

BENJAMIN R. KIRKLAND | CURRICULUM VITAE

School of Architecture + Design | Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University | Blacksburg, VA 24061
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PERSONAL STATEMENT

I am a professional industrial designer and adjunct instructor with an enthusiastic bonsai addiction. I have more than a decade of professional design and design-management experience, and I have expertise working with fabricators, vendors, contractors, and firms in a professional setting. I have built a strong educational video presence on YouTube through my bonsai hobby, Appalachian Bonsai. My academic interests focus on building empathy for the human condition, critical & speculative design thinking, and videography for online learning. I am looking for a place that continues my love of mentoring new talent, and an administration that values the contributions of their faculty toward the education of its student body.

EDUCATION

2019 *Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech)*
Master of Science in Architecture

2003 *Auburn University*
Bachelor of Industrial Design

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

2020 – Curr. *Virginia Tech*
Adjunct Instructor of Design
Human Factors
Lecture discussions of ergonomics, anthropometrics, design principles, human development, UX, aging-in-place, ADA, cognition, and emotion as they relate to designed objects, architecture, urban spaces, and user interfaces; taught to a large cross-section of major and minor students
Industrial Design Lab III (Junior Studio)
Introducing working aspects of critical design and corporate branding within a studio environment to reinforce design methods, research, materials & processes, and social/cultural responsibilities; advising on manufacturing techniques and professional development
Industrial Design Lab II (Sophomore Studio)
refinement of skills; introduction to industry partners; incorporation of human factors into design practice; introduction to design research; deepening the complexity of design process with integration of skillsets, specifically visual & verbal communication of ideas
Summer Studio for Minors
Online introductory course for interdisciplinary minor students to understand how to work during the coronavirus pandemic; general instruction on design research, sketch ideation, prototyping, and final presentation of ideas; Zoom instruction
Solidworks (CAD)
Online instruction of the 3D modeling software package Solidworks to sophomore design students, with skills ranging from beginner to intermediate

2018 – 2019 *Virginia Tech*
Graduate Teaching Assistantships

Responsibilities included grading assignments, recording attendance, lecturing during instructor absences, and acting liaison between remote instructors & students during professor's leave of absence

Design Visualization

Human Factors

Design Research

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

2019 *Graduate Education Development Institute (GEDI)*

Training in contemporary pedagogical techniques, use of technologies in the classroom, and inquiry-based learning

2015 - 2016 *Daley Group, LLC*

Coached in professional career & managerial development; understanding interpersonal relationships in working environments; conflict management; time management

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2016 – Curr. *Appalachian Bonsai – [YouTube](#)*

Founder & Content Creator

Production of online video tutorials about bonsai trees, including tree design, collection of raw materials, seasonal maintenance, care instructions, and soil components; speculative discussion to innovate the art into an American version of a traditional form using native materials.

80k+ subscribers; 9+ million views (July 2020)

2019 – 2020. *Virginia Tech – [Living Labs: A Big Sticky Project](#)*

Associate Researcher

Conducting interviews and producing video content for exhibition & record; aiding in production of ceramic tiles for large architectural installation; promoted efficiency through assembly line production methods; general labor

2008 – 2018 [Crenshaw Lighting](#)

Lead Designer, Product Designer, Estimator, Fabricator

Designed custom architectural light fixtures; restored & replicated historically important lighting artifacts; managed team of industrial designers and mechanical engineers; oversaw production of all submittal and working drawings; formalized design process through communications, checklists, data collection, and hiring of staff; estimated for quotes; consulted clientele; assisted in fabrication, restoration & installation of light fixtures; operated as shop liaison; proficiency in Solidworks 3D modeling software & Photopia optical design software

Notable Projects with Crenshaw Lighting

[Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#), Seattle, WA – SkB Architects

Facilitated the design of custom ceramic lighting for new headquarters; connected artisans and craftspersons into a cohesive creative unit; converted renderings and mockup visuals into constructive working models for fabrication

520 Park Avenue, New York City, NY – Robert A.M. Stern Architects

Detailed quotation of custom lighting; preliminary designs for approval & manufacture; sourcing of custom materials; advisement to engineering and fabrication

Wyoming State Capitol, Cheyenne, WY – HDR, Plan One/Architects

Restoration & replication of historic light fixtures; research of historic glass types & methods in the creation of new custom lenses; assistance in complete lighting design package; consultation to ensure historical accuracy of elements

Minnesota State Capitol, St. Paul, MN – HGA Architects

Restoration & replication of historic light fixtures; design of new historically-inspired light fixtures; modification of fixtures to modern LED technology; assistance in complete lighting design package; design consultation throughout project development, production, & installation; procurement of custom materials; fabrication of custom details

United States Supreme Court, Washington, DC – Architect of the Capitol

Replicated historic elevator light fixture destroyed by fire; enabled in-situ 3D scans & modeling for custom casting; provided on-site consultation; procured custom castings

Provo City Center Temple, Provo, UT – FFKR Architects

Designed for manufacture of custom light fixtures for historic temple; assisted in lighting design package; facilitated production & installation

George W. Bush Presidential Library, Dallas, TX – Robert A.M. Stern Architects

Assisted in fabrication, finish, transportation, and installation of custom brass and crystal chandeliers; advised on-site labor in troubleshooting install

United States Capitol Building, Washington, DC – Architect of the Capitol

Assisted in detail drawings of custom castings and fittings for Room S-238 chandelier; assisted in fabrication & finish of custom details

Cincinnati Museum & Union Terminal, Cincinnati, OH – GBBN Architects

Restoration and replication of historic Art Deco lighting; identified key details required for accuracy through old photographs and broken fixtures; created custom lighting inspired from original designs

Thalian Hall, Wilmington, NC – Hanbury Architects

Modeled and provided fabrication documents for historically-inspired chandelier; advised on details for accuracy based upon historic sketches and photographs

The Monroe Building, Chicago, IL – Holabird & Root

Replicated wall sconce fixtures based upon historic photographs; designed custom elevator call lights; designed office bowl pendants with custom bronze staves

2006 – 2008 *Dreaming Creek Timber Frame Homes*

Frame Designer, Timberwright

Converted architectural drawings into 3D timber models; applied traditional and custom frame joinery; drafted documents for clientele, engineers & fabricators; assisted in production of CNC files for Hundegger K2; assisted in fabrication and on-site raising of architectural timber frame structures; proficiency in AutoCAD HSB & Cadwork timbering software

2006

Chateau Morrisette Winery

Graphic Designer

Designed promotional materials and produced conceptual wine labels

LECTURES

2021 *Exhibitor & Demonstrator*
88th Historic Garden Week Tour, Roanoke VA

2020 *Invited Lecturer, "Sketching Trees"*
North Carolina Arboretum, Asheville NC

Invited Lecturer, "Inspired by a Southern Appalachian Bonsai"
North Carolina Arboretum, Asheville NC

Poster Presenter, "Speculative and Critical Design in Education: Practice and Perspectives"
ACM DIS2020 workshop, hosted by Edinburgh Napier University, Scotland, UK

Visiting Bonsai Artist & Videographer "Radical Redesign: Curator's Talk & Styling Demonstration"
North Carolina Arboretum, Asheville NC

2020 *Invited Lecturer, "A Bonsai Program"*
Salem Garden Club, Salem VA

2019 *Invited Lecturer, "A Bonsai Program"*
Hahn Horticultural Garden, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg VA

2019 *Invited Lecturer, "Bonsai & YouTube Content Creation"*
IDS Thought Leaders Series, Industrial Design Program, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg VA

2017 *Lecturer & Demonstrator, "Introduction to Bonsai"*
8th Annual Greater Roanoke Home & Garden Show, Roanoke VA

APPOINTMENTS

2016 – 2018 *President*
Hinoki Bonsai Club, Roanoke VA

2015 *Vice President*
Hinoki Bonsai Club, Roanoke VA

MEMBERSHIPS

IDSA
Hinoki Bonsai Club