# 2020 SCALE, SEATTLE Fob 21-23

SRB of ASID California Peninsula Chapter

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- As stated on ASID's website: "SCALE: The ASID National Student Summit is THE must-attend event of the year for interior design students who want to move ahead of the competition and toward a successful career."
- SCALE is DEFINITELY worth attending.
- The 2020 SCALE held in Seattle was amazing and mind-blowing. I have learned a great deal from peers and professionals and from both formal presentations as well as informal social activities. I also made new friends, setting up new professional connections throughout the U.S.





# What was offered at SCALE

#### SCHEDULE



- I arrived on Thursday night, so I was able to participate in all the events during the next three days.
- ASID had posted all the events on their website and through a 3<sup>rd</sup> party app AttendeeHub students and professionals were able to see each other's profiles and select the sessions that they wanted to attend. AttendeeHub was also able to generate personal schedules.
- Many presentations were scheduled concurrently. For this reason, students were advised to review the presentation outlines and presenter's profiles ahead of time to decide which sessions to attend. The objective was to help ensure a more relevant and fulfilling experience, as well help with better time management.
- There were multiple portfolio review sessions during the three days. It would have been even more useful to bring a portfolio to walk through with the professionals. Never-the-less, I found the portfolio review session a tremendous one-on-one communication opportunity for students to ask questions of professionals.

# Firm Tours

- LMN
- Big Fish Games
- CallisonRTKL
- Seattle central Library
- Perkins & Will
- The Collective
- ZGF
- Bullitt Center
- Pacific Place
- Amazon Headquarters
- |A
- DLR group

- I went to LMN tour on Friday morning.
- LMN is a local Seattle architectural firm: "Since its founding in 1979, LMN has dedicated its practice to the health and vitality of communities of all scales. Our staff covers a broad multi-disciplinary spectrum including Architecture, Interior Design, Urban Design, and Design Research, with project teams commonly comprising elements of each. It is well known for generous, enriching civic design in the public and private realms. LMN's projects are always different, but they share a common approach to how they work for people whether in a campus, city, neighborhood, or workplace, we all have a need to feel connected."
- The work of the firm itself is amazing; experiencing it first-hand was even more so. LMN prepared in-depth presentations for the attendees. They introduced 4–5 different projects of variable scales and they also described how the different teams of architects and interior designers work together. During the facility tour we were shown a variety of concept models, print-out of design processes, design library and photos of their fun activities.















# Firm Tour

- I wouldn't want to relocate to Seattle since I have family in San Jose. But firm tours do give new grads, who would consider moving to other cities, ideas about prospective firms they might consider joining to begin new and exciting professional journeys in different geographies.
- Even if you are not considering working in Seattle or another cityy, it is always good to build new connections, which might lead to future referrals or other opportunities.
- There were many students from across the US asking LMN designers to share their business cards and inquiring about their intern opportunities.

#### Career Fair

- I collected brochures and business cards from organizations that attended the career fair. I strengthened my connection with Davis Furniture because it is also a firm that I intern with.
- The career fair was very generic. I was a little bit disappointed in this regard. There were tons of students but a very limited number of firms and reps, so the conversations were generic too. It was hard to distinguish yourself from other designers to help the firm people remember you. Not surprisingly it wasn't the best scenario to ask for an internship or interviews.
- There was a photo booth set up to take professional photos for the students. But the line was huge.
- I also checked out the Demo lab, which was mostly vendors: Benjamin Moore, Sherwin Williams, Wilsonart, etc. to learn about new products.

The following organizations were at the career fair:

- Perkins & Will
- HDR
- HOK
- Studio O+A
- CallisonRTKL
- MCG Architects and Design
- Sherwin Williams
- Davis Furniture



l grabbed some design competition forms from vendors and filled out some product request forms.

# Portzolio Review

- I went through the Portfolio Competition winners' portfolios in depth. It was not only about pretty renderings. The best portfolios all demonstrated solid design knowledge and skills as the foundation, along with strong writing and story telling ability, as well as proficient model making and graphic design skills to illustrate the final work. The thirteen portfolio competition finalists not only submitted their portfolios, but also attended a whole day interview session with design firms to explain their work and present themselves. The top three winners were selected based on a combination of their portfolio and the interview result.
- For those who didn't make it into the finalists round of the competition, but were job ready and open to relocate, the portfolio review session was a good opportunity to present one's work and get exposure to future employers. Students were able to find the reviewers from the firms that they would like to work for, then book the review session to talk about themselves, their work and their goals. This opened the possibility for an employment opportunity or at least job a interview. I spoke to two professional designers, one from the DC area, and one from LA. I treated my time with them as a career consultation moment. I asked many questions about future career paths, their professional suggestions, and added their LinkedIn at the end of the conversation. It was super helpful and very inspiring.





Portfolio competition winner Mona Nahm shared her experience and portfolio with us.



My schedule during these three days

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**My Schedule** 

#### Presentations

- The presentations and discussions covered both commercial and residential design. ٠
- The main topics were about interview skills, the industry, design firm culture, sustainable ٠ design, and career paths. The presentation was intended to inspire aspiring designers, and to provide sufficient information to help junior designers successfully launch their careers and how to survive in a work environment.
- There were overlapping presentations, so my friends and I attended different sessions and later shared with each other the main ideas and our notes
- What follows are the ones that I really enjoyed. ullet



#### Saturday Keynotes: Pattern Recognition in Space Design

- "In the digital world, the recurrence of patterns is the basis for all kinds of predictive wizardry, from online movie recommendations to big city services and resource allocation. In workplace design, the same sort of patterning occurs at human speed and with far less data, but the results are often just as magical. 0+A's Primo Orpilla looks at how patterns inform every stage of design from the behavioral habits of clients in their workplace to the architectural symmetries that shape a new environment to the textures and materials that give it a deeper meaning. Reviewing projects from 0+A's three decades of practice, Orpilla unpacks another form of wizardry: predicting how space will help people work better." SCALE 2020 Keynote Introduction
- Primo Orpilla is the co-founder of Studio O+A, a multi-disciplinary San Francisco design firm that has changed the way we think about work and workplace. O+A's groundbreaking designs for Facebook, Microsoft, Yelp, Nike, McDonald's, Slack and many other companies have demonstrated the power of design to make the work environment a catalyst for creativity and a vehicle for change. Collaborating on innovative furniture designs, Primo has consistently expanded O+A's scope and reach. As Global Chair of Student Experience at IIDA, he works to promote design education and expand opportunities for young people in the profession. A frequent lecturer on design and the future of workplace, Primo speaks at schools and design conferences globally, empowering the next generation of designers. In 2016 O+A won the Cooper Hewitt Design Award for Interior Design. In 2017 FRAME Publishers released a comprehensive retrospective of the firm's work: Studio O+A: Twelve True Tales of Workplace Design.
- I asked him a question "As an owner of the firm, at the same time an interior designer, what do you think is the best, or say the most efficient way to work with architects?" and I earned a book with his signature.

# Panel discussion – What can you do with this degree?

- Obtaining your degree in interior design opens many doors to an exciting array of career paths-but which one is right for you? The panelists shared their stories of twists and turns in their career trajectories, and how they'd leveraged their degree for success. The three panelists were all involved with interior design: one was a design leader + realtor, one was a faculty leader, and one was an experiential magazine designer. Junior or senior, they all shared their experiences about the turning points in their careers, and how they decided which way to choose.
- The non-traditional design jobs may not lead to the traditional NICDQ path. They might not be considered as "real" design jobs for some, but as the world develops and as technology improves, many new positions that require unique combinations of skill sets will emerge and will open doors for many of us.

# Evaluating job offers/How to negotiate



- "Briana Guin is a recent graduate from Auburn University and a former finalist and winner of the ASID Student Portfolio Competition. She has always been a passionate advocate for design and is eager to contribute that same passion and enthusiasm into every aspect of her work. She began her career path as a junior designer at ICRAVE, an interior design firm whose emphasis is on storytelling through the medium of interior design. In her current role as an experiential designer at CNX, a Condé Nast division, her focus has broadened to encompass a wider role of design aspects and responsibilities. She aims to expand upon her spatial storytelling abilities and use them to connect to a broader audience using methods of interior design, graphic design, architecture, and experiential design. In doing so, her goal is to create moments and experiences that are beautiful, inclusive, personable and inspirational." – SCALE 2020 Presentation Introduction
- I joined her group to participate in the discussion about "how to negotiate an offer". She highlighted what to negotiate and what exactly is negotiable. I really appreciated her openness as a young designer. She shared her experiences and thoughts without any reservation. She used herself to demonstrate to all of us that in this small industry, people help each other to be stronger and move farther.

#### Power Presentation – The Winding Road: Building a modern career in design



- "The landscape of new career options can be confusing and overwhelming for design students and recent graduates- seemingly endless, or incredibly limited. The idea of a corporate 'ladder' that's ready to climb has never been the norm in design, and in today's marketplace, it can feel even more uncertain which steps to take. Never fear the ability to craft an amazing career is truly in your hands! In this session, Elizabeth Von Lehe shared her unusual career path that traced around the globe and ranged from product design to city master plans. She shared the steps and missteps that have framed her career and taught her invaluable lessons. From landing that first job to crafting a career full of meaning and inspiration, this session discussed the everyday practices and resources that every young designer can apply as they start out in the field." SCALE 2020 Keynote Introduction
- Elizabeth has taken an extremely busy route. She travels all over the world all the time and tries to maintain her relationships with people by randomly calling from her phone book on her way home, walking. I admired the dedication that she puts into her career, and I loved the story of how she transitioned from Target to the design field. However, everyone has his/her own pace. We can't copy each other by simply following someone else's path. We can get inspired by others, then follow our hearts, and find a way that fits us and keeps us going.

### Sunday Keynotes: Counter-intuitive skills

- "Caroline Robbie's aesthetic was formed by early exposure to how the built form and decorative arts affect one's quality of life from her artist mother and architect father. Now a registered Association of Registered Designers of Ontario (ARIDO), she aims to achieve solutions to design challenges using a wider lens and approaches her work through a perspective that is grounded in art, seeing the conceptual narrative first and foremost. As the head of the Interiors Group and as a principal at Quadrangle, she has delivered some of the studio's award-winning projects including Corus Entertainment, Deluxe Toronto and Hollywood, 60\_80 Atlantic Avenue, OCAD University's Sharp Centre for Design, Toronto's SkyDome/Rogers Centre, and multiple art projects at Artscape Daniels Launchpad." SCALE 2020 Keynote Introduction
- In the closing keynote, Caroline Robbie talked about why counter-intuitive skills are necessary to spark creativity. She spoke about how design skills are translatable and how developing the ability to see opportunity where others see obstacles helps you create your luck. It was fun to listen to Caroline to talk about design, her early childhood experience with her architect dad, and how her perception of the color yellow was ruined on a trip.
- Finally, I felt that it was not only the design experience that the professionals shared that was precious, but also their attitudes about life, their sense of humor, and their calming manner were the components that inspired me and encouraged me the most.





### Leadership Training

- I was selected as one of three "Volunteer of the Year" Finalists. Although I didn't win, I appreciated the nomination from our school chapter and the recognition from ASID.
- There were many student leaders from different schools nationally who attended the three-hour leadership training session. We had discussions about the activities and events that might be organized for students in the future. We also had fun activities to gain a sense of open mindedness and collaboration.

#### Leadership training

- Rosemarie Abraham, who is the Associate for Community Engagement from ASID Headquarters, interviewed Amy Bissel, the President of Tidewater Community College Interior Design Club, Winner of Student Volunteer of the Year, and me. We shared our thoughts about being a student leader and how we perceived 2020 SCALE.
- From the leadership training session, I felt that our ASID Peninsula chapter was doing a great job. While some other SRBs (student representative onboard) complained about lacking communication or clear directions, I was proud to say that we have clear structure and instructions through-out the entire chapter. Students are very much involved in multiple activities and actively connect with professionals through various events.



Left to right: Amy, Rosemarie, and me

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- There were many students from 4-year university programs. Their programs focused mainly on commercial design. They also had had intense and thorough training on different BIM software as well as Adobe tools. Their portfolios were composed of multiple well-organized projects and procedures. All the portfolio competition winners were from this group of students.
- There were also many mature students from community colleges for most of whom Interior design was a second career. The advantages this group had were their transferrable skills from other industries: people skills, organizing skills, and a wide range of knowledge about society and the industry as a whole.
- Interior Design is a profession with many different types of jobs. Everyone can fit in best by developing their strengths and interests. Continuing to learn and improve professional skills, to be sincere, and build connections will definitely help us not only survive but thrive in this field.



# Apter Hours Fun

The schedule of 2020 SCALE overlapped with the beginning of the COVID–19 pandemic. Since I had been to Seattle before, I tried to stay in the hotel and minimize contact with the public. The restaurant in the Motif hotel had a menu that catered to a variety of dietary requirements. There were five of us from West Valley College attending this event; it was nice to get to know each other better.

I am looking forward to attending the 2021 SCALE in DC. Will you join me?