

INTERNSHIP MANUAL
Welcome to the Erie Art Museum!



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CONTACT INFORMATION:

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Museum Hours:

Tu-Sat 11am – 5pm

Sun 1pm – 5pm

Frame Shop Hours:

Tu-Sat 9am – 5pm

Administrative Office Hours:

M-F 9am – 5pm

Staff:

John L. Vanco, Director and Curator

Jill Kambs, Assistant Curator

Vance Luper, Registrar

Carissa Snarski, Director of Marketing

Andrea Krivak, Publications Coordinator

Chrisine Eddy, Director of Development

Kelly Armor, Director of Education and Folk Arts

Allly Thomas, Education Coordinator

Karen Dodson, Business Manager

Sandy Lopez, Development Assistant

Tavon Markov, Building and Event Operations

Lin Lang Su, Frame Shop Manager

James Pearson, Frame Shop Assistant

Kay Campbell, Front Desk Receptionist

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE INTERNSHIP

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Erie Art Museum is to maintain an institution of excellence dedicated to the promotion and advancement of the visual arts

- by developing and maintaining a quality art collection
- by encouraging art in all its forms
- by fostering lifelong art learning
- by building community among artists, art students and the public.

EXPECTATIONS:

Interns are treated much like Museum Staff: You are expected to keep a regular schedule (and responsibly let Staff know of any absence or change of schedule), and juggle many projects at once. Interns are also expected to take initiative and volunteer for the projects that may benefit or interest them the most. When you need feedback on or are finished with an assignment, email it to your supervisor, don't wait to be asked for it. It is also important for interns to check in regularly with your supervisors, continually ask questions, and develop the priceless skill of cooperation in a group setting by working together! Interns must commit to 200 hours total and at least 10 hours per week. Some interns do as much as 400 hours.

SICK DAYS: If an intern misses more than 10 days due to illness or emergency, the internship will be cancelled. If the intern wishes to resume, he/she must make an appointment with his/her internship supervisor. If for any reason you'll be late, or can't come in, text and email your supervisor as soon as possible.

MEETINGS:

Interns are welcome to attend weekly staff meetings held at 9:30am on Tuesdays. During the summer there is a weekly intern meeting at 9:30am on Wednesdays and Museum Studies, Education, and Folk Arts interns are required to attend. (Graphic Design, Photography, and Communications interns are encouraged to come to this meeting as well.) Come prepared to report on your projects and be ready to take notes.

SCHEDULES:

All interns need to keep to a set schedule so everyone knows when to expect you. The schedule can change part way through the internship (if your summer job schedules changes, for example). You can schedule yourself any time during our business hours, M - F, 9am - 5pm. The only day we require summer interns to be here is on Wednesdays from 9:30 - 2pm to attend the weekly intern meeting at 9:30am and to assist with Mid-Day Art Break from noon - 2pm. Other than that, create a schedule that will work best for you. Interns are strongly advised to attend and assist with any evening and weekend programming. If you work an event, you may flex your schedule accordingly.

JOURNALS & RECORD KEEPING:

As this is a learning experience, some interns are required to keep daily journals (Museum Studies, Museum/Art Education, and Folklore) while all are suggested to keep a record of projects and assignments they've worked on during the course of their internship. If you are using an EAM computer, keep **all** your documents in a folder with your name on it, not on the computer's desktop. At the end of the internship, make sure you leave your supervisor with digital copies of everything you have done. It is almost always best to give EAM staff your work digitally. If they want to print a copy, they can. For those who need to keep a journal the only requirement is that it be a basic list of what you worked on each day, you can also include observations, thoughts, and analysis. The journal also should include a (200 – 500 word) summary of your overall experience at the end of your journal.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY:

Like the work done by EAM staff, all interns' work is considered the intellectual property of the Erie Art Museum.

AT THE END of YOUR INTERNSHIP:

A week or two before, make sure you remind your supervisor of your last day. If possible, schedule an exit interview. If that isn't possible, write a one-page reflection of how you benefitted from the internship, and what you would change (or have the museum change) if you could do it over.

II. WORK ENVIRONMENT

WORKSTATIONS:

If you have your own laptop, bring it, you can port up to the network and use the museum's printers. There are computers available for interns to use but they need to be shared. Ideally every intern has a dedicated work station, but some interns may need to work in different spaces different days.

GMAIL: If you don't have a gmail account, get one. You'll need it to access calendars and documents. It is also helpful to have a DropBox account. Both are free.

DRESS CODE:

Comfortable, business casual attire. If you are helping with installing an exhibit, you'll need clothes that can get paint on them.

ENTERING:

The stairwell door at 10 East 5th Street is open during business hours. You can also enter via the public entrance when the Museum is open: Tuesday – Thursday 11am – 5pm, Friday 11am – 9pm, Saturday 11am – 5pm, and Sunday 1pm – 5pm.

KITCHEN:

The break room, located on the second floor, is equipped with a refrigerator, microwave, and coffeemaker.

LUNCH:

Interns, like staff, may take their lunch break whenever they choose. (Interns are encouraged to take a lunch break if they are working more than four hours.) Packed lunches may be stored in the refrigerator. Downtown Erie is also home to a number of eateries: Starbucks, Subway, Happy Garden Chinese, McDonald's etc. If you purchase something from the Museum's Wave Café, tell them you work at the Museum and you'll get a small discount.

RESTROOMS:

The main public restroom is located on the first floor. Restrooms are also located on the 2nd and 3rd floor, and the Customs House ground level.

RECYCLING:

The EAM is very serious about recycling and composting. Dispose of your trash mindfully. Paper, glass, cans and plastic are recycled. Food, coffee grounds, tea bags, dirty napkins, paper plates, pizza boxes, are all composted. Aluminum foil, foil or plastic food wrappers, broken glass, anything with excessive adhesive or tape on it, and bubble wrap are trash.

NO SMOKING:

The Museum campus is smoke free, including the courtyards. If you need to smoke, walk at least 50 feet away.

PARKING:

Interns may utilize free parking lots along the Bayfront Highway by the Intermodal Transportation Center (just east of the Blasco Library). Free public shuttle is available at these locations: (EMTA FREE Bayliner Trolley Service www.emtaerie.com for service schedule)

Bayfront Park & Ride at Liberty Park: M–F, 7am – 5pm service every 25 min.

Intermodal Transportation Center: M–F, 6:15am – 11pm, every 9 min. (*Sometimes they run on schedule, sometimes they don't. If you are on a tight schedule, plan for a longer wait!*)

You can park in the Erie Insurance lot at 5th and French after 5pm and on weekends. There is also free, unmetered parking available west of Peach Street and East of Holland Street, a 4-5 block walk. The metered parking on 5th Street goes for 12 hours, meters on State and French go for 2 hours.

III. AT THE MUSEUM

TOURS on SUMMER WEDNESDAYS:

Wednesdays are free admission days at the Museum all year round. During the summer, the Museum hosts a weekly noon concert series called Mid-Day Art Break. The concerts last from noon – 1:00 pm and two free tours of the exhibits are available to the public, one at 12:30, and one at 1:00. Interns are responsible for giving these tours every week.

CLASSES at EAM:

Staff and Interns are able to take most any Erie Art Museum Art Class for free! (Supplies are not included, and those taking clay classes need to pay something to cover clay and firing fees). Talk to Ally if you are interested.

IV. DO'S AND DON'TS

- DO take a lunch break, and get to know the other interns and staff.
- DO ask questions, and get over any fear of 'bothering' the staff. We have all been new and know that your questions are important!
- DO take time to explore the exhibits on your own and familiarize yourself with the art.
- DO invite family and friends to come to the Museum for a visit. You can bring them in at no charge and give them your own personalized tour!
- DO put stamps on outgoing mail, ask a staff person where they are kept. The non-profit postage paid message on EAM postcards and envelopes is for bulk mail only, put a stamp over that if you mailing anything.
- DO keep alert! If a bathroom needs supplies or there is a spill, let someone know right away. If there is trash on the gallery floor, pick it up. If you notice suspicious activity of any kind (rambunctious children, inebriated visitors, etc.) listen to your gut and alert a full-time staff member, even if you aren't sure there is trouble.
- DON'T answer the phone unless you've had specific training.
- DON'T use the elevator unless you are physically disabled. It wastes energy. Remember to fully shut down museum computers before you leave.
- DON'T be oblivious or impolite around guests, no matter how rude they may be to you. The EAM considers interns staff, not volunteers. Remember that when you deal with the public in any way (over the phone or face-to-face) you represent the Museum. Be kind and courteous to everyone. If you find yourself dealing with an unhappy or abrasive person, tell them you'd like them to speak with your supervisor and find any full-time staff member.
- The Museum serves wine and beer during receptions, parties and fundraisers. DON'T drink alcohol unless you are 21 or over. If you are of drinking age, don't drink while you are working, e.g., at the front desk, giving a tour, taking tickets, etc., and don't get intoxicated at all.

V. VISUAL THINKING STRATEGIES

Interns will practice and eventually lead VTS sessions. You should take time at the beginning of the internship to become familiar with the practice.

Visual Thinking Strategies is a pedagogy that uses art to teach thinking, communication skills, and visual literacy to those on a tour. The curriculum works best if you follow basic, logical, tested rules, even if they seem a bit restrictive at first:

- Ask the questions provided to initiate an active process of discovery and probing on the part of the students (members of tour): “*What’s going on in this image/picture?*”
- Listen carefully to and acknowledge every answer by looking with the students at the image, pointing to those details mentioned, and paraphrasing what the students say.
- If the speaker does not give concrete evidence (“the painting is depressing”, “the person looks happy”) ask: “*What do you see that makes you say that?*”
- Facilitate the discussion as it progresses, linking various converging and diverging opinions and helping students synthesize a variety of viewpoints.
- Encourage further inquiry, keeping the process open-ended and asking students to stretch and search for information beyond what they know: “*What more can we find?*”

For more information on VTS, refer to the VTS packet, “Understanding the Basics” and “Basic VTS at a Glance” by Visual Understanding in Education (2001)

VI. WRITING FOR THE MUSEUM

At the Erie Art Museum, we use a simple system for developing text about exhibitions. Dubbed “1-1-1”, it requires writing one page, one paragraph, and one sentence on a single exhibition or artist. These writings become the basis for press releases, newsletter articles, calendar blurbs, and descriptions on printed announcements. They have to be tight—concise and informative.

The 1-1-1 is not a simple exercise. It's a challenge, especially when you've spent years writing for professors, who seem to value big words and long texts rather than cogent and concise statements. Museum writing, whether it is for an exhibition announcement card, a newsletter article, a press release, a wall text, or a catalogue, demands concision. People simply will not spend time reading something that is dense and unorganized. Even more basically, they will not read anything that is longer than necessary. A wall text, for example, should not exceed 200 words - the closer to 100, the better.

You may be surprised at how much you can say in a few words, once you understand how important it is to be concise. This process demands that you make choices about what you say, striking a balance between what is most important for the reader to know, and what is most interesting to the reader—often two different things.

How to begin:

- Describe the exhibit; you don't need to include the dates or which gallery, just relevant information about the exhibit.
- Make a list of the points you want to make--factual information, insights and observations, possibly in outline form.
- Start big and narrow down; write the page first, then paragraph then sum up in one or sometimes two sentences.
- Idea is to sell the show. This writing is used for newsletter articles, brochures, web text, calendar (the one sentence descriptions) etc.
- Start with the who, what, when, where, why, how. Then expand outward.
- Try to have some kind of “hook”; put the most interesting information first.

- When writing from an artist's statement, remember that it can give you a lot of information, but you need to make sure you understand the meaning. Don't change what they're trying to say.

Writing tips:

- NO Personal Statements ("I think..." "Some may feel...")
- NO Passive Statements (Use Active VERBS!!)
- NO references needed, but paraphrase and keep track of where your information comes from in case someone wants verification. DO NOT PLAGIARIZE!
- NO Artspeak. Use simple terms and explain them. BUT talk about the art! That's the main idea. Biography is secondary, unless there is something unusual that will catch readers attention and keep them reading.

When you are finished make an appointment with whomever is supervising the assignment. That person will go over it and edit it with you. Getting personally attached to one's own writing for the Museum is not professional. Everyone, even our Director, has their writing edited by someone else. Expect your work to be changed.

Other Sources for Writing Advice:

<http://australianmuseum.net.au/Writing-Text-and-Labels>

Saying it Differently: A handbook for museums refreshing their display (Published by the London Museums Hub) (Ask John for this.)

<http://www.mediacollege.com/journalism/news/write-stories.html>