university to the hotel one evening. I then drew out the things I thought were most important and created a list that I could use the next day to record the times I passed them and additional information. I continued to process this information, writing it out into several different lists, until I had simplified it into information I thought was important and could be understood. The final product is an accordion book that can be folded up for personal use or laid out on a table for display. The book includes both important directional information, such as where to turn, and also observations about people that a walker may see, smells they might smell, and views they should be sure to look for.



The most essential things to walking somewhere are distance and direction. This map is minimized to simply inform the user of where to turn, and how far to go between turns. Steps are the unit of measure for the sake of universality.



Alexander **Romeo**

The idea for my map was to create an interactive way to travel from our classroom to our hotel only looking at the iron gates outside of houses. These were one of the first things that caught my eye on our initial walk, so I made a photo blog documenting each gate in order from the beginning to the destination. Now, all one needs to do is look for the next gate to lead them back to either location.



Claire **Smith**

When I was thinking about how to map my path from school to the hotel where I was staying, I decided to use landmarks. Landmarks can be places I have been, memorable sights or smells, or actual signs to destinations. The only qualification it has to meet is that it stands out to me from the jumble of sensory information that surrounds me. What I've done is make a map of symbols representing the physical places I passed, along with a supplementary list of the sounds and smells I encountered at certain places along my path.



Corners

To investigate points of intersections as both physical space and metaphor. As part of the process of on going observation and field research .Students were asked to focus their attention to points of connection within the city that revealed an expression of contrast.

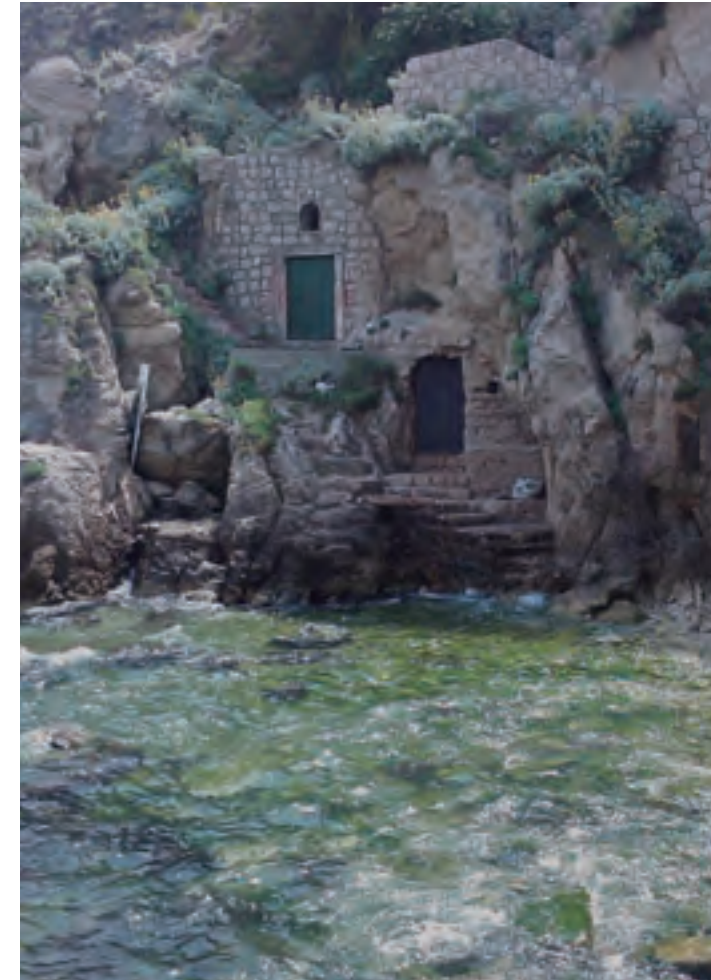
Heather Alivero

In this corner I compared clotheslines to the way the boats are in the bay in Old City. The boats are not docked, but are anchored with rope all next to each other in rows. I have never seen a boat held without a dock, yet it conserves trees and materials. Croatians do not use dryers and they hang dry everything, conserving energy. Europe is conscientious compared to the United States when dealing with environmental issues.



The visual was the corner where the water was hitting the rocks and foaming. I took everyone from the class to this visual site and read them this poem. The purpose of my corner being so vague was to ensure the contrast was a personal one, made from the accumulation of experiences back home as well as in our time abroad in parts of the former Yugoslavia.

During this step in my creative process, I was forcing myself to keep the enormous amounts of thoughts and connections out of the picture. The focus was how I perceived what I was seeing, seeing not only the ocean and rocks but what connections I made to that imagery. Hopefully, this poem was able to let the class start to go through a similar process.



Culture

Comparing clashing currents of constant change
Corners meet, facing each-other in derange
The medium of life fighting the solidity of form
The Fighting fluid cant forget that back to dust is the norm

Hearing the hurried heralds howl hints to heal
The stubborn stand of bubbling blue wont keel
Two cultures will meet on the edge, forming a border between
One wages war the other crumbles, mixing, combining the mean

Miranda Flores-Salvaggio

Dubrovnik and I created an exchange. The city is a whole new world to me, as I am a whole new girl to the city. This corner crosses what I take from this experience, and what I will leave behind.

"I am the bird entering the city of fish. We cannot communicate through words but actions. Our closed eyes become open. Once a paved path, now wild. I breathe in the unfamiliarity of this new world and apart of me I breath out into this wilderness. This exchange is Golden. I feel alive!"



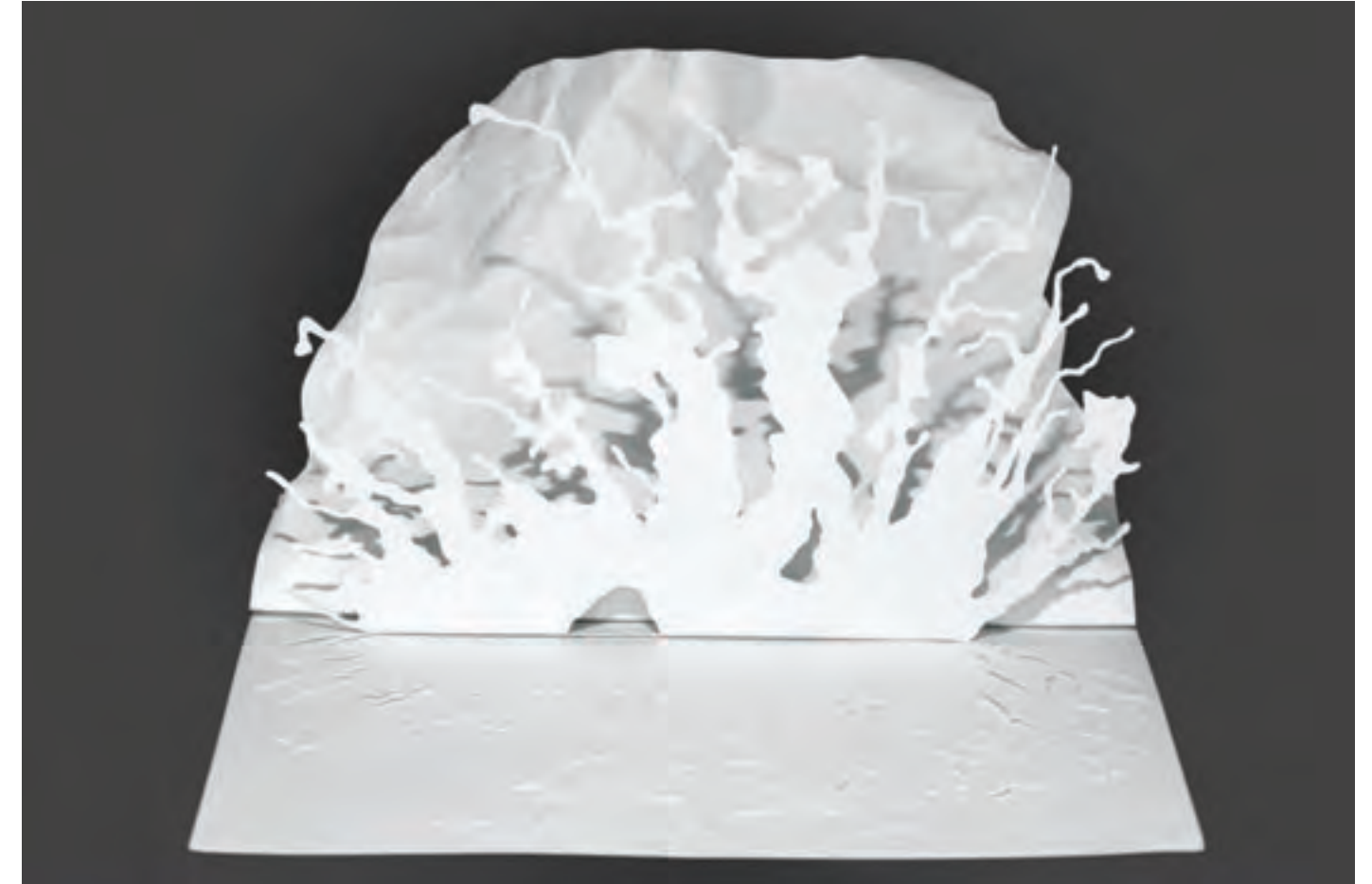
Courtney **Koslof**

After visiting two very different parts of Dubrovnik, I noticed how much the profile of the landscape could change. I wanted to contrast the way this bridge starkly stands out against the skyline with the almost uniform horizon the buildings in the Old Town create. I choose to loosely render the landscapes in watercolor to bring more attention to the image overall instead of small details.



Andrew **Lapinski-Barker**

My corner is about the power clash between the ocean and rocks. I tried to capture the moment of tension when they meet as well as the relentlessness of the ocean and the steadfast nature of the rock.



For the corner assignment, I want show the meaning of making a choice. I made an example of making a choice. When we were in the old city, we had a city walk in the old town. We needed to climb the stair and view the beauty of the old town. During the trip, I saw someone stopped climbing and to go down. But we still climbed the city wall, and finally, we saw a lot of scenes. However they missed the natural and mystical sight. They made a wrong choice, so they couldn't enjoy the beautiful of the old city. If we continue going up all the time, we will find a lot of new things that will help us understand the magic of the world.



In searching for a contrast to represent as a corner, I began to think about Dubrovnik – present and past – the relationship between the city and time. I choose the imagery of a rock in the Adriatic Sea as waves wash over it. The rhythm of the sea becomes hypnotic as if keeping time. Repeatedly, the sea hid the rock and then again revealed the rock. Over centuries, the sea had shaped these rocks. Reflecting on the relationship of the rock with the sea revealed that there is a rise and fall – an ebb and flow – in all things. Nature, itself, in its seasons has a pattern of renewal, blossoming, maturing and death followed by renewal again.

an ancient city exists
as the rhythm of the sea
fills the rock-pool to its brim
washes over graves and bones

ebbs and flows pass the time
decline and renewal in cadence
war becomes peace
winter turns to spring

as solid as the rocks may seem
eternal a city shall be
lore overshadows misery
presence will be here yet not be



Madison **Mock**

I created a "corner" to illustrate contrasts I witnessed in Dubrovnik, Croatia. I took pictures in the light (hot) and in the shade (much more comfortable) along the walk from the university to the hotel. I then sampled out colors from the photographs to create blocks of color. The ten color swatches on the left represent the shady color palette, and the ten on the right represent the sunny one. For display purposes, the piece is printed out and folded along the center to create an outside corner.



The corner is at the intersection of two colors representing opposing faces of Dubrovnik, their past and future. The Croatian War of Independence took place twenty years ago with signs of the damage still visible on the walls and in the hearts of many citizens. At the same time Dubrovnik wants to heal and move on, to emphasize the natural beauty of their locale for tourist economy. Blood was spilled in the same place we vacation.



Alexander **Romeo**

My idea for the corners project was to contrast the older architecture of Dubrovnik's old city, with the new Franjo Tudjman Bridge. These two architectural landmarks are famous to Dubrovnik, but they are both completely different. One shows the city's origins and true age, while the other is a modern architectural piece that uniquely fits into the modern side of Dubrovnik.



Claire **Smith**

What I notice most about the Old City and the surrounding neighborhood is the contrast between the old historical elements and the newer more modern elements of the city. I saw this mainly in the style of the architecture of the buildings around me, but also in the appearance of the areas (i.e. clean vs. overgrown, crisp corners vs. worn smooth).

The way I have laid out my corner is thus: on one edge of the corner there are images that are mostly new things; on the other there are older elements. As you get closer to the intersection, the pictures contain more and more new and old elements together in the same frame.



Final

As “seen” though their eyes. Back in the studios at RIT, students continued to reflect and put their experiences and data from the field research into play. Each individual student, working within their own studio discipline, completed a project that captured the physical and emotive qualities of place.

Heather **Alivero**

When I visited Croatia, I was inspired by Hotel Belvedere, abandoned for years, because it was bombed during war. My photographic series composes a journey of looking through the hotel and finding the beauty in this decay of the county's past. The strong contrast of shadows and highlights within this space embodies the mixed feelings Croatians have about the war, yet how they are striving to move foreword. Although the hotel is trashed, one cannot deny the breathtaking view of Dubrovnik the hotel holds, allowing the space to still hold its beauty.





Byron Conn

During my time in Croatia and Herzegovina I quickly came to focus my studies on the divide between different cultures. While trying to view the two opposing cultures, of locals and tourists, I realized the perfect platform to capture this would be a room divider. A room divider can create an interactive divide in a room, leading to a different experience depending on which side you are viewing it from. This is how I felt about the relationship of tourists and locals during my time in Croatia and Herzegovina. The local and tourist culture are closely entangled as Croatians survive off their tourism based economy, yet where this interaction is viewed from shows two greatly different perspectives. These ideas translate into the 1/4 scale model of the room divider.





Miranda Flores-Salvaggio

I had two goals before embarking on my Croatian adventure: to gain an eye opening experience and to create a graphic journal of this experience. Physically, I knew I needed more practice and confidence with pen drawings. I also knew that I needed more knowledge and inspiration from a new place. I started this Journal right in the airport on that first day, drawing the people that surrounded me. Constantly observing and learning from everything, always drawing. The result became a visual of Croatia and Bosnia through my own eyes. The journal displays my progression of drawing and enlightenment, from confused to clear. After returning home and finishing the journal, I realized I had found a new part of myself and a developed style of my own.





Courtney **Koslof**

One thing I observed during the trip to Dubrovnik and Bosnia was the amount of people I began to recognize from seeing them day in and day out. These people depend on and support the area simultaneously. I wanted to depict the location through illustrating these individuals. I chose to use pastels to create traditional portraits, which focused on the figure. To accompany the drawings, I made the black and white Intaglio prints of images that I believed had an environment that helped to describe the individual.

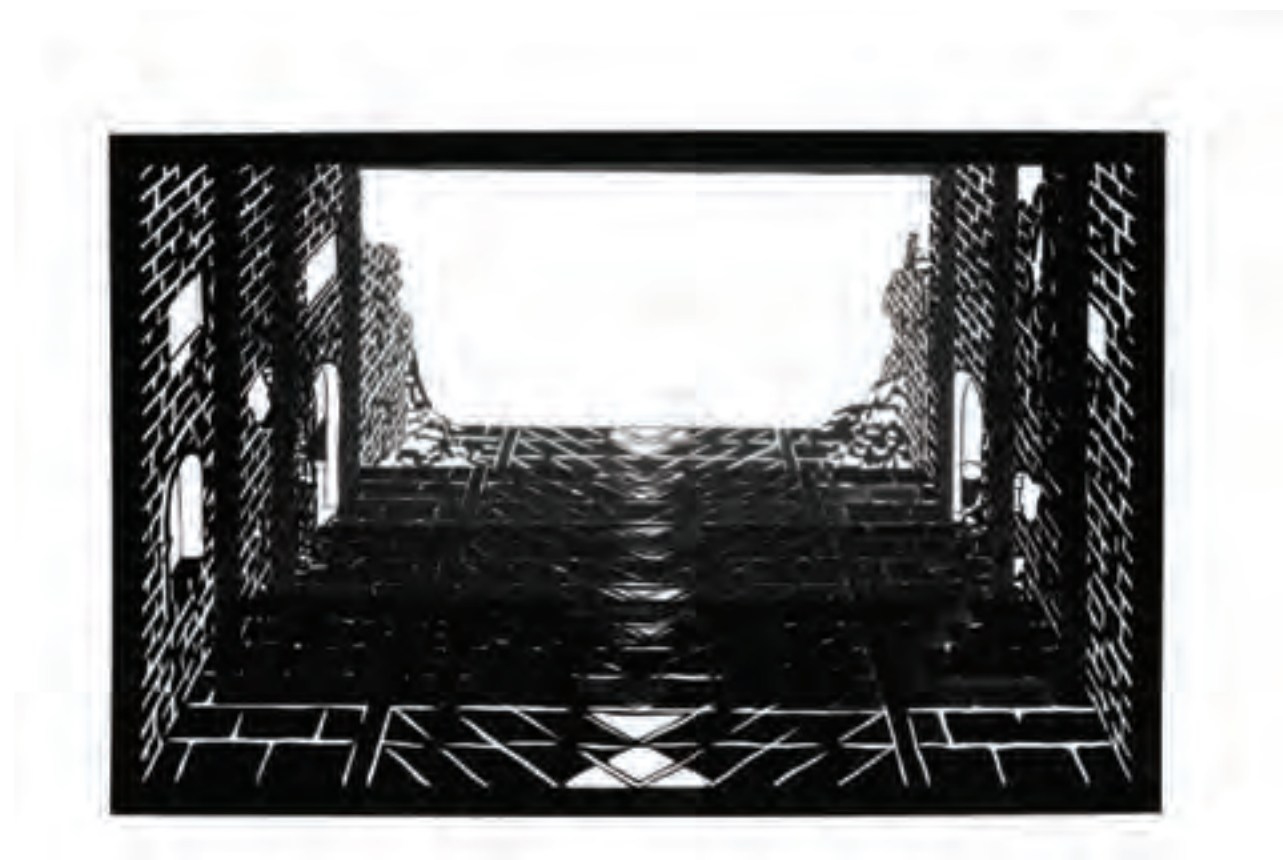
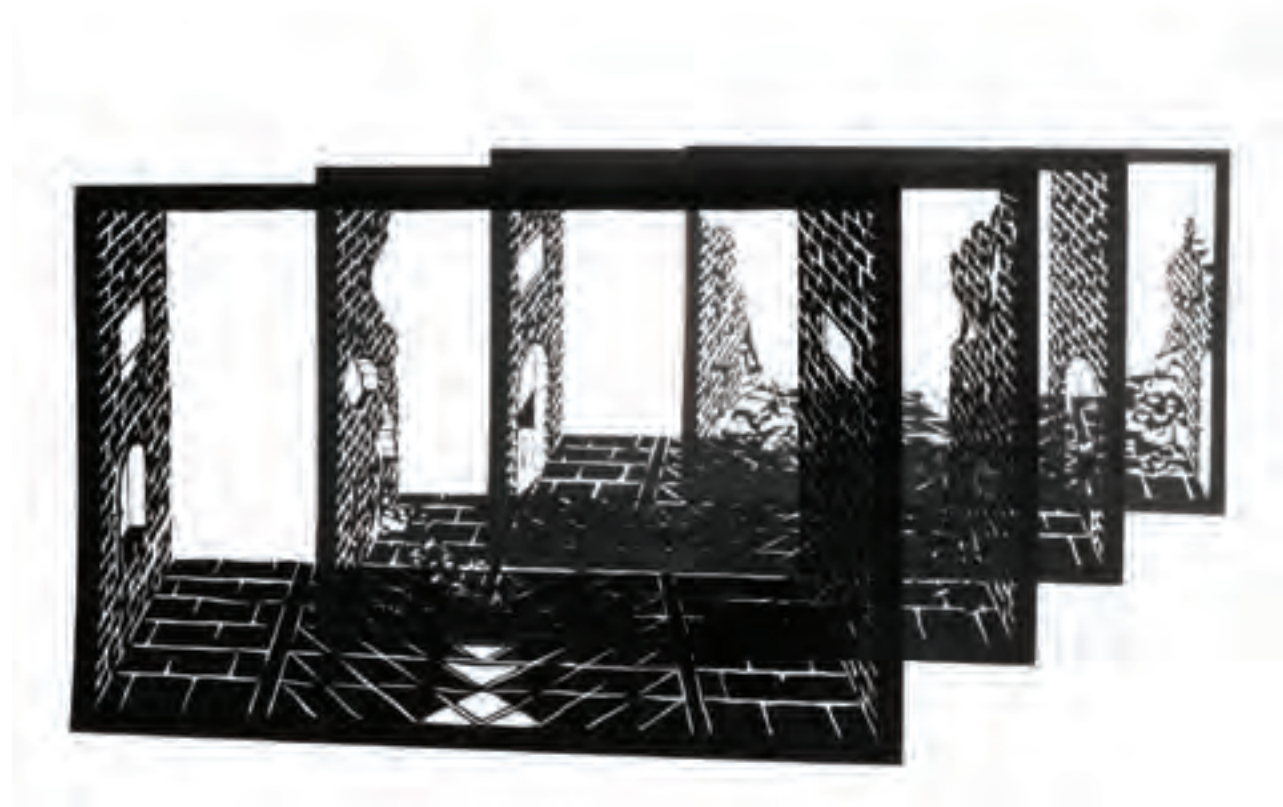




Andrew **Lapinski-Barker**

This piece is about the history behind the city of Dubrovnik, Croatia. Each window is an iteration of the city at a different point in time, all together making an image of the city street. I tried to capture Dubrovnik's rich and disaster stricken history.





My idea of doing the bookmark is going to present different cultures back to America. I come from China, a very Eastern culture compare to USA and Croatia. And people in US know their culture well; and most of them don't know where is Croatia and China, and how their cultures look like. I made 14 bookmarks, one side of the bookmark is about China, and the other side is about Croatia.

I have three main parts I did for my bookmarks, culture, environment, and people. Buildings in the city, oceans, and the forests in Croatia are the most interesting views. And the streets, mountains and people in China can present the Chinese culture well, too. The size of bookmarks is small, so we can carry them whenever we want. People will be surprised when they see the both sides of the bookmarks.



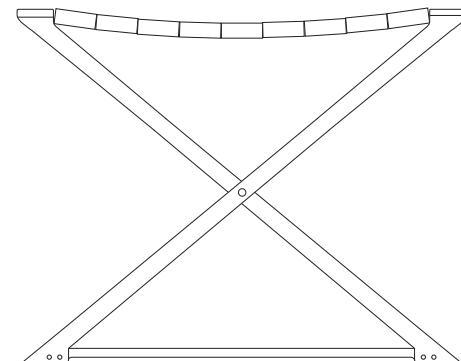
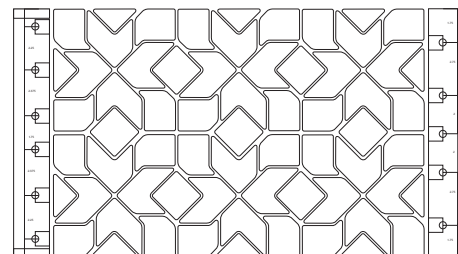
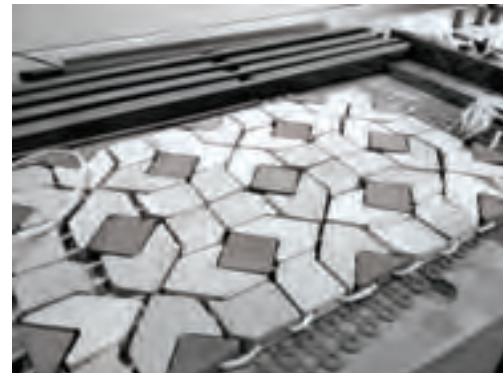
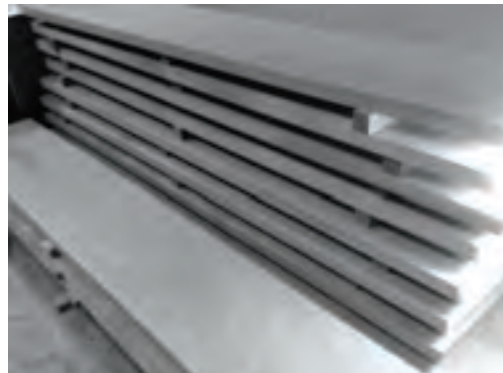


Katie Marsh

In the markets of Dubrovnik you will see many booths selling traditional Croatian handicrafts. I found myself repeatedly attracted to the embroidery with traditional Croatian designs applied to table linens, scarfs and aprons.

For my final project, I took the shapes found in these traditional embroidery patterns and made wooden blocks. For a furniture piece, I decided to design a stool with a hammock seat. The culture around the Adriatic Sea is very relaxing and the archetype of the hammock represents this feeling. I found design of this piece very inspirational. I plan to work on more hammock seating designs incorporating these shaped wooden blocks.





Madison **Mock**

I like the idea of collecting moments, either through photographs, objects, or written down observations. While in Croatia, along with taking many photographs, I kept journals where I recorded the things I experienced and taped in things that I found. Later, I synthesized this information into a sequential book documenting my journey. Using my journals, memory, and the metadata collected by my camera, I was also able to compile a list of all additional information I had about the content on each page.



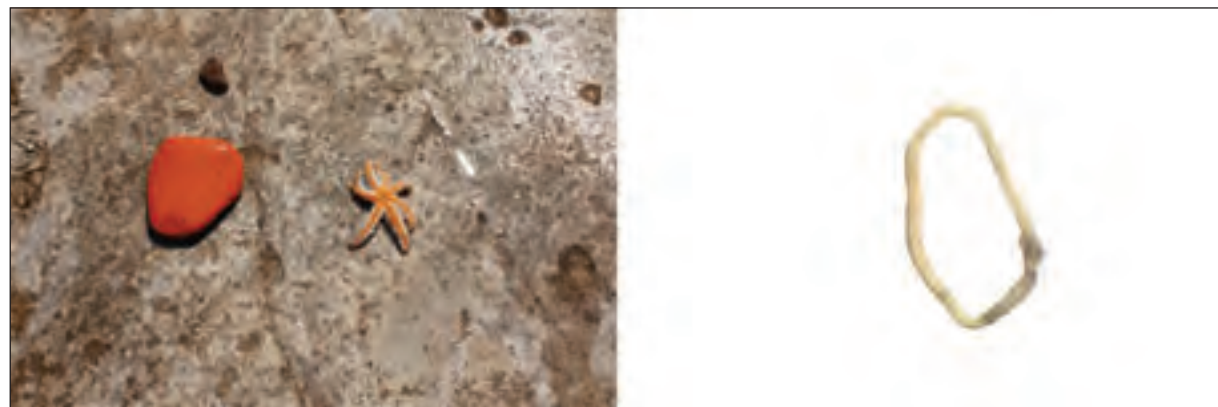
[object] 6.8.11. Dubrovnik, Croatia. Walk from University to Hotel.

[photograph] 6.8.11. Dubrovnik, Croatia. Walk from University to Hotel.



[photograph] 6.11.11 2:21 p.m. Dubrovnik, Croatia. Old Town.
Turb. 5. m. (Art. 2. stopped out.)

[photograph] 6.11.11 2:45 p.m. Dubrovnik, Croatia. Old Town.
Oiling down stairs from fort.



[photograph] 6.11.11 2:35 p.m. Dubrovnik, Croatia. Archæothurn.

[object] 6.11.11 2:24 p.m. Dubrovnik, Croatia. Archæothurn.
Leaving the swimming spot.

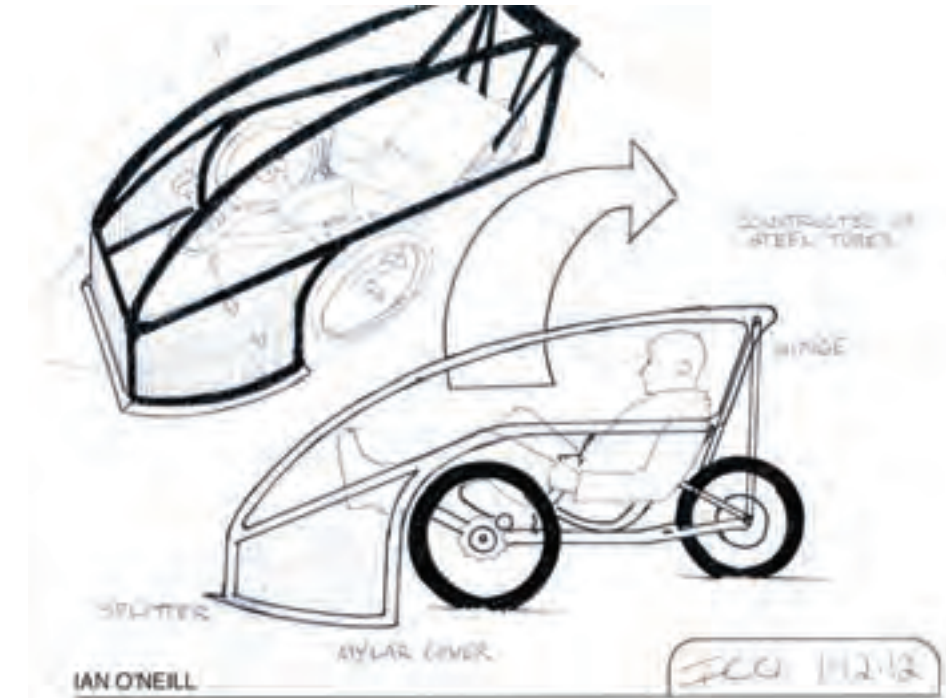
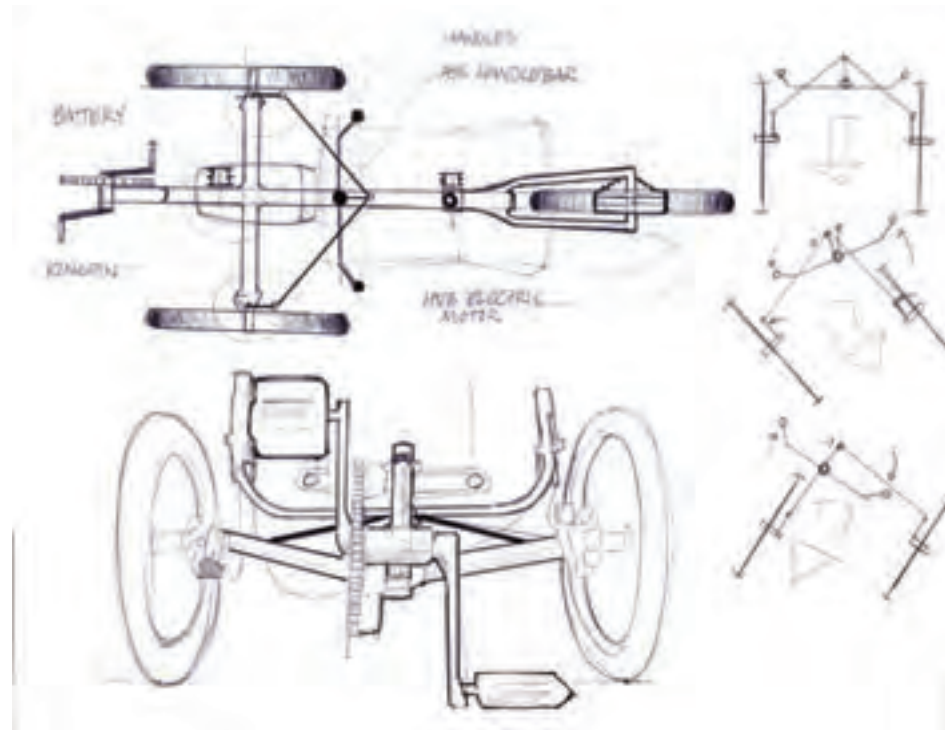


[photograph] 6.11.11, 9:57 a.m. (9/34 a.m.) Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.
Where WWI began.

[photograph] 6.16.11. Dubrovnik, Croatia. University.
[objects in photograph] 6.11.11. 10:10 a.m. Sarajevo, Bosnia
and Herzegovina. Tour guide.

Croatian people's use of scooters as a form of transportation is different from what we experience in America. By observing traffic patterns in Dubrovnik and riding a scooter myself, my design intent became to design a scooter and a share system for sustainability. In order to bring my design closer to reality, I collaborated with RIT's eBike Fleet Team who are working to design an electric bike share system for RIT. Implementing electric technologies with recumbent tricycles allows for a wider range share system. I think this system could be used to promote unity among the people of the Western Baltic region (former Yugoslavia) by connecting the countries. In my ongoing process, I am designing a utility eTrike fairing to make sharing more efficient, convenient, and fun.

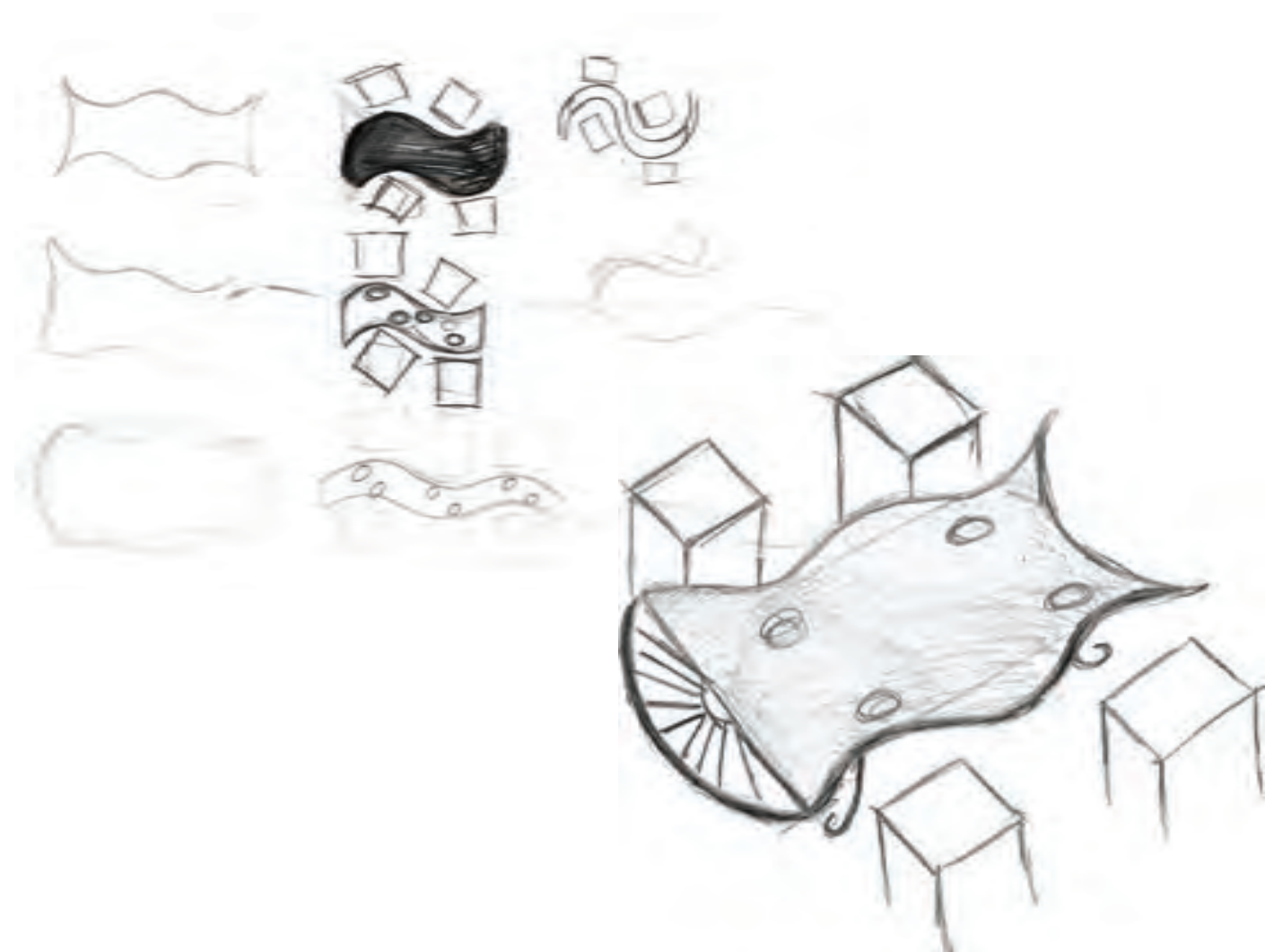




Alexander **Romeo**

While in Croatia, our time was spent exploring, looking at the beautiful scenery, researching the culture, and jumping into the day-to-day life of the people of Dubrovnik. For many of us, there was one constant every day: drinking coffee. So for this project, I decided to make a coffee table incorporating the look and feel of Dubrovnik. Instead of going with the traditional round or rectangular coffee table, I made a top shaped to accommodate a lot of people with everyone having their own area without feeling awkward. The textured cement covering replicates the stone buildings found all over the city: both in color and texture.





Claire **Smith**

When I walked through the city of Dubrovnik, I saw two different elements: old and new. The more I explored, the more I saw these elements at odds with each other. An old statue just a couple yards away from a new monument for the wars of a decade ago; A car that was made in the years before I was born sitting under a tree in mint condition, while a brand new car lay forgotten under ivy and dust a neighborhood away; an open air market just a couple blocks down the road from a shopping complex. I wanted to show the places that had been forgotten by tourists and passerby, as well as show the places that had been remembered and cherished by the people of Dubrovnik. I wanted viewers to interact with my work and compare and contrast these two elements side by side and make their own connections between them.





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Colophon

This catalogue was produced as a supplement to The City as Site, a study abroad program taught by Roberley Bell, that took place during Summer 2011 in Dubrovnik Croatia.

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City as Site was set in Museo Slab and Andes.

