February 8, 2021

Hey everyone :) I'm Victoria (she/her) @victoriataisundell and I'm going to be doing our first ever museum staff takeover of the Instagram this week!

Super ~meta~ because I am also the staff member who runs the Instagram all the time 😂 but here I am, peeking out from behind the curtain, to share about myself and what it's really like to work at Five Oaks Museum and in the museum field in general. It's a bit weird and scary to post as myself lol, even though I post here ALL the time. The mortifying ordeal of being known 🙃

About me: 🌿

I am an artist and educator, but most I'm a learner. I'm from the Chicago North Shore, Illinois, which is unceded land of the Council of Three Fires - Ojibwe, Ottawa, and Potawatomi - and several other Anishinaabe nations, and I currently live in Portland, Oregon with my dog and plants. Something most people in the PNW don't know about where I'm from is that Lake Michigan is powerful, like the presence of the ocean.

My work with the museum:

I am the Head of Integrated Learning at Five Oaks Museum. It's a new title for me as of 2021 and it still feels a bit grandiose to say it. I've worked at the museum for 2.5 years. To the best of my knowledge (though I hope I am wrong), I am the first person of color to work at the museum. I started in visitor services when it was ye olde pioneer shrine aka Washington County Museum, then grew to take on most of the education work, like field trips and group tours. I transformed what / how we teach thru the transition to becoming Five Oaks Museum by focusing on individual's stories, arts integration into history content, and redefining our learning goals. Now, my role is to infuse learning opportunities into our communications, events + programs, direct education offerings, guest curated exhibitions, and contracted research projects.
February 9, 2021

hey this is Victoria, ur fave Head of Integrated Learning at Five Oaks Museum, here to talk about how I got into the museum field!

Since my high school jobs as a swim instructor and camp counselor, I knew I loved working with kids. For 2 years, I studied elementary art education and Latin American history at @hampshirecollege in Western Massachusetts. Two of my best friends signed up for the docent training program at the nearby @meadartmuseum. Docent means museum tour guide btw. 😮 Museums seemed kinda just ok, but I didn’t want to miss out.

The instructor at the Mead taught us about different kinds of Western art, how to look at the art, and how to prepare and weave facts about the art into a semi-natural conversation with students. Museums became a place where I knew how to belong. I dream of creating a program like this but in Five Oaks Museum style for @portlandcommcollege students.

Docent training was one of the best things I could've done for myself. Speaking in front of a group of peers or adults has always made my heart pound and my head feel hot and dizzy. Practicing it over and over in small doses through the course of the program helped me gain the ability to manage my body's reactions while speaking to a group. Now, I rarely have this reaction anymore, and I know how to manage it when it does come up. That instructor changed my life.

(continued on next page)
February 8, 2021 (continued)
I finished my undergrad degree (Studio Art, 2018) at @lewisandclarkcollege in Portland, OR. Along the way, I taught art in numerous summer camps, which really means teaching the process of turning an idea into reality and iterating on it.

I think the roles of summer camps and museums as learning spaces outside of the traditional US school system are often underestimated. Camps & museums can be a place to learn in a lower pressure, more curiosity-driven way and to focus on subjects and skills outside of state requirements. Also, working in camps and museums is a great way to get paid to gain practical & professional experience in the education field, without getting an expensive degree.

Have u had an instructor outside of a school setting that made a big impact on you?
February 10, 2021
How I look at Art (and u Can too)

Hey it’s Victoria and I’ve got an activity for u! I look at art following five super doable steps that I also teach to kids and adults in museum programs! Here’s the thing: you do not need to have Deep Thoughts About Art™ and you do not need to “Get It.” Anyone at any age can follow these steps and totally jam with any artwork.

Step 1: look. What colors, objects, people, textures, details, etc do you see? Take ur time, we gotta look closely at the whole thing before we even start analyzing anything.

Step 2: think. What do you think is going on in this artwork? What does it remind you of? What might the artist want to communicate through the art? What do you see in the artwork that gives you that idea? There are no right/wrong answers, this is all up to your own perception.

Step 3: read. To gain context, read the title of the artwork, and the artist’s statement/curator’s note/object label if available. The context that a museum gives to viewers about the art is called “interpretation.” When I teach kids, I prepare interpretation just for them.
Step 4: reflect. After reading the context, how did it change your thoughts about the artwork? What new ideas can you incorporate into your thinking?

Step 5: wonder. What questions do you still have about the artwork? If you could meet the artist, what would you ask them?

Try the five steps out on these artworks, which are some of my favorite artworks to talk about with kids from our history/culture exhibitions This IS Kalapuyan Land and DI$place. For the educators out there, this method is based on Visual Thinking Strategies but I've adapted them to combine art with history :)
floating loksi'
by Phillip Thomas (Chickasaw)
Oil on birch panel, 3’ x 4’, 2019.
Featured in This IS Kalapuyan Land

Interpretive text:
The Chickasaw tribe is originally from Mississippi and survived forced removal to Oklahoma, where many Chickasaw people live today. In his own life, Phillip has moved many times and now lives in Portland, Oregon.

Loksi’ means “turtle” in Chickasaw. Chickasaw stomp dancers wear rattles made from turtle shells. Once forbidden to dance and speak their language, Chickasaws now dance and speak with pride.

Turtle Island is a name for the American continents used by many Indigenous communities.
HI-story of struggle
by Shaka Funk Design Co.
Featured in DISplace

Interpretive text:
After establishing power in Hawai‘i through the fur trade and missions, American businessmen took political control over the Hawaiian kingdom in 1893. Hawai‘i became a U.S. territory, then became the 50th U.S. state.

The artists of Shaka Funk Design Co. grew up as classmates in O‘ahu, Hawai‘i. Both came to Oregon for college. They say: “This collage is our answer to a question posed to Native Hawaiians today from foreigners: Are we Hawaiian or American?”

This digital collage features many prominent figures in modern Native Hawaiian politics and activism.
S.O.S.  
by Derrick Lawvor (Modoc)  
Cow skull, two eagle feathers, leather, 2019.  
Featured in This IS Kalapuyan Land

Interpretive text:
A classic “cowboy western” object is transformed into a memento mori: an object that serves as a reminder of death, such as a skull.

Derrick lives in Beaverton, Oregon where he works as a Trimet mechanic. He is a Modoc descendant and member of the Klamath Tribes.

Salmon are essential to historic and contemporary Indigenous lifeways in the Pacific Northwest. Due to hydroelectric dams, water pollution, and habitat destruction, salmon are endangered in Oregon.
Kou EndeMech
by Kevin Matthew Kaunuali‘i Kiesel
digital painting in Photoshop, 2020
Featured in DISplace

*Interpretive text:*
Kevin was born on the island of O‘ahu, Hawai‘i and grew up in Wahiawa. Moving to Seattle in 2007 gave rise to an examination of his cultural identity and fused his interests in art, culture, and science fiction. Mechs are humanoid or biomorphic machines found in science fiction and anime.

Kevin says, "Inspired by creatures and plants found in Hawaii, this mech is covered with a camouflage paint scheme using the endemic Kou flower."

Indigenous Futurism is an art and media movement which express Indigenous perspectives of the future, past, and present in the context of science fiction.
February 12, 2021

Victoria here. Working at Five Oaks Museum means building the future we want to live in, one step at a time. It means taking our responsibility seriously. It means I get to tell the chamber of commerce group about land back!

It wasn't always like this. Washington County Museum in 2018 was an oil spill of bad energy. The education programs involved elementary students watching a powerpoint and no asking questions allowed.

TBH its unreal to be who I am and to do the work I do. At other museums, someone in my position would be unemployed during the pandemic. It's almost survivor's guilt, and it's the responsibility of this privilege. I bare my teeth to fight even as I am overwhelmed all the time! I gain purpose from our values, I gain spirit from the potential of every collaboration, I block out all the bad energy from the past which is probably not a healthy long-term solution!

I mentioned Monday that I might be the first POC to work at the museum in its 70+ years history. Big yikes. But I am not and will never be the last.

3 things I am really proud of: (pictured)-Practicing our educational values. No lectures for kids, integrating arts and history, learning how to teach tribal history right as a non-native (that would be a whole other post.)-Writing the interpretive displays for Tigard Outdoor Museum. Focusing on individual people's stories helped us clarify our museum's approach to history.-This Instagram! It's like a museum exhibition space where we meet people and highlight community members who make living history.

2 things I am excited about:-Once its safe to travel, working with the Anacostia Community Museum in D.C. to create learning materials as the 2020 national Neville-Pribram Award awardee from the Smithsonian Institution!-Growing the museum’s learning opportunities. For example, partnering with high schools for a career program in museums, so on!

1 thing to takeaway:-Creating education practices for a loving future is possible. Start right away before you have everything figured out, then improve & get feedback & iterate as you learn along the way. It’s one step at a time, no matter the size of your institution.
Over decades of persistent hard work on the part of the people of the Grand Ronde and other tribes, the rights of the Grand Ronde to run their own affairs and govern themselves were restored. As a result, Congress passed the Grand Ronde Restoration Act, which restored their rights and status in 1980. With the passing of the Grand Ronde Restoration Act, Congress designated the Grand Ronde Restoration Area as a designated reservation. Today, the reservation covers 7,000 acres, including the Klickitat River, the Clatsop River, and the Columbia River, all over the United States.

First signed on the Treaty of August 9, 1855, and as a result, Native American tribes were forced to sign away their land rights. Originally covering 40,000 acres, the newly established reservation was limited to 7,000 acres. Today, the reservation covers 7,000 acres, including the Klickitat River, the Clatsop River, and the Columbia River, all over the United States.

Artists are invited to engage with the history and culture of the Grand Ronde Reservation through the Artist Takeover program. Artists are encouraged to create art that reflects the history and culture of the Grand Ronde Reservation. This program is an opportunity for artists to engage with the history and culture of the Grand Ronde Reservation and to create art that reflects the community.
February 13, 2021
Victoria again, this time to talk about my personal papercutting art practice! Also, I've got a question sticker up in the stories today so ask me anything :)

The art form:
Papercutting originates in China. People make and display red papercuttings for Chinese New Year, which was yesterday! Happy year of the metal ox :) Papercutting is also part of traditional folk arts in Mexico, India, Japan, Slavic countries, and Jewish communities. Well-known Western paper cutting artists are Kara Walker and Henri Matisse.

(continued on next page)
How I do it:
I sketch in pencil then use an x-acto style knife to cut a single sheet of paper. I consider the structural integrity—how the paper will hold together. To me, paper cutting feels like a sculptural form of drawing. Sometimes I leave my papercuttings as a single sheet (pics 1&2), sometimes I add gouache paint (pics 3&4), and sometimes I glue and layer them (pics 5&6).

(continued on next page)
How I learned:
I started paper cutting at 14 and I've learned the technical skills through trial and error. I did study art in college and created a body of work for my senior thesis (pics 7,8,9). The gallery setting led me to experiment with light and large scale, which I'd love to do more! Currently I make art on the weekends at my desk, so I keep it contained.

(continued on next page)
My ~profesh artist statement~ that I haven’t changed since 2018:
I cut and layer paper to reference multiple perspectives and the circularity and build up of time and earth. A single perspective can perpetuate systems of authority or erase certain points of view and experiences. Additionally, I use composite moments, incongruent scales, and the shift of shadows to suggest the instability of perspective. The circles and layers in my work refer to how stories repeat, strata builds up, and the stars return the light from the past to the present. Human making blends with organic processes as we sculpt terrain. Similarly, I cut and layer paper, the pressed veins of trees, into new forms.

TBH this reminds me of Five Oaks Museum! Last pic (10) is inspired by the museum. Thanks for following my takeover this week and for all your support of my work and the museum, much love <3 @victoriataisundell