

Jacob Schoeneck

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Why I Wish to Study in Rome

I personally chose to study and intern in Rome because being the son of a working class family, I have never had the privilege of leaving the Midwest and seeing a world that wasn't as flat as the horizon. I would be the first person in my extended family to ever leave the U.S. and it would be in pursuit of the kind of skills and experiences that I'll want to carry with me for the rest of my life. Above all, I'm most passionate about earning a meaningful life for myself full of diverse cultural experiences - something that I believe benefits not only my personal character, but also the design process as well. One of my favorite professors in the BDA program, Todd Rhoades, told us that design works by virtue of bringing together disparate experiences and ideas into one solution. The further you can expand that periphery of thought he said, the further you can reach out, empathize, and collaborate with ideas that overlap other people's experiences. I feel that because of my background I often struggle to relate with other designers who recount the beautiful places, things, and people they've seen overseas. I don't know what it is like to work in an office or firm environment and that kind of cultural capital is something I ardently desire to understand for myself.

A major career goal fulfilled by this workshop is the opportunity to intern in an Italian firm and to gain beginning experience working in both a professional and international context. Professional jobs have long somewhat intimidated me because it is a work environment entirely foreign to anything I've known. Growing up I worked with my dad as a carpenter, but never

have I worked in a place where work was done professionally and with the creative sweat of my mind. An internship would be an opportunity for me to break out of the blue-collar world and to get my foot in the door where my creative aspirations lie. The common thread of my motivation to study abroad is to experience all that is strange and new and exciting so that I might be inspired and to carry that inspiration with me for the rest of my life. I believe intellectual learning must be fresh and challenging, and ultimately I can't think of a better way to pursue that than through an international experience that drops me into a novel setting both culturally and professionally.