



Lyceum Travel Report - Summer 2024
Michael Fitzpatrick

Thank you

I wanted to thank several people who influenced and supported me throughout my travels.

Lyceum Fellowship

To my relatives in Ireland...

Uncle Steven Carr & Aunt Aoife Gaffeny

To my professors...

Dr. Marcella Eaton & Dr. Alan Tate

Frits Van Loon & Kamni Gill

And...

My parents & sisters

Without your guidance and support, this travel report simply wouldn't have been possible.

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Countries Visited - 9
Cities Visited - 28
Projects Visited - 280+

Travel Goals:

The intentions of the travel was to better understand the overall direction of my graduate research. Many of the sites and cities visited looked to understand the spatial connection between people and forests. Through these connections I wanted to learn how it could then apply to the reforestation of Ireland. When initially starting the travels, the research question initially was broad but over the three months, the research became clear to me.

That question was...

What would a reforestation plan mean for Ireland's border in the next 75 to 100 years?

Initial Travel Experience:

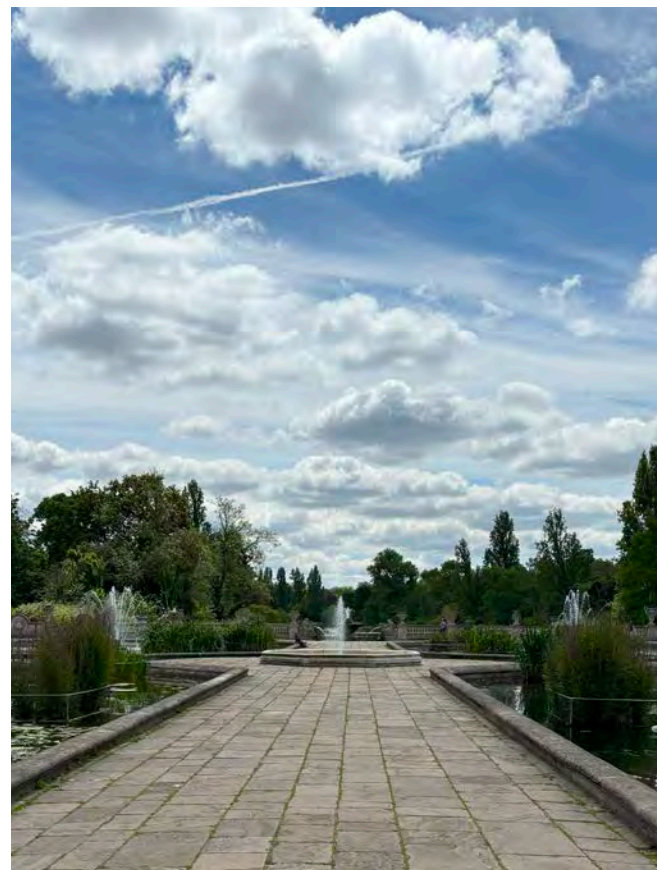
To start, I had very little travel experience, specially going at it alone. My first time traveling was a year prior for 12 days with my undergraduate studio group to the **Netherlands** and **France**. For three months, it was a test to see if I could replicate those 12 days to benefit my graduate research. In the end, I visited **280+** projects spanning the 3 months of travel. In reflection, I am still in disbelief I traveled for the full extent and visited so many different projects related to the field of Landscape Architecture and design.

The following photos taken are ingrained in memory and represent key moments in both my travel and direction of research.

Country - England

My first stop was London, England for 1 week. I started in London knowing it would be one of the biggest cities on my trip across the United Kingdom and Europe. Initially I was overwhelmed, not completely registering everything, almost running on auto-pilot. The scale of everything was something I was not accustomed too. Some of sites I visited, I would spend hours simply walking around, finding new corners and spaces that normally would be brushed over. A major point was larger parks would close at particular times, making some visits shorter then others, something I had to quickly adjust too but found interesting. The closures of parks had me start to realize how public space was valued, specially in a dense city.

The Albert Memorial



Kensington Gardens

Royal Albert Hall





Natural History Museum



One thing I always tried to do was either walk or bus to places while in London. Not the quickest way around, it allowed me to slowdown, taking in larger parts of London.

Streets of London

Chelsea Physic Garden was an amazing site. I never imagined the amount of biodiversity in such a small site within the heart of London. The garden had over 4600+ Plant species within a small area. The site inspired me in how we value space and what could be achieved if planned overtime



Chelsea Physic Garden





The British Museum set precedents for how traditional and contemporary architecture was merged together across London. It was finding the balance of scale and how the styles were represented to the viewer.

The British Museum

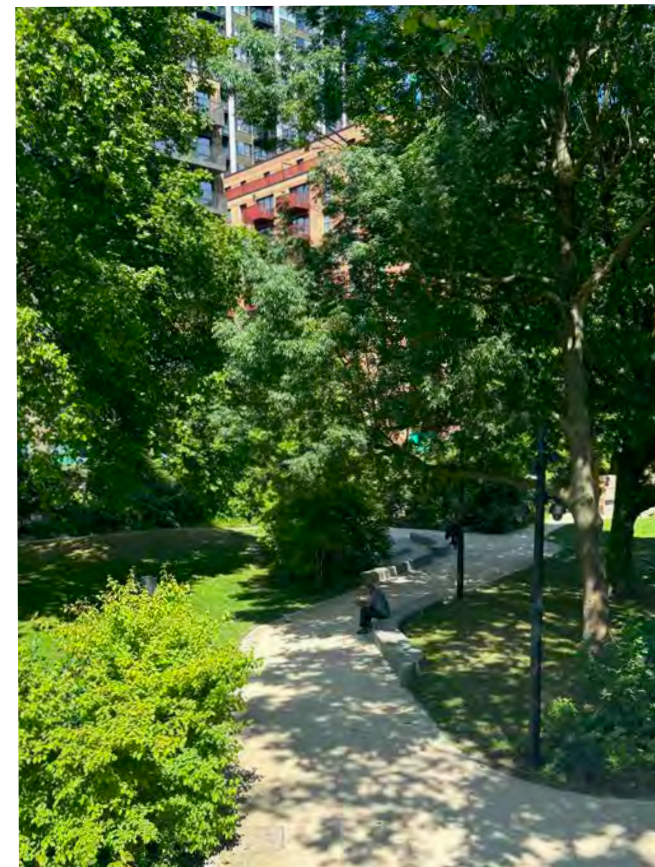


Granary Square

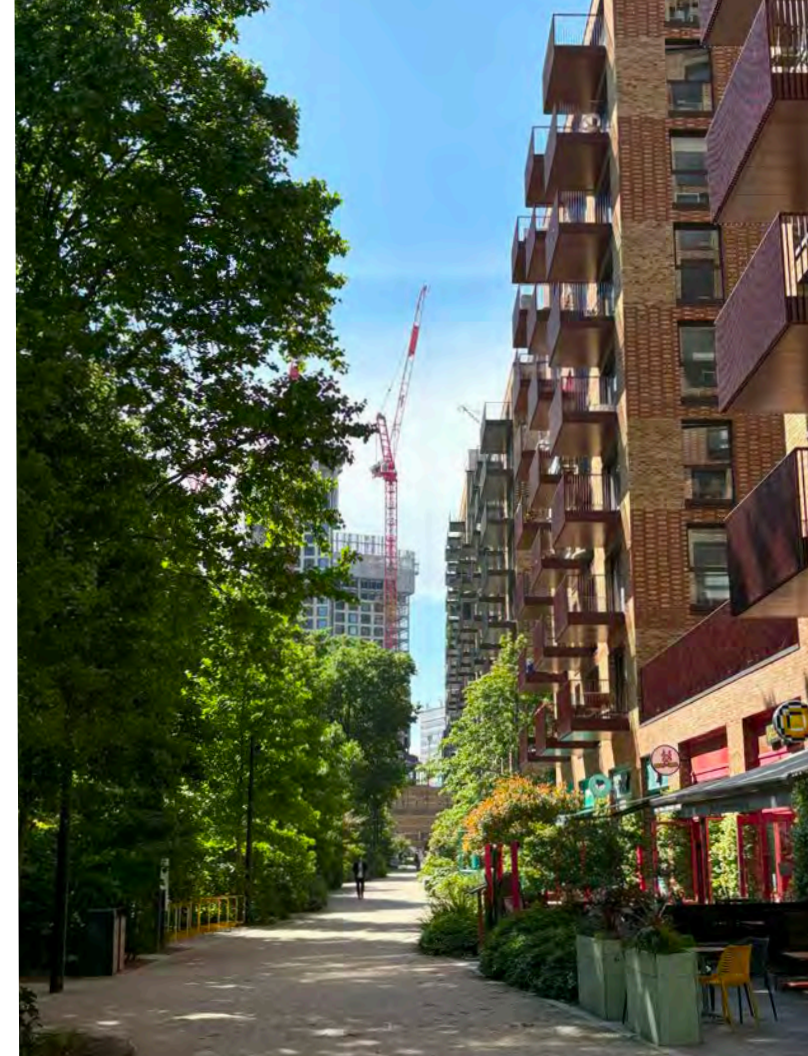


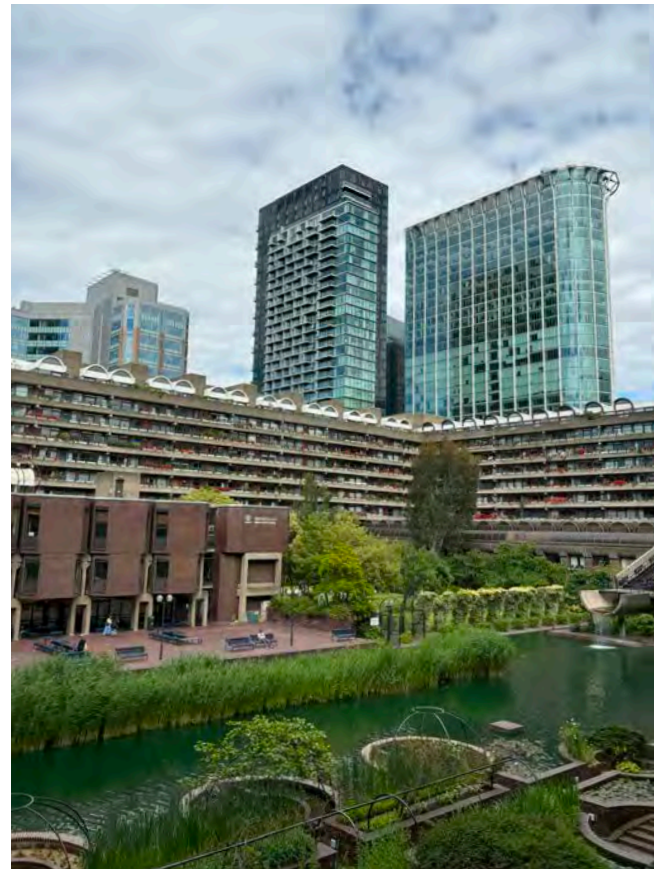
Granary Square felt like a series of landscape projects stitched together, creating one space. The area seemed like an oasis that separated people from the traditional aspects of London.

Elephant Park was a standout space for me. It felt like a larger scaled forest courtyard space that was placed in the middle of a contemporary part of London.



Elephant Park





Barbican



Stepping into the Barbican was like walking into a completely different city. A reject of London's architectural identity through the brutalist design style.

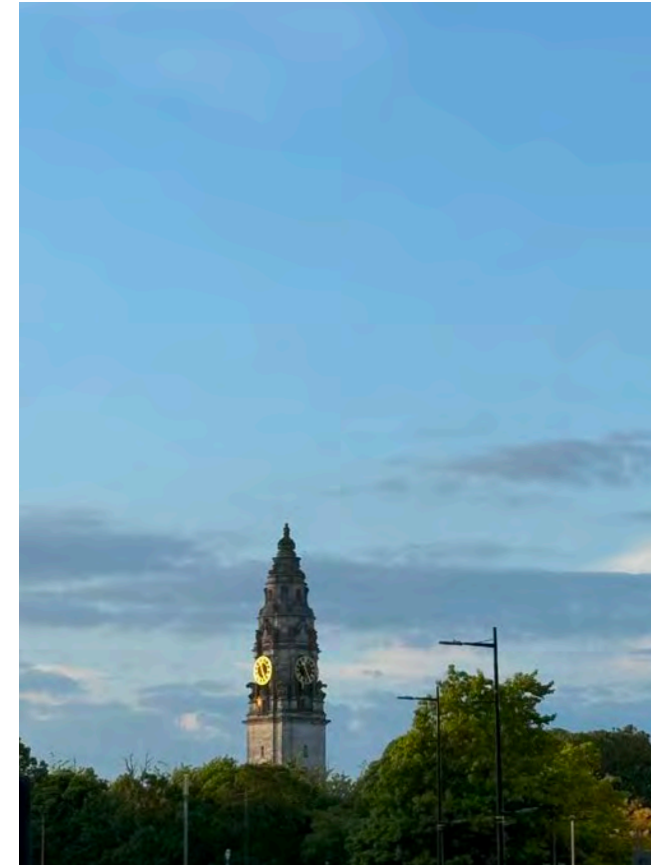


Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park



Country - Wales

My next stop was Cardiff, Wales for 5 Days. Wales, primarily Cardiff was quite the contrast to what I had experienced in London. My time spent was more exploring the city and fringe areas of Cardiff rather than any specific site. Cardiff somewhat forced me to slowdown and actually take in a lot of what I was seeing, either on boat, train, or bike. Here, many of the photos were somewhat random but captured much of the landscapes I was interested in relating back to the overall research topic.



Cardiff City Centre





Longwood Nature Reserve



Train Across Northern Wales



Cardiff Bay Wetlands



An event was taking place for concerts, so much of Cardiff Castle was restricted or had pop-up tents surrounding the lower area. First impressions were not great for visiting my first castle but that changed once I saw the views on the walls.

Cardiff Castle

Country - Republic of Ireland

My longest stop was Lexilip, Republic of Ireland for 1 month. My visit in the Republic of Ireland was quite an emotional visit. A personal goal within my graduate research was to understand both my families heritage and what it means to be a landscape designer across Ireland. Much of that was achieved while visiting several cities across the region. Dublin, Cork, Howth, were simply fairy tales I heard growing up from my dad. It was surreal making those connections, seeing where my family came from and how it all related to what I was researching across Ireland. Many of the sites visited across the region would not have been possible without my Uncle Steven and Aunt Aoife. Both introduced me to several different sites and people who helped throughout my research, better defining what it meant to reforest Ireland.





River Liffey was my first visit within Ireland. The River Liffey connects directly to Dublin, which on train was a 30-45 minute ride. If you wanted to walk the River Liffey to Dublin, you could!

River Liffey



Lexilip Heritage Trail



Phoenix Park was a site I would continuously visit throughout my time in Ireland. The park set precedents are many of current values of landscape design and management practices. The Kings Deer for example are a larger population of deer that overgraze the park landscape now. They are hunted yearly to keep the population numbers down

Phoenix Park

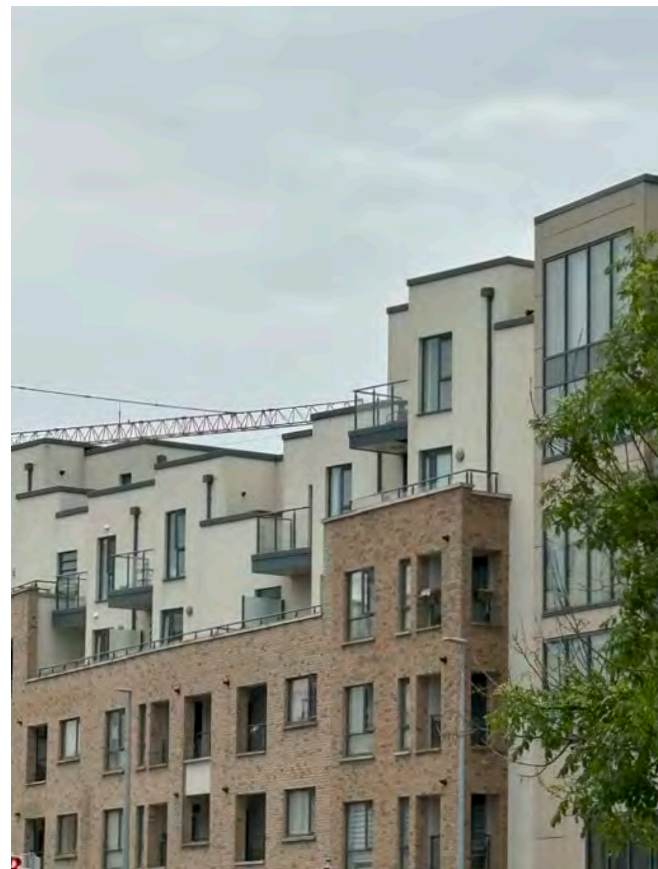




Garden of Remembrance



St. Patrick's Park



Frank Collins Park



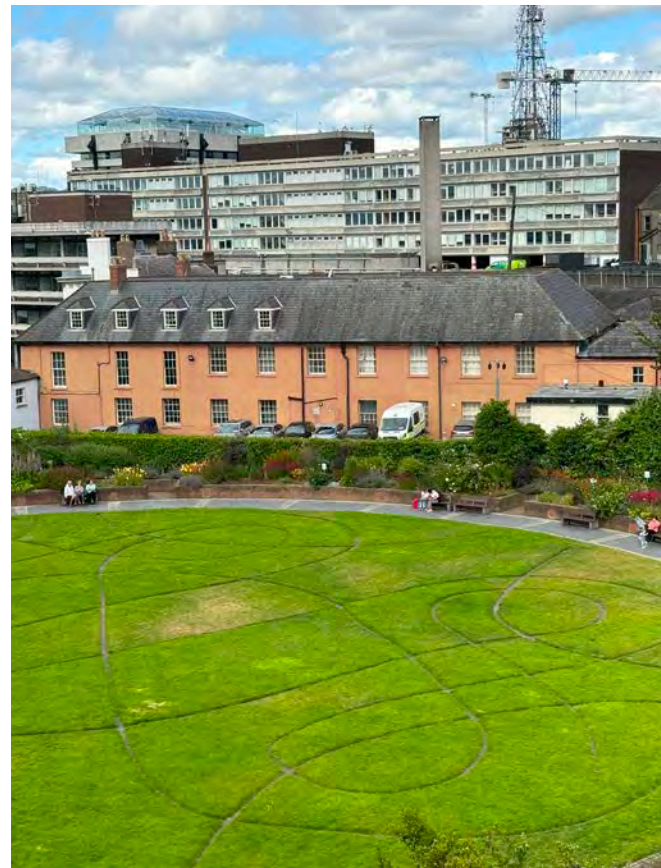
Frank Collins Park showed an influence of landscape design that I had not seen up until this point within Ireland. The space replicated a wetland habitat not normally seen within Ireland with several structures that engaged both natural and human systems.



Howth Cliff Walk



University Collage Cork



Dublin Castle



Fringes of Lexlip



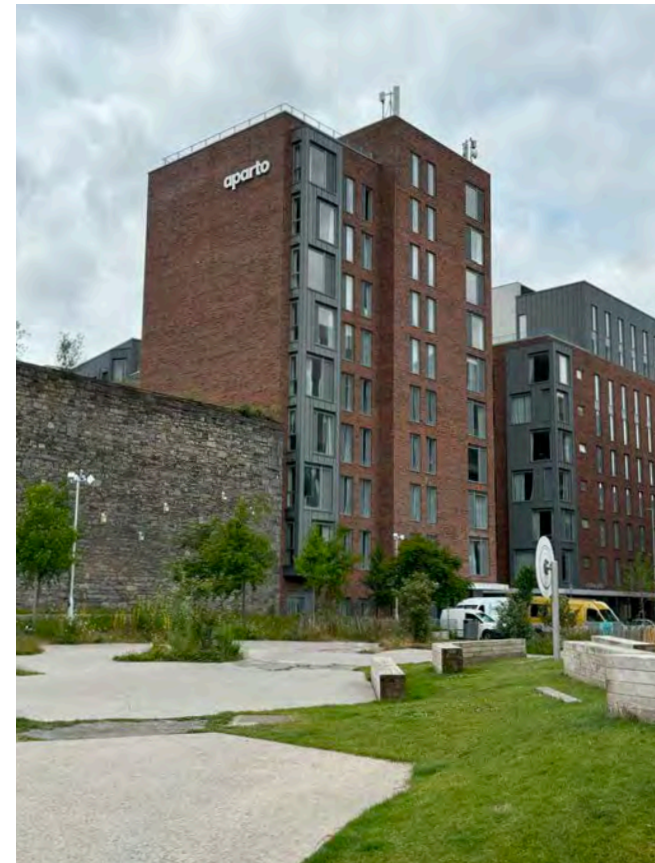


Irish Museum of Modern Art





Collins Barracks



Bridgefoot Street Park





Wicklow Mountains

Passing through the Wicklow Mountains gave much needed context to the deforestation taking place across Ireland. There is a beauty to the Irish landscape that reforestation would cover overtime. This was the moment that had me realize there will need to be a balance for how forest is spatially integrated into the communities.





Beyond The Trees Avondale



Wicklow Valley





The Japanese Garden represented the progression of life. The beauty that came from the spatially composition and narrative I feel the space is important when considering how designers integrate forests into the landscape. How can we communicate a message or story through a small space?

The Botanical Gardens in Dublin brought in new questions when researching reforestation across Ireland. How is native biodiversity spatially valued and managed? The botanic grounds only recently introduced an area that highlighted the native biodiversity.

Irish Botanical Gardens





Bray



Airfield Estate



Airfield Estate was a site that interested me quite a bit after my visit. The site was an agroforestry project within the heart of Dublin. The garden grows its own food for the community kitchen which is then used for educational purposes. The project was quite interesting to visit when thinking about designing community engagement.



Irish National War Memorial Gardens



Powerscourt House & Gardens



Country - Northern Ireland

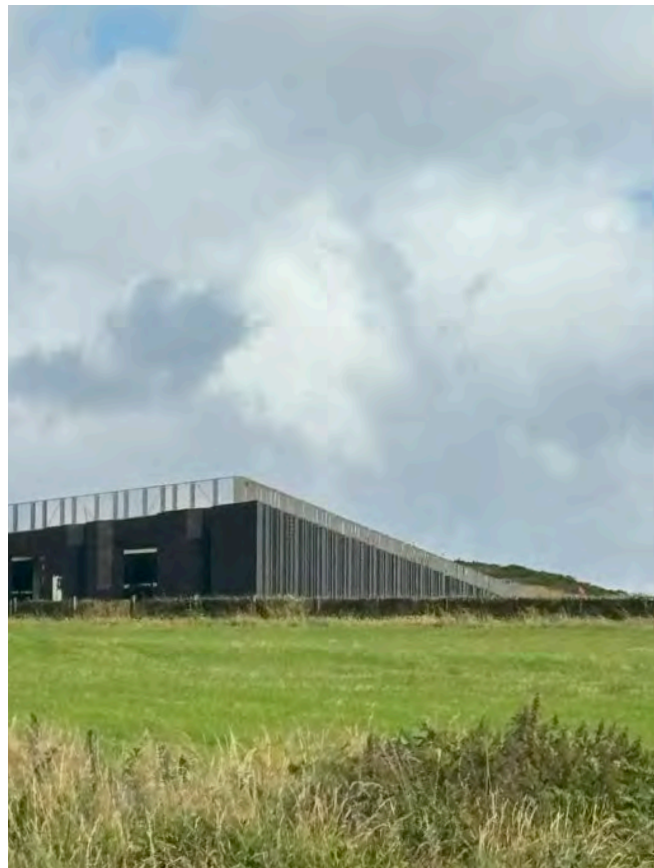
While staying in the Republic of Ireland, I planned out a 5 day trip into Northern Ireland. The areas visited were not as busy as I had imagined originally. I visited three cities while staying in Northern Ireland; Belfast, Londonderry, and Limavady. My visit primarily focused on understanding the social-political aspects across Northern Ireland, primarily how communities were designed. It was quite interesting but hard to understand, specifically the history in Londonderry. My uncle would ask me questions, seeing how I would respond to particular situations related to The Troubles. At the time, I did not know how to respond but over time, grew to understand why those questions were being asked. In the context of my research, the history, more specifically the border needs to be acknowledged.









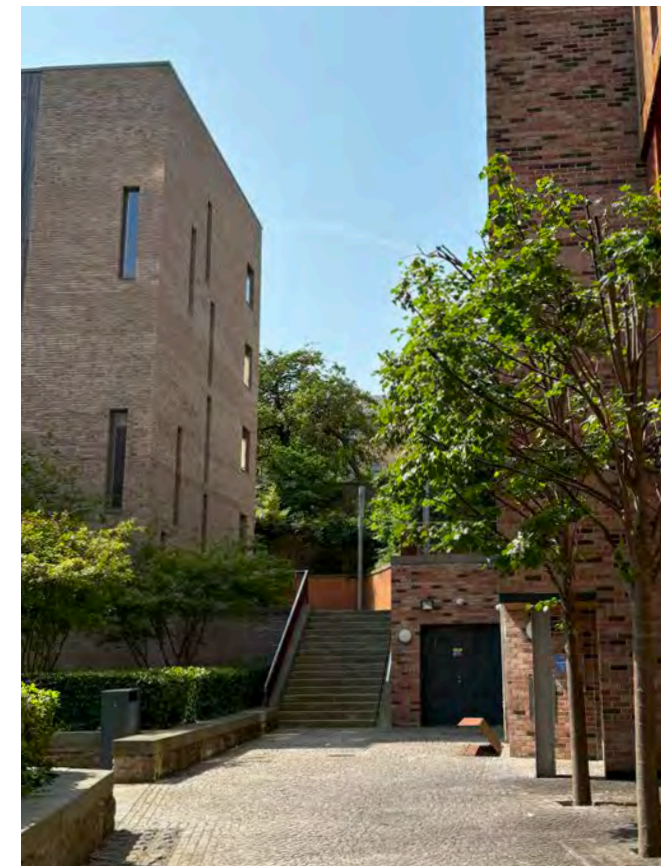


Giant's Causeway



Country - Scotland

After leaving Ireland, I would fly to Edinburgh, Scotland for 10 days. My time in Scotland was quite a surprise when arriving in the airport. I stayed 5 minutes away from the Royal Mile during the biggest cultural event in the city, Fringe Fest. I was not prepared for the amount of people across the city. Four days were spent in the Highlands, avoiding the crowds during the day. The density of the city in comparison to Dublin was shocking. The architecture, primarily the streetscape was nearly double of what a normal street looked like in Ireland. Seeing the historical design maintained, representing a core identity of the cities design was inspiring. The beauty within the landscape across Scotland reinforced the challenges I would face in Ireland. How can reforestation respect the existing spatial landscape characteristics without removing the surrounding communities traditional views of land?





National Galleries of Scotland: Modern One







Arthur's Seat



Dynamic Earth



Loch Ness



Glencoe Valley





Dundee V&A



The Burrell Collection



Maggie's Dundee



Countries - Denmark + Sweden

My time in Denmark coincided with visits to Sweden. I stayed in Copenhagen, Denmark for 7 days. Flying to mainland Europe was a contrast to a lot of my travel experience up until this point. The design and how the landscape was valued is quite different from what I was accustomed to. That contrast was prominent when visiting Malmo, Sweden. There was a more organized approach to landscape design and planning, shifting away from the contemporary appearance of naturalization. It felt as if it found the blend of history and contemporary design, shifting away from traditional influences of horticultural and forestry practices. In relation to my research, how the border or bridge to Sweden from Copenhagen is handled was quite interesting to experience. I was told to simply have my passport on hand just in case of inspection, almost felt like the open border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Nothing came of using my passport but it felt almost like Denmark and Sweden were the same country.



Orestad

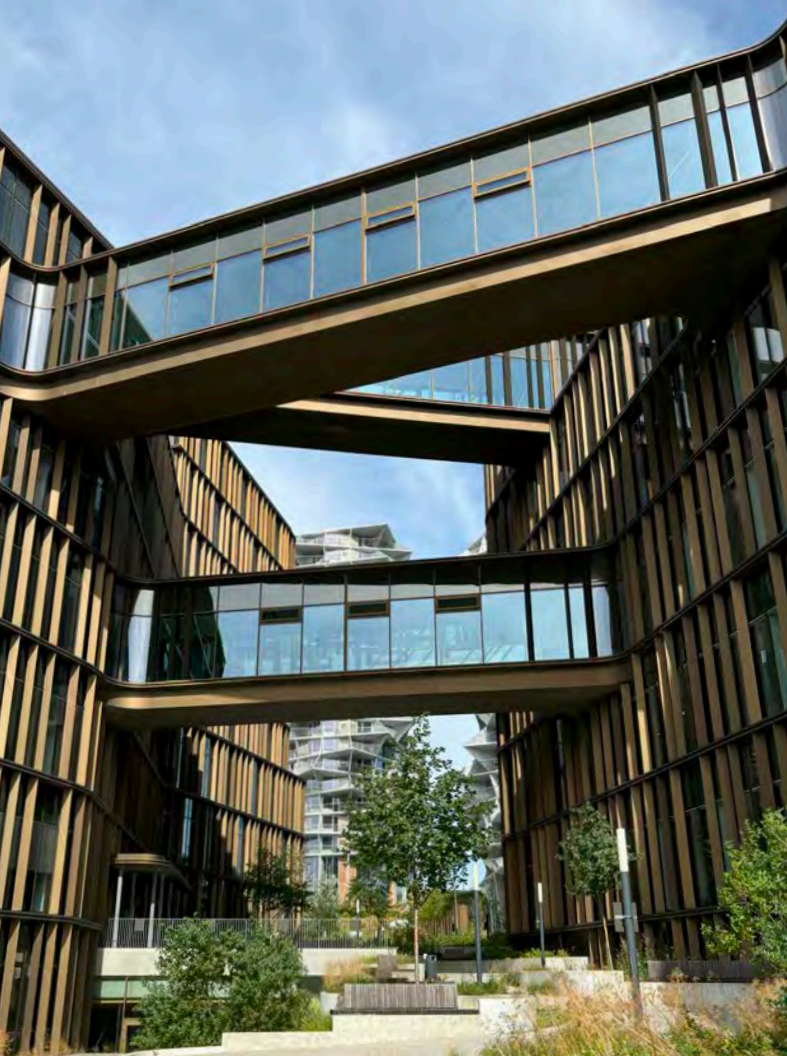


Mountain Dwellings



The Opera Park





Kaktus Towers



Bymilen



Superkilen Park was attached to a series of parks that went nearly half the length of Copenhagen. The space felt like a true pedestrian green corridor, spent nearly 2 to 3 hours walking , stumbling into new spaces throughout the city.

Superkilen Park

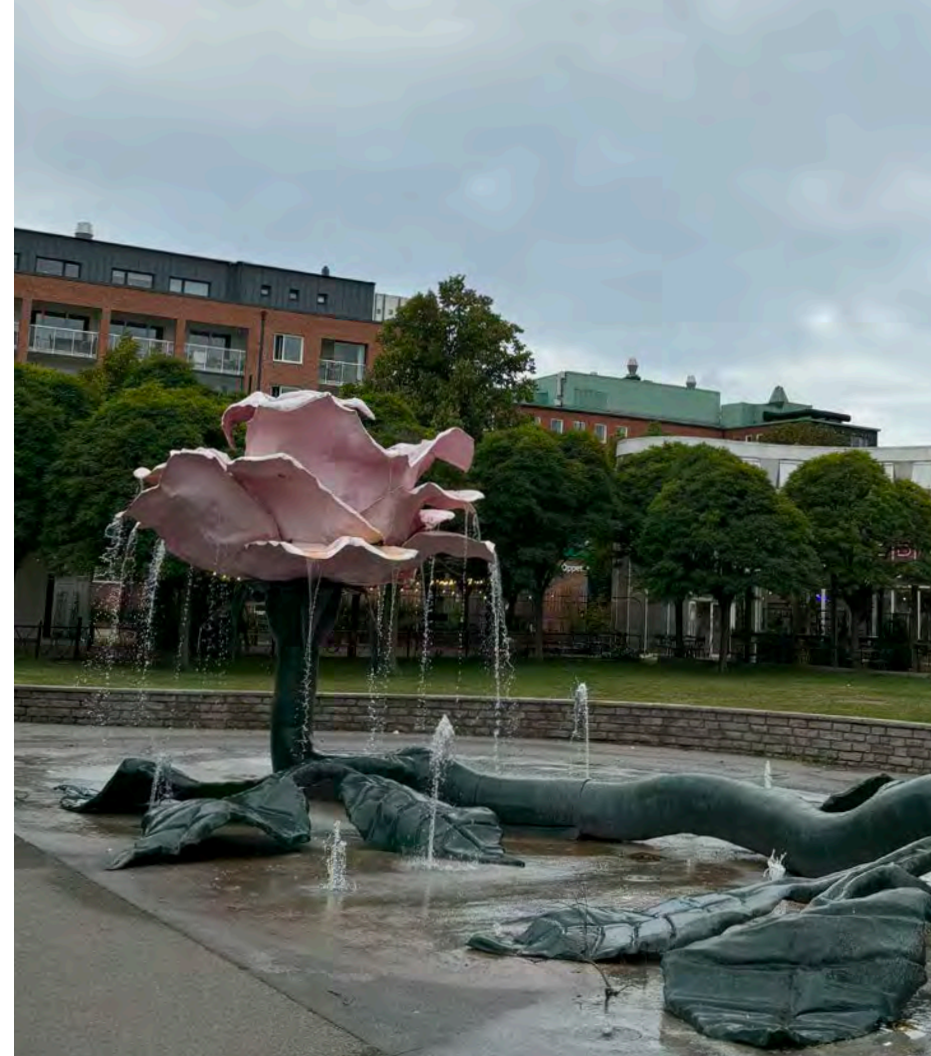


Kastellet





The King's Garden





Clemensstorget



Pildammsteatern



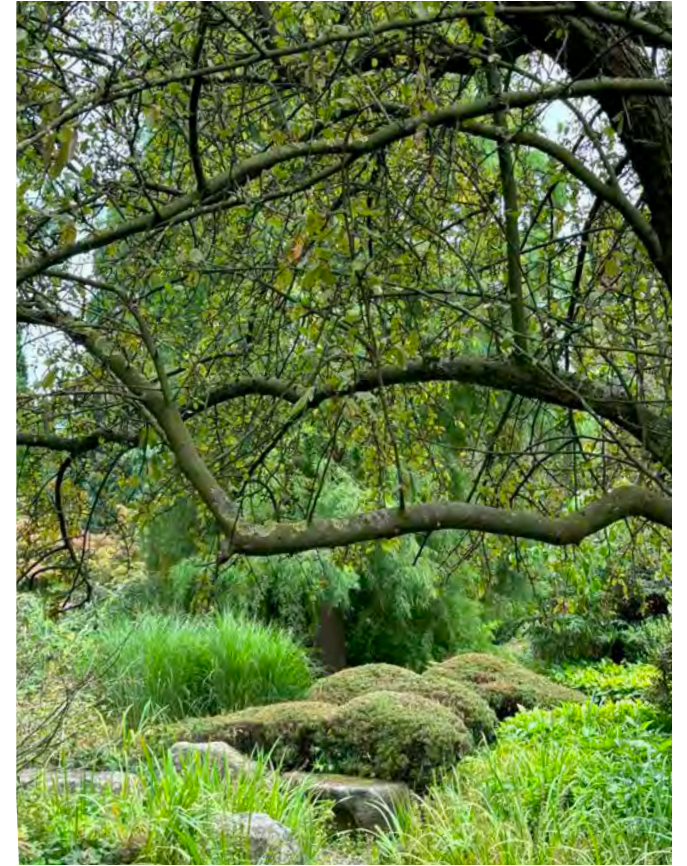
Pildamsparken

Country - Germany

Training in and out of Germany was quite an adventure within itself. Leaving Copenhagen, I would train to Hamburg and stay for 7 days. A lot of uneasy took place throughout my time in Germany. Confidence was built-up throughout my time traveling but something was off. I learned there were strikes taking place that would affect the trains to Berlin. Trains were being canceled so during the day I was tracking when I could leave for Hamburg in the evening. The design and social-political stance of Germany reminded me a lot of Northern Ireland. It felt very similar in terms of design and value of the landscape, focusing on how natural systems can bridge communities together. Many projects blended and made use of older industrial sites, allowing the landscape to take hold and be a minimal intervention. This allowed the history of the country to speak for itself in numerous scales throughout my time in Germany.



Sandtor Park



Kleine Wallanlagen





Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe





Landschaftspark Duisburg-Nord

Country - Netherlands

My time in the Netherlands was not my first; previously I had spent 7 days visiting several sites with my school group. During my own travels I spent 14 days visiting several cities across the Netherlands. In my travels, I wanted to take the opportunity to directly connect with those practicing landscape design and see the coastline of the country. In my time visiting, I had conversations discussing what I had learnt and the challenges I was facing within my own research. The discussions focused on the approach and ultimately, it was recommended for the research to look into designing within natural boundaries of Ireland, for example, water basins. The discussions also talked about the design mindset across the Netherlands. Many of those I talked to were now spending the time dialing back previous work, allowing natural process to take hold of areas. It allowed my work and understanding of the different sites to go beyond having the Irish border define how the project was handled and designed.



One of several sites recommended to me while I was visiting the Netherlands. It walked the line between being public and private, with the only way to gain was through a breeze way that was altered. The space was generally taken care of by the neighborhood, creating an unknown public courtyard.



Lange Voorhout Park



Westduinpark





Holland



TU Delft Hortus Botanicus



Dakpark Rotterdam



Almere



Hoek van Holland



Possibly one of my favorite sites across the Netherlands. The blend of architecture and the simple approach to landscape design created an atmosphere that brings peace once you enter the courtyard.

Pandhof van de Dom



Park van Luna



Park High Meadow



Rotterdam 127



Urban Food Forest Rijnvliet



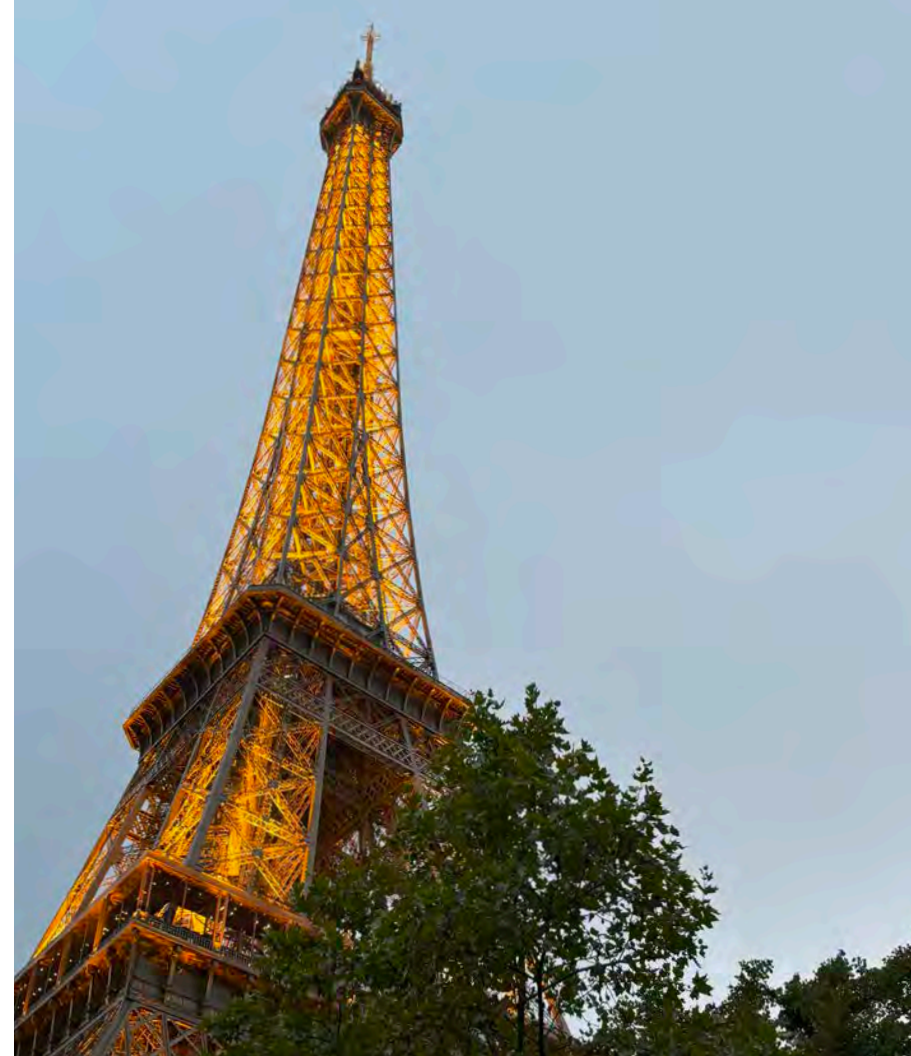
Sint-Oedenrode



Green Cathedral

Country - France

Paris was the last stop of my travels where I spent 5 days. The irony of this last stop was that up until this 3 month travel, I had only visited countries in winter. Seeing Paris in summer and verge of changing to fall was quite a memorable experience. Many of the sites I had previously had now a yellowish green tint that with the right sunlight, created amazing spatial experiences throughout the city. In my second visit I knew I wanted to avoid previous stops, specially with the Olympics just ending a day prior to my arrival. That "want" was very difficult to achieve but within my 5 days I was able to visit quite a few new projects on the fringes of Paris. Many of projects visited and re-visited helped change my view of landscape design , primarily how we experience a forest atmosphere within an urban context. A lot of the spaces created a secluded and peaceful place, separated from general norm of the everyday.



The last time visiting the Eiffel Tower, it was a time of uneasy for me. I was not as impressed by the Eiffel Tower until I went up and saw the city. Seeing it now, it gives a sense of direction and time. I know looking at the tower at a distance, I'm at least an hour or 2 walk way from the heart of Paris.



Parc André Citroën





I had heard the design approach to Château de Vaux-le-Vicomte Garden but never understood the actual scale of the project. To achieve the perception and view, walking the whole length took an hour to truly understand the actual scale and water masked by the raised topography.

Château de Vaux-le-Vicomte Garden





Parc des Buttes-Chaumont



One of the view projects that I would continuously revisit while I am in Paris. This courtyard design is a mono-culture planting of two plant species but redefined what an urban forest meant to me spatial. It had me ask the question; how many trees are needed to plant a forest?

Designe & Dalnoky Courtyard







Reflection on Travel Experience:

The 3 months were quite overwhelming and hard to believe it has all past now. Something that has been told to me numerous times, those 3 months were a once in a life time experience. Everyone was correct, not sure I will ever gain such an experience again moving into my future and design career. A lot of doubt took place throughout the travel, questioning, did I do and achieve enough within the 3 months? **9 countries, 28 Cities, and 280+ projects** visited, I believe I did. While many of the projects were not shown in this travel report, each one will carry on into how I view and value design. Nearly **33,000 steps on average** each day, I got to quite a few places, thankfully not alone. I had a lot of support from either my professors or family, without them none of it would have been possible in the long run.

Reflection on Research:

Did the 3 months of travel help my graduate studies? In short, yes. Without traveling to the UK and Europe, I am not sure my research would be at the same point now. Visiting the different countries and seeing how landscape design and natural systems were valued, helped me better understand my role as a landscape architect. As a designer I am simply a mediator for both human and natural systems. I seek to understand how social-political policies can merge with natural processes and cycles. The value of biodiversity, spatially is changing and can be seen throughout each country. Bridging both systems is something that is taking place within Ireland and is the driving force behind my interests as a landscape architect. These interests can be seen within the questions I look to answer within my graduate studies.



How can the target of 18% forest cover address the Irish climate and biodiversity crisis?

What does “Irish Native Biodiversity” imply when designing for climate change?

How can 18% forest cover preserve or enhance the landscape qualities / characteristics while meeting the strategic goals of Ireland’s Forest Strategy?

