

Chiara Clarke Siravo

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Female | 07/05/1987 | Italy and United States of America

Archives and Database Expert for Matera 2019

JOB APPLIED FOR POSITION PERSONAL STATEMENT

I am a design historian, curator and researcher. I hold a degree in History from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) and an MA in the History of Design from the RCA and V&A. My research around the Design of Hell led to the publication of an essay in the book Pictures of Hell by American photographer, Mark Ruwedel. Other published work includes a piece about Archizoom's 1973 dressing design system, Dressing is Easy and an essay on the powers of ingestion in the Middle Ages. I was Editor of The Towner and a member of the design and architecture research studio, Space Caviar and was recently fellow at the Center for Contemporary Art (CCA) Kitakyushu, Japan. Other recent projects include Producer for IdeasCity at the New Museum in New York. My multidisciplinary background has helped me to develop a variety of skills, both practical and theoretical as well as a versatility that has allowed me to work efficiently at different levels and in unfamiliar contexts. I thrive when working *in movement* and solving problems, big and small. Joining the Matera 2019 team, I believe is a perfect match for both my skills and my interests. I am confident that I would bring a fresh approach to the project.

WORK EXPERIENCE

May – October 2017

Producer and Researcher

IdeasCity, New Museum, New York, USA

- IdeasCity is the New Museum's initiative that explores the role of art and culture beyond the walls of the museum, through a five-day residency program (40 fellows), publications and a public conference. I joined the team as producer and researcher contributing to the organisation of the residency and public conference in Arles, France in May 2017 and the public conference in the Sara D. Roosevelt Park in New York in September 2017 (5k visitors). Responsibilities include:
 - Research for the content of both the residency and conferences in Arles and New York.
 - Working with designers, fabricators, sourcing and managing a part time assembly team, to build pop up structures overnight in a public park to host the conference.
 - Working with and managing IdeasCity team members.
 - Editing academic essays published in collaboration with IdeasCity and eflux.
 - Overseeing creation of IdeasCity editorial content, its website and social media.
 - Liaising with partner organisations in France and USA.

Business or sector Art and Culture/Museums

December 2016 – April 2017 **Research Fellow**

Center for Contemporary Art Kitakyushu (CCA), Kitakyushu, Japan

- The CCA in Kitakyushu is an international platform and research centre dedicated to contemporary art in the south of Japan. In addition to a rotating exhibition program, yearly conference and active publishing house, the CCA has been running a fellowship program for artists, architects, designers and curators for almost 20 years. I was invited to be one of five fellows for the CCA Fellowship Program to re-open my research into the 'Design of Hell'. I focused on transforming my research into short essays with a strong visual element with the aim of building an atlas of the underworld. Each essay is one page long and can live on its own or within the atlas. The fellowship culminated in a publication and exhibition. More details and pictures can be found on my website: www.chiarasiravo.com

Business or sector Art and Culture/Museums

April – December 2016 **Managing Editor**

The Towner, Milan, Italy

- The Towner is an online magazine in English and Italian about the city baked by Moleskine. I was hired to initiate the english language edition of the magazine within a small team based in Milan. The Towner published personal essays, historical essays, journalistic investigations, humour, art, architecture and culture essays as well as interviews all revolving around the city. We published one article each day and one long-form article each week. I learned how to edit and publish in a fast paced environment balancing the thematic and geographic coverage of the magazine and budget.

Responsibilities included:

- managing other editors on the team.
- sourcing writers and liaising with them.
- visual editor.
- liaising with illustrators.
- reporting back to the editor in chief.
- writing essays for the magazine.
- Administration tasks and budgeting.
- Translation from Italian to English.

Business or sector Art and Culture/Publishing

December 2014 – March 2016 **Researcher**

Space Caviar, Genoa, Italy

- Space Caviar is an architecture and research studio operating at the intersection of design, technology, politics and the public realm. Founded by Joseph Grima and Tamar Shafir, the office uses built work, exhibitions, publishing, writing and film to investigate and document contemporary modes of habitation and the spatialisation of social and political practice.

Responsibilities included:

- Research for IdeasCity, New Museum.
- Research, materials and production for the creation of the RAM House, a dwelling prototype that explores the home's response to a new definition of privacy in the age of sentient appliances and signal based communication.
- I was in charge of sourcing funding for Space Caviar projects.
- As the sole historian in the studio, I regularly contributed research, both visual and text based for the various projects that were in course: Chicago Architecture Biennial 2015, Blockchain (film), Palazzo Clerici-Salone del Mobile.

Business or sector Art and Culture/Museums

January – May 2014 **Curatorial Intern**

Museum of Arts and Design, New York, USA

- I was the curatorial intern at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York where I responded directly to the director of the museum, Glenn Adamson.

Responsibilities included:

- Research for the MAD Biennial which included the work of New York based artists, furniture designers, fashion designers, individuals working at the intersection of new technologies, materials and design.
- Research for future exhibitions with a focus on materials and fabrication.
- Practical activities included finding sourcing book and website designers for individual projects, drafting official letters and reaching out by phone and email to curators and artists.

Business or sector Art and Culture/Museums

2013 – 2014 **Freelance Representative for Special Editions**

Cahiers D'Art, Paris, New York, London.

- Cahiers D'Art is a Paris based gallery and publishing house founded by Christian Zervos in the 1930s. In 2013 they published a second edition of the Picasso Catalogue Raisonné in English and French and I was hired to promote the book in the United States and later in the UK at art fairs and auction houses.

Responsibilities included:

- I single handedly set up and ran a booth for Cahiers D'Art at the Bass Art Museum in Miami in December 2013.
- This job taught me to leave my comfort zone and leave the space of the researcher to enter that of producer and promoter within the realm of art and publishing.
- I initiated and closed the sale of 15 Zervos sets, priced each at \$15,000.

Business or sector Art and Culture/Publishing

September 2012 – October 2013 **Assistant Director**

Helly Nahmad Gallery, New York, USA

- The Helly Nahmad Gallery in New York hold a ample collection of 20th century masters including Picasso, Miro', Fontana and De Chirico.
- Responsibilities included:
- I took care of the day-to-day operations of the gallery, administration, managing and updating the gallery database which included over 5,000 works.
 - Maintained relationships with artist foundations and institutions that borrowed work from the Nahmad Collection. These include the Calder Foundation, The Beyeler Foundation, several private galleries and the big auction houses.
- I researched and wrote descriptions of different works for the gallery as well as press releases.
- I helped set up and staff the gallery's booths at major art fairs, Art Basel in Miami liaising with architects & art handlers.
 - This included preparations before the fairs (applications, architectural plans for the booth) as well as managing during fairs.
 - I assisted with preparation of the Sterling Ruby Show at Nahmad Contemporary in May and the Richard Prince show in November 2013.

Business or sector Art and Culture/Gallery

September – December 2008

Curatorial Intern

International Center of Photography (ICP), New York, USA

- I spent three months working in the Robert Capa Archive at ICP. Here I learned how to handle objects in the archive, how to catalogue and how to think about the archive from a conceptual point of view. Although this was a long time ago, it still stands as one of the most important formative experiences of my career.

Business or sector Art and Culture/Museums**EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

September 2010 – July 2012

MA History of Design

Royal College of Art (RCA) and Victoria & Albert Museum (VAM), London, UK

- I joined the RCA/ V&A History of Design MA with a focus on the 20th c. and later shifted to the early modern period.
- Research topics included: wax as a material of representation; perceptions of animals in the early modern period through an analysis of objects made from animal materials or representations of animals; history of perception.
- I carried out archival research in Naples and Calabria.
- Dissertation- The Material Culture of Hell: Shaping a Parallel World, Italy 1500-1700. I looked at changing perceptions of hell and the underworld in early modern Italy through an analysis of how a non-material and invisible world was made material through objects, literature and scientific discovery.
- Awards: Gillian Naylor Award for best essay, 2011.

September 2005 – July 2008

BA History

School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London, UK

- I focused on twentieth-century history of Africa and the Middle East with an emphasis on cultural and visual history.
- I wrote two dissertations:
- Black Victorians: 'Anglomaniacs' and Nationalists on the Gold Coast 1850 -1930. In this research I looked at the complex role of garments in the making of Gold Coast society and later as actors in the Ghanaian nationalist movement.
- Images of Bamako: Image Histories and Myths from Colonialism to the Post-Independence Era. I Focused on the role of the camera and of photography in the history of Bamako, Mali. The essay traced the use of photography as a colonial weapon power and its subsequent appropriation by Malians before and after independence. I spent 1 month in Bamako where I interviewed photographers and spent time in the national archive gathering photographs commissioned by the socialist government that led the country after independence.

PERSONAL SKILLS

Mother tongues English and Italian

Other language

	UNDERSTANDING		SPEAKING		WRITING
	Listening	Reading	Spoken interaction	Spoken production	
French	B1	B1	B1	B1	B1

Communication skills

- Italian to English translation and *vice versa*: I was employed by Vice Magazine, Eutopia, The Towner amongst others as a translator for cultural essays.
- I have experience with public speaking as a result of speaking on the radio (see below) and public presentations at universities (see below).
- I am a proficient writer and editor.
- I thrive in teamwork environments and value, enjoy and conduce toward the exchange of ideas and collaborative work (all my work experiences had involved working efficiently as a team and I am often the initiator of collaboration.)

Organisational / managerial skills

- leadership (responsible for a team of 10 people in my role as producer at IdeasCity, I was responsible for editors and interns at The Towner).
- I am organized and efficient and able to think about several things at once in order to focus on details whilst never losing sight of a birds-eye view over tasks and projects. I have developed this skill throughout my work experiences and in particular as producer of IdeasCity.
- I am able to carry out independent projects and self-organize. (While I was at the CCA in Japan, I worked independently over 4 months to produce the material for an exhibition and a publication. I also developed these skills as a student of the humanities, which involved independent research and writing.)
- I am extremely detail oriented (research and production harvest these skills in different ways).

Job-related skills

- Proficient with archival research, archival methods and database systems (at the International Center of Photography I worked in the archive organizing and handling rare objects, at the Helly Nahmad Gallery I worked with a database of over 5,000 works, as a student at the V&A I had to learn how the museum's CSM archival system worked).
- Experience with working in parallel with different organizations and experts (Helly Nahmad Gallery, MAD Museum, Space Caviar, New Museum).
- Experience in organizing conferences and events (Space Caviar and New Museum).
- Experience with designing and delivering printed material (Space Caviar, The Towner, CCA Kitakyushu Fellowship).
- Experience with publishing online: editing and wordpress (The Towner, IdeasCity).

Digital competence

SELF-ASSESSMENT				
Information processing	Communication	Content creation	Safety	Problem solving
Proficient	Proficient	Proficient	Proficient	Proficient

- Good command of office suite (word processor, spread sheet, presentation software) gained at university and through working.
- good command of editorial tools such as InDesign and Adobe gained through working in the art and culture fields.

Other skills Experience with construction sites for temporary events and basic knowledge of power tools (Space Caviar, New Museum).
Sewing (personal pursuit).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Publications 'Extracts from Hell', in CCA Fellowship 2016-2017 Book, 2017
'Italy & Italy', Alla Carta, issue 10, 2017
'What Kind of City is Hell?', in The Towner 2016
'Naming America', in The Towner 2016
'Highways', in STEALTH, issue 2, 2016
'Dressing is Easy', in Riot of Perfume, issue 6 2015
'Geographies of Hell' in Mark Ruwedel, Pictures of Hell, Alaska Editions & RAM Publications, 2014
'On the History of the Humors, Hunting and Ingesting Symbolic Foods: Are we what we eat?' in Alla Carta, issue 5, 2014
'The Design of Hell', in ARC, issue 16, 2012

Commercial Writing:

-Writer and consultant for PRISCAVera, NYC based fashion label
-Introduction, Woolrich F/W 2016 Catalogue
-Interview with Tom Dixon for Pirelli World, Issue 2, 2016
-Writer for Atelier VM, Milan based jewelry brand

Projects CCA Fellowship Exhibition, CCA Kitakyushu, Japan 2017

Seminars 'The Geography of Hell', guest lecture in Joseph Grima's course on Subterranean Architecture at University of Genoa, Architecture Department 2015

Honours and awards Gillian Naylor Award for best essay, V&A/RCA, 2011

ANNEXES

- 1) Degrees
- 2) Portfolio of selected publications.

Testimonial of employment or work placements can be provided upon request.

Chiara C. Siravo

