

Olbia Workshop Report

Roma Architectural Visit

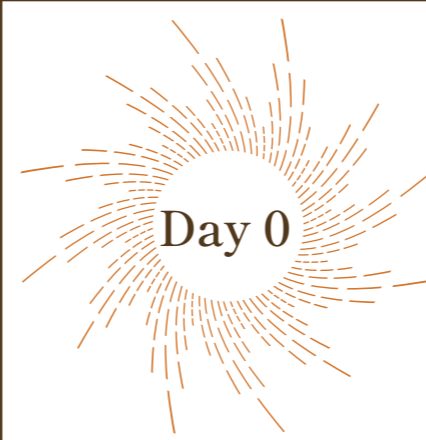
2025/8/25 – 8/28

Overview of the Architectural Field Trip

We participated in a workshop held in Sardinia, Italy, in August and September 2025. One week prior to the workshop, we conducted an architectural field trip. Six students, two faculty members, and one tutor from Kyushu University participated, visiting three cities: Rome, Florence, and Siena. Guided by Professor Hori, an architectural history expert, and Professor Aitani, an expert in overseas architecture, we gained a great deal of knowledge.

Rome Architectural Visit

We spent the first three days of the trip visiting architecture in Rome. Since Italian afternoons are scorching hot, our schedule consisted of Prof. Hori's architectural tour in the morning, free time (resting/siesta) until sunset, and Prof. Aitani's "Night Walk" in the evening. We stayed in the Vatican area for three nights and mainly toured historical buildings in Rome.

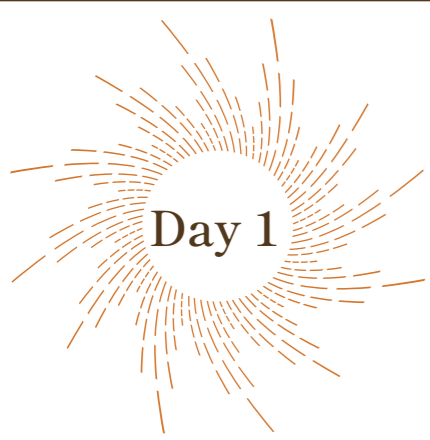


8/25 Departure

9:30 Depart Japan
19:00 Arrive in Rome

We arrived at our accommodation at night and went out for pizza together. My first authentic Italian pizza was huge, and it was a dinner that made me truly realize I had arrived in Italy. From our accommodation in the Vatican, where we stayed during the Rome visit, we could see St. Peter's Basilica. It was a moving sight every time we looked at it.





8/26 Rome Architectural Visit ①

8:30 Pantheon



On the morning of Day 1, we first visited the Pantheon. There is a hole in the center of the dome. Seeing that the Romans understood the structure would hold even with this opening—just as we learned in class—I felt their greatness. I heard that when it rains, the water entering through the hole is illuminated by light, creating a fantastical scene. I would love to see the Pantheon in the rain someday.

Prof. Hori's Quiz①

During the tour, Prof. Hori gave us several quizzes. The first one was inside the Pantheon.

- Q : Why are the square recesses (coffers) in the photo above shaped like that?
- A : If the recesses were made normally, their centers would look misaligned. By shifting the indentation, it makes the person inside feel as if they are standing in the true center of the dome.

9:30 Sant'Ivo alla Sapienza
(Borromini) Exterior only



Walking through the city, a distinctive spiral tower came into view. This is a masterpiece of Baroque architecture, famous for its Star of David plan. Although we couldn't enter the building, we were able to see the courtyard we had studied in class. Entering this courtyard

gave me a strange sensation of being enclosed while still being outside. Next time, I definitely want to go inside and experience the transition between interior and exterior. Also, according to Prof. Hori's guide, if you look at how the orders (columns)—a characteristic of Roman architecture—meet at the corners, you can feel the struggle of the architects. Focusing on these corner details, which differ for each building, might make viewing architecture even more enjoyable.

01 Intro
02 Day 0
03 Day 1
04 Day 2
05 Day 3
06 Summary

01 10:00 Palazzo Massimo
(Peruzzi) Exterior only



Next, we viewed the exterior of Palazzo Massimo. It features a curved facade that rises along the curving street. Here, Prof. Hori's second quiz was presented.

Prof. Hori's Quiz②

Q : Why is the right edge of the facade left slightly wider?

A : To make it appear centered and symmetrical when viewed from the orthogonal street opposite.

10:30 Palazzo Farnese
(Michelangelo) Exterior only



A few minutes walk later, Palazzo Farnese appeared. Facing the square and built with a volume larger than the surrounding buildings, it was impressive. Here, too, there was a quiz.

Prof. Hori's Quiz③

Q : What is amazing about the facade of Palazzo Farnese (bottom left photo)?

A : It harmonizes the part and the whole by matching the ratio of the eaves at each story with the eaves of the building as a whole.

10:30 Palazzo Caffarelli-Vidoni
(Raphael)



Walking a bit further, we found Palazzo Caffarelli-Vidoni. It is a palazzo with a single story layered on top of a two-story structure. This was also something we learned in class. I was surprised that such architectural works exist naturally within the city at such close distances—an experience unique to Rome.

Extra
—Drinkable Water—



Throughout Rome, there were water fountains like the one in the photo. I was skeptical about whether it was drinkable, but I was told that if the water is cold, it is safe. During the hot days, we walked around the city filling up on this water.

11:00 Piazza Navona & Santa Maria della Pace
(Cortona)



After that, we went to Piazza Navona. It is a very vast square containing a church with a facade designed by Borromini and a fountain sculpted by Bernini. These two masters of the Baroque meet in this square. Legend has it that Bernini's statue looks as if it is trying to protect itself, implying that Borromini's church might collapse on it.



12:00 Chiostro del Bramante



Next, we saw Bramante's Cloister. Inside, it was wrapped in floral art for an event, allowing us to experience a modern use of historical architecture. Even here, focusing on the corner column capitals reveals traces of design struggles (as seen in the photo), which is interesting.

13:00 Ara Pacis Museum



Lemon Shop

- Free Time -
14:00 Spanish Steps



15:00 Piazza del Popolo



15:30 Carbonara



During the afternoon free time, I first went shopping at a variety goods store recommended by Prof. Hori, then visited the Spanish Steps. After that, we ate gelato and sorbet at Piazza del Popolo. We had a late lunch of Carbonara at a restaurant recommended by Prof. Aitani. Apparently, Rome is the birthplace of Carbonara. Afterward, we nervously took the train together.

17:00 Parco della Musica (Auditorium)



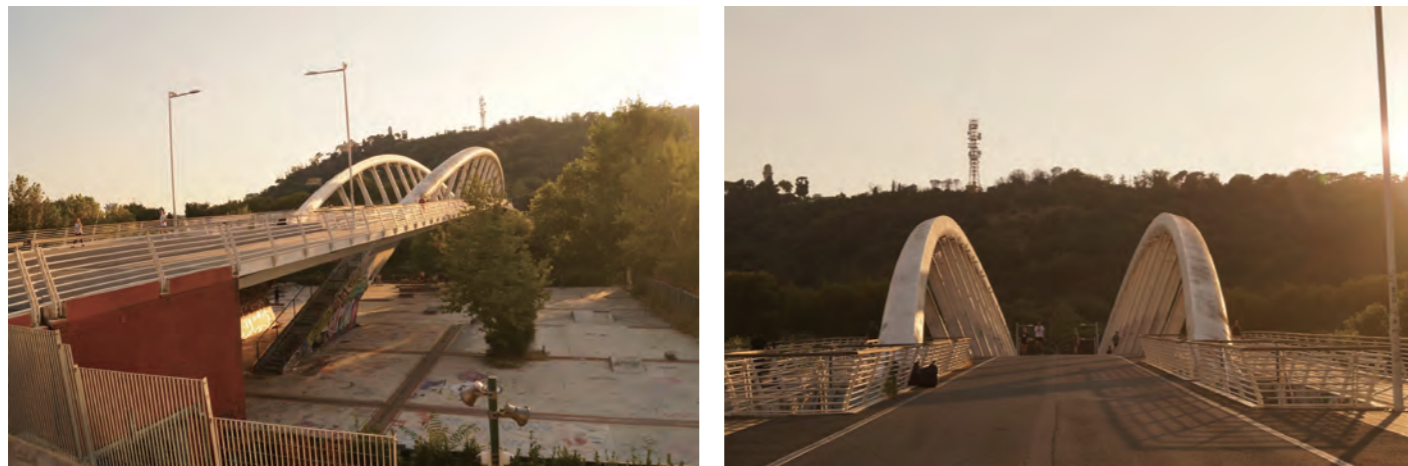
17:30 Palazzetto dello Sport



18:00 MAXXI: National Museum of 21st Century Arts (Zaha Hadid)



19:00 Ponte della Musica (Bridge)



After getting off the train, we walked around to see four buildings. Parco della Musica is a concert hall designed by Renzo Piano, Palazzetto dello Sport is a shell-structure gymnasium, and MAXXI is a museum designed by Zaha Hadid. I thought Rome was full of traditional buildings, but I was very satisfied to see modern architecture as well.

19:00~ Prof. Aitani's Night Walk : St. Peter's Square

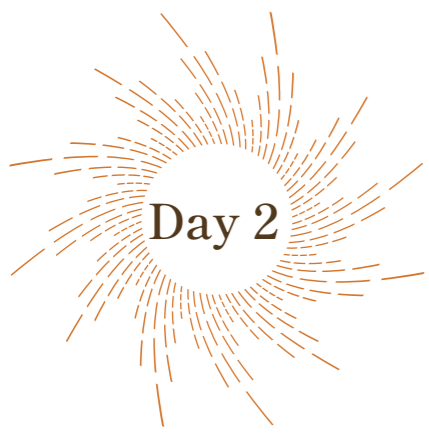


After sunset, we went on a night walk led by Prof. Aitani. We could always see St. Peter's Basilica from our hotel, but lit up at night, it was fantastical. Although it was the same city we walked during the day, the atmosphere at night felt different, and it seemed even

more crowded. Tables and chairs spilled out from restaurants onto the streets, with people enjoying dinner with wine. We could hear violins, cellos, and opera-like singing in the squares. I felt it was a wonderful city that makes you want to stop and listen.

Day 1 Summary

Day 1 was packed with historical architecture learned in class, sightseeing, and modern masterpieces. We walked more than expected and were exhausted. However, my friends secretly went to buy tiramisu and surprised me for my birthday. The cake shop was apparently closed, but the owner kindly opened it just for them. I was incredibly grateful for my friends who adventured in English in a strange land, and for the warm-hearted people of Rome.



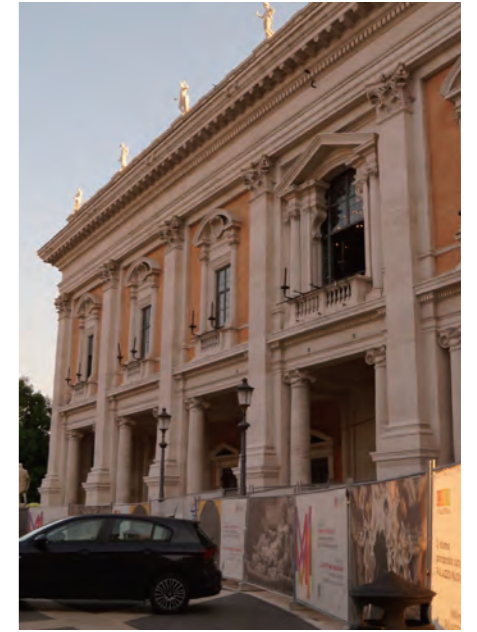
8/27 Rome Architectural Visit ②

6:30 Capitoline Hill



The morning of Day 2 started very early. To take photos of the empty Piazza del Campidoglio, we had our breakfast packed at the hotel and headed out. Piazza del Campidoglio was designed by Michelangelo and uses optical illusions. The square looks rectangular but is actually trapezoidal; the pattern that looks circular is actually oval. The terrain is also utilized. As you climb the slope toward the square, you can't see the opening clearly (bottom left photo), but as you ascend, you feel the space opening up (bottom right). Once inside, you get a sense of expanse (top right). Behind this area are ruins (top left photo), and we ate breakfast in a nearby park. Seeing ruins everywhere is a landscape unique to Rome. We also met a lovely couple taking wedding photos there.

Giant Order



At the Piazza, we saw Michelangelo's Giant Order. By adding large orders that match the proportion of the entire building, he unified the whole structure beautifully. I felt Michelangelo's genius.

8:00 Church of the Il Gesù



We walked a few minutes to Il Gesù. The interior space was impressive; the boundary between painting and sculpture seemed to blur, and the decoration made it difficult to tell where one ended and the other began. The ceiling fresco (top right photo) was a masterpiece.

8:30 Colosseum



Next, we went to the Colosseum. It is iconic enough to be recognized from afar, and I was amazed that ancient people completed such a massive structure. Since it is a famous tourist spot, there were many people. We showed our passports and went through security. We first entered the inner arena area (left photo). Viewing it from the inside allows you to truly realize the grandeur of the building. I felt it is definitely one of the "must-see" architectures in Rome.

11:00 Trajan's Market



Afterward, we visited Trajan's Market. Like the Colosseum, it uses many arches to create large spaces. We could see actual arches everywhere, making it an educational visit from a structural perspective as well.

We went to a pasta restaurant recommended by Prof. Hori. There were many Italian pasta dishes like Amatriciana, Cacio e Pepe, and Carbonara. I chose the Amatriciana (right photo). The combination of tomato sauce and rich cheese was delicious. We also ate gelato several times on Day 2!

12:00 Pasta



- Free Time -
 14:30 Tempietto



In the afternoon free time, we took a bus to the Tempietto. It is a building by Bramante featuring a dome on a circular plan. They allowed us into the "backyard" area, and the view from there is shown in the photo on the right. I was moved by the cityscape of Rome looking down from above, which is completely different from Japan.

16:00 Vatican Museums

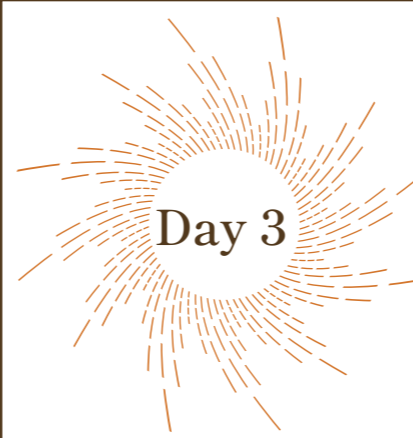


We ended Day 2 at the Vatican Museums. Since it takes about half a day to see everything, we focused on the areas we wanted to see most. The Last Judgment in the Sistine Chapel left the strongest impression.

Day 2 Summary

Day 2 was a day full of "star-class" architecture. It was a stimulating day seeing and entering buildings I had studied in class and for grad school entrance exams. Since the previous night was late and the morning was early, we rested early this day.

8/28 Rome Architectural Visit ③



10:00 San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane
 (Borromini)



Day 3 started with Borromini's San Carlo. I think this was the highlight of the day. It felt humble yet sophisticated, and I sensed his talent. Next, we saw Bernini's Sant'Andrea church nearby. In contrast to the former, this one was very glamorous with abundant decorations, conveying the use of financial power.

10:30 Sant'Andrea al Quirinale
 (Bernini)



I felt that the former heightens spirituality, while the latter displays power and splendor. By knowing the background and comparing them, I realized I could view them differently than if I knew nothing.

11:30 Trevi Fountain



While the professors rested in the park, we ran to the Trevi Fountain. Legend says if you throw one coin over your right shoulder, you will "return to Rome"; two coins mean "you will be with your loved one forever"; and three coins mean "you will break up with your lover." We each threw a coin and took photos.

13:00 Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore



While the professors were having lunch at a restaurant, we went to the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore. It was a huge cathedral. We heard that Bernini's tomb was here, so we all searched for it. The photo above is the tomb we found.



14:20 Depart Termini Station → 16:17 Florence

Day 3 Summary

Day 3 was the day we moved from Rome to Florence. While enjoying the last moments in Rome and feeling a bit sad to leave, we boarded the train with high expectations for Florence. I think we enjoyed Rome to the fullest.

Extra -Italian Pines-



The trees in Rome are completely different from those in Japan. The photo on the left shows Roman pines. At first, I wondered what kind of tree it was, but I was surprised to see pine needles when I looked closely.

Rome Summary

Rome was a wonderful city—not only for its magnificent architecture but also for its atmosphere, with music coming from nowhere, and its delicious food and drinks. It made me want to visit again. Although it is a tourist destination and I was worried about pickpockets, none of us encountered any trouble, and we enjoyed Rome safely. Above all, having Prof. Hori and Prof. Aitani with us provided so much knowledge, allowing us to see things completely differently than if we had come alone. I feel this was the greatest takeaway from the trip.