**Mid-term reflection |** Simon à Campo

**An entire franchise?**

Designing a whole franchise is an enormous task, something that can’t be completed in one semester. That’s why already form an early stage my stage-coach and I, decided to create a task list of everything that had to be done for the franchise. In here I gave priorities to certain tasks that are the most interesting for me to do during my internship. One day a week we sat together to see what I created and what the next step could be. This way of working turned out to be working great although a focus on one subject maybe stays to strong. Because every week I show what I did, I will get told how to further improve it. This doesn’t leave any room for tasks that I haven’t started on yet. That’s why I will have to see which tasks are developed enough for the franchise concept at this point, in order to have time for new tasks to be done. The clear focus on one subject in a week is something that works positive and I will continue to do.

After researching about franchise I also decided to stick to creating one awesome, innovative shop instead of thinking about the franchise as a whole. The idea of the franchise will be in the back of my head but it is now better to focus on creating a test shop that after a year can become a franchise.

**A lot to see!**

On day one of my internship we went to Brussel to see a lot of pastry and chocolatier shops even inside the production. The incredible level and care they have for this food in Belgian is so much higher than in the Netherlands. It set a good benchmark for me on how the shop and the products should look like.

But we didn’t stick to one trip, during the whole process we kept going to events. During the process this is a good way to validate your ideas. The first trip was an eye-opener and other trips where good to compare your ideas to the real world. For me it helped to understand how passionate people can be about their profession. They go to the extreme and the level is incredibly high as I saw at the MOF (Best French Pastry Competition). Comparing this to the design world I can see a lot of similarities and helps me understand what drives people.

During the rest of the semester I want to continue to go to events and trip in order to keep validating my process. In different stage of the progress you will encounter problems and it is good to see how others solved these problems.

**Improve skills**

*Food photography*

I dived into the world of Food Photography for this internship. Having access to perfect cakes that are the best subject to photograph, I took this opportunity to explore my camera. I read and completed the assignments in the book “Food Photography”. It started with an basic explanation of how camera’s work and its settings. I didn’t had this basic knowledge and rapidly improved my photography skills. Also it helped me to try different set ups and how important light is for your subject. For product photography it is roughly the same, the only this with products is that you don’t have to worry it loses freshness. I look differently now at pictures and when I receive and advertisement folder I try to analyse what the food-photographer did.

*Solid Works*

Finally after all those year at ID, I have a proper reason to use Solid works. I got into the basics and already in a few hours had the result I wanted. Of course I had a simple design but at least the threshold to create something in Solid works wouldn’t be so high the next time. In the second half of the semester I want learn more about Rhine, a different 3D modelling program. In this program you can make nice renderings of your model which can be very handy if my prototype isn’t finished yet as a physical object.

*Webshop*

Even before I started my internship, I did a lot of research about creating a webshop. Spending many hours on how I could adjust the design, I came to the conclusion it was going to a lot harder than I thought. At this moment I think it is better to think about the logistics that comes with having a webshop, rather than programming a webshop itself. This is because you have companies that turn your design in a template that can do it cheaper and faster already than I can do. However I did help me to better understand a more advanced way of programming which I can use in my own business.

**Books, books and books**

I love books as and resource of information and inspiration. Also for this project I bought the following books in order to help me with my process:

* *Franchise for dummies*

Although it sounds as a horrible book, it was a good start to get familiar with the world of franchise. The franchise-givers of the enormous company Wendy’s in America tells about the relationship between the franchise-take, franchise-giver and the customer. It thought me the pros and cons and pitfalls of having a franchise

* *Franchise, een uitdagend vak*

This book was more for the Dutch market and compares the American style to the Dutch. It gave me more cultural awareness of the Dutch market.

* *Food photography*

Already in the `Improve skills` part you can read the influence of this book on me

* *This is service design thinking*

Although this book describes a lot of techniques I´m already familiar with, it is a good book to check if I used the right techniques to come up with the service of the shop. It can fill the gaps of the theory I already know and is a good motivation to really use them in the project.

* *Understand Design*

As one of my PDP goals I want to read this book further in order to improve my reflections. That´s because this book is full of reflections on being a designer. Hopefully I will also get some tips or inspirations from my fellow designers.

**Talking with experts**

During several trips and visits I talked to numerous experts. I talked with multiple barista´s that know a crazy amount about coffee. This changed our idea to have 7 different coffee beans to only 3 because it´s not doable to remain a good quality of beans when you have too many choice. Talking with experts is a lot easier and faster than trying to find it by yourself. For me this remains a hard thing to do, because I like to figure things out by myself. Also on the Dutch Design Week a talked a while with the designer from the online 3D printing platform Shapeways. Here I learned how I should take the process of 3D printing a coffee cup into account for the shape of the cup.

Folie culinaire was a special exhibition only for the top of the gastronomy sector. Here I made contacts with coffe companies, porcelain companies, people who build driving shops about the franchise concept. Some new ideas popped up that we wanted in the shop such as a slow coffee machine. Talking to experts helped me to validate ideas and make sure what you are doing is too crazy or not unique enough.

I still want to talk and work together with FabLab Maastricht in order to 3D print my coffee cup. Also I want to lay contacts and ask quotations at companies to produce certain products of the franchise.

**Demo day**

At first, I was a bit nervous for the Demo Day because I was not sure if what I was doing fit the study. But it turned out that everybody loved what I was doing. My decision on working more on the cup design turned out to be a good one, because I got a lot of reactions and compliments. During the Demo day I talked to a lot of people about the cup and how to improve it. It turned out it was very hard to mass produce it because porcelain doesn´t like straight lines. When talking to a master student we came to the genius idea to make the straight part of wood. Already in the plate I used wood because I like to modern but traditional look it gives. Now implementing this idea also in the cup makes the concept more strong but also eases the production of it.

I also noticed that I had to make the shops concept stronger a more thought trough. With the book `This is service design thinking` I want to use different techniques to make it more stronger. Also I have to start doing User-test and co-creation sessions.

The coaches mainly talked about the tremendous amount of work I had to do. I don’t see this as a problem since it is not my goal to finish everything. The main goal is to learn from this experience and with the priority list I have I make sure I spend my time on the right tasks.

**PDP Goals**

Looking at my PDP Goals I’m doing pretty well. Where I still have to work on is exploring my visual identity further in the form of a portfolio. I want to make this portfolio in the Christmas vacation so I have time to focus on it. On the other goals I already reflected above.

**Influence on me as a designer (future job)**

During the semester I did a lot of research on what I can do or be after the bachelor. I searched for articles about what future jobs can occur. What I found was that your soft skills become more important (social, communication, leadership) instead of hard skills (programs, materials, technique).

I talked with Herman Meijer, a specialist in digital commerce about what I can do as a future job. He recommended starting at big awesome companies right away in order to get working experience. Because of him I found some business that do the same as I want to do. For example the company Fabrique that does creates brands, identities and interaction. Or Tinqwise, a e-learning company of which a followed a guest-lecture at the Design Academy about his vision on learning. I want to continue my search for my dream job or dream company where I want to work during the semester.

First I thought that I only found the marketing and digital part interesting and product design wasn’t something for me. Now that I started to really create a really simple product in the form of a coffee cup and a plate, I also notice I really enjoy doing it and can come up with some clever ideas.

I start to compare myself to professionals because it is possible that in less than one year I’m already part of the professionals as well. This increased the benchmark for myself as a designer and my deliverables and motivates me to present and work like a real professional to everyone. I always try to do the best job possible because you’ll never know who sees it.