

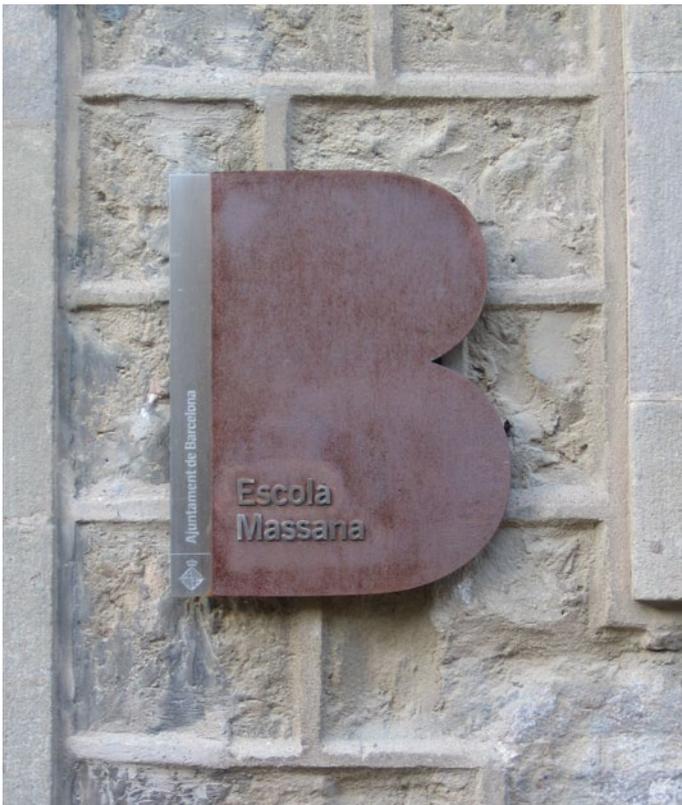
Report

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DREAM Glass Master Class

Barcelona: 22nd February - 3rd March



I want to have a diverse array of materials that I know how to work with and glass is one of them. I think glass design is one of the most respected fields of design along with furniture design and certain kind of product design for example lighting design when thinking of design the traditional way. The reasons for this can be historical or that those type of design objects can afford a certain amount of playfulness and artistic touch without losing their functionality. Additionally functionality or price are seldom the main selling points of crafts and these kind of design objects. You buy a remote control because you want to change the channel without moving from the couch but you don't buy a vase worth of thousands of euros because you don't have any place to put your flowers in. You buy it because you love it. Apart from decorative pieces glass is used in wide array of products,

many of them industrially produced. How to find the balance between design and crafts was one of the questions this master class was supposed to tackle.

I'm an industrial designer myself and I think it is worth saying that I'm especially concentrated on user centered design and service design which places the needs of an user at the center stage of the design process. I have worked with big complex systems and the end result is not always anything tangible or even easy to explain. Experiences are ment to be experienced. Even though that is what I've been doing lately I'm also very interested in working with more tangible product design for example with glass.

I think the divide to craftsmen and designers is somewhat true but I think it is more about whether you really master the crafts and work as a glass designer as well or work as a product and concept designer glass being one of the materials you work with. In the latter case you don't really even need to master all the techniques, just know the basics and right people to work with. I've had quite limited experience with glass design but I have tried for example sand casting and glass blowing and learned the basic methods while in Finland. I've also designed a drinking glass using computer-aided design (CAD) and computer-aided manufacturing (CAM) programs. In that case professional glass blowers did the actual blowing.

During the master class in Barcelona we tried out different techniques and didn't do any bigger project. Considering my background I think trying out different methods and listening lectures held by seasoned professionals was also useful and inspiring even though the end results are not portfolio pieces. I think I would have been ready for a bigger project in co-operation with a craftsman but either way I learned quite a lot.

Like I said I've been working with user centered and service design projects recently. Those are multidisciplinary approaches where people from different backgrounds participate in a design project. Special attention is paid to user's needs and that is usually the starting point of the whole design process. The projects are not always the kind of projects what you would associate with design in the first place. That highlight designers' special ability to create desirable, functional products and experiences in varying fields of society having a firm base in users' needs. The inspiration often comes from everyday life and its inconveniences. From that point of view it was also very useful and inspiring to be in Spain. I haven't been there since starting my design studies and it is always interesting to see the small differences in everyday life. Some things just work and some don't and especially the reasons why things are the way they are. How the culture, history, traditions and environment shape the life in different places and what are the similarities throughout Europe or world and on the other hand what are the local specialities.

I think in design profession you have to at some point choose whether you really want to master some thing for example glass and work as a designer as well. Other path is to become a designer and know something about everything and more importantly the right people to contact when your own expertise is not enough. To make it simple it is about either having the ideas or the skills to make those ideas come true. If you just have good ideas but you don't master the crafts at all you go nowhere. More importantly you can't really even know what you can do without the basic knowledge about the materials and manufacturing methods and their limitations.

We had several small projects during the master class in Barcelona. The normal day consisted of a seminar and several hours of working in the workshop. Most projects took one day to finish but some took an additional day. We tried several techniques including thermoforming, fusion, working with



At one of the seminars



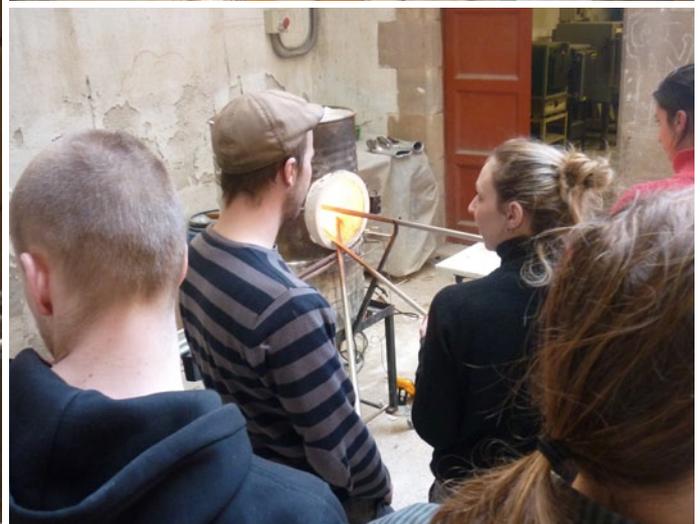
Thermoforming



Stained glass workshop



Glass blowing workshop





Rapid prototyping



Sagrada Família



Listening about thermoforming and fusion



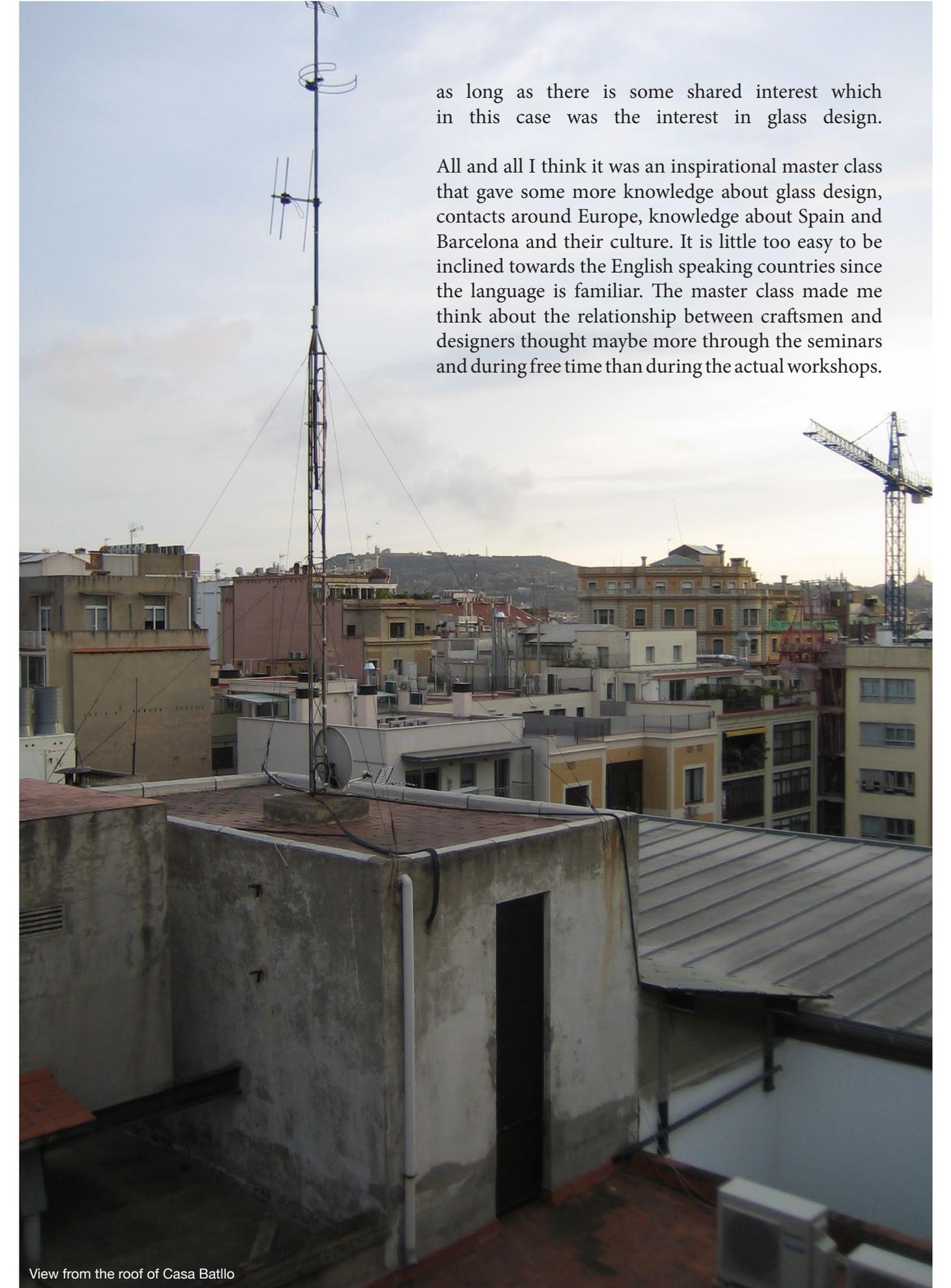
At Liceu metro station

our teachers had designed lights to Sagrada Família.

stained glass and silicone, glass blowing and sand blasting. Thermoforming, fusion and stained glass were completely new things for me. I think most useful for me in the future will be the knowledge about glass blowing and sand blasting. From the personal point of view I think that also fusion was very interesting and it could be an interesting technique for producing more artistic pieces. Additionally to seminars and workshops we also visited different museums and some exhibitions showing works of some local industrial designers and showcasing the most recent rapid prototyping techniques. Also the most famous sights like Casa Batllo and Sagrada Família were inspiring to see and one of

Most of the teachers spoke actually quite good English even though everybody was apologizing how bad they are. However there were two teachers that really didn't speak English at all which was little inconvenient. All the other students spoke atleast some Spanish apart from us Finns and some mastered it way better than English so considering that it wasn't that big of an inconvenience. Additionally there was always somebody translating the basic message to English.

There were also business students with design studies among us designers and craftsmen and I think that was good. I think it is good to mix people from different backgrounds



as long as there is some shared interest which in this case was the interest in glass design.

All and all I think it was an inspirational master class that gave some more knowledge about glass design, contacts around Europe, knowledge about Spain and Barcelona and their culture. It is little too easy to be inclined towards the English speaking countries since the language is familiar. The master class made me think about the relationship between craftsmen and designers thought maybe more through the seminars and during free time than during the actual workshops.

View from the roof of Casa Batlló