

# Tana Helean

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Senior Director with 20 years of experience in strategic design, innovation, and creative production – specializing in culture-shifting experiences and technology that seamlessly integrate physical and digital mediums. I have an affinity for maximizing potential, and empowering breakthrough collaboration. I am well-versed in navigating ambiguity, implementing structure, and shepherding the creative process in complex contexts. Tenure includes 5 years at Sphere, leading experience strategy, design, R&D, real-time technology, creator tools, and benchmark content. At Obscura Digital, I led global projects with high-profile clients such as Google, HP, AT&T, Salesforce, and AS+GG for Expo2020. Before Obscura, I collaborated with the founders at Recombinant Media Labs and Gray Area to define, build, launch, and operate immersive and interactive production facilities, artist residencies, education programs, incubators, and events with avant-garde luminaries. I have a BA from UCSD and MFA from Mills College, with formal studies in design, interactive and immersive media arts, computer music, and multidisciplinary engineering.

## EXPERIENCE

### Sphere Entertainment • Remote

Senior Director, Strategic Design & Creative Innovation • Mar 2019 – Mar 2023

Managing Director, Design & Creative Services • Jan 2018 – Mar 2019 (overlapped with Obscura, prior to post-acquisition closure)

- Built and led cross-functional R&D team of 15 (3 direct managers), defined structure, headcount, and work streams
- Defined and executed scalable program & product strategy, owned roadmap, prds, prioritization, sprints, and reporting
- Initiated and led creation of realtime content, pipelines, and creator tools with complex dependencies: reduced turnaround time by 50%
- Drove experience strategy for all users, from creators to customers, across all touchpoints
- Produced the 1st immersive show pitch to be green-lit, breaking the streak of dozens of unsuccessful pitches
- Initiated and led design guidelines for this entirely new medium; reduced common content failures by 90%
- Partnered with the U2 team for their residency; provided specs & workflow solutions to eliminate blockers & enable rapid ideation

### Obscura Digital • San Francisco, CA.

Managing Director, Design & Creative Services • Jan 2018 – Mar 2019

Associate Creative Director • Sep 2016 – Jan 2018

Producer • Dec 2015 – Sep 2016

A pioneering immersive and interactive creative studio with full in-house capabilities working with Fortune 100 clients across the globe.

- Worked with the C-suite to win & develop new business,
- Managed creative team (6 direct reports, xfn teams of 20+); provided project oversight, and cultivated a culture of excellence
- Crafted and presented client-facing pitches, creative briefs, creative strategies, personas, journey maps, experience narratives, and schematic design documents; led cross-functional teams through design, development, production and delivery
- Created and managed project scope, schedules, budgets, objectives, deliverables, and resources

### Freelance • International

Experience Designer & Producer • Jun 2012 – Dec 2015

Clients: Virgin, OMCA, ICAS, Berkeley Art Museum, Protos Digital Art & Technology, Electronic Cinema, Decibel, Interferenze, Mutek, and more.

### Liminal Space • Oakland, CA.

Co-Founder & Executive Director • Sep 2010 – Jun 2012

Created an emerging art and technology studio that provided a platform for multidisciplinary experimentation, and production of visionary projects, residencies, workshops, and events.

### Gray Area Foundation for The Arts • San Francisco, CA.

Director of Operations • Dec 2008 – Jul 2010

Collaborated with the founder to conceptualize, design, curate, and run the organization's business model and public programs.

### Recombinant Media Labs / Asphodel Records • San Francisco, CA.

Associate Director • Aug 2004 – Dec 2008

Co-led the design of the immersive av platform, engineered custom spatial a/v software, produced dozens of events and residencies, represented the organization internationally, and developed commercial and cultural partnerships. Designed printed and digital marketing assets.

### Immersive Media Research • San Diego, CA.

Product Designer & Technical Writer • Jun 2003 – Jul 2004

Part of the team that created the Vortex Surround software products for professional multichannel audio content production.

## EDUCATION

### Mills College • Oakland, CA.

Master of Fine Arts, Electronic Music & Media Arts • GPA 3.9

- Awards: Full scholarship, Teaching Assistant: Beginning and Advanced Electronic Arts/Interactive Media Design

### University of California San Diego • La Jolla, CA.

Bachelor of Arts, Interdisciplinary Computing and the Arts • GPA 3.8

- Awards: Qualcomm Institute Research Fellowships (2) for Generative real-time visualization & sonification, novel interaction design & networked interactive media, Artistic Achievement Award

## CERTIFICATES

**Leaders Program • The Leadership Consortium** • A development experience for top talent, led by Harvard Business School Professors  
**Design & Innovation • IDEO U** • Insights for Innovation, Storytelling for Influence, From Ideas to Action, Foundations in Design Thinking

## COMPETENCIES

**Vision & Strategy:** creative, content, product, future state, forecasting, planning, roadmaps, process, OKRs & KPIs

**Design & Creative Direction:** problem framing & solving, ideation, UX/UI, visual, product, service, prototyping, linear/immersive/interactive content

**Production:** physical/digital integration, audio, video, spatial computing, real-time, 2D/3D CG pipelines, media servers, OSC, TCP/UDP, ST2110, etc.

**Operations:** stakeholder alignment, team building & management, program & project management, workflow/process management, partnerships

**Soft Skills:** creativity, effective communication, presentations, active listening, collaboration, perpetual learning, candor, flexibility, endurance