

2007/08 Worldstudio AIGA Scholarships New York Design Center Award



MATTHIAS SLAVENS

Architecture
Sophomore
The Pratt Institute

The moment I learned to read and write marked the beginning of an ambition that led me around a world in which I have gathered a plethora of experiences and impressions.

Saving every paycheck I earned while in high school I managed to arrange several trips to Europe, and around North America. In my explorations, I found architecture to be my biggest influence and passion for going on these trips. Even as a child I showed high interest in structure, and aesthetics.

I started in a small high school in Chugiak, Alaska taking whatever architecture related classes I could seek out. Unfortunately only Computer Drafting was available due to limited budgeting in the arts community. I took so much of the class and redefined many of the assignments according to my own creative vision. I did this to the point where I was offered college credit for my work.

I applied to several Universities after high school and, when accepted, had the powerful realization my family would not be able to support me in a lot of my avenues. This was primarily due to lack of financial stability, my father's incarceration for drug possession and armed robbery, as well as my mother's lack of financial and emotional support due to my sexual orientation.



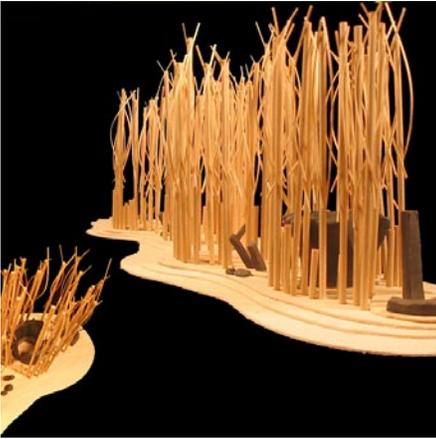
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MATTHIAS SLAVENS

Architecture



I decided to try to continue my architectural curiosities at the local university where tuition costs were lower for in state students. I took Construction Management, the closest major that would give me the opportunity to learn architectural techniques. I found that Construction Management had absolutely nothing to do with True architecture.

Maintaining high grades I transferred to Portland State University. Even though the Architecture program was not accredited I learned so many valuable things. I consider my time at Portland State a time of immense growth and maturity.

Keeping almost straight A's in all of my architectural courses while building a solid portfolio allowed me to start exploring the possibilities of transferring to a liberal arts school where the philosophy and environment would be more conducive to creativity and inspiration. I applied to Pratt Institutes School of Architecture. I read Pratt's philosophy and recognized it to be exactly what I was looking for. It embodies what I consider to be a true architecture education in every way, shape, and form.



I knew my acceptance into Pratt Institute, which has one of the foremost schools of architecture in the country, was only the first step in a sequence of expectations I have for my future and myself. Given my families financial hardship and abusive home situation throughout my childhood and my ability to support myself throughout my adolescence gives me reason to believe I have the endurance and motivation needed to be an excellent candidate for this scholarship.

If I were given this scholarship I would use the funds to pay the high tuition, housing, book, supplies, and software needed in order for my architectural studies to be fulfilled. Although New York is an excellent laboratory for a student with my potential and expectations it has one of the highest costs of living in the country. Without this scholarship my ability to pursue these passions would be seemingly impossible.

I would value more than anything in the world to have those same opportunities afforded to me as other students who have won this award before in past years.

I am a goal oriented, hardworking, and an ambitious student in dire financial need and I would greatly appreciate consideration for this scholarship to aid my studies and continue working towards my future as a young professional.