

## Amy Teh – Italy, December 2018

At the beginning of the Christmas holiday, I took part in a study trip to four Italian cities: Milan, Bologna, Urbino and Florence. Since our design project for the year is concerned with university spaces, the trip took us to many interesting educational buildings to help us reflect on the nature of learning and to inspire our projects in the forthcoming year. The architecture we saw ranged in period and scale, and also included several churches, houses, apartments and palaces.

In Milan we visited the recently completed School of Economics of the Bocconi University. Its concrete massiveness and large circulation spaces was a vastly different experience to the intimacy and extravagance of the Villa Necchi. I particularly enjoyed walking around the city's tree lined streets and visiting the Prada Fondazione.

In Bologna, the highlight was visiting the Basilica of Santo Stefano, which encompassed seven churches built over several hundred years. The resultant amalgamation is a beautiful combination of open and closed spaces, and particularly enjoyable brick details.

From Bologna we took a coach to Urbino for the day - a walled city set within hilly countryside. We first explored the Renaissance Palazzo Ducale, with its underground vaults, courtyards and window seats. From there, we visited the modern university buildings, designed by Giancarlo de Carlo – sensitive yet playful additions to the medieval city, also making the most of the beautiful surroundings with several outdoor terraces from which to enjoy the view.

In Florence, we were particularly inspired by the San Marco monastery and the individual cells which lined a cloister – each with a delicate fresco painted by Fra Angelico. They were somewhat like serene versions of the kind of rooms students live in.

Overall, it was an utterly fascinating trip, and my store of photographs and sketches will serve me well as I begin to design my own buildings. I am immensely grateful to Pembroke for their generous contribution toward this endeavour.