CRAIG SEAN PALACIOS
September 21, 2017

AIA Nevada Service Awards
401 S. 4th Street, Suite 175
Las Vegas, NV 89101

Dear AIA Nevada Awards Committee,

I am both pleased and honored to support the nomination of Craig Palacios, AIA for the AIA Nevada Young Architect Award. Craig’s commitment to the profession, to his community and to his chapter of the AIA is exemplary. Craig is an advocate and mentor for young professionals and has served on the Executive Committee for Emerging Professionals. In addition to his exceptional talents as a designer, he is half of the dynamic partnership known as Bunnysfish studio. Since the inception of that partnership Craig has been a critical and creative voice for the sustainable redevelopment of downtown Las Vegas.

Craig is recognized by architecture students as a strong mentor who encourages their development and growth. He is a faculty member at the UNLV School of Architecture and the Howard Hughes School of Engineering. He has become a sought after juror for project critiques in the architecture school and the college of engineering; thereby, providing a creative linkage between the two programs. His experience in architecture and engineering provides complementary influence to students within both programs.

Craig’s knowledge and dedication to building a better, more sustainable Las Vegas is evident in his commitment to his community. He has been involved in a majority of high profile renovations and redevelopment projects in the cities of Las Vegas and North Las Vegas. He has built a reputation as a community-builder in the public and private sector. Through his design ability and leadership he has been a driving force in the reshaping of the downtown Fremont area into a dynamic and vibrant part of the community.

I believe Craig exemplifies the finest attributes of a young AIA architect, and for these reasons deserves to be recognized with the 2017 AIA Young Architect Award.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Eric M Roberts, AIA
Craig Sean Palacios received an Associate’s Degree with an emphasis in studio art from Seattle Central, dual undergraduate degrees in Art History and Architecture, and a Master of Architecture from the University of Nevada Las Vegas. During his time at UNLV, he developed a passion for designing in the unique city of Las Vegas and also met his future business partner Tina Wichmann. The duo fell in love with designing together. ‘It became harder and harder to distinguish whose project was whose, we collaborated on everything. The combined effort always developed into something new that was never expected.’ Craig Palacios.

After university, Craig joined YWS Architects where he spearheaded a sustainability program that resulted in a LEED Silver Headquarters Building. He ultimately worked with YWS to open a South East Asia office. During the years at YWS, Craig worked on major hotel casino projects such as Fontainebleau Las Vegas, Echelon, and City Center, as well as projects in Bratislava, Philippines, UK and Dubai. Craig has worked with Chefs Alan Yau, Nobu, Jose Garces, and Todd English. After gaining valuable work experience, Craig went on to team up with his former UNLV design partner, Tina Wichmann, to create a small collaborative studio called Bunnyfish Studio. Located in the heart of downtown Las Vegas, Bunnyfish Studio focuses on making a high impact in the downtown community.

Between 2011 and today Craig and Bunnyfish Studio have worked with Tony Hsieh and the Downtown Project to create several signature catalyst projects which sparked a substantial investment in the community. Today Craig and Bunnyfish Studio are working with several developers who are continuing to develop the emerging downtown community with more density, amenities and needed multifamily housing.

Along with oversight and management, Craig spearheads project development (the time between when a potential project is identified until it goes into production), sustainability, and staff development at Bunnyfish Studio. Craig and Bunnyfish Studio have completed over 150 projects since Bunnyfish Studio started in 2011.

Craig is not only a practitioner but he also gives back to the architecture community by being involved in academia. Craig is an adjunct professor at the School of Architecture and the Howard Hughes School of Engineering. Craig gives guest lecturers, and participate in critiques at the UNLV School of Architecture.
Achievements

- AIAS Secretary/Treasurer 2002
- AIAS President 2003
- Attended Grass Roots 2003
- Hosted AIAS Western Mountain Region 2003
- Project of the Year 6th Year Architecture School - TESU (Temporary Emergency Shelter Unit)
- Graduate Assistantship - First Year Architecture Studio Instructor
- AIA Executive Board - Director of Emerging Professionals 2010-2011
- Presenter HD Expo (Green Day) 2011
- Authored, ‘Sustainability for Civil Engineers,’ + co-taught course Howard Hughes School of Engineering 2010
- Licensure + Professional Practice January 2011
- Presenter Themed Entertainment Association Conference 2013
- Las Vegas Mayor’s Urban Design Awards (MUDA) Historic Preservation and Adaptive Reuse - Inspire Mixed Use Project 2014
- Las Vegas Mayor’s Urban Design Awards (MUDA) Buildings and Environments - John E. Carson Mixed Use Project 2014
- Las Vegas Business Press - Green Award 2014
- Hospy Award Best Theatrical Experience - Inspire Mixed Use Project 2014
- American Institute of Architects, Nevada FIRM OF THE YEAR 2015
- Las Vegas Historic Preservation Committee Award Excellence in Historic Preservation - John E. Carson 2015
- Las Vegas Mayor’s Urban Design Award (MUDA) Buildings and Environment - The Pioneer Mutli-family Housing 2015
- Presenter Neon Museum - “Motor Court Magic: Mid-Century Architecture and the Roadside Motel” 2015
- Advisory Committee - Global Food and Beverage Association 2016
Articles

- AIA - Architecture Las Vegas Magazine – Next Generation Spring 2016 Issue
- AIA - Las Vegas Forum Spotlight Member - February -  
- Cool Spaces: The Best of new architecture - New Sizzle Reel (http://www.cool-spaces.tv/)
- The Chaise Lounge Pod Cast # 104 What’s a Bunnyfish  
  (https://audioboom.com/posts/5461234-104-what-s-a-bunnyfish)
- Vegasseven - The Bunnyfish That Ate Downtown (http://vegasseven.com/2014/08/20/bunnyfish-that-ate-downtown/)
- Las Vegas Sun - Vegas INC - Firm helps guide Las Vegas with adaptive architecture  
  (https://vegasinc.lasvegassun.com/business/2014/sep/14/firms-helps-guide-las-vegas-adaptive-architecture/)
- Las Vegas Review-Journal – Bunnyfish Studio’s name reflects its philosophy, green objectives  
- Las Vegas Informer: Craig Palacios: Green Architect  
  (http://lasvegas.informermg.com/2011/08/06/craig-palacios-green-architect/)
- David Magazine – Local Architects Have Designs for Downtown  
  (https://issuu.com/davidmagazine/docs/april_2014)
- Nevada Business Press - BUNNYFISH Studio Expands, Opens New Headquarters at Downtown Las Vegas’ John E. Carson  
- Las Vegas Citylife: Let’s talk-A new gallery is hoping to start a conversation about Las Vegas architecture -- involving you  
  (http://archives.lasvegascitylife.com/articles/2012/05/24/ae/art_iq_53740608.txt)
- Las Vegas Weekly - BUNNYFISH STUDIO S HELPED REVITALIZE FREMONT STREET AND WANTS TO DO THE SAME FOR NORTH LAS VEGAS  
- Seattle Magazine – Go Mad for 7 Midcentury Modern Homes  
  (http://www.seattlemag.com/article/go-mad-7-midcentury-modern-homes)
- Las Vegas Business Press – Maintaining Flavor  
  (https://businesspress.vegas/economy/small-business/maintaining-flavor/)
CRAIG SEAN PALACIOS

Articles

- DTTLV.com - How is Bunnyfish Studio Involved with Rock in Rio USA? (http://dtlv.com/2015/03/18/bunnyfish-studio-rock-in-rio-usa/)
- John Curtis is Eating Las Vegas: Hold Onto your Fedoras: Eat is Now Open! (http://www.eatinglv.com/2012/09/hold-on-to-your-fedoras-eat-is-open/)
- Vegas Chatter: Was Fremont Studios The Dream Plan For Neonopolis? (http://www.vegaschatter.com/tag/Craig%20Sean%20Palacios)
- Las Vegas Citylife: Let’s talk-A new gallery is hoping to start a conversation about Las Vegas architecture -- involving you (http://archives.lasvegascitylife.com/articles/2012/05/24/ae/art_iq_53740608.txt)
- Cornell Real Estate Review - Betting Against the House: Redeveloping a Former Casino in Reno, Nevada (http://scholarship.sha.cornell.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1149&context=creer)
CRAIG SEAN PALACIOS

Design Work

- Inspire Theater
- North Las Vegas Core Masterplan
- Maryland Parkway Art Masterplan
- Reno Renaissance Hotel Renovation
- The Pioneer Studios
Inspire Theater

Inspire Theater is a multitude of programmatic elements, all with the focus on discovery – intellectual and through the built form.

Located on the corner of Las Vegas Boulevard and Fremont Street, arguably one of the most important corners in Las Vegas, the Inspire Theater is an adaptive reuse of a cast-in-place concrete building that was constructed in 1955. Along with the gorgeous concrete structure, the space hosts soaring wood bow-trusses and a tongue and groove wood ceiling – preserved elements that formed the inspiration for the design.

The heart of the project is a 150-seat theater created primarily for a speaker’s series, but designed to accommodate a wide range of performance types. A bar and lounge is connected to the theater by glass doors, which can be opened to allow visual and auditory flow between the two spaces. An espresso bar and worldly newsstand line the front along Fremont and Las Vegas Boulevard, forming the entry sequence into this collaborative venue.

The second floor has a small glass conference room, exterior deck, and ample work space with seating that ranges from sofas to recliners. From the outside of the building, one might notice an intimate bar in a glass box cantilevered above Fremont Street, but from the inside it is only accessible through a secret door built into a bookshelf. The second floor toilets are pods, clustered in the middle of the space, with one of the pods leading to the rooftop terrace.

The rooftop terrace hosts a work|lounge with a bar, and a view of both Las Vegas Boulevard and Fremont Street.

In order to incorporate the desired program into the 15,000 SF space, the design had to integrate spaces with virtually no independent circulation. Most spaces open from one to another and blur the lines of transition. The challenge in this design was to create openness, with consideration of differing operating hours, climate zones, and security requirements. The most critical aspect of the design was serendipitous intellectual collision.
North Las Vegas Urban Core Masterplan

Over the years, North Las Vegas has collected miscellaneous properties within the North Las Vegas Urban core. The area is blighted with high vacancy and no sense of identity. Bunnyfish worked with the City to create a vibrant and functioning downtown where people can live, work, and play.

Bunnyfish completed site visits and analysis, community/stakeholder outreach, research on similar cities, and compiled best practices. Bunnyfish also reviewed and provided commentary on existing research.

One of the primary objectives of the study was to explore a main arterial street downtown, Lake Mead Boulevard, which currently has unidirectional traffic around a large island parcel. From the studies and meetings, Bunnyfish created three conceptual schemes that explore whether or not Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) should straighten out Lake Mead Boulevard and make the traffic a dual-directional eight-lane arterial, or retain the existing unidirectional path and develop the island parcel.

It was decided to keep traffic flow as-is and allocate the NDOT funds for neighborhood amenities such as dedicated bicycle lanes, wider sidewalks, and safer crossing conditions.

Currently, the master plan is being marketed for private development, and civic upgrades are being produced in accord with the master plan. It is definitely one of the most exciting development prospects in Southern Nevada.
The Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada has been working on a light rail connection between the McCarran Airport and downtown Las Vegas. Bunnyfish was engaged to vision the public art type and locations along the journey, develop public space, and create a pedestrian and bicycle-friendly experience through the many neighborhoods that the mass transit will traverse. The team included a landscape architect, local artist, and a national artist as consultants.

Bunnyfish completed a best practices review of over 20 different similar urban art interventions. Five public outreach meetings were conducted at various locations along Maryland Parkway, and feedback from the public and neighbors was documented and incorporated into the plan.

Weekly site walks were conducted for data and inspiration. Bunnyfish interviewed community members and stakeholders with University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV), Clark County, and the City of Las Vegas. From these studies and meetings, Bunnyfish created a strategic plan and master plan outline. The first piece of public art was installed December 2016 and the next piece (privately funded) was installed in June (the Bunnyfish Sculpture).
Reno Renaissance Hotel Renovation

The Renaissance Hotel in Reno is a renovation on of an existing non-branded hotel property into the first full-service, flagged hotel in Reno History.

The design for the guest rooms and all public spaces speak to the historical and immediate environmental and cultural context, as well as Reno’s emerging tech industry and economic future, creating a sophisticated environment with Renaissance’s signature “wit.”

Reno’s ranch heritage is honored with woolen and leather fabrics in contemporary patterns and colors, and metallic elements harken to the city’s tech future while still a nod to the history of nearby silver and gold mining.

Every space is designed to have “story worthy” moments and encourage special guest experiences. A wall with pet tags - Renaissance and Reno are very dog friendly - allows guests to have their best friend’s name engraved by the concierge and become part of an evolving art installation. Soft upholstered rock pods encourage interaction and social media moments, and relate to the Truckee river that runs alongside the property. A ring sculpture in the lobby reminds guests of Reno’s storied past as the city with the “quickie divorce” - where new divorcees would toss their wedding rings over the Virginia Bridge, which is located next to the hotel.
The Pioneer is a renovation of a 5,000 square foot multi-family residential property. The property was established as part of The Pioneer Heights Community in the 1950’s.

To pay homage to the 50’s and also the pioneer period, Bunnyfish blends the two styles by using the clean, bold color palettes of the mid-century modern aesthetic and the rustic, wood textures of the pioneer style. BUNNYFISH preserves the character of the buildings by keeping the iconic mid-century elements and accenting them. Contemporary flair is added to the shared outdoor spaces making the spaces fun communal environments featuring a space for food trucks, a courtyard, and private wood decks with retro glider seats.

The interior design also captures and blends both design styles by keeping some of the key elements that speak to the mid-century modern style and adding elements that introduce the pioneer style with plaid fabrics designed to drape over the windows and provide privacy for the residents.

The Pioneer is also part of the beautification of the neighborhood and the street, and fills in a gap for a much needed mid-income residential demand in the area.
October 30, 2017

AIA Nevada Service Awards Jury
401 S 4th St., Suite 175
Las Vegas, NV. 89101

Re: 2017 AIA Nevada Young Architect Award Nominee Craig Palacios

Dear Distinguished Members of the Jury,

I am honored and pleased to write in support of Craig Palacios, AIA, for the AIA Nevada Young Architect Award. I have gotten to know Craig well since 2007 when he joined my firm, YWS International. During those years, Craig worked closely with me designing master plans for integrated resort projects throughout the country. Craig took a lead role in an adaptive re-use of a 19th century power plant in Massachusetts into a modern integrated resort.

This adaptive re-use project was a perfect project for Craig because at the same time, he was spearheading new programs for our office focusing on sustainability. His passion and leadership for new technologies was a genuine fit as he initiated a complete sustainability program to our office. This included education, best practices for the firm and culminated in LEED Silver Certification of our office.

As President of AIA Las Vegas, I am very aware that Craig is a constant participant at our monthly meetings as well as Western Mountain Regional Conferences. During our recent WMR
Date: 10-30-2017

American Institute of Architects

Re: Nomination for Craig Palacios for the Young Architect Award

To Whom It Concerns:

I write this letter in support of Craig Sean Palacios who has been individually nominated for the AIA Young Architect Award.

As a builder in Houston, Atlanta, and Dallas and for the last decade here in Las Vegas, I have had the opportunity to work with numerous architects, on a myriad of projects. I can unequivocally state that the most symbiotic of my professional architectural relationships – has been with the Palacios team. In the last five six years we have worked on many projects together most of which have shaped the downtown community as we know it today. Every one of them is different and unique. As a General Contractor, I proudly get to build these projects. As the venerable Walter Gropius once remarked, “Architecture begins where engineering ends.”

As your organization is dedicated to the celebration and advancement of Architecture, you surely can appreciate the challenges of the profession, and the importance of communication, both between the client, and the contractor. The Architect is the conduit for that triad. With Craig I have witnessed his skill at this, ensuring that client-driven ideas, not viewed holistically, do not compromise the budget or ultimately the design and he is a shepherd of the integrity of his projects, making sure that the final product is design worthy. My experience is that these are traits often honed through many decades of practice. In this case, it is all the more remarkable given that Craig has been licensed for less than ten years, and yet so promising. The most celebrated architect of the century, Frank Lloyd Wright said it best when assessing the pitfalls of your profession “A doctor can bury his mistakes, but an architect can only advise his client to plant vines.” It is my opinion, based upon the aforementioned collaborations, as well as the observation and accolades of other peers and clients – Mr. Palacios will not be cultivating vines.

A final thought occurred to me as I write, and reflect on the resilience of this city that has been so good to so many. This award is to honor young architects. We are a young city, but with a rich history. Some of the past recipients of this prestigious award are personal friends of mine, while the work of others I have assessed as the Planning Commissioner for Las Vegas. Their work lives on long after them; monuments to their skill and profession. I’d like to hope that one day folks will look back at their achievements with pride, much like Zick & Sharpe, Wayne McCuller, Martin Stem, or Paul Williams. It is my hope that Craig Palacios can share this award, and will one day be remembered as one of the inspiring architects who led the rebuilding renaissance of Downtown Las Vegas. I encourage you to consider his nomination with favor.

If you have any questions please contact me at trinityhs@yahoo.com or at 702-204-8737.

Sincerely,

Trinity Schlotman
702-204-8737
October 30, 2017

Nomination Letter for Craig Palacios  
AIA NEVADA DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARDS  
Category: AIA Nevada Young Architect Award

Dear Randy Lavigne and the AIA Nevada Awards Committee

BUNNYFiSH studio, led by Craig Palacios and Tina Wichmann, both alumni of the UNLV School of Architecture, has in the past few short years built up an impressive portfolio of design work and in the process has played an integral part in reshaping downtown Las Vegas. Their work has garnered the attention of many architectural and popular culture writers, awards programs, politicians, and the public. For these reasons and more, I am honored to whole-heartedly share my recommendation of Craig Palacios and am delighted by the nomination he has received.

Craig’s work in the downtown serves as an example of how architects not only create cool designs but also build community relationships. Regarding sustainable design and advocacy, he doesn’t just talk the talk, he walks the walk so to speak... he started his business in a downtown coffee shop and has moved the business just slightly out of the center of the downtown development into unchartered territory once to find the growth and energy follow right behind. Today he his firm has purchased a dilapidated midcentury modern building well out of most downtowners comfort zone, added a piece of public art in front of the building and has spurred growth along the corridor. Craig is also committed to frequently setting aside an hour or two to participate in academic design critiques. His dedication to assisting the next generation of design professionals is a true hallmark of Craig’s character, and his selection as one of the featured architects on a pilot episode of a television program about the built environment of Las Vegas as well as being included in the “next Generation” issue of Las Vegas Architecture Magazine is testament to Mr. Palacios’ trajectory as a major design force in the state.

Seemingly every project BUNNYFiSH completes not only fills a void in the urban fabric of downtown and the East Fremont District; Craig truly brings a sense community to the spaces in between. He is an inspiration to emerging and established professionals and I imagine a model of many future members of the AIA. I am happy to answer any questions you might have. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Glenn Nowak, AIA  
Associate Professor, Graduate Coordinator  
Hospitality Design (HD) Concentration  
UNLV School of Architecture  
4505 S. Maryland Parkay  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89154-4018  
702-895-1076 office  
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glenn.nowak@unlv.edu
October 30, 2017

RE: Letter of Reference

To Whom It May Concern:

I have been a commercial developer in Las Vegas for 14 years. During those years I have worked with a number of architecture firms ranging in size. I was introduced to Craig Palacios in November 2015. In January of 2016, Craig had introduced Dapper Companies to a client who was a good match for a downtown urban concept I was working on (the project was designed by Bunnyfish and is now under construction). Since then, Dapper Companies and Craig have worked on 15 projects together, ranging from small commercial tenant improvements to a 15 acre new-concept shopping center.

Many of my projects with Craig have been urban adaptive re-use projects or prototype projects that I believe will bring a new product to the southern Nevada market and may change the way Nevadans live/work/play.

Most recently we have been able to expand our urban sensibilities and modern aesthetic to work on projects throughout Southern Nevada and to push the envelope of the aesthetics and function of the current offerings.

Craig spends a great deal of his time mentoring his staff most of which are recent UNLV graduates and several are students of his from his time as an adjunct professor at the school of architecture. His staff are receptive and understanding of our position as developers to make projects profitable, but always with a little bit of Bunnyfish-ness. Their firm culture as a whole is engaging, welcoming, and fun. I am always welcome in their studio and encouraged to use the space for non-Bunnyfish projects or personal projects when I am downtown.

In my work, I am traveling to neighboring states to look at potential projects and to look for case studies of my endeavors. I have seen work throughout the Country and feel that Craig’s creativity is on par with the best I have seen.

I am sure why Bunnyfish was awarded the AIA Nevada Firm of the Year and find it hard to imagine an architect more qualified to be awarded the AIA Nevada Young Architect.

Respect,

[Signature]

J. Dapper
Developer/Principal