

June 28, 2011

California College of the Arts
Human Resources (Job #2029)
5212 Broadway
Oakland, CA 94618
employment@cca.edu

Dear Esteemed Search Committee,

I am honored to have been invited to apply for the position of Chair of Interior Design by Adjunct Professor Megan Werner. I hope that you will find my vision for the future of Interior Design and my qualifications and accomplishments, briefly summarized below, worthy of your consideration.

As you know, the profession of Interior Design is growing. The US Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that employment of interior designers is expected to grow 19 percent by 2018, faster than the average for all other occupations. Future interior designers will be asked to be conscious of sustainability, they will have to look at material applications and their environmental impact, integrate their designs with active and passive building systems that maximize operational energy consumption and savings. In accordance with these issues, I believe that now, and in the future, interior designers will benefit from knowledge of craftsmanship and manufacturing processes, particularly emerging manufacturing methods, because the scale of interior design allows for a close relationship between the design and fabrication of building components and furniture. Digital representation and analysis technologies will continue to improve and will allow young designers to lead the way in gaining greater insight into future interior conditions. As a growing profession, and as many people recognize the benefits of integrative design, I believe a masters degree for interior designers will become more common, especially in colleges and universities that focus on scholarly and research oriented activities.

The Chair of a leading interior design program must not only understand the future of Interior Design but also be able to project a distinct vision for the program. This means the Chair is responsible for developing a meaningful curriculum and organizing a faculty around it in service of a clear mission. I believe that a strong curriculum must be developed around a mission that is specific to the department, the college, the locale and the specific resources that make that place unique. In addition, a strong program must be comprised of: an educational foundation that focuses on skill building; that hands-on experience is vital; that connections to the community and context are important; that experimentation leads to innovation, students and faculty should be allowed to experiment in class and in course proposals; that faculty research should be incorporated into special and upper division classes, and I have a strong interest in seeing new technology continually introduced into the curriculum. I have arrived at this philosophy over the past nine years while teaching architecture and interior design courses at various institutions in the United States and while directing programs in both the Netherlands and Italy.

My experience includes teaching design studios, materials and methods seminars and digital media courses at several universities. I started teaching at Clemson University in 2003 as an Assistant Professor where I also served as Director of the Charles E. Daniel Center for Building Research and Urban Studies in Genova, Italy in 2006-2008. Since then I have taught at SCI-Arc, the University of Arizona, the University of California at Berkeley and the California College of the Arts. Currently, I am an Assistant Professor of Interior Design at San Jose State University.

At San Jose State University, I have worked to cultivate and expand the student's understanding of material through the lens of methodologies related to digital production. This is accomplished in part through my teaching and research, my co-authoring of the new curriculum that will meet CIDA requirements and my participation on the department's curriculum committee. The two classes I have developed at SJSU focus on materials. One class focuses on digital processes of production in the material realm in which students

design and fabricate full scale installations using CAD CAM technologies, such as 3D printing and laser cutting, in conjunction with more traditional material and production techniques such as metal casting, concrete casting and thermo forming. The second class encourages the digital exploration and representation of materials and material effects. Software rendering programs such as modo, vray and Maya used in the world of movie making, as well as architecture and interior design, are becoming increasingly accurate and easily allow the user to experiment with materials by adjusting specularity, reflectivity, fresnel, bump and amplitude, and textured materials. For interior designers these tools are invaluable as they allow us to not only understand the effects of materials on space and the effect light has on materials and space but they allow us to communicate them as well. At Clemson University, the California College of the Arts and the University of Arizona I was part of the foundation level faculty and I also taught Materials and Methods seminars and a material based seminar titled "Digital Poetics" which is a seminar devoted to the study of digital modeling and fabrication, materials and methods, and recycling, reusing and rethinking materials.

My research and scholarly work is situated within the field of digital materiality and in the exploration and invention of building components and interior architectural products using additive manufacturing techniques. In the past year Rael San Fratello Architects has become a key player and inventor in the world of 3D printing due to the materials that we are developing for printing – such as concrete polymers. Additionally we are beginning to develop collections of 3D printed products for interiors made of concrete, environmentally friendly poly-lactic acid and nylon at a range of scales from that of the room, and the walls within the room, to small objects for the interior.

Over the past few years I have won and placed in many design competitions and exhibited my work internationally. Most recently Rael San Fratello Architects won the Van Alen Institute's Life at the Speed of Rail design competition, the WPA 2.0 competition, the Sukkah City competition, second place in the Architectum International Architecture Competition MIAMI, and the Metropolis Magazine Next Gen award. My work has been on display at the 2010 Biennial of the Americas, Exit Art in NYC, the AIA in San Francisco, the National Building Museum in DC, the Design Biennale in South Korea and the Index Awards in Denmark among other places. Additionally the work of Rael San Fratello Architects has recently appeared in new books such as *Utopia Forever* and *Smart Surfaces* and publications such as Metropolis Magazine, DOMUS, the New York Times, Business Week and Fast Company.

There is an exciting world of materials, technologies and environmental challenges awaiting the Interior Designer and design student today. I would be extremely excited and honored to lead the Interior Design program as an administrator and educator invested in research and teaching into the future. I thank you in advance for your consideration of my application.

Sincerely,

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