

Labor produces
all culture

All wealth must
go to labor

Museum Workers Unite

May 1, 2020



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University of Illinois at Chicago

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As I write this, museums around the globe are shuttered, hundreds of museum employees across the country at institutions like the MoMA, LACMA, the Portland Art Museum, and SFMoMA have been laid off or furloughed. The future of museums as we knew them is uncertain. None of us in the Museum and Exhibition Studies graduate Public Engagement seminar at the University of Illinois at Chicago could have imagined this pandemic when we set about our plan at the outset of 2020 to create an event centered around museum labor at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago.

Museum May Day was to take place on International Workers Day, May 1, 2020, a day chosen to commemorate the Haymarket Square Riot of 1886, an event that started in Chicago as a peaceful protest for the eight hour workday that turned into a violent riot. We approached organizing the event in the spirit of solidarity, recognition, relaxation, and above all acknowledging the value of all laborers as full human beings with dignity, rights, desires, and needs. In our statement about the event we wrote:

In a moment where the value of art and culture and the people who work tirelessly to create, uphold, and protect it is diminished and questioned, let us not forget that we all deserve eight hours for work, eight hours for rest, and eight hours for what you will.

The events of the day will bring museum workers together in solidarity—shared meals, group discussions, moments of collective joy. We will highlight the value of relaxation—a program that emphasizes mindfulness and movement. We will reimagine how we think of labor and provide helpful tools, strategies, and portable models that workers can deploy in their own institutions so that we might return to our work with a renewed sense of community and an important reminder that we are all in this together.

Now many of those in the museum and culture sector whose labor we wanted to uphold and support are without jobs to return to. Reading this now, I long for the community and solidarity we sought to invoke, a togetherness not mediated through screens nor

perforated with this heightened level of fear and anxiety. Many want nothing more than for things to go “back to normal,” and while I want jobs, security, and safety for all, where we were was not what we should aspire to—inequity, exploitation, greed, and legacies of exclusion should not be our measure or our demands or hopes.

The offerings put forward here by the MUSE UIC Public Engagement seminar are a small gesture of solidarity, a sharing of hope, a place of rethinking, and hopefully some moments of relaxation and joy. These pieces range from worker rights and history, proposed museums of labor, profiles of museum workers, to recipes for cocktails inspired by labor movements. We are with you in solidarity, though we cannot physically be together in the space of a museum on May Day as we planned.

What do we want and need for museums to be when they reopen? In Arundhati Roy’s piece “The Pandemic is a Portal” she writes:

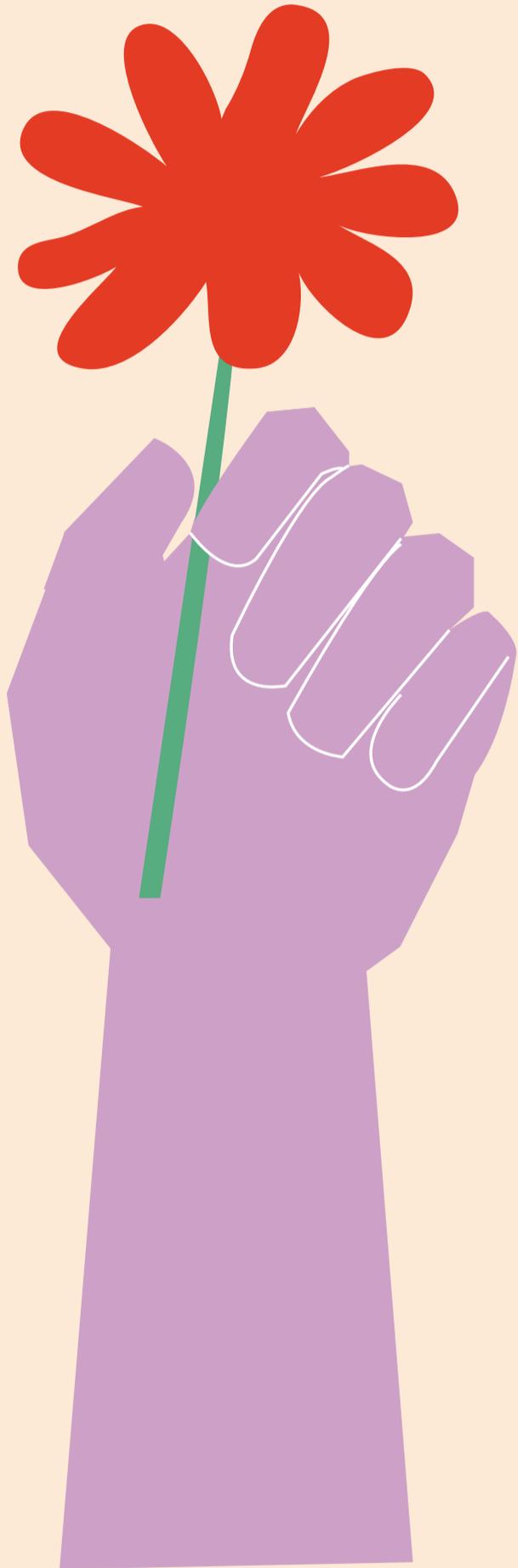
Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next. We can choose to walk through it, dragging the carcasses of our prejudice and hatred, our avarice, our data banks and dead ideas, our dead rivers and smoky skies behind us. Or we can walk through lightly, with little luggage, ready to imagine another world. And ready to fight for it.

What is worth taking with us as we move toward a future for museums? Let us leave behind our mistakes, our valueless directions, our structures and systems of exclusion and oppression. Let us walk through this portal lightly, together, with no one left behind, ready to fight for the worlds we’re already creating.

In love and solidarity,

Jen Delos Reyes

**Associate Director, UIC School of Art & Art History
Chicago, IL**

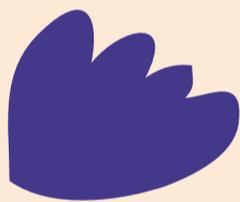


Labor

As a class assignment inspired by the necessary and critical practice of land acknowledgements, the class wrote "labor acknowledgements" which we imagine could be read at the beginning of public events following a traditional land acknowledgement. The labor acknowledgement is meant to bring attention, and appreciation, for the many often invisible and unacknowledged forms of labor that create, sustain, and maintain cultural institutions and organizations. What follows are several examples from the class. We encourage you to adopt and adapt these.

Welcome, and thank you all for joining us today for this event. Before we begin our program, I would like to take a few moments to call attention to the critical contributions of our partners and employees, and to express our deepest gratitude for the time, labor, creativity, and care they have poured into making today's event a success. Without their tireless work, endless patience, incredible generosity, and unbridled enthusiasm, I can safely say that this event would not have been possible. On behalf of our organization, our audience, and our wider community, we thank you for your labor. We see you and we value you, as individuals, employees, collaborators, colleagues, and friends. It is important in our organizational culture to not just nurture and support the amazing talent, ideas, and innovations of our staff and contractors, but also to publicly acknowledge their hard work and affirm the importance of their contributions to our mission. Moreover, we wish to be fully transparent with you, our audience, about all of the energy and effort that goes into producing our public programming. In this spirit of transparency, acknowledgment, and solidarity, I would like to sincerely thank the following people for their support.

—**Hannah Landsman**



I want to take this time to recognize the labor that our colleagues, volunteers, interns, work studies, part-timers, preparators, educators, contractors and full time staff have contributed and put in so that our doors can remain open, our programs running, those who ensure that our social media platforms stay active, our building be welcoming and clean and more. This is a small yet significant step in our equity efforts to raise awareness that our roles as cultural arts workers are vital to our arts community. I want to acknowledge the fact that our roles and labor do not have to be recognized only in structured formats such as annual performance reviews or staff meetings. Labor acknowledgements can remind us that patience is not required to acknowledge the labor that builds these museums and cultural organizations. This is something we can all begin to practice with our colleagues and peers. I want to acknowledge the role that each and every one of us play no matter what the length of our positions, titles or experience may be. It is my hope that this also serves as a reminder that we are part of a field that is populated by people first and objects second.

—**Onyx Montes**

In the last decade we have seen unprecedented growth in urban development, akin to that of the industrial revolution in the 19th century when farms were left behind for tenements and factories. For some, the industrial revolution in America was a time of unrivaled fortune and growth, and pain and erasure for others. This unfair balance enabled the American metropolis to become an incubator for endless cultural production, coming from all echelons of society. From traditional schools of art to the frustrations of blue collar workers, art was a lifeline to the booming cities across the nation. But not all culture and work was seen as equal. History is plagued by a lack of recognition to manual labor, women, LGBTQ+ individuals, and people of color. Industrial growth has not been kind in recognizing everyone who kept the cities moving and granted humanity amidst the smokestacks.

As cities boom once more, and what it means to be a worker in America is re-evaluated, more than ever the public looks to the arts in this era of hyper-communication and social connectivity for meaning, pleasure, and direction. With this opportunity, our collective responsibility is to recognize all the entities involved in our cultural production, from the artist to the intern and every person in this spectrum of labor and interdependence who plays a part in delivering, preserving, and interpreting the art and culture that our world desperately yearns for.

—**Jojo Galvan Mora**



On this occasion we want to acknowledge and pay tribute to the labor that goes into this event, this space, this room, this institution. For every creative endeavor, there takes labor on the part of workers of every kind. The pleasure that comes from expression requires many forms of work that happens behind the scenes of gallery walls and public gatherings. We pay respect to labor histories as well as the individuals that made today possible. Not only the physical; but the mental, emotional, and historical labor of those who have worked tirelessly to raise voices and address working conditions. We want to practice this acknowledgment in hopes that it will raise awareness around people and histories that are often hidden or untold and encourage others to do the same. We honor the labor of this specific moment and the labor it has taken for all of us to be in this place together.

—**Anika Bierig**

Know Your Rights!

American Labor Law 101 for Museum Workers



A guide by Hannah Landsman

All workers should know and understand their rights. While in many ways American labor law lags far behind other comparably industrialized nations, we do have a number of laws that provide crucial protections for workers. In the spirit of May Day, and in solidarity with workers everywhere, I have compiled a brief primer on some of the more salient labor laws in the United States.

This is by no means an exhaustive list, nor does it provide a deep dive into any of one of these laws. Be advised that most of these laws only apply to employers that meet certain criteria (such as employing 15 or more people, or engaging in interstate commerce, to name just two examples), so some may apply to your particular workplace or job, while others may not. Still, I hope this will provide a starting point, and encourage you to familiarize yourself with your legally protected rights. Know your rights, and demand that your employers recognize them!

National Labor Relations Act (1935)

Also known as the “Wagner Act” (after the U.S. Senator Robert Wagner, who authored the bill), this law seeks to address the undeniable imbalance of “bargaining power” between employers and employees that so often disadvantages workers. The NLRA guarantees the right of private sector employees to form trade unions, engage in collective bargaining, and take collective action, including strikes. In addition, this law also established the National Labor Relations Board, an independent federal agency charged with enforcing labor laws regarding collective bargaining and investigating unfair labor practices. Section 8 of the NLRA spells out specific unfair

labor practices for employers, employees, and unions. If you are interested in understanding more about your right to organize a labor union, start here!

Fair Labor Standards Act (1938)

The FLSA might be called the cornerstone of American labor law. As one of the key pieces of legislation passed in the wake of the Great Depression, this

law finally established many of the worker rights and protections the Haymarket protestors sought nearly 50 years prior, from establishing a federal minimum wage to setting limitations on the duration of workdays and workweeks. Perhaps its most crucial provision, FLSA ensures the right to overtime pay (time-and-a-half) for certain workers who work more than 40 hours in a given workweek. This law defines two classes of employees in relation to overtime: exempt and non-exempt. Exempt employees (who are typically salaried) are not entitled to overtime pay, while non-exempt employees (who are typically paid hourly) are entitled to overtime pay. This law also sets a salary threshold for classifying an employee as exempt, in addition to laying out other criteria for this classification; the U.S Dept. of Labor raised this threshold from \$466 per week to \$684 per week, effective Jan. 1, 2020.

The FLSA also sets age limits for certain types of work and mandates that employers provide breaks under certain conditions, among other provisions. This law is essential to understanding your basic rights as an employee.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964: Equal Employment Opportunity

One of the most groundbreaking pieces of civil rights and labor legislation in American history, Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibits certain types of discrimination with regard to any term, condition, or privilege of employment based on particular characteristics, or “protected classes.” This law specifically prohibits discrimination in employment decisions and actions (including recruiting, hiring, training, promoting, transferring, disciplining, and discharging, among others) on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Title VII also led to the creation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the federal agency that administers and enforces civil rights laws dealing with workplace discrimination. If you ever wish to file an official complaint of workplace discrimination, you will start with the EEOC.

Though this landmark legislation represented a giant step forward for basic civil rights, and has been amended numerous times in the last 60 years, it is by no means as comprehensive as it should be; note that sexual



orientation and gender identity, for example, are not granted protection under this federal law. However, many states (including Illinois) have expanded legal protections to other classes and characteristics (such as citizenship status and arrest record) not listed in Title VII.

Age Discrimination in Employment Act (1967)

This law is intended to protect job applicants and employees 40 years of age and older from discrimination on the basis of age in any terms, conditions, or privileges of employment (such as hiring, promotions, discharge, and compensation). Signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1967, the ADEA was in part a response to the exclusion of “age” from the protected classes guaranteed protection under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Occupational Health and Safety Act (1970)

Intended to decrease workplace hazards and prevent death and injury on the job, this act sets basic standards for employee safety in the workplace, such as stipulating that employers provide adequate safety training and creating accident reporting procedures. This law also established the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA), the agency within the Department of Labor that sets and enforces workplace health and safety standards. Though the law is far too comprehensive to cover even a fraction of its many important provisions here, I do want to draw attention to the right to personal protective equipment (or PPE). Employers are required to provide their employees with adequate, sanitary, and appropriate PPE (such as gloves, hard hats, or face masks) wherever it is necessary.

Pregnancy Discrimination Act (1978)

The PDA also amends the Civil Rights Act of 1964, this time by clarifying that discrimination on the “basis of sex” or “because of sex” includes discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions in employment matters. Interestingly, this act defines pregnancy as a temporary disability in the eyes of the law. This definition often allows eligible pregnant women to file for short-term disability and receive some compensation while unable to work, or may entitle them to reasonable accommodations to allow them to continue working while pregnant. However, this can create problems if additional disability time is needed to address complications from pregnancy and childbirth, to say nothing of the incredibly problematic, undeniably androcentric classification of a normal (female) biological function as a “disability.” Critics allege that the repeated use of the word “woman” in the act also has prevented transgender, gender fluid, and nonbinary people who are biologically able to become pregnant from receiving full protections under the PDA as well.

Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990)

This landmark act represents yet another attempt to address conspicuous gaps in the protections afforded by the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In short, the ADA prohibits discrimination based on disability in employment, transportation, public accommodations, communications, and access to government programs and services. Title I specifically focuses on employment, prohibiting private employers, state and local governments, employment agencies, and labor unions from discriminating against qualified individuals with disabilities in job application procedures, hiring, firing, advancement, and other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment. The law defines a “qualified individual” as a person who can perform the essential functions of a given job, with or without a “reasonable accommodation.” Unlike the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the ADA goes a step beyond simply protecting a group from discrimination by mandating that employers provide reasonable accommodations to disabled job applicants and employees, provided that accommodation does not impose an “undue hardship” on the employer’s operations.

It is important to note that covered employers generally are not required to provide a reasonable accommodation to a disabled employee unless that employee asks for one. Moreover, what constitutes a “reasonable accommodation” may vary widely by employer, job, and employee. Like many other laws on this list, the ADA is an imperfect, though important, attempt to expand access to equal employment opportunities. However, despite several amendments over the last few decades, the ADA still has a way to go before it truly makes employment more accessible and equitable for individuals with disabilities.



Family Medical Leave Act (1993)

Lacking though this law might be, the FMLA is nonetheless a crucial piece of the patchwork of legal protections for American workers. The FMLA provides job-protected leave to eligible employees who require leave from work to tend to their own or a family member’s serious health condition, or to bond with a new child, as well as for military leave (under certain conditions). The law provides up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave for a qualifying reason, provided the employer falls under the jurisdiction of FMLA, and provided the employee has been employed for at least 12 months and has worked at least 1,250 hours preceding the request for leave. Its most-used function may be coverage for

parental leave for the birth or adoption and care of a new child, though as noted above, FMLA does not guarantee the right to paid parental leave. In some cases, FMLA also may be used intermittently to help employees with chronic illnesses or conditions (or employees who must provide care for family members with chronic ailments) manage their health and maintain their employment.



Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act (2009)

This act takes its name from Lilly Ledbetter, a former union worker at the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company who unsuccessfully sued her employer in the late 1990s over the glaring disparity between her pay and that of her male colleagues upon her retirement. Amending the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Ledbetter Fair Pay Act states that the 180-day window to take legal action against your employer for pay discrimination, on the basis of your status as a member of a protected class, resets with each paycheck affected by that discriminatory action. In effect, this law removes one barrier (a restrictive statute of limitations) to bringing complaints of unfair compensation practices against an employer.

Families First Coronavirus Response Act (2020)

Though this law is a broad response to the current global public health crisis, several provisions speak directly to worker rights and protections. Effective April 1, 2020, the FFCRA establishes the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA), which is intended to help protect families and workers during the COVID-19 outbreak. Under the EPSLA, eligible employees who are unable to work or telework due to COVID-19 are entitled to up to two weeks of paid sick leave, regardless of any leave time earned through their employer's regular leave policies. In a stark but important departure from the standard eligibility requirements for FMLA, employees are eligible from their first day of employment.

The FFCRA also includes the Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act, which mandates that employers with fewer than 500 workers provide up to 12 weeks of paid leave for employees unable to work or telework because their child's school or day care has closed, or their care provider is unavailable due to COVID-19. Employers are not required to pay employees for the first 10 days of such public health emergency leave.

For those who have lost their jobs due to the COVID-19 crisis, Title III of the FFCRA temporarily suspends work requirements under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as the food stamp program). This provision allows participants who would have otherwise become ineligible for SNAP upon the loss of employment to continue receiving those benefits.

Labor Union Reading List

A guide by **Laura Sato**

A union is an organized group of workers who work as a collective to improve wages, hours, and working conditions for all. Most museum workers are not unionized. In a study done by Bloomberg Law, about 12.1% of all museum employees belong to a union and 12.6% are on a union contract. More than 40 museums in the United States have unions. By organizing and being part of a union, museum workers can fight towards better wages and for a new contract. Unions can also provide the ability for workers to get a seat at the table regarding funds, wages, and mission of the cultural institution.

Here is a list of books and resources that tell the history of labor and unions, as well as how to work alongside and in labor unions.

HISTORY OF LABOR UNIONS

“The Rise and fall of Labor Unions in the U.S.: From the 1930s until 2012 (but mostly the 1930s-1980s)” by G. William Domhoff

In this post, Domhoff provides a history of labor unions from the 1930s until 2012 and tells the story of unions alongside labor policy.

Out in the Union: A Labor History of Queer America by Miriam Frank

In this book, Frank tells the history of queer American workers from the mid 1960s to 2013.

A History of America in Ten Strikes by Eric Loomis

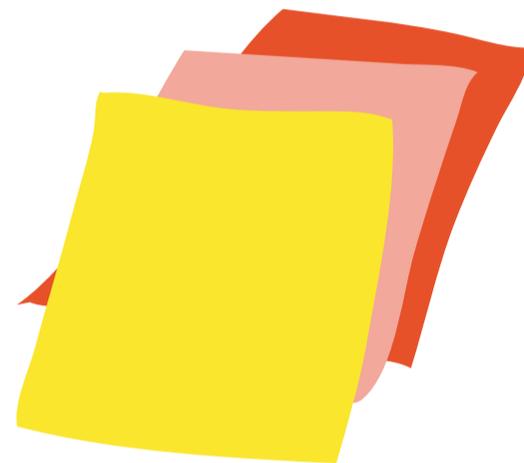
By using case studies of ten strikes, Loomis’ book discusses the myths and assumptions of the U.S. labor movement.

Radium Girls: The Dark Story of America’s Shining Women by Kate Moore

Moore tells the story of young factory women who fought for better work conditions and for workers’ health and safety.

Workers on Arrival: Black Labor in the Making of America by Joe William Trotter Jr.

Tells the history and contribution of African-American workers from the 1600s to the present.



RESOURCES

What do Unions Do?

by Eds. James Bennett and Bruce E. Kaufman

This book dives into unions as collective units and how the voice of unions represented labor in the workforce.

Industrial Relations Systems by John T. Dunlop

Dunlop uses his experience as an arbitrator and mediator between unions and the government, to recommend that representatives of management and labor unions to sit down together, investigate, and work to resolve problems.

Unions and Collective Bargaining: Economic Effects in a Global Environment by Toke Aidt, Zafiris Tzannatos

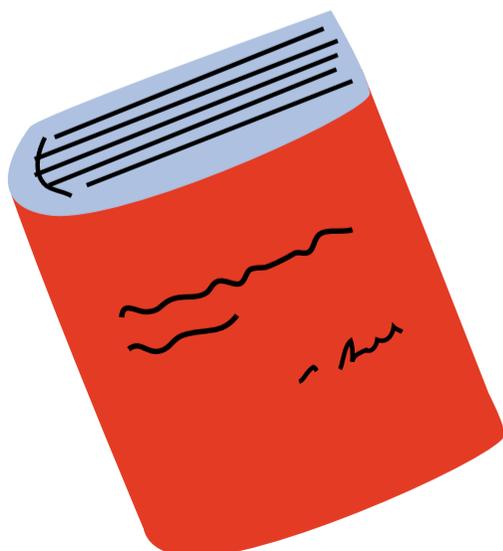
This reference book talks about the economic effects of unions and of collective bargaining.

Beginning Human Relations by Laura Portolese Dias

This book discusses various topics to help attain job success. Chapters include: Handle Conflict and Negotiation, Manage Diversity at Work, and Work with Labor Unions.

Rebuilding Labor by Ruth Milkman and Kim Voss

By recalling stories of union members, Milkman and Voss give suggestions on ways that unions can change their strategies for the better.



Museum Worker Resources

A guide by Ramsey Hoey

We are experiencing strange, unforeseen times at this very moment. While socially distanced, we all need some extra support right now. I am appreciative of my cohort, educators, and co-workers that jumped in so quickly to help. Continuously sharing resources, online zoom workshops, grant application opportunities as well as guides and workshops for mental well-being and mindfulness. I felt supported, but also reminded, that we are all in this experience collectively. Inspired by the support, I put together the follow list of resources and events below, which pertains too all the multiple roles of labor in the arts community.

Museum Workers Speak

An activist group Facebook page who discuss improving working conditions and internal practices in museums and cultural institutions

[Link]<https://www.facebook.com/MuseumWorkersSpeak>

Common Field

Common Field posts nation-wide job openings, opportunities and programs in the arts. Their current online program is Convening, runs April 23 through May 3. Convening includes conversations, dialogue sessions, panels, reports from the field, workshops, project commissions, and All Together sessions.

[Link]<https://www.commonfield.org/>

Creative Capital - Artists Resources

A list of resources for artists working in all disciplines, as well as arts philanthropists, and arts professionals.

[Link]creative-capital.org/2020/03/13/list-of-arts-resources-during-the-covid-19-outbreak/

Sixty Inches from Center

Resources in Chicago and across the Midwest, Sixty Inches from Center is an online arts publication and archiving initiative, they share a large range of recommendations, resources, and links for artists and arts laborers.

[Link]http://sixtyinchesfromcenter.org/in-case-of-emergency-artist-resources-for-you-for-us/?fbclid=IwAR2k-R0iizwjI36uTRKwrONMfsnISRqeLvlIQRFFRMufCChBvqnow_lj10

American Alliance of Museums

Online, free resources for museum laborers including career management resources which include tips on career transitioning, cover letter and resumes, experience, interviews, mentoring, careers, networking, and salary negotiation.

[Link]<https://www.aamus.org/programs/manage-yourcareer/career-management-resources/>

Social Distancing Festival - Virtual

The Social Distancing Festival are celebrating artists and art laborers and their work that has been disrupted. Open to all, submissions include video and webcam rehearsals, scenes or recordings from previous workshops, design plans, and performers.

[Link]<https://www.socialdistancingfestival.com>

Communion and Co-Working Kiki & Sit Visit at Reunion Chicago

“Every Tuesday and Thursdays Reunion Chicago opens its doors to folks that want to get some work done, ask us a question, peep the space for a gathering, or just dream.”

Quoted from Reunion Chicago website - Address: 2557 W North Ave, Chicago IL 60647

[Link]reunionchicago.com

e-flux Podcasts

Podcasts featuring engaged artists, thinkers, and workers today. Transcripts are available on request

[Link]<https://www.e-flux.com/podcasts/>

Propeller Fund

Gallery 400 and threewalls

Administered by Gallery 400 and threewalls. Propeller fund is funded through a grant from the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. Propeller Fund provides multiple grants directly to visual artists and groups living and working in Cook County, Illinois from amounts of \$1,000 – \$6,000. The Propeller Fund seeks to support projects that are independent, informal, self-organized, and long-term or short-term.

[Link]<https://gallery400.uic.edu/interact/propeller-fund/>

@openingnightchi

Instagram account for Chicago local exhibition

@artofsocialdistancing

Instagram account for international online exhibitions

12 Sites of Memorial to Labor History, Figures, & Movements

A guide by Jojo Galvan Mora

Union organizer and labor leader Samuel Gompers once wrote the following quote for the American Federationist Magazine: “To be free, the workers must have choice. To have choice they must retain in their own hands the right to determine under what conditions they will work.” For generations, the legend and history surrounding labor movement leaders has left us with a lifetime of heritage to interpret, and campaigning to learn from. As the 21st century labor movement addresses some of the most unique challenges ever presented in the workplace, there is a case to be made for understanding our collective roots as laborers. The arts and humanities have a special role in this interpretation as the record keepers and stewards of memory for our collective efforts. This has left us with a rich trail of monuments, museums, and spaces that celebrate the history of our labor movement, interpret the messages of our leaders past and present, and inspire new directions. This list celebrates the legacy arts and labor have created to help us remember who we are and what we can accomplish. This mix of parks, monuments and art installations isn’t comprehensive, but is instead meant to serve as a launching pad for exploration into national, regional, and local labor history and activism, reminding us that no matter where we’re from or what we do, we all collectively deserve the same rights.

Pullman National Monument
Pullman Historic District, Chicago, Illinois

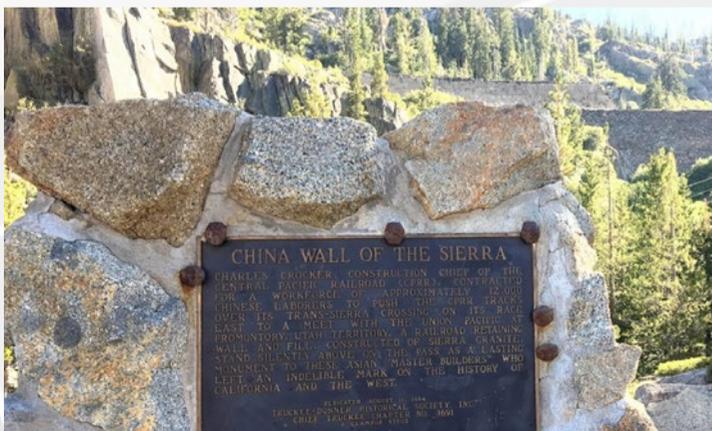


Samuel Gompers Monument
Robert Aitken,
Washington D.C.



Samuel Gompers has monuments and memorials dedicated to him scattered throughout the United States, and all are rightfully earned. One of the most recognizable and influential figures in American Labor history, he was the founder of the American Federation of Labor. His philosophies led to the foundation of collective bargaining procedures, and his countless publications and speeches have continued to shape labor efforts in the modern day. Gompers is buried in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, near other key figures on both sides of the labor movement during the Gilded Age.

China Wall of the Sierra
Donner Summit, Truckee, California



Labor's Grove and Monument
Harrisburg Pennsylvania

Fearless Girl
Kristen Visbal,
New York Stock Exchange, New York



Kristen Visbal's Fearless Girl was unveiled in 2017 the day before International Women's Day, originally placed at Bowling Green, in front of the Charging Bull statue synonymous with Wall Street. Commissioned by an index fund focused around investing in gender-diverse companies, the 4 foot statue aimed to send a message centered around diversity in the workplace, especially in the boardrooms where women continue to be underrepresented. Becoming an overnight sensation, the statue was ultimately moved to accommodate the crowds it drew and the complaints of the Charging Bull Statue artist. Fearless Girl now faces the New York Stock Exchange.

I Am A Man Plaza
John Jackson and Cliff Garten Studio
Memphis, Tennessee



Haymarket Martyrs Memorial,
Albert Weinert,
Forest Home Cemetery, Forest Park,
Illinois

The Haymarket Martyrs Monument was erected in 1893 commemorating executed anarchists for their suspected part in the Chicago Haymarket Bombing that left several dead and injured. The monument was erected at Forest Home where the martyrs are buried because no cemetery in Chicago would allow them to be buried within. The memorial depicts lady justice standing over a fallen worker, with the bottom of the monument inscribed with the final words of August Spies, one of the martyrs. "The day will come when our silence will be more powerful than the voices you are throttling today."



César E. Chávez National Monument,
Keene, California



The César E. Chávez National Monument is sprawled over 100 acres in Keene, California, on property that once operated as the headquarters of the United Farm Workers and was the home of Chávez from the 1970s to his death. The monument consists of a visitor's center, interpretive history displays, and a memorial garden where the remains of Chavez and his wife are buried. Certain buildings on the site continue to be operated as offices for the UFW, and the monument is being proposed for inclusion into a national park along with other sites important to the farm worker movement.

**Transcending,
David Barr, Sergio de Guisti,
Philip A. Hart Plaza, Detroit, Michigan**



**The Labor Monument:
Philadelphia's Tribute to the American Worker,
John Kindness,
Elmwood Park, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**



**Statue of John Henry,
Charles Cooper,
John Henry Historical Park, Talcott, West Virginia**

American tall-tale legend John Henry was a black steel driver immortalized in the legendary story where he defeated a steam-powered drill meant to replace him in a head-to-head competition. Using his legendary strength and accuracy, he defeated the drill only to immediately die after. This larger than life, rugged statue unveiled in 1972 weighs over three tons and perfectly immortalizes the fabled rail worker who has shaped labor lore and efforts for generations.



**Zuccotti Park,
Lower Manhattan, New York City**



Zuccotti Park in New York was the birthplace of the Occupy Wall Street movement in 2011 challenging economic inequality, and corporate influence on government policy. The foliage and public art installations become temporary homes to thousands of activists who "occupied" the park with tents, tables, and signs bearing the movement's motto "We are the 99%" referencing income disparity, wealth inequality, and the American debt crisis. Occupation of the park lasted from September 17th to November 15th 2011. That same year, TIME Magazine named "The Protester" as the Person of the Year, directly mentioning the OWS movement among other international efforts.

Labor Leader Trading Cards

A guide by Amanda Lautermilch

Labor Leader Trading Cards are bite-size pieces of information about a labor leaders from US History. While these cards are not a playable game like Magic the Gathering or other deck building games, they are, in our opinion, collectible and great for trading and paying tribute to these figures who paved the way for more humane, fair, and just labor practices in the United States.

Amanda Cachia



- ✿ Writer
- ✿ Curator
- ✿ Researcher

Biography

Amanda Cachia is a scholar and independent curator and critic living in Sydney, Australia. Her research focuses on modern and contemporary art; curatorial studies; disability studies; performance and politics; activist art and museum access; and phenomenology. Her dissertation centered on how the choreopolitics of disabled bodies informs new knowledges of space through various contemporary art practices. In addition to her writing and research, Cachia has organized approximately forty exhibitions over the last fifteen years in various cities across the USA, England, Australia, and Canada.

César Chávez



- ✿ Advocate
- ✿ Symbol of Hope
- ✿ Organizer

Biography

Born in 1927, César Chávez was a folk hero and symbol of hope to millions of Americans. In 1962, he and a few others set out to organize a union of farm workers. Nearly everyone told them it was impossible. But for a time they succeeded beyond anyone's wildest imaginings. An ardent advocate of nonviolence, Chávez was one of the most inspirational labor leaders of the 20th century, with an influence that stretched far beyond the California fields.



Mother Jones



- ✿ Activist
- ✿ Orator
- ✿ Organizer

Biography

Born in 1937, Mary Harris "Mother" Jones rose to prominence as a fiery orator and fearless organizer for the Mine Workers during the first two decades of the 20th century. Her voice had great carrying power. Her energy and passion inspired men half her age into action and compelled their wives and daughters to join in the struggle. If that didn't work, she would embarrass men to action. "I have been in jail more than once and I expect to go again. If you are too cowardly to fight, I will fight," she told them.

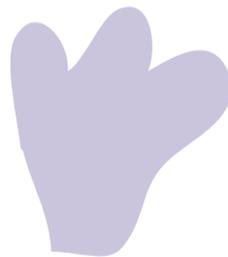
Bradley Lomax



- ✿ Defender
- ✿ Ally
- ✿ Advocate

Biography

Bradley Lomax, a key figure in the Independent Living Movement and member of the Black Panther Party, worked to support the needs of people with disabilities in the community of Oakland, California during the 1970s. A disabled member of the Black Panther Party (BPP), Lomax's involvement with the 504 Sit-In was critical to the sit-in's success as a major milestone of the Disability Rights Movement. The protest lasted 28 days and involved more than 150 protestors, and due to the involvement of Lomax along with other disabled Black Panthers in the protest, the BPP made and kept a commitment to feed one hot meal to every protestor every day. Lomax set the standard for solidarity between Black activists and the largely white Disability Rights Movement, and without his efforts, the 504 Sit-In would have collapsed.



La Tanya Autry and Mike Murawski



- ✿ Defender
- ✿ Visionary
- ✿ Advocate

Biography

In August 2017, La Tanya Autry and Mike Murawski created the #MuseumsAreNotNeutral t-shirt campaign to refute the myth of neutrality that many museum professionals and others put forward. Autry and Murawski began this movement to acknowledge that museums are cultural products that originate from colonial enterprise, and therefore, they are about power. They are political constructs. Museums Are Not Neutral is a bridge for relating and discussing historical and ongoing colonialist practices with people from various occupations. Wearing the T-shirt is, as one student termed, “a walking exhibition.” The emphatic statement often leads to impromptu discussions about the histories and roles of museums. These everyday encounters that happen in grocery stores, airports, on the streets, as well as on campus greens, and other places are opportunities for everyone to reconsider our institutions and envision what we want from them.

Pauline Newman



- ✿ Organizer
- ✿ Defender
- ✿ Advocate

Biography

Pauline Newman, born in 1887, was a queer American labor union organizer and workers’ rights activist. She began working at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory as a child, and as a teenager, she organized an after-work leftist book club at the factory, a precursor of her career to come. When she was 20, Newman led a group of independent women to organize a rent strike in the tenements of the Lower East Side. 10,000 families refused to pay their rent on January 1, 1908, the largest rent strike the city had ever seen, which sparked decades of tenants’ rights activism. The following year, she organized a strike of 40,000 female garment workers. The attention earned her the title “east side Joan of Arc” from the New York Times, and a Socialist Party nomination for New York secretary of state, even though women did not yet have the right to vote.

Portia Moore



- ✿ Creator
- ✿ Writer
- ✿ Visionary

Biography

Portia Moore, a recipient of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Laura Bush 21st Century fellowship, is a museum visionary and activist-scholar who employs Critical Race Theory to interrogate museums and other cultural heritage spaces. Her research examines the intersections of race, community, technology and social media, and inclusion in museums. A Regular Contributing Writer and Project Advisor for the Inclusion; her writing and research is used as training and learning materials at museums across the country. She is the co-creator of The Visitors of Color project; a national counternarrative project recognized by the American Alliance of Museums as a resource on DEIA (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access), which seeks to highlight and share the lived experiences, insights, and reflections on modern museums from marginalized citizens. You can follow her on Twitter @PorchiaMuseM.

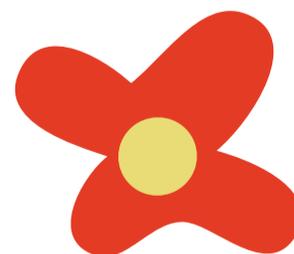
Jane Addams



- ✿ Writer
- ✿ Organizer
- ✿ Ally

Biography

Born in 1860, and graduated from Rockford Female Seminary in 1881, Jane Addams founded, with Ellen Gates Starr, the world-famous social settlement Hull-House on Chicago’s Near West Side in 1889. From Hull-House, where she lived and worked until her death in 1935, Jane Addams built her reputation as the country’s most prominent woman through her writing, settlement work, and international efforts for peace. She wrote prolifically on topics related to Hull-House activities, producing eleven books and numerous articles as well as maintaining an active speaking schedule nationwide and throughout the world. As a result of her work in the Peace Movement during WWI, she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931.



Interviews

Jameel Bridgewater
MCA Coat Check
E-mail: jameelbridgewater@gmail.com
Pronouns: He/Him

Bio: My name is Jameel Bridgewater, I'm a Graphic Designer from Champaign, IL currently living and working in Chicago. I graduated with a bachelor of arts degree from Columbia College Chicago in 2016, and studied Graphic Design and photography. My work spans between social commentary and the manipulation of photographs, materials, and design to tell stories.

What are your own ambitions for the artistic/museum world? Does the MCA help you towards that goal?

My ambitions for the artistic / museum world is to bring light to the every day working artist like myself, and celebrate black and brown people in an honest and raw way. I want to see more people like me in seats of power and decision making. I also want to touch base on social constructs and how we, as a community, can tackle them. The MCA facilitates time to be in the galleries and opportunities to go to previews, talks, and shows. It also may put me next to people that may have those positions in higher places and the ability to ask questions. So sometimes, the museum can be helpful towards that goal.

Do you feel like the MCA is doing enough in terms of equity and inclusion at every level of the institution from the artists on display, front facing staff, and administration? If not, what do you believe needs to change/what changes are being made already?

I feel like the MCA is doing pretty well in terms of equity and inclusion as far as the artists on display and the events that take place around the institution for sure. There has been a spike in diversity as far as the museum goes in the last few years in my observation. Culture and demographic is changing, so with that I think the museum has kept up with what would feed the community and their current viewer. There is a bit of a break up in hierarchy in the professional museum world when it comes to job and level of work in the institutions infrastructure though. You can see the level of responsibility one holds in the museum based off of most visual attributes. I wish there was program for individuals that are artists, that also work at the museum. To see a system that would assist and facilitate showcasing for working



artists on a public level, would be a dream. I believe it could assist breaking out artists; most of the museums front facing staff have BA's and are some of the city's top, local talent. Sometimes It can feel like a fine line between being a museum employee and being a full-fledged growing artist.

What drew you to working at the MCA, and working for coat check?

I have been going to the MCA since I was a freshman at Columbia College Chicago and for every art student it would be the dream, or perfect place to work. That and the style of art that was being showcased was very interesting to me. Working coat check is really just a step into the door for me. I would like to come in to meet people and build a community around art. I think what makes it worth it, is the interactions and the observations I am able to have of the art viewer.

What are your personal interests and passions, and what he has been doing recently to help pass the time (maybe this is something artistic or physical)?

I'm an art director, that loves design and physical objects. I construct garments through shape and function. My passions are to tell stories through my work. I have been working on a clothing collection and biking. It has been a very self reflecting and interesting time.



**Kristin Field, volunteer programs coordinator
Garfield Park Conservatory
Pronouns: She/Her**

What is your background? How did you get into this work?

It is a bit of a long path, but I'll do my best to keep it short! I majored in international relations and communications in college. I joined the Peace Corps after I graduated and spent 2 years in Cameroon as a community health volunteer. When I got back to Chicago after I completed my Peace Corps service I worked at a refugee agency helping newly settled individuals find work in Chicago.

During that time I realized I really love science & gardening and was interested in urban agriculture. I completed the University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener program and started volunteering at the Garfield Park Conservatory as a beekeeper. I changed career paths and started working at a nonprofit that focused on environmental law and policy. After about 2 years there I was really craving more hands on work when this position at the Conservatory opened up! I've been working at the Conservatory for a little over two years now.

How does your institution show appreciation and solidarity for your volunteers?

We try to show appreciation in a number of different ways! First of all, on a daily basis by verbally thanking volunteers for their work after every shift. For me personally, making sure to take the time to get to know volunteers and what is going on in their lives outside of the Conservatory is also really important. We also host a number of events throughout the year to both show appreciation and foster community. Our biggest appreciation event is the Volunteer Appreciation

Dinner we usually host every April where we serve volunteers dinner and have awards, gifts, and activities. We also try to host two smaller get togethers throughout the year as well. We really rely on volunteers at the Conservatory, and staff truly do appreciate all the work that volunteers contribute to make the Conservatory the place it is. We try our best to make sure volunteers know that they are part of the team at the Conservatory!

How does supervising and working with volunteers impact and understanding your view of labor?

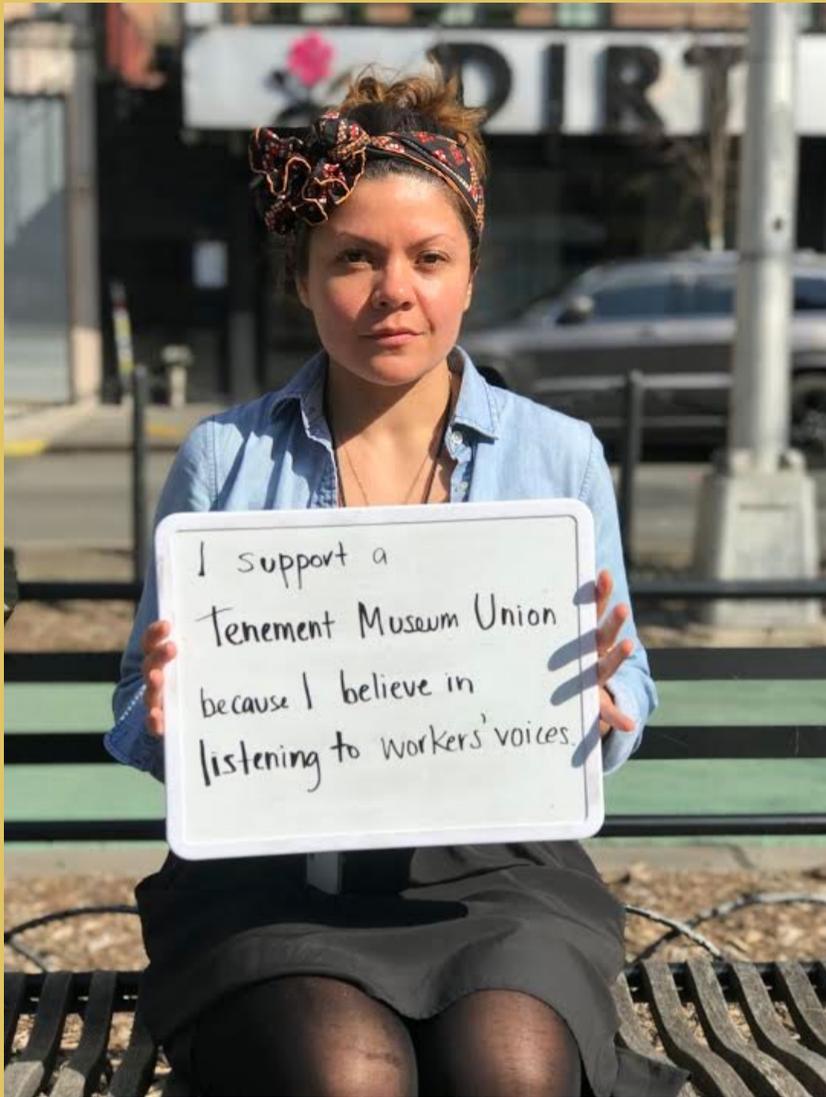
That's a really interesting question! There are so many different types of labor; there is the more obvious physical labor that many of our volunteers do like mulching a garden or helping to plant a tree, but there is also social and emotional labor as well that often goes more unseen. For example, our family programming volunteers really do a lot to support all of the kids that come to our programming and make sure they feel seen and supported. Like in our society, not all types of labor are seen and valued the way that they should be; I try to be conscious of this and make sure I am recognizing all the types of labor volunteers do, not just the most obvious roles.

What is the impact of volunteer engagement on your institution's overall identity and/or culture?

Our volunteers have a huge impact! The Conservatory very truly wouldn't be the same without them. I think one of the most important ways volunteers shape the culture at the Conservatory is that they allow for more personal interaction with our visitors and more opportunities for informal learning. Beekeeping and composting volunteers have weekly free public demonstrations; demonstration garden volunteers can answer visitor questions about growing food in small spaces in Chicago; tour guides can connect even a seasoned visitor to our collection in new ways; special event volunteers make sure that everyone that comes to our family programming feels welcomed, has fun, and hopefully learns something new or tries a new experience.

What are some of the challenges of working with volunteers and, when they arise, how do you overcome them?

In a room full of people who know a lot about plants, it can be a challenge to make sure volunteers feel acknowledged for what they bring to the table. I always want to make sure volunteers know that their own knowledge and background is valued. We try to take the time to really listen to our volunteers' knowledge, experiences, and opinions. I've learned so much from volunteers, and it is really important to foster an open environment where people feel comfortable sharing!



Megan Elevado
Member, Tenement Museum Union, UAW 2110
Co-Organizer, NYC Museum Workers Happy Hour & Museum Workers Manifesto

How did you get into museum work? How did that lead to labor organizing?

Following college, I found myself in event planning and fundraising roles at cultural institutions and eventually ended up at the American Museum of Natural History. From there I went to grad school and did a curatorial fellowship at the Cooper Hewitt National Design Museum. Eventually, I ended up where I am now, teaching at Parsons The New School for Design and working in education at the Tenement Museum.

My research considers Western museums as places that perpetuate colonial legacies in their administrative practices, architectural structures, and through their fundraising, collecting, and curatorial practices. My interest in labor organizing grew out of my analysis and reimagining of what “the museum” can be. If changes are made within museums, they’re often top-down decisions that don’t consult or consider the perspectives of those “on the ground” who see what’s really going on in the museum day to day. Visitor-facing and non-senior staff are often considered expendable and not valuable, but their experiences and knowledge should be tapped to truly make museums responsive to their visitors

and the communities in which they exist. My frustration with upper-level management dismissing or inadequately addressing requests for support and change from lower-level and visitor-facing workers is what spurred my interest in organizing.

With the successful unionization efforts in early 2019 at the New Museum, Tenement Museum, and Guggenheim along with worker-inspired protests at the Whitney, I saw a lot of worker solidarity within museums, but not a lot of conversation across institutions. This led to the birth of NYC Museum Workers Happy Hour that I initiated with Antonio Serna. We wanted to get museum workers from across New York City in the room together, to celebrate worker-initiated successes (from union drives to access programming), share strategies, and connect. Our goal is to develop worker solidarity across NYC cultural institutions and museums. The first Museum Workers Happy Hour was on May 1, 2019. Since then, we have held more get-togethers and organized a month-long series of Museum Workers Manifesto writing sessions as part of Art Workers Lab @PS122 Gallery from January to February 2020.

Tell us about the process of organizing a union of at the Tenement Museum.

It’s important to highlight that Tenement Museum workers raised their issues with administration multiple times. Hitting a wall, unionizing was a way to have our voices heard and needs acknowledged. I’ll share some of the reasons why I think the Tenement Museum union drive was so successful (winning the vote 72-3).

1. Person to person conversations. Successful organizing is relational. This means face to face interactions (when possible), asking how others feel about the issues being raised, where they stand, what their concerns are, and fielding questions people may have.
2. Respect for position. If someone isn’t sure or doesn’t support a union, that’s ok. They have the right to their opinion and to disagree. Ask them more about their stance, it is an opportunity to learn different perspectives on the situation and may even help develop a stronger campaign. Perhaps something is missing or some people don’t feel well represented. Don’t try to forcefully persuade, especially early on. Revisit the conversation after some actions have been taken, some people may shift in their support. If they haven’t budged, again, that’s ok. Just because they aren’t with you, doesn’t mean they are against you.
3. Consistent lines of communication: keeping everyone in the loop, addressing concerns as they arise, and fostering a culture of open community dialogue. Although this may seem obvious, it takes a lot of effort to do this well. We had multiple in-person group meetings (with individual catch-up

sessions for those who could not attend) where everyone was encouraged to offer their thoughts and expertise without judgement. The Organizing Committee made sure that all voices would be heard and suggestions considered.

Obviously these are just three elements of a much larger process, but I think they are essential to successful organizing.

KUDOS, LOVE, and RESPECT to the Tenement Museum Union Organizing Committee for their incredible and tireless dedication that built solidarity and community among our bargaining unit members that remains strong to this day.

How can museum workers advocate for their rights and interests, even in the absence of a recognized union?

Know your legal rights as a worker. It's a starting point to gauge whether or not your workplace is adhering to labor laws. If not, start advocating to see change. Legally, the institution can't argue.

Power in numbers. Regardless the size of your workplace, worker solidarity makes a difference. Identify colleagues who want to see change and who want to bring up issues to administration. It's better to go as a group than individually. Or, if an individual does make a public statement (at a meeting or via email) be sure to back that person up. For example, if a colleague stands up during a meeting and makes a statement about a work issue, follow up by saying, "I agree with what was just brought up by my colleague." And then another person can say the same thing, followed by another. Showing support and taking up time/space is impactful and communicates that a concern is shared by many instead of a few, which makes it more difficult for administration to ignore.

Bring in an influential person. Is there a board member, prominent community member, or famous patron who can serve as an ally to your cause? If you know of a powerful/influential person whom administration would listen to, ask them to speak on your behalf. It depends on what their relationship is to the institution, but they should be someone the administration would want to please, or at least someone with whom admin would not want to fall out of favor. This individual (or could be a group/company) may be able to make a public statement about your cause that can reach a bigger audience, resulting in outside pressure. This was done by the New Museum Union during their campaign. They asked artists to openly support the union campaign. This tactic can be used with or without a union.

Any tips for museum workers looking to organize or interested in exploring unionization?

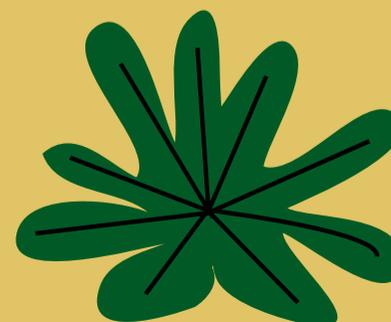
Talk, talk, talk, to others. Remember, organizing is relational. Talk to those who have expressed they want to see change in your workplace. Get to know people outside of your department. Talk to people who have unionized. Send an email or a DM to museum unions. Don't feel that any of your questions are stupid. There are a lot of misperceptions about unions and organizing. It's better to get clarification than assume.

Understand that there is a lot of work involved. Passion and commitment are, of course, important, but depending on your job(s), home, and life circumstances you may not be able to take on certain roles. There are many ways to provide support. Do what fits your personality, and lifestyle. When speaking to those who have unionized or organized in a capacity you would like to see happen in your workplace, don't just ask how they did it. Ask about time commitment and other contextual questions that give you an overall picture of the process.

How have your organizing priorities shifted given the COVID-19 crisis? How do you think this might impact the future of both work and collective bargaining within museums?

After doing what I can to support immediate needs of friends and colleagues, I am taking this moment to step back. I think now is a time to reflect on what has been accomplished so far, as well as observe and take inventory of what is currently happening in the museum and cultural worker community. The ills of the system are continually being exposed. Because everything is happening so quickly and unpredictably, I think trying to take actions right now, in the moment, won't be productive or helpful because we are in the middle of a labor crisis in our community (and across so many other sectors). There is definitely more to come. This time can be used productively to build momentum so that we're ready to take steps once our worlds open up again.

I hope this will be a critical moment – we have more time to talk, make connections, build community, and consider what changes are really needed to create systems that support workers. My hope is that we will realize that we cannot fix, patch, or mend the current system nor return to what was the status quo.



Opinion



How the Other Half Lives: Cultural Workers in the Economy of Inequality

By Hayden Hunt

Throughout the United States, museums employ hundreds of thousands of workers that broadly work to preserve our society's art and culture. Cultural workers can understand the draw of working in or around museums: these are institutions they believe in, that inspired them, and that they hope will inspire others.

Museums are striving to become equitable institutions on a variety of fronts. In terms of employment, many follow federal guidelines that prohibit job discrimination on the basis of race, gender, or nationality, as well as (some) state guidelines that protect workers on the basis of sexuality or gender identity. In recent years, there have also been initiatives to eliminate unpaid internships that perpetuate class inequality. Other museums chose to offer free or reduced admission costs in order to greatly expand access to all members of the public.

Is it enough?

In many ways, museums benefit social and economic inequality. At most museums, they lose money for every visitor that walks in the door—since it costs more to keep the lights on than they earn by charging visitors for an entry ticket. It's why so many museums rely on hefty fundraising initiatives to keep themselves afloat. As someone who has worked at both a commercial art gallery and in the development department of a major museum, there are few differences between how each organization prioritizes the needs of the wealthy in order to ensure an institution's survival.

Wealth-based favoritism often occurs behind closed doors or after normal business hours, but it results in major discrepancies between how museums treat donors and how they treat their average visitor. Museums may be striving to become more equitable in the eyes of the public, but there is a pervasive invisible favoritism that goes on behind the scenes that upholds an unbalanced economic status quo. The average visitor is not invited to exclusive events (often, with high ticket prices), nor are they invited to travel with curators on specially planned

fundraising trips. Museums need funding, but is this the most ethical way to raise it?

Museums strive to function like democratic institutions. They are open to the public and they strive to be accessible to all. Like any democracy, however, they remain susceptible to special interests, bribery, and nepotism.

One of the great tragedies of museum work is that the people who work in museums rarely make salaries that would allow them to collect the type of art that museum trustees do, and rarely do they earn seats on the executive boards that govern these institutions. How often does a museum wing get named after a loyal staffer, rather than a deep-pocketed donor?

If museums are to become the type of institutions we idealize, it will come at a great cost. They should not be institutions that just serve the hyper-elite, who visit the institutions after all of the regular visitors have closed. Nor should wealthy trustees dictate the terms of employment for staff members who often have little say over an institution's destiny. Cultural workers need to be valued for the work that they do, and ensuring this happens may require alternate governing structures that remove some individuals from seats of power that were earned solely on the basis of an individual's financial contributions.

In a changing world that is becoming more inequitable day by day, it is time for museums—those institutions that we love and cherish—to value cultural workers more reciprocally than they have before.

With Great Power Comes Total Disregard for Workers: My Life as an Emerging Museum Professional

by Megan Moran

Does your employer care about you? How do you know? How does it feel to be cared for by an organization?

As long as our basic needs for survival (income and healthcare) remain tied inextricably to our employment, these questions concern all of us working in the museum field. Many of us are all too familiar with the toxic aspects of working for largely nonprofit organizations: the scarcity mentality, the understanding we should be grateful to be paid at all for our work, and the idea that we are entirely replaceable by any number of fellow idealists with humanities degrees.

Being a young professional in the museum field comes with its own terrifying blend of imposter syndrome and fear of never finding stable enough employment to pay back your student loans.

I fully expected to manage these fears and insecurities upon graduating with my Master's in Museum and Exhibition Studies. What I was less prepared for was the staggering amount of dispassionate unprofessionalism I would encounter on the job search.

The precariousness of navigating power dynamics and imposter syndrome in this field never hit harder for me than my first attempt at negotiating a salary for what would have been my first full-time job in a museum.

Earlier this year, I was offered an Education Manager position at an institution in the Chicago area that would have been perfectly timed with the end of my contract-based part-time job. The offer felt like I had finally achieved the mythical "big break," that upward move in my career I've been chasing for years. I received the job offer via email from my would-be supervisor. He said I needed to set a start date before HR would send me the official offer. So I accepted the job (albeit informally), expressing my excitement about joining the team, but I was careful to mention that I looked forward to reviewing the official offer letter.

It didn't escape my notice in the email that the salary offer was \$1,000 less than the low end of the salary range I gave when he asked for it before we even set up the first interview. When I told him my range was \$45,000 – \$55,000, and he said absolutely nothing in response to it, I assumed that meant they could make an offer in that range. You know, like any reasonable human being. But I wasn't worried; in fact, I saw it as a sign they were bracing for a counteroffer, and I believed I was prepared to make it. Every professional mentor I've ever had and several peers in the nonprofit field have advised me to always ask. It's expected, and it's completely standard professionalism.

While I waited for the formal offer letter, I did my research. I based my counteroffer on three key sources: the organization's most recent publicly available Form 990, my own experience and credentials, and data available on websites like GlassDoor and PayScale.

Based on my research, the median salary for this type of position with my qualifications (6 years experience, Master's degree) at comparable institutions in the Chicago area is \$48,000. I decided to ask for \$47,000 - \$49,000 in my counteroffer, following advice I'd heard to counteroffer high in anticipation of getting another offer lower than my proposed range. I felt confident that my ask was entirely reasonable (especially given the CEO of the organization made around \$180,000 last year). Yes, surely, this was all perfectly reasonable.

Yet while I had convinced myself I was being reasonable, make no mistake: I was terrified. As we all know, talking openly about money is generally taboo and especially so in nonprofits. I did not think the salary offer was insignificant; on the contrary, it was a great deal more than any of my previous annual earnings, and I would have full healthcare coverage. But I decided this risk was worth taking not only for myself, but in the hope that if I did get a higher offer, I could report the data back to websites where it might be useful in other people's negotiations. I fought hard through the discomfort to reassure myself this was reasonable professional conduct.

At this point, I thought I was "doing the dance," so to speak. Best case scenario, they make an offer in the range



I propose. Worst case scenario, they tell me kindly but firmly they can't go any higher. The most likely scenario, I thought, was they would meet me in the middle. As it turns out, what actually happened was far worse than what I imagined the worst case scenario could possibly be.



The offer letter came via email from HR. Based on what I knew theoretically about this process, it was standard for HR to act as an intermediary in a salary negotiation, or otherwise connect the new employee with who they needed to speak with directly. So, I went ahead and sent my counteroffer to HR in reply to the offer letter.

Unbeknownst to me, my counteroffer was forwarded by HR to my would-be supervisor; I only realized this action had been taken when it was him who responded. He wrote back with a single sentence: "I do believe this is a growth opportunity for you, and I hope you will accept the salary at the level we've set."

Though it may not have been a conscious intention on his part, my eyebrows rose at the tone of his reply practically oozing with condescension. I was equally put off by what was left unsaid; this was all he deemed necessary to write back. He didn't feel the need to elaborate on how this job would be a "growth opportunity" for me. No attempt was made to explain the non-financial benefits of the job. No acknowledgement was offered of the case I made for my value to the organization. The implicit meaning was clear: "Know your place. You don't have any power here. Be grateful and take what I've deemed you are worth."

In spite of (or maybe because of) these misgivings, I knew almost right away that I was not going to back down. He said he "hoped" I would accept. I thought, surely, any reasonable professional will engage me in this negotiation, especially now that I have the chance to address him directly and remind him of the salary range I gave weeks ago. Still, I thought we were "doing the dance," not yet realizing that this man was not even pretending to "do the dance" with me.

In my email back to him, I re-stated my case for why my requested salary range was commensurate with my experience and industry standards, all the while expressing my genuine enthusiasm for the job (though I was definitely starting to have trepidations). I concluded the email by sharing my "hope" that we would find the best match for both myself and the organization.

Within an hour, my would-be supervisor emailed back the following two sentences: "Well it appears we are at an impasse. I'm rescinding the offer and wish you well on your job search."

This time, the implicit meaning of these words was painfully clear: "You are disposable. Watch us put you in your place, you entitled millennial woman." It was a cruel, punitive action fully intended to humiliate and demoralize me.

I have to admit, it was hard not to blame myself for botching what was supposed to be my dream opportunity to finally have stability after years of cobbling together part-time and contract work. Very, very hard. But here's the thing that kept me from spiraling into the abyss of self-doubt: knowing my worth and standing up for it forced this organization to show their true colors.

A story about an abusive salary negotiation gone wrong (or right, seeing as I ultimately dodged what I imagine was a massive bullet) in the midst of a global pandemic destabilizing the museum field as we know it...is actually a lot more relevant than you might initially think.

What happened to me weeks before this public health crisis and what is unfolding in the museum field right now are symptomatic of deeply entrenched field-wide issues that boil down to whether or not institutions—pardon me, but—give a shit about their employees as humans worth being invested in.

We love what we do in museums, but why does it so often feel like museums don't love us back?

Just as my nightmare salary negotiation incident is symptomatic of that organization's toxic workplace culture, so too are many of the layoffs and furloughs speaking volumes about how much museums truly value and care for their workers. What do museums even consider their broader institutional mission to be when some have so readily axed their already precariously employed museum educators?

Taking a compassionate view of these unprecedented circumstances, we know that not all senior staff make these decisions without a heavy heart; my question is: how soon are they allowed to let their team know about potential layoffs? I'm less concerned with throwing individual bosses under the bus and more so with how much transparency is practiced in an organization's culture of care. I think we can all agree that it's two entirely different things to be open about hard truths to

give your staff as much notice as possible and keeping them in the dark for as long as you legally can.

We already knew that a gross power imbalance existed between museum leadership and workers. It couldn't be clearer that now more than ever, we need to build power and solidarity among workers. We need unions in museums. We are witnesses and victims of labor injustice in our field, and we have the receipts to prove it. Think about it: who better to collect, archive, interpret, and exhibit the stories of how institutions are and are not caring for their workers during this crisis?

Through collecting and sharing our stories, we must build solidarity and power now if we hope to have a future in museum work.

Museum workers have already started digital story collecting initiatives like this: take a look at Art + Museum Transparency on Twitter and the brilliant #DearMuseums project started by the Museum Education Roundtable. Let's do more. Let's extend this archival practice and collaborate with workers across multiple fields to document their experiences, building much needed solidarity among workers of all different professions.

Museums will still be here after the worst of the pandemic subsides. It is imperative that we not let them forget the human cost of their short-sighted actions to save a buck (looking at you, MoMA). We will not forget the CEOs and upper leadership who did not take pay cuts and opted instead to layoff and furlough their public-facing staff. We will not forget the institutions that used this crisis as an excuse to bust unions by laying off key union organizers. We will not forget that our livelihoods were not eroded by the coronavirus, but by the lack of infrastructure in place to ensure workers are protected and cared for when a crisis of this magnitude strikes.

you're welcome

you're welcome

you're welcome

you're welcome

you're welcome

you're welcome

you're welcome

**when's the last time
someone thanked you?**

Why museum workers don't deserve a living wage

By Anonymous Know-it-all

Recently, museum workers have been kicking up a fuss about their pay, going so far as to create a public spreadsheet listing out their salaries[i] in an affront to the loving care and effort that the wealthy elite have put into constructing an artificial stigma around the subject in order to obscure from the working class their subjugation. "Salary transparency" spits in the face of all employees who have the decency to nervously skirt around the topic of money so as not to commit the mortifying faux pas of revealing that their lives and labor are valued differently from the lives of their colleagues and coworkers. This is just one tactic that museum workers have used to argue that they should be paid more, but amidst all this uproar, they appear not to have considered a crucial question:

do they deserve a living wage?

Don't get me wrong, people should obviously be paid for their work (except for artists because, honestly, they need the exposure more); but salaries are proportional to the necessity of the work, and some jobs are simply more important than others. For instance, where would society be without elite corporate lawyers who do everything in their power to ensure that the rich and powerful aren't beholden to the same laws as everyone else? And it goes without saying that hardworking CEOs who inherited their companies from their equally hardworking parents and tirelessly evade taxes and exploit workers to cope with economic downturns that are entirely, 100% out of their control are more essential to our great nation than nurses, whose only responsibility is to keep people alive. Sorry, museum workers: the fact of the matter is that you're just not that important.

I, for one, could do without museums, and I'm sure most people would agree.[ii] For starters, art is old hat: I mean, who wants to look at a painting when they could stare at

a blank wall instead? Frankly, the world could use less art giving meaning to life and inspiring interests outside of efficient, monotonous commitment to the corporate machine. Moreover, when I visit a new place, I love having nothing to do besides sitting quietly in my hotel room, which is why it's patently ridiculous that museums are so intrinsically tied to the identity of every major city in the world.

What can history and science museums contribute to my life that I can't get from the outdated textbooks my high school teachers had to use because of widespread budget cuts? And while we're on the topic of education, what do kids even get out of museum field trips? When I was in school,

I much preferred learning about art, history, and science in the abstract with no concrete frame of reference to personally encountering evidence of times and cultures vastly different from my own.

The way I see it, all museums are teaching our youth is to be interested in unprofitable career paths (museum work included).[iii]

My point is, we don't really need museums, so museum workers should be thankful that they have jobs at all. After all, how much staff can a museum need, anyway? Four, maybe five people? Actually, they could probably make do with just one very talented curator and a couple of unpaid interns.[iv] And these are cushy gigs we're talking about – let's face it, hanging paintings is hardly rocket science. [v] And that's really all there is to running a museum, right? Admittedly, I don't know that much about what goes on behind the scenes in a museum. But I do know with absolute certainty that museum workers don't deserve to be paid a living wage.

***In the early weeks of the COVID-19 crisis, hundreds of museum workers across the US were furloughed and laid off as cultural institutions scrambled to cope with the sudden loss of revenue from admissions sales, event rentals, and fundraisers. Many who did not lose their jobs saw their salaries cut. At the time of writing, there remains a possibility of further losses of employment due to the pandemic. Museums' responses to this crisis have showcased the vulnerability of museum professionals and brought attention to cultural workers' dire need for support and solidarity. We stand with all those whose livelihoods have been threatened by the Coronavirus.

- [i] The Google spreadsheet, currently titled "Arts + All Museum Salary Transparency 2019," actually aims to draw attention to the economic inequalities that plague cultural institutions, particularly in the art world. As this is being written, it has amassance to all major league sporting events combined!
- [ii] Millions of people visit museums each year, so it's probably safe to say that people want them around. See "Museum Facts," American Alliance of Museums (aam-us.org).
- [iii] A study published in 2014 found that museum field trips significantly improved critical thinking, historical empathy, and tolerance in students, as well as their interest in museums (Greene, Kisida, and Bowen, "The Educational Value of Field Trips"). If you need any more proof that museums are awesome, check out *Museums Change Lives* by the Museums Association to learn about the social impact museums can have on their communities.
- [iv] Museums jobs have become highly competitive in recent years: there is a surplus of fledgling museum professionals and increasingly few permanent positions available. Many museums, particularly smaller institutions, have cut costs by having each of their employees filling multiple roles and hiring contractors and un-or-underpaid interns to take care of whatever's left. Kind of makes you wonder why anybody would get a museum studies degree, huh?
- [v] Museum jobs are often highly specialized and require extensive education (often a master's degree or higher). Some roles, like conservator, require extremely specific skills and extensive knowledge in multiple fields. After all, nobody wants to be the guy who screws up a Picasso.

Transitioning Remotely

By Sidney Murphy

2020 has been a time of transition throughout all of our lives, especially for cultural workers. Ryan Hardesty, the Curator of Exhibitions and Collections at the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art at WSU recently had a conversation with me about how this moment in history has impacted his work as curator. He has stated in a virtual conversation that his institution like many others has had to make “institutional pivots requiring creativity and quick leadership”. Some of these creative changes have included online teaching of the museums two university courses, moving the MFA exhibitions which are typically held in the museum space, to alternative spaces and even using online platforms like zoom for gallery talks and receptions. Hardesty also comments on the future of exhibition planning, stating that a “pre-virus exhibition plan may now feel out-of-step given the societal changes underway” which is something that has been on every cultural worker's mind, how do we move forward?

While an institution like a museum or a university gallery may be the traditional space for cultural preservation and production, What about other cultural institutions and workers, or even just the individual? Cultural workers and people are being asked to stay at home, away from the spaces and people that would usually act as a base for their work. They too have to find ways to shift their norm and move past traditional ways of doing cultural work and reach out remotely.

A cultural worker like myself has been confined to my residence for over two weeks, and my passion for culture has only grown stronger.

I too have had to find creative ways to satisfy my desire to feel normalcy in my day to day, by supplementing in this work remotely. I have been utilizing online platforms like Instagram to explore what others have been doing to continue their work remotely, and how individuals have been using this time to reach out to one another and create bonds through this shared experience. Most of my

days have been spent reading, painting, or online, but the major shifts for me have happened outside of that isolation.

For me it all began during a dinner with my family, we had done it so many times before but this time it felt different. My three young nephews sat with us, and we all began telling stories about each other to them. Stories they had never heard before. The natural habit of cultural transmission did not stop when we were confined at home, it almost grew as a way to help us cope with such a large world event. We talked about the past and good memories, as well as our hopes for the future and how we are living in the present. All the ideas that we discuss as cultural workers emerged in this conversation; coping with trauma, community building, the importance of memories, culture preservation and also cultural transmission. While we all have made a shift to viral transmission, the importance of cultural transmission is still very beneficial during these times.

As we are challenged at the moment to take a step away from the normal activities of our lives, we are faced with the opportunity to reach out to one another and not lose sight of the values we hold surrounding culture and sharing it.

I found that as the days went on more people would reach out and vice versa to find or give support, to have these conversations, and to talk about what we want the future to look like. Many people have shared articles, movie suggestions, book reviews, language classes, and artwork because culture brings us all joy even in unsure times.

Ryan Hardesty finished his commentary on how culture work has shifted in this chaotic time by saying “the forecast for a future ‘normal’ may look unlike anything

before” which I completely agree with. Cultural workers have come up with creative ways to continue their work, and individuals like myself may not know, but they have been participating in this work as well. I have hope for the future, especially when it comes to culture work because everything is shifting in new exciting ways.

While the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art is an example of how a museum on a university campus is shifting its creative focus right now, there are many other institutions implementing programs with very similar creative shifts in mind. Many large institutions are under financial pressure due to COVID-19, and have had to lay off many of their workers. The Whitney Museum in New York City recently laid off 76 members of their staff due to the museum closing, but has also made major shifts towards online teaching initiatives to keep most freelancers employed. On April 2nd 2020 the Whitney stated “The program will serve our community during the COVID-19 crisis and will enable you, our dedicated freelance team, to keep working, even though the museum is closed”. This statement sparked a lot of conversation throughout cultural institutions and beyond; while many fear the uncertainty for cultural institutions worldwide, the Whitney museum is setting an amazing example for other museums and galleries to make these changes that will allow this work to continue through uncertain times. A fun

example for how cultural institutions are making shifts to virtual content came from the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago. On March 16 2020 the Shedd Aquarium posted a video of their penguins being able to explore the closed building, which sparked international interest in the museum. The Shedd has also provided educational tools and entertainment to their followers, which has not only encouraged viewership but also encouraged people to get more involved while in their own spaces.

Right now is a time of uncertainty, but also a time of hope and change.

While much of the work done by cultural workers has looked much different from what it has in the past, these new ideas for virtual content and education have allowed for more engagement by the broader public. It has also given individuals the agency to do their own cultural work in whatever way suits their personal situations. While I have enjoyed sharing stories with my family, and sharing with friends during this time, I do not see a boundary for the individual to be creative and get involved in cultural work of their own at this time.

#MuseumLayoffs: A Compilation by Onyx Montes

On the week of April 3, 2020 the Museum of Modern Art in New York City terminated all museum educator contracts announcing via a mass staff e-mail that, “it will be months, if not years, before we anticipate returning to budget and operations levels to require educator services.” Layoffs and furloughs have affected museum workers across the nation due to the lack of museum’s financial infrastructure to support part-time and contract workers in an economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Sentiments of anxiety, fear, and anguish are imminent for those who are dependent on the museum’s doors to remain open, a reality that has been amplified by this pandemic. What follows is a compilation of screenshots I took after following the #MuseumLayoffs hashtag. It was a way for me to cope and come to terms with the realization that this is a new normal for many who share roles similar to mine as museum educators, contract workers and part-time staff. These are just a few institutions and the amount of workers that have been laid off or furloughed in the month of March and April 2020.

Name of Institution	Mission	Annual Operating Budget Before COVID-19	Layoffs		Furloughs	
			FT	PT	FT	PT
Akron Museum	To enrich lives through modern and contemporary art.	\$4,200,000	5	36		
Dia Art Foundation*	Dia Art Foundation is committed to advancing, realizing, and preserving the vision of artists. Dia fulfills its mission by commissioning single artist projects, organizing exhibitions, realizing site-specific installations, and collecting in-depth the work of a focused group of artists of the 1960s and 1970s.	\$19,000,000			20	45
Guggenheim Museum	Committed to innovation, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation collects, preserves, and interprets modern and contemporary art, and explores ideas across cultures through dynamic curatorial and educational initiatives and collaborations. With its constellation of architecturally and culturally distinct museums, exhibitions, publications, and digital platforms, the foundation engages both local and global audiences.	\$74,000,000		56		
Hammer Museum**	The Hammer Museum at UCLA believes in the promise of art and ideas to illuminate our lives and build a more just world.	\$18,000,000		150		
International Center of Photography***	to present photography’s vital and central place in contemporary culture, and to lead in interpretation of issues central to its development.	\$17,000,000		55		
MOCA (LA)****	We are committed to the collection, presentation, and interpretation of art created after 1940, in all media, and to preserving that work for future generations. We provide leadership in the field by identifying and presenting the most significant and challenging art of our time, actively supporting the creation of new work, and producing original scholarship.	\$20,000,000		97	36	
MOMA*****	the encouragement of an ever-deeper understanding and enjoyment of modern and contemporary art by the diverse local, national, and international audiences that it serves.	\$210,000,000		85		
Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit (MOCAD)*****	MOCAD presents art that contextualizes, interprets, educates and expands culture, pushing us to the edges of contemporary experience.	\$1,800,000	12	10		



Art + Museum Transparency @AMTransparency

22/ San Francisco's @exploratorium #museumlayoffs: 100 student workers laid off. 150 on-call staffers effectively laid off. 250 other staffers getting pay cuts or furloughs. Pay cuts for senior leadership.



At Exploratorium, layoffs, furloughs to affect 85% of staff — datebook.sfchronicle.com

6:06 PM · Mar 31, 2020



Art + Museum Transparency @AMTransparency

26/ #Museumlayoffs in Illinois. The Children's Museum in Oak Lawn @cmoaklawn is laying off 13 of its 14 staff members. A donor is helping to pay the one remaining staffer who is part-time so that they can continue to run the museum's social media.



Forced to close and down to 1 employee, Oak Lawn Children's Museum adapts... — chicagotribune.com

6:43 AM · Apr 2, 2020



Art + Museum Transparency @AMTransparency

29/ The @whitnymuseum announces #museumlayoffs. 76 employees laid off, mostly visitor services staff. Health insurance continued through June 30. Unspecified pay cuts for senior staff.



Expecting \$7 M. Shortfall, New York's Whitney Museum Lays Off 76 Employees — artnews.com

1:53 PM · Apr 3, 2020



Art + Museum Transparency @AMTransparency

30/ Read short overview for @mfaboston where 340 staff members (around half total staff?) will be furloughed, timeline thru June 30 for now, may change. Furloughed staff will get unemployment to "maintain at or near current income" + director taking 30% paycut



Museum of Fine Arts will remain closed, furlough staffers through June 30 — bostonglobe.com

4:37 PM · Apr 3, 2020



Art + Museum Transparency @AMTransparency

32/ And now reporting on the #museumlayoffs at New York's @newmuseum: 7 laid off & 41 furloughed out of the staff of 150. Furloughed staff health insurance continued through June 30. Senior staff taking pay cuts of 10-20%, director pay cut of 30%.



The New Museum and Whitney Museum Cut Dozens of Employees as Lockdowns Continue With No End in Sight — news.artnet.com

7:54 PM · Apr 3, 2020



Art + Museum Transparency @AMTransparency

35/ In Tennessee, the @MemphisBrooks Art Museum has announced furloughs for 29 ft and pt staff. Not furloughed are administrators and security. Museum remains "committed as ever" to \$110m building project.



Brooks Museum temporarily furloughs 29 staff positions... — dailymemphian.com

2:07 PM · Apr 8, 2020

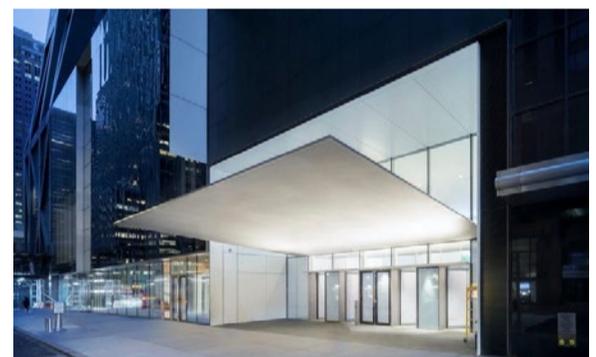


murawski27 @murawski27

22/ "I'm not sure what a museum is without education, especially a closed museum for which I would argue education is even more crucial."



#MuseumEd #IAMuseumEd



MoMA Terminates All Museum Educator Contracts — hyper-allergic.com

9:05 AM · Apr 4, 2020



Tana Hargest @TanaHargest

I should have added that MoMa director Glenn Lowry's annual compensation is \$2.2m, and MoMa is sitting on a \$1b endowment. Oh, and museum education is about the only department that could be working online with the public right now.

11:08 AM · Apr 5, 2020

Acknowledgement

I want to take this time to recognize the labor that our colleagues, volunteers, interns, work studies, part timers, preparators, educators, contractors and full time staff have contributed and put in so that our doors can remain open, our programs running, those who ensure that our social media platforms stay active, our building be welcoming and clean and more. This is a small yet significant step in our equity efforts to raise awareness that our roles as cultural arts workers are vital to our arts community. I want to acknowledge the fact that our roles and labor do not have to be recognized only in structured formats such as annual performance reviews or staff meetings. Labor acknowledgements can remind us that patience is not required to acknowledge the labor that builds these museums and cultural organizations. This is something we can all begin to practice with our colleagues and peers. I want to acknowledge the role that each and every one of us play no matter what the length of our positions, titles or experience may be. It is my hope that this also serves as a reminder that we are part of a field that is populated by people first and objects second. — Onyx Montes

- *Dia Art Foundation furloughed FT staff retain their benefits.
- ** The Hammer Museum laid off 150 PT workers from its Visitor Experience and Gallery Operations Department.
- ***The International Center of Photography laid off 55 PT workers from its Visitor Experience and Education departments.
- **** MOCA (LA) laid off 97 pt workers from its Education (Teen program included), Gallery Attendants, Exhibition tech, Store Associates Department.
- *****MOMA laid off 85 PT Freelance Educators.
- *****MOCAD has laid off 12 FT and 10 PT employees from its Visitor Services, Cafe, Education & Public Programs, Curatorial, Operations, Events, Membership departments.

Leisure



Take a Deep Breath and Relax

A Guide by Laura Sato

As museum workers, we work hard everyday to be in the service of multiple publics. We had previously planned to have moments of relaxation throughout the Museum May Day. This is a list of suggestions you can do to relax during this time of uncertainty regarding work, fair compensation, and health. Ponder this list and adapt it to suit your needs.

- 1.** Do some light exercise: go for a walk, stretch, yoga, jog, exercise, dance, online fitness classes via social media
- 2.** Call friends, family, your support group
- 3.** Breathing exercises
- 4.** Listen to your favorite music
- 5.** Have your own dance party
- 6.** Coloring pages (see Activity header)
- 7.** Start a new hobby: knitting, crocheting, crafts, vision boards
- 8.** Read a book you have been pushing off: My suggestions include Emma by Jane Austen, Crazy Rich Asians by Kevin Kwan, Life of Pi by Yann Martel, Warm Bodies by Isaac Marion, Good Omens by Neil Gaiman and Terry Prachett. To find and borrow library books, go to openlibrary.org
- 9.** Have a nice cup of tea
- 10.** Light a candle
- 11.** Aromatherapy
- 12.** Watch a tv episode or movie
- 13.** Write in a journal
- 14.** Try a new recipe
- 15.** Take a bath or shower



Diaphragmatic Breath: Breathing Deep for Inner Calm

By Anika Bierig

In the course of everyday life at work, home, or school, we can become overwhelmed by stressors in our internal and external environments. Those who work in museums and cultural spaces often have to interact with the public in many different ways and spend a lot of time serving and accommodating others. Sometimes we need a way to reset in the course of a busy day or a way to find relaxation more consistently. An important tool at our disposal at all times is our breath. Many people use the chest and surrounding muscles to breathe, commonly known as shallow breathing. Chest breathing can have the effect of increasing stress and anxiety. By training ourselves to breathe from our bellies, instead of our chests, we can achieve feelings of physical and mental relaxation. One of the biggest benefits of this diaphragmatic breathing is reduction of stress, which can do dramatic things to improve our overall health.

The diaphragm is a dome-shaped muscle located at the bottom of the lungs. Our stomach muscles help move the diaphragm and give us the power to empty our lungs of air. By engaging in diaphragmatic breathing we can slow our breathing rate down which decreases bodily exertion and lowers our heart rate. If we are taking deeper breaths, and therefore taking in more oxygen, we don't have to take as many breaths to get all the air we need.

Use the following steps either a few minutes per day or in moments of stress. You may not be in control of many things but you are in control of your breath!



Steps*

1. Sit, stand, or lie down comfortably
2. Relax your shoulders
3. Place one hand on your chest and the other on your stomach near your belly button
4. Breathe in through your nose bringing your breath deep down into your abdomen. You should feel your stomach expand out towards your hand (chest stays relatively still)
5. Breathe out slowly through the nose feeling the stomach deflate
6. Take a few more deep breaths with focus on the rise and fall of your stomach. Continue to breathe fully and deeply, allowing and trusting the body as the breath slows and becomes more relaxed

***practice makes perfect (or better)**

Museum May Day Libations

by Quinton Sledge

As echoed throughout this publication, I wish to acknowledge the workers and laborers that keep our society functioning, specifically those working in the service industry. My ten plus years of employment in restaurants and bars shaped my work ethic in an extraordinary way. From back of house to front of house, I've done it all and seen it all, but my experience isn't unique. There are millions of service industry folks doing under-appreciated work—work that guests will never see. It's an honor to be a part of such a hard-working community.

I dedicate this menu to everyone I've worked with over the years that have done the thankless work. Literally back-breaking work. Sometimes degrading work. Oftentimes soul-sucking work. This is also for all the museum workers that make our cultural institutions function. From the administrators, to the interns, to the volunteers, the custodial staff, to the museum restaurant and cafe workers, we lift our glasses to you.

This menu was designed with the intention to honor workers and to educate imbibers on labor history and power structures. If this menu inspires you to break out your shakers and mixing glasses and try these drinks out for yourself, please do so responsibly.

Arts Administrator's Tears

(Created by the Open Engagement team)

In the summer of 2018 the Open Engagement conference team was hosted by the ACRE artist residency.

While there, they hosted a Happy Hour venting session in honor of the often invisible labor it takes to maintain creative practices and spaces. All artists are arts administrators.

They created a craft tequila cocktail called The Administrators Tears, invited people to fill out emotional labor invoices, and made space for a BYOEmail for performative readings of frustrating, nasty, abusive, passive aggressive “professional” emails, and grooved to a playlist titled ALL LABOR IS EMOTIONAL mixtape of femme-fronted jams dripping with frustration, rage, and dreaminess.

Let's raise a glass, pour one out, and give a little RESPECT to arts administrators everywhere.

THE RECIPE:

In a cocktail shaker combine:

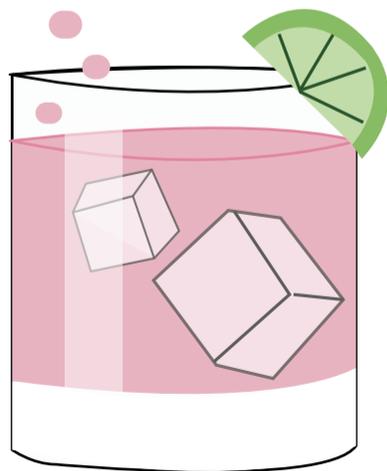
- 2 oz Tequila
- 1/2 oz Campari
- 1/2 oz fresh lime juice
- 1 oz fresh grapefruit juice

Shake and strain over ice in a lowball glass

Top with soda water, grapefruit soda, or sparkling wine

Garish with a lime wedge

Pairs well with unpacking emotional labor.



The Onyx Tonic

This drink is inspired by Onyx Montes (@onyxmontes). She is a MUSE grad student, arts educator, storyteller, fashion icon, and contributor to the Museum May Day Newspaper. She is also a staunch advocate for salary transparency. The taboo behind discussing salaries creates division and tension between coworkers. Onyx took a brave step and shared her salary as a marketing and communications manager on social media in an effort to try to end the stigma behind salary discussion and to play a part in ending the gender pay gap.

Much like Onyx, this drink is strong and invigorating—giving the workplace a dose of the medicine it needs.

THE RECIPE:

In a mixing glass combine:

- 2 oz tequila reposado
- 1/2 oz Fernet Branca
- 1/2 oz agave simple syrup*
- 2 dashes Bitterman's Xocolatl Mole bitters
- 1 dash Bitter Truth grapefruit bitters

Stir with style. Strain into a chilled coupe glass. Garish with grapefruit swath.

Pairs well with dismantling oppressive power structures.

*agave simple syrup recipe: combine equal parts agave nectar and water. Stir until combined.



The Haymarket Handshake

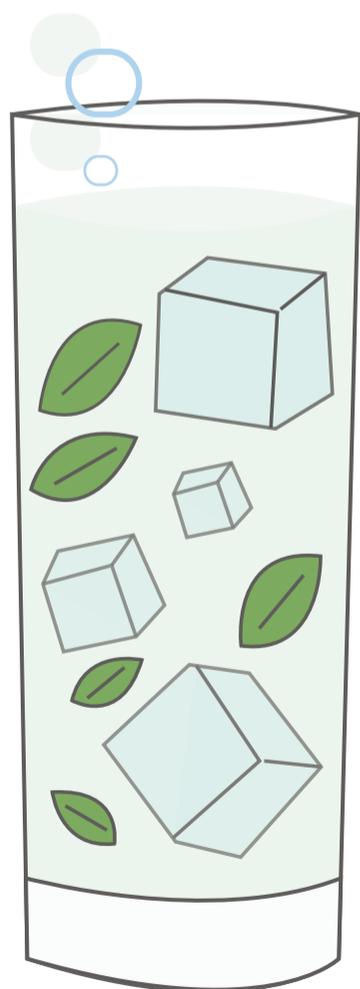
THE RECIPE:

12oz can of Speakerswagon Pilsner
from Haymarket Brewery
1 shot of Jeppson's Malört

This drink is equal parts history and folklore, much like the Windy City itself. A variation of the "Chicago Handshake" we paired Haymarket Brewery's flagship Pilsner "Speakerswagon" with the legendary Chicago-made Jeppson's Malört. A spirit made for the hardest of workers and most rebellious of anarchists.

Haymarket Brewery borrows its name from the 1886 bombing incident that took place during a labor rally in support of the eight hour workday. A peaceful demonstration quickly unfurled into a chaos at the square, where ultimately the lives of seven police officers and four civilians were lost. Although charges were pressed and a trial was conducted to this day the perpetrator has never been officially identified.

Pay homage to the working class roots of Chicago and remember this event which sparked the movement to designate May 1st as International Workers Day with this timeless and authentic drink.



The Unpaid Intern

Because many institutions still engage in the practice of not paying their interns for the work they do, we thought we would create a cocktail with the same level of craft but excludes one key ingredient: the alcohol. No money for work = no booze.

THE RECIPE:

10 mint leaves
1 oz lime juice
1 oz simple syrup*
Ice
Topo Chico (or other soda water)

Build this drink in a Collins glass. Muddle lime juice, simple syrup, and mint leaves in glass.

Add ice. Top with Topo Chico. Garnish with lime wedge.
Stir and enjoy.

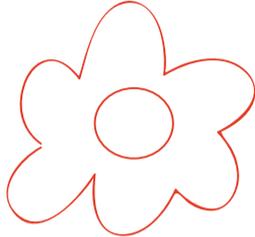
The mint leaves remind us of the cash the unpaid interns never see.

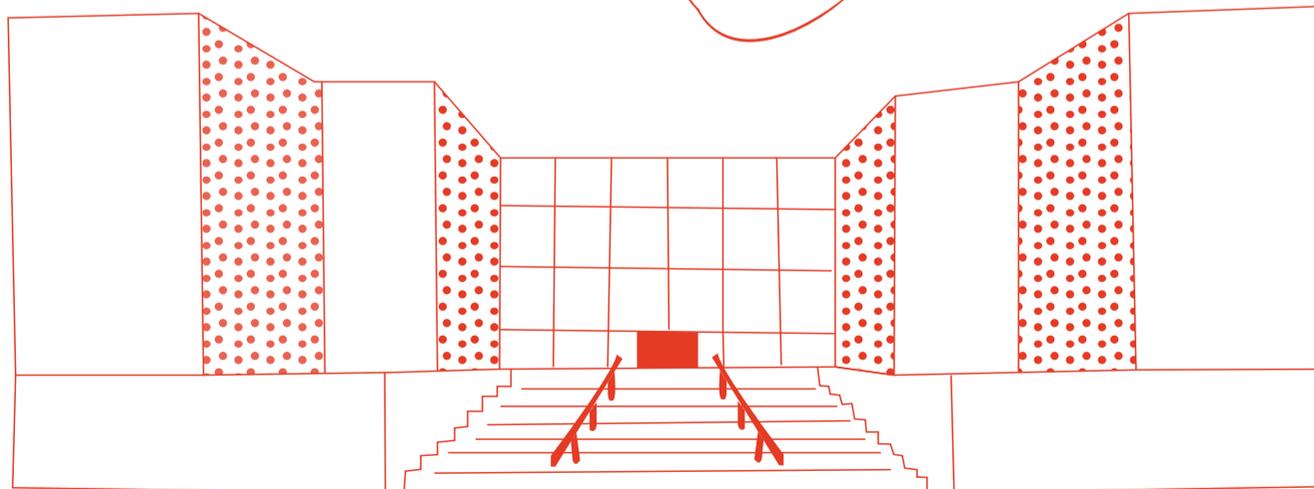
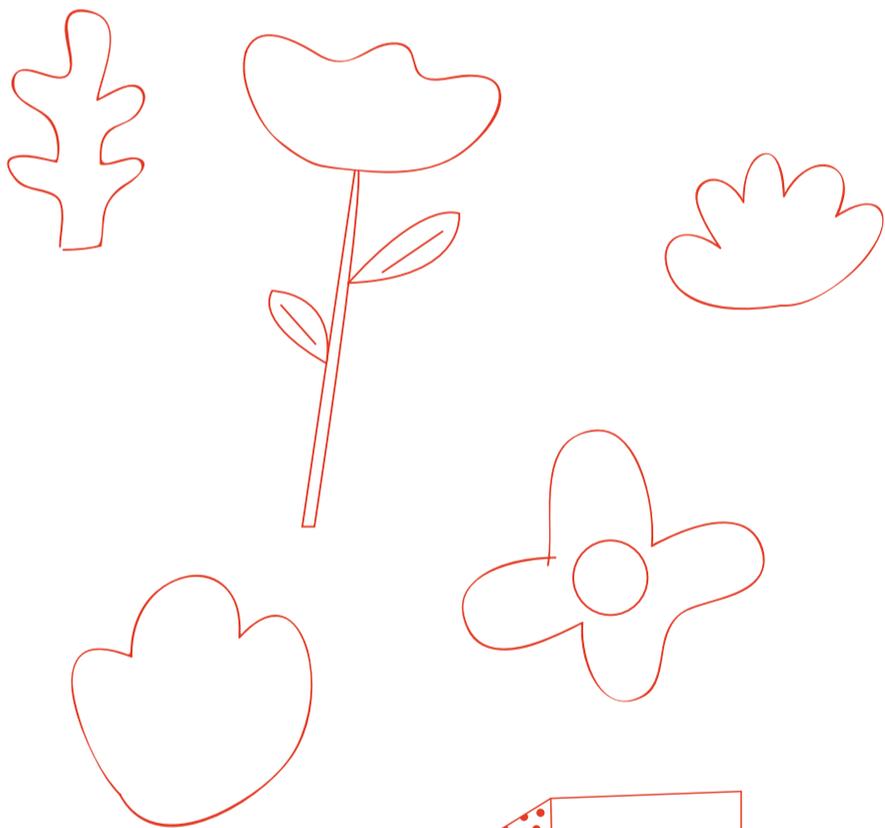
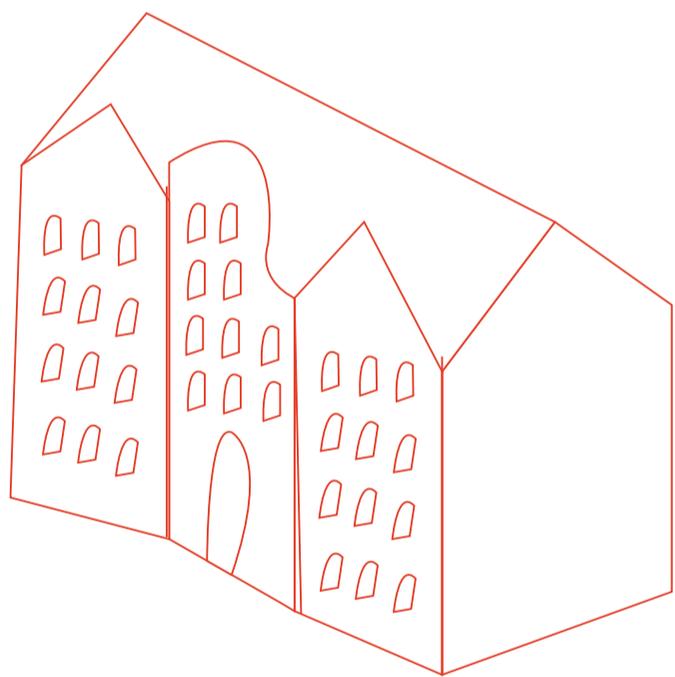
Add 2 oz of white rum to make this drink feel valued.

Pairs well with PAYING INTERNS

*simple syrup recipe: combine equal parts sugar and hot water. Stir to combine. Let cool before use. Pay your interns.

Activities

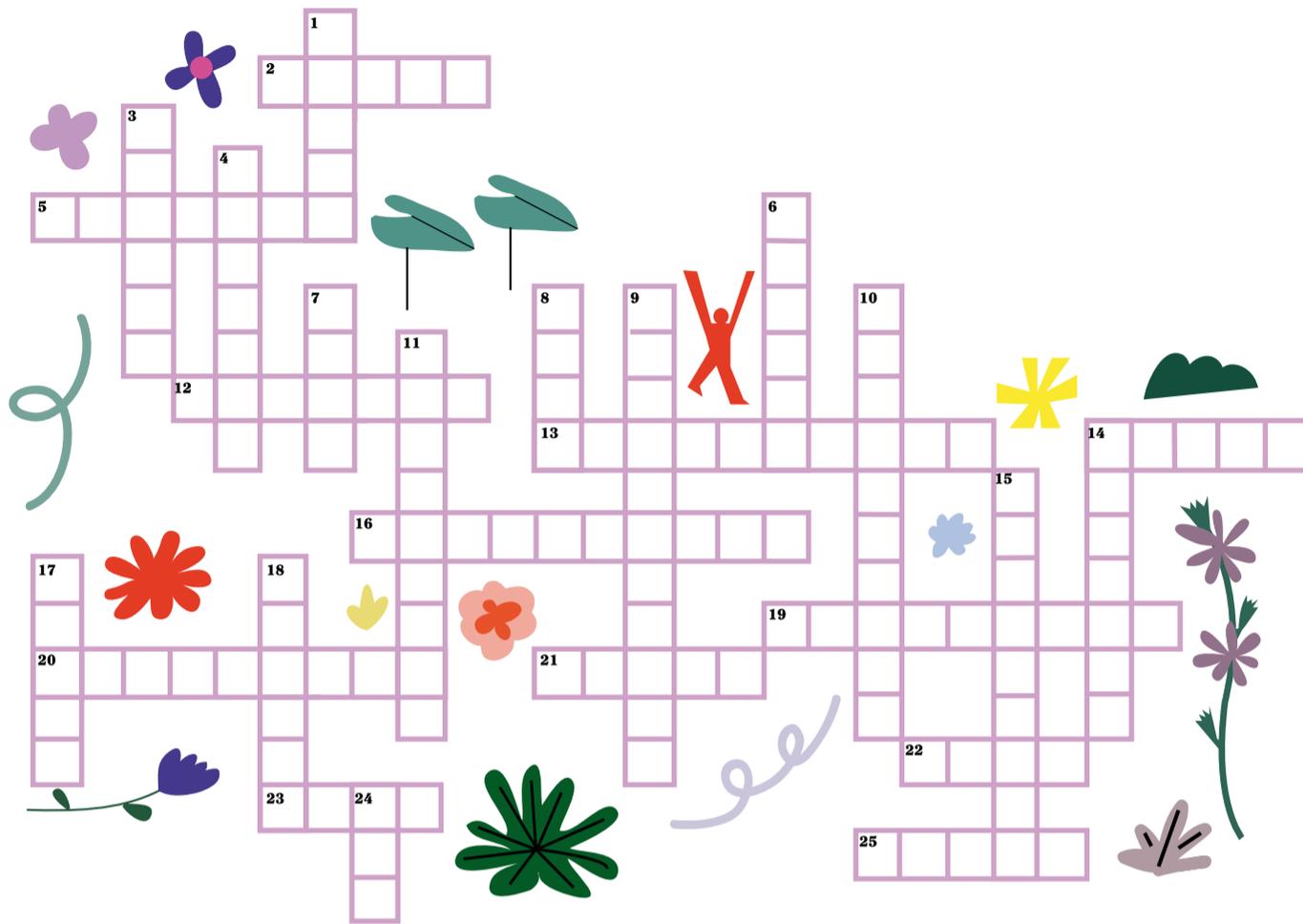
color me 



Labor Crossword

by Anika Bierig

We all benefit from the history of labor activism. Take some of your daily “what you will” time to figure out these labor history clues that have shaped our country and our collective rights.



Across

2. Human activity that provides the goods or services in an economy
5. Prominent labor organizer and revolutionary activist of the 1920s who was described by the Chicago Police Department as “More dangerous than a thousand rioters”
12. Nationwide railroad strike that began as a wildcat strike in response to a reduction in wages
13. Unity or agreement of feeling or action, especially among individuals with a common interest
14. Lawrence, Massachusetts strike of 1812 led by immigrant women fought for bread and this too
16. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in Memphis, TN while supporting these striking workers
19. Published declaration of the intentions, motives, or views of an individual, group, political party or government
20. Formal complaint that is raised by an employee towards an employer within the workplace
21. Organization that advocates for workers' rights and benefits through collective bargaining
22. Part 1 with and; those who makeup the body of a union as distinguished from the leaders
23. A strikebreaker who willingly crosses the picket line
25. Mother ____ who was a teacher, organizer, and co-founder of the IWW

Down

1. Money that is paid or received for work or services
3. Work stoppage by a body of workers to enforce compliance with demands made on an employer
4. Secretary-Treasurer of the AFL-CIO who said, “The only effective answer to organized greed is organized labor”
6. Helped organize the Delano grape strike and co-founder of the United Farm Workers
7. Part 2 with and; those who makeup the body of a union as distinguished from the leaders
8. Founding member of the Industrial Workers of the World and five time candidate of the Socialist Party of America
9. Class of wage-earners in an economic society
10. More than one million people participated in a May Day protest in 2006, known as the Day without
11. Location of bombing that took place at a labor demonstration in support of workers striking for an eight-hour work day
14. Wartime Rosie, representing the women who worked in factories and shipyards during World War II
15. This Los Angeles museum successfully unionized and signed their first contract in 2018
17. This many hours for work, for rest, and for what you will
18. Karl Marx wrote “Workers of the world unite; you have nothing to lose but your ____”
24. IWW motto, An Injury to One is an Injury to

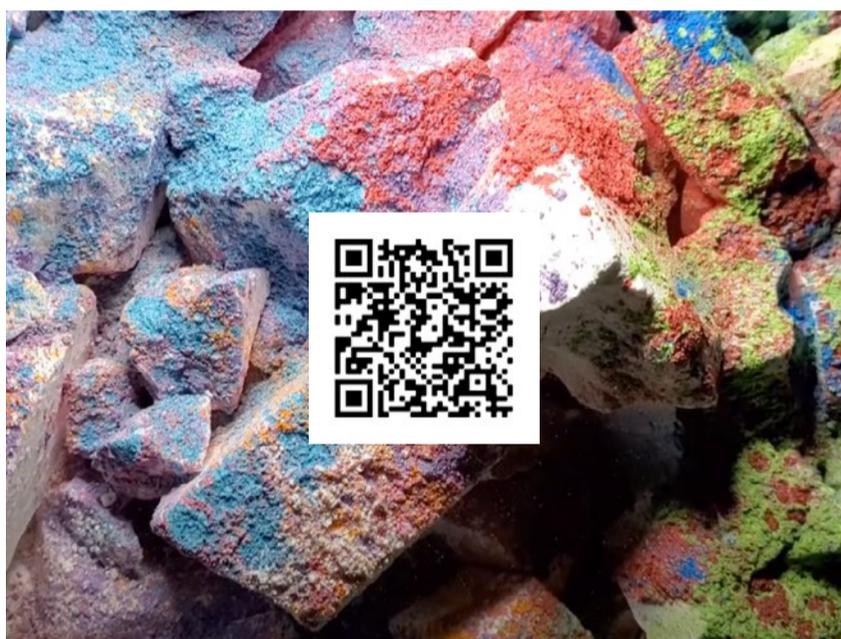
Curated ASMR Playlists

by Abby Atwood

In the past few years, ASMR has become one of the most popular types of videos on the internet. ASMR stands for Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response. It is “a feeling of well-being combined with a tingling sensation in the scalp and down the back of the neck, as experienced by some people in response to a specific gentle stimulus, often a particular sound.” Many people rave about the benefits of ASMR; from helping them sleep, to calming them down during a panic attack.

I myself discovered ASMR during my first year of Graduate school, I was having difficulty falling asleep at night due to stress. As soon as I started watching I was more relaxed and had an easier time falling asleep. During this pandemic, many museum professionals are working from home and normal avenues of stress relief, such as going outside, and hanging out with friends, are no longer available to us. It is vital that we care for ourselves during this time.

I have curated some playlists of ASMR videos that have greatly helped me during stressful situations, and I hope they can help you too.



Powder Crumbling



Soap



Powder Shaving



Create Your Own

May Day Flower Origami

By Abby Foss

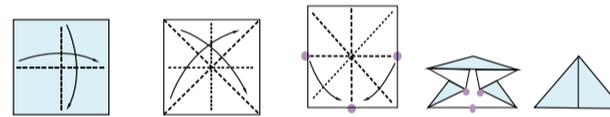
Why Flowers? May Day in its most basic form is a celebration for the coming and return of springtime. This particular festival is thought to have ancient origins and practices, but today's current traditions include gathering flowers and wrapping ribbons around the Maypole. Unfortunately, May Day does not have a strong tradition in America due to its "pagan" origins, which caused it to be forbidden by the Puritans. Nevertheless, it is also important to note that in its modern context May Day is strongly associated with labor and worker's rights around the world. Labor movements cemented their connection to May Day during the turn of the 20th century due to the events of the Haymarket Affair (aka. the Haymarket Riots). This event started as a nationwide strike for an 8-hour workday on May 1, 1886, and culminated in riots, bombings, and the hanging of four leaders of the protests in Chicago; Albert Parsons, August Spies,

George Engel, and Adolph Fischer. Flowers themselves have also appeared as symbols for various different movements, like "Bread and Roses" which has been used by multiple different groups and activists, but might be most well known for its connection to the Lawrence Textile Strike in Lawrence, Massachusetts. In this instance, roses were used to signify the workers' demand for respect as well as fair wages and working conditions. In fact, this strike is best known as the "Bread and Rose Strike" which began on January 11, 1912 after workers found that their wages had been cut without notice. This movement was not only successful, but was a movement largely run by female workers and represented multiple different ethnic communities, most of which came from south and eastern Europe. Perhaps for our current era of activism we could stand behind the Black-eyed Susan, a flower that symbolizes justice!

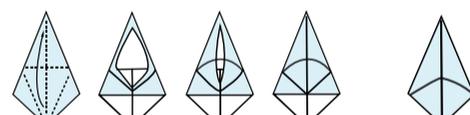


Feel free to cut out a square of this Daffodil pattern!

Lily (harder)

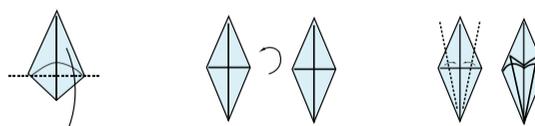


Squash fold, repeat on every side



Petal fold, pull bottom up to top and fold

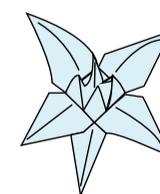
Repeat on every side



P pull flap downwards, repeat 3x

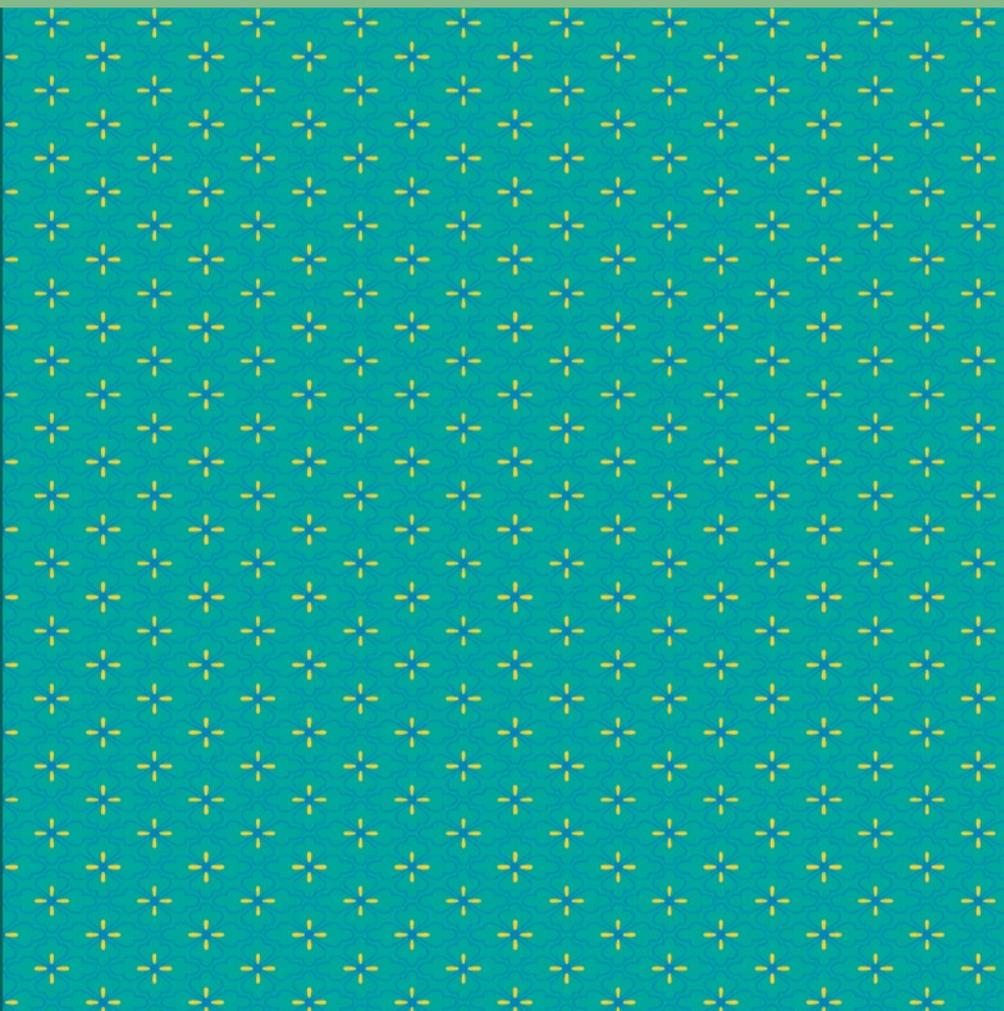


Pull flap down to create petal, curl, and repeat 3x

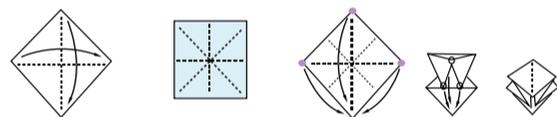


Why Daffodils? These flowers bear multiple meanings from “misfortune” and “self-love” to “rebirth” and “joy” depending on the color and number of flowers a person is given. Daffodils also often represent Spring itself as they are some of the first flowers to bloom. Moreover, yellow daffodils in particular are associated with rebirth and new beginnings and therefore daffodils can also symbolize change. In contrast, “daffodil” is the common name for a Narcissus flower, named after the Greek mythological figure who fell in love with himself that he was cursed for his selfishness. Therefore, while a single daffodil can symbolize bad luck, multiple daffodils are meant to bring cheer and good fortune as if to suggest that happiness, changes for the better cannot happen alone.

Why Lilies? While these flowers also have a close association to themes of “hope” and “birth”, the lily’s symbolism is most closely connected to the idea of “purity and “innocence.” Confusingly, other flowers like the water lily or lily-of-the-valley also bear the name “lily” and share some symbolic meanings like rebirth or prosperity respectively; however, they are not true lilies scientifically. Like daffodils, lilies can also symbolize joy and happiness if a person sends yellow lilies specifically and both flowers also have a history of signifying wealth and success. As an added bonus, yellow lilies also represent good health and healing, a particularly important message that a person may want to send during this time.



8-petal flower (easier)



Fold paper along creases to make a square



Squash fold, repeat on every side



Repeat this and previous step, on every side



Rotate 180 degrees fold in



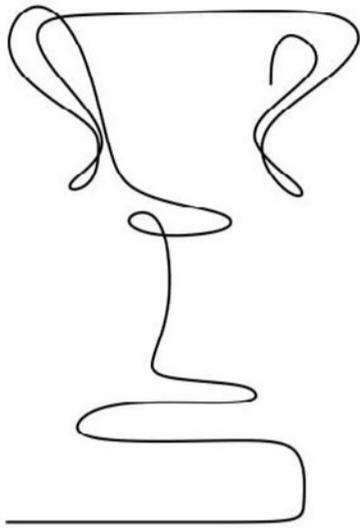
Slowly peel out petals

Creative Prompts

By Mallery Lutey

In a situation where we are all spending more time with ourselves, the prompts below are designed to inspire reflection and creativity. No rules. No restrictions. No right or wrong. Just a space of your own to be free.

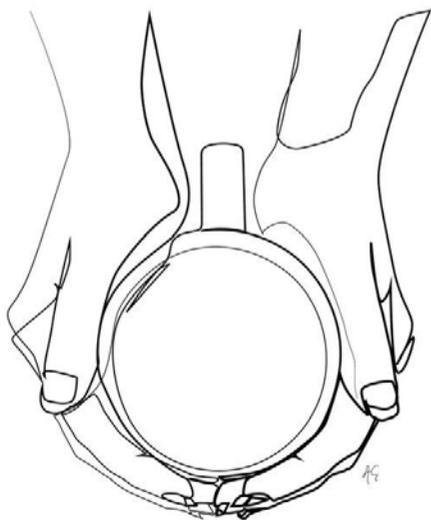
And the award for the most accessible and inclusive museum goes to...



Write down ALL of the words and feelings that come to mind when you think about your experience working at your museum.



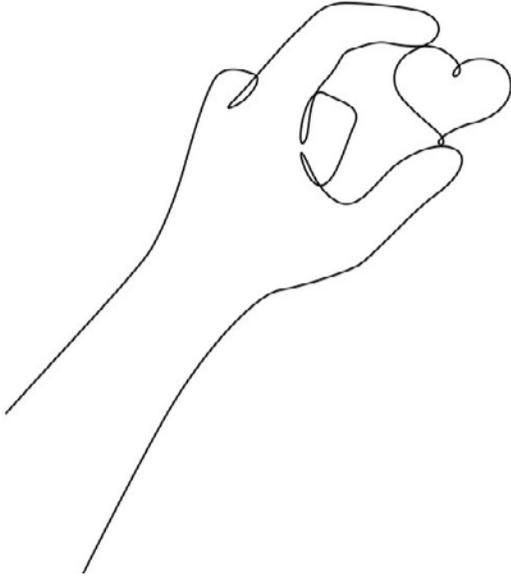
Take time today to do something that makes you feel good. Then write down details of what you did and how you feel afterwards so you can remind yourself to do it more often.



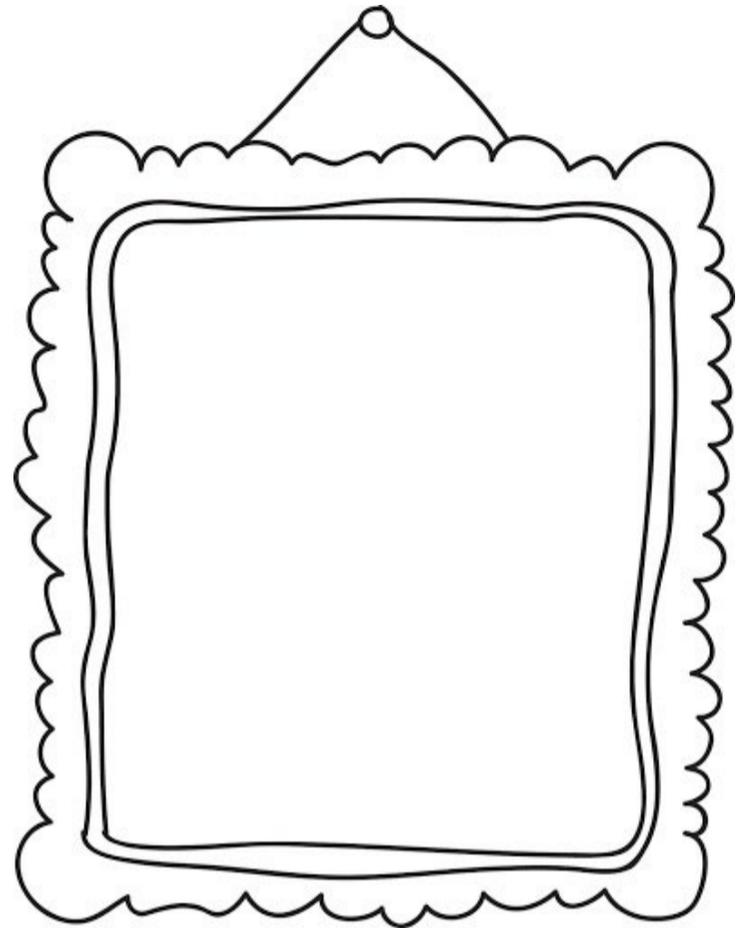
Write down all the names of people who you think deserve some recognition and appreciation today.



Make a promise to yourself, or someone else - a promise you know you can keep. Believe in your own truth.



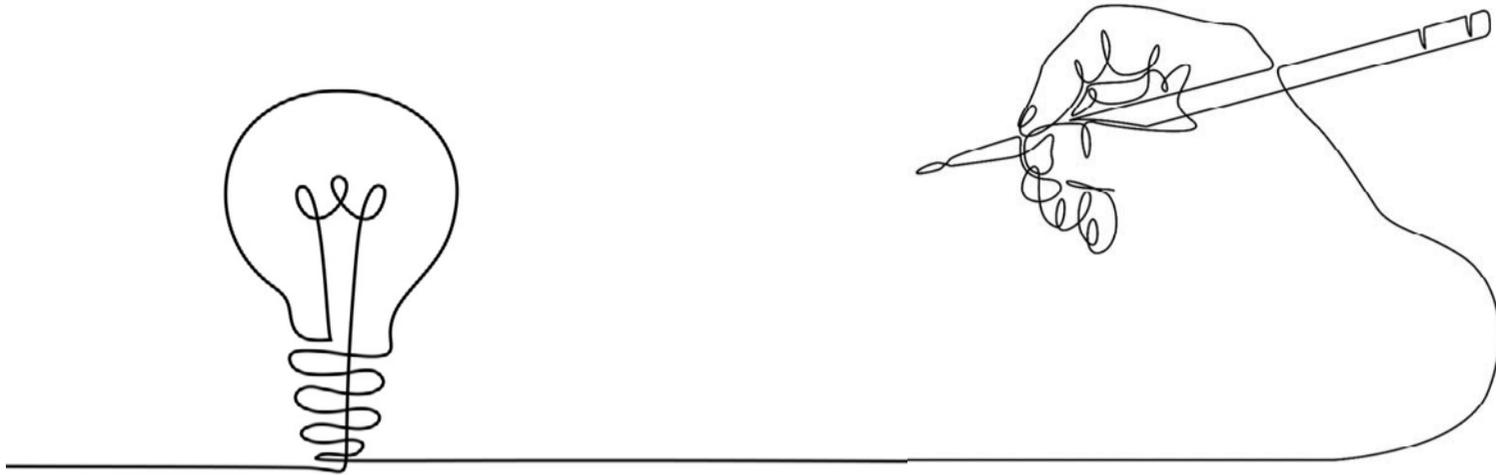
Recreate your favorite artwork - in your own style!



Design and sketch your own exhibition wall!

Brainstorm ideas of things, anything - from policy to pay - you'd like to see change in your museum when you get back to work.

Write a haiku about your museum experience.



Make a list of all the street names you take to get to your local museum.

Create a playlist that will help get you through your work day a little easier.



Who We Are:



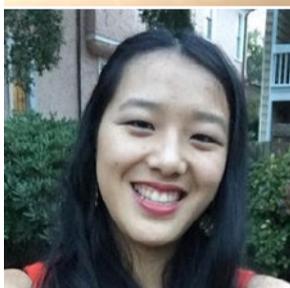
June Ahn is a second year graduate student in the MUSE program. During this semester, she helped facilitate the Public Engagement seminar and oversaw the design for this publication. She received a B.A. in biological sciences from Smith College and has worked at laboratories at the Royal Botanic Garden in Kew and the University of Chicago. Her work primarily focuses on creating informal plant education opportunities. Please visit juneahn.me to learn more.



Abby Atwood is a 2nd year Graduate student in the Museum and Exhibition Studies Program at UIC. She has been volunteering at museums and galleries since she was 12 years old. She has been involved with planning and creating multiple exhibits over those years. Her Graduate Capstone project was the creation of a digital archive documenting the stories of volunteers at the Economy Shop; a charity thrift store in Oak Park that has been running for over 100 years.



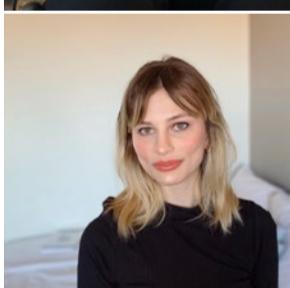
Anika Bierig is an educator in Chicago completing her Masters in Education at UIC. Her academic interests include culturally-responsive programming and critical literacy, exploring and exposing the power structures inherent in language and the public sphere, including museums. Anika is currently a Program Manager at the literacy non-profit Open Books, serving students within Chicago Public Schools. In a past life, Anika was also a labor organizer and feels particularly excited to share this piece with the world. She hopes the publication lifts up workers wherever it reaches them.



Abby Foss is a first-year graduate student in the UIC MUSE program who is currently working as a graduate research assistant for public programming and community engagement at Gallery 400 in UIC. She has always had an interest in people and culture and her current research surrounds the complexities of identity, heritage, and adoption. She has also just started freeform crocheting an afghan to pass the time stuck in COVID-19 isolation, please wish her luck.



Jojo Galvan UIC's own resident man in black, Jojo is a student in the MUSE program at UIC. He graduated from North Central College with a B.A. in history and a minor in religious studies. As a cultural worker, he's equal parts historian/folklorist, educator, and archivist. In his graduate studies he's exploring the connection between historic buildings, displaced communities, and informal networks of faith and support. In his spare time he can be found with his camera, writing horror stories, and giving walking history tours from the heart of the city to its graveyards. He's currently the Archivist for the Midwest Nursing History Research Center.



Ramsey Hoey is an M.A. candidate in the Museum and Exhibition Studies program at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She graduated from the University of North Dakota with a B.F.A in Studio Art with minors in Art History and Graphic Design. In her graduate studies, she focuses on curatorial practice in Modern and Contemporary women's painting, performance, and installation. Currently, she is working toward creating a platform promoting community and dialogue for female-identifying people in the arts. Ramsey is also the Curatorial Graduate Research Assistant for Gallery 400 and the Gallery Coordinator at the 5th Floor Gallery in Chicago.



Hayden Hunt is a recent graduate of the Museum and Exhibition Studies master's program at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He recently established Five by Ten Gallery, an experimental exhibition space in Chicago's West Loop neighborhood. He was formerly the Assistant Curator of Heather James Fine Art, an art gallery located in Palm Desert, CA. He has held internships at the Art Institute of Chicago and is passionate about art collecting and exhibition design.



Hannah Landsman is a Chicago-based HR and arts administrator with varied experience in libraries, higher education, and the arts. She has worked at Gallery 400, the Chicago History Museum, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, and at Elizabeth Leach Gallery in Portland, Ore. She is a first-year graduate student in the Museum and Exhibition Studies program at UIC, where she previously earned her BA in Art History. She also serves as a staff administrator in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at UIC.



Amanda Lautermilch (MA Museum Studies, BFA Acting) is a PhD Student in Disability Studies at UIC. Her research is focused on Crippling Curation, the act of approaching curation (and artistic direction, more generally) with a Disability Studies/Justice perspective and exploring how intercategory intersectionality as an analytical framework can impact downstream issues of representation, access, and inclusion in art and cultural spaces. She is an associate director for the upcoming 2021 Bodies of Work Disability Arts and Culture Festival, which is accepting proposals through June 30th, 2020. For more information, visit <http://tiny.cc/BOWfest2021>



Mallery Lutey is a 2nd year graduate student in the Museum and Exhibition Studies program at the University of Illinois, Chicago, Registrar Assistant at the Field Museum of Natural History, and Teaching Assistant for an undergraduate Bioanthropology course. She graduated with her B.A. in Anthropology from UIC, and has previously studied at Museo Contisuyo in Moquegua, Peru as a field archaeologist, artifact analyst, and steward of collections care and processing. Her current research works towards promoting transparency and accessibility to cultural material through digitization and community collaboration.



Megan Moran (MA Museum & Exhibition Studies, 2019) is a Chicago-based museum educator and arts administrator. Her graduate research focused on developing a critical social-emotional learning framework for the context of art museum teaching. She has worked in education and public programming at the Frye Art Museum in Seattle, WA, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, the Jane Addams Hull-House Museum, Alphawood Gallery, Gallery 400 at UIC, and most recently the 2019 edition of the Chicago Architecture Biennial. Megan is currently the Interim Marketing Coordinator at Hubbard Street Dance Chicago. If you would like to dialogue about any of the points raised in this article, please feel free to reach out: meganmoran23@gmail.com



Onyx Montes was raised in Mexico and moved to Seattle by herself at the age of 17. She attended the University of Washington where she majored in Art History with a minor in Women Studies. She is currently pursuing her MA in Museum and Exhibition Studies at UIC and is part of the inaugural Arts & Culture Leaders of Color Fellowship by Americans for the Arts. Upon graduating from the University of Washington, Onyx taught an art history workshop for incarcerated women at two different Mexican penitentiaries. She is an avid reader and well traveled with 19 countries and counting.



Sidney Murphy is a University of Illinois Chicago MUSE graduate student, and former WSU Cougar! Her focuses are educational museum programming as well as social justice-based initiatives. Her biggest success as a cultural worker thus far was her Black History Month Celebration at the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art. This event connected to an exhibition she helped with featuring 4 internationally renowned artists; Wangechi Mutu, Leonardo Drew, Mark Bradford, and Julie Mehretu. She takes pride in her work and fights for the representation of others.



Laura Sato is a first-year graduate student studying Museum and Exhibition Studies at UIC. She graduated from Agnes Scott College in May of 2019 with a BA in Art History and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. Her graduate research focuses on accessibility, museum education, and exhibition design. Laura hopes to create space in art museums for underrepresented and marginalized communities. She is currently a Graduate Research Assistant in the Global Asian Studies department at UIC researching Uptown Chicago.



Quinton Sledge is a first year MUSE student, restaurant worker, and a former Abraham Lincoln impersonator. He is currently the acting Publication Coordinator for *Fwd: Museums*, a yearly journal produced by the MUSE program and published by Stepsister Press. He is originally from Mount Vernon, Illinois and currently lives in Bucktown, Chicago, Illinois.



Rose Waniak Originally from South Brunswick, New Jersey, Rosie Waniak is a first-year MUSE student at UIC with a bachelor's degree in Art History and English from Loyola University Maryland. Drawing inspiration from her passion for community service and social justice, her research is primarily focused on inclusive, collaborative, and community-centered museum programming initiatives. She currently teaches ESL to adult English language learners and enjoys reading, running, and hiking in her free time.

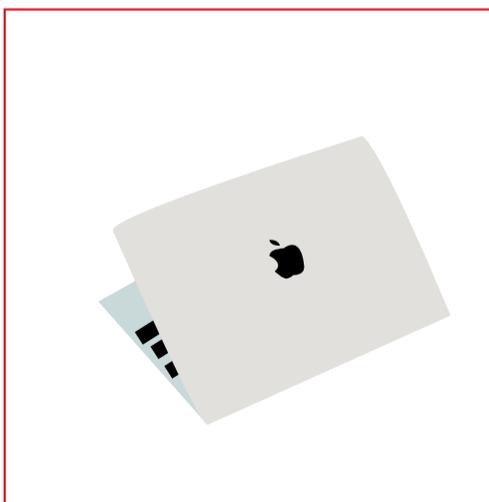
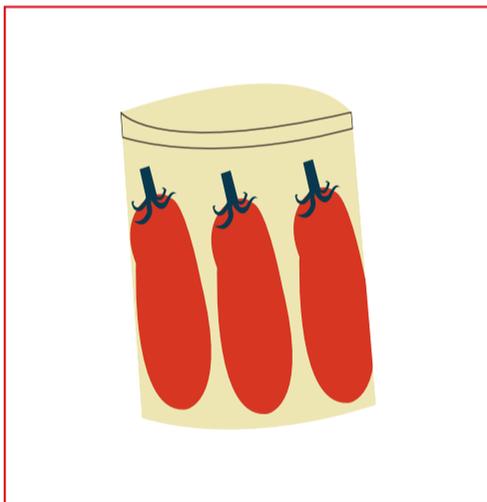
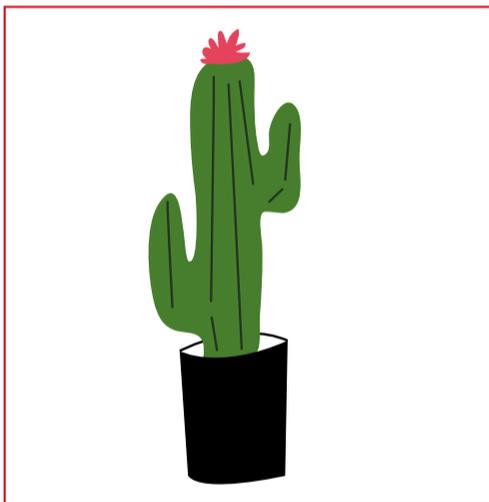
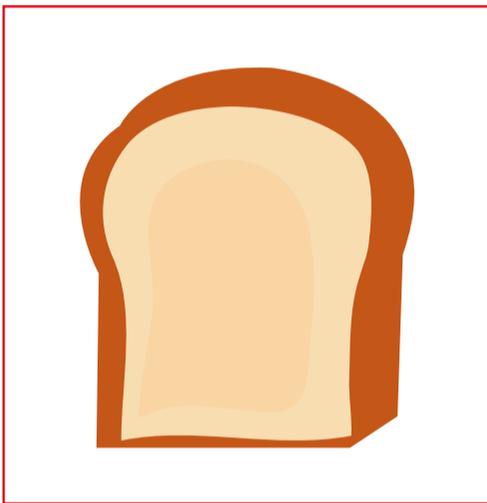
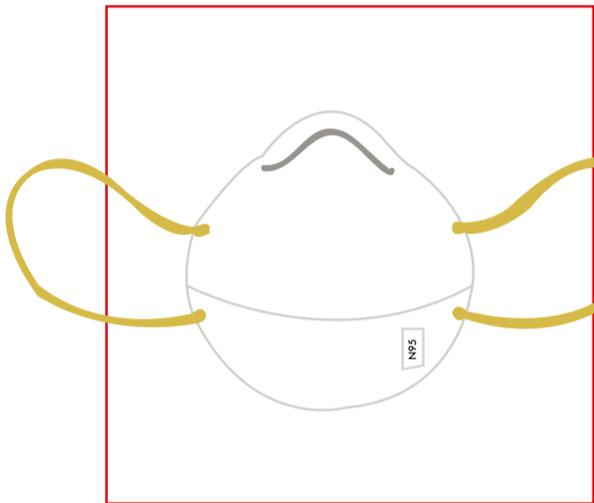
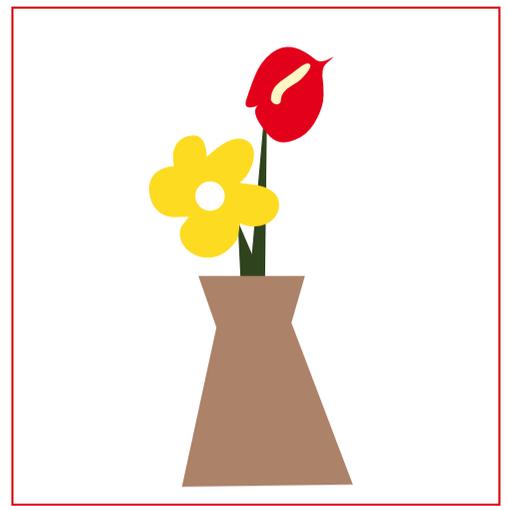
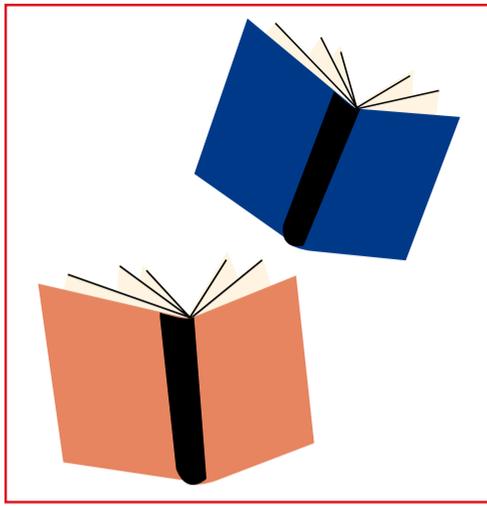
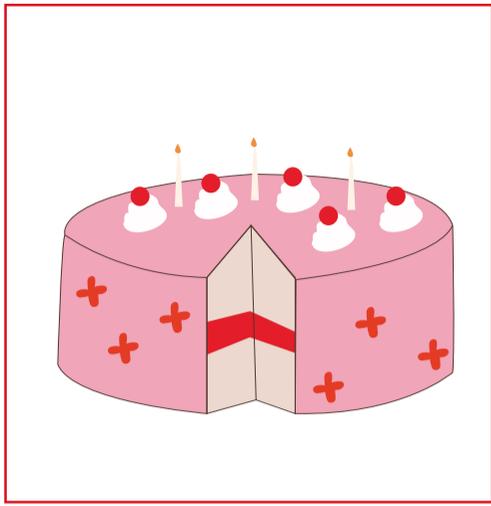
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Know Your Rights!: American Labor Law 101 for Museum Workers - Hannah Landsman

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A Museum of the Pandemic