

Kelli Shermeyer, PhD

Helping Arts & Cultural Organizations Create their Futures

www.kellishermeyer.com

Professional Overview

I am a humanities scholar with extensive grants management and administrative experience working to advance the arts and humanities in the service of creating a better future for all. I turn visionary thinking into actionable steps for implementation, while refining communication and program execution processes to better serve an organization's strategic priorities. An expert writer and presenter across public-facing genres, I excel at translating complex information into digestible forms for a broad range of audiences.

Experience

Postdoctoral Researcher / University of Delaware, Department of English (Newark, DE) / August 2022 – present

- **Humanities Teaching:** engage over 200 students in writing courses that focused on interpreting cultural productions for a public audience; facilitate experiential learning opportunities that focused on close looking and interpretation of art and historical artifacts; publish “Better Worlds through Pedagogy,” co-written with former university students, in *Towards a Just Pedagogy of Performance*
- **Institutional Research & Data Management:** design database for maintaining detailed alumni records to trace career trajectories for English majors and support recruitment efforts; present findings to unit leadership; train administrators and project supervisor on best practices for coding nuanced variables; craft project documentation and protocols for regular updates
- **Public History:** collaborate with colleagues in the blue humanities to collect oral histories of women and non-binary stakeholders across the fishing industry to create public conversations that reflect on the entanglements of gender, labor, knowledge, and power in Maine's coastal communities
- **Scholarship:** pursue projects in two research areas—environmental humanities and creative anachronism in living history interpretation— including submission of an article to peer-reviewed journal, development of a book proposal, and regular conference presentations on creative anachronism in historical interpretation and ecologically conscious theater

Institutional Giving Manager & Development Consultant / Wilma Theater (Philadelphia, PA) / July 2021 - May 2023

**IGM July 2021-August 2022, Consultant September 2022-May 2023*

- **Grant Writing & Project Management:** raised over \$1.1 million dollars from government and foundation grants to support arts and public humanities projects; supervised grant proposal process from concept development through final reporting, including budgeting and budget reconciliation; led cross-functional team in preparing grant materials that met specific funder guidelines for content and formatting
- **Process Development & Training:** created new procedures for more effective prospecting, relationship management, and proposal generation; built detailed documentation of procedures designed for self-guided training on grants management; trained new Institutional Giving Managers on procedures and best practices; updated institutional style guides to increase professional standards across the development department;
- **Strategy & Analysis:** synthesized research to prepare reports and recommendations on funding opportunities, trends, and arts and cultural ecosystem for senior leadership
- **External Communications:** created pitch decks, impact reports, executive summaries, strategic planning documents, and other reports for senior leadership, high level donors, and the public
- **Relationship Management:** established a schedule for regular communication with foundation professionals to share work and receive feedback; met with staffers to strategize potential funding opportunities from state and national government programs
- **Public Humanities Support:** successfully fundraised for public humanities work in collaboration with the Free Library of Philadelphia; served as thought partner to program director about measuring impact of public-facing work

Visiting Assistant Professor / University of Oklahoma (Norman, OK) / August 2020 – May 2021

- **Teaching with Museums:** designed and executed a new program for emerging writers to compose work in conversation with the Fred Jones, Jr. Museum of Art's collection
- **Curated Workshop Series:** facilitated a series of masterclasses and workshops with nine nationally recognized writers and critics to enhance student learning, professionalization, and DEIA competencies

Edgar F. Shannon Postdoctoral Fellow / University of Virginia (Charlottesville, VA) / August 2019 – May 2020

- **Humanities Teaching:** taught university courses on writing & critical inquiry and advanced seminars on global drama

- **Peer-Reviewed Publications:** published articles in the *Journal of Contemporary Drama in English* and the *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*
- **Public Writing:** published review of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in *PAJ* and “Pandemic Dramaturgy: Tragedy and Accountability” as part of the LMDA Dramaturging the Phoenix essay project
- **Conference Presentations:** accepted as plenary speaker for the American Society for Theatre Research’s 2021 conference; organized panel for Modern Language Association annual conference

Director & Founding Member, University of Virginia Public Humanities Lab (Charlottesville, VA) / May 2017 - May 2019

concurrent with graduate study

- **Fieldwork in Historical Interpretation:** conducted fieldwork at the Frontier Culture Museum in Staunton, VA
- **Supervised Public Humanities Initiatives:** oversaw research and advocacy activities and budgets of four interdisciplinary humanities working groups
- **Strategic Planning:** led process to deliver lab mission statement and core values
- **Grant Guidelines:** developed funding and application guidelines for prospective subgrantees
- Secured renewal funding based on successful annual reports
- **Symposia Execution:** managed budget, logistics, communication strategy, and programming for two public humanities symposia open to the public and UVA community

Graduate Student & Instructor of Record / University of Virginia (Charlottesville, VA) / August 2013 – May 2019

- **Earned PhD in Modern & Contemporary Literature:** successfully completed graduate coursework in literary studies, narrative theory, aesthetics and politics, cultural studies; passed qualifying exams in modern and contemporary literature and critical theory; wrote and defended dissertation
- **Secured Competitive Funding:** received funding to support research and participation in interdisciplinary humanities seminars including the Irish Seminar (Notre Dame) and the Mellon School of Theatre and Performance Research (Harvard).
- **Innovative Pedagogy Training:** facilitated eight pedagogy workshops for peers and faculty and crafted educational materials on cultural and linguistic competency, effective feedback strategies, and teaching technologies
- **Scholarship:** contributed pieces to several public-facing digital publications in the humanities and published a chapter on Colson Whitehead’s *Zone One* in the collection *The Written Dead: The Zombie as a Literary Phenomenon*: regular conference presentations
- **Humanities Teaching:** designed and taught writing-intensive courses on American political theater, monsters in American culture, and imagining the future
- **Digital Humanities Fellow:** trained in digital humanities methods for research and public-facing work and conducted research in mixed reality theater.

Education

University of Virginia / **PhD in Modern and Contemporary Literature & Critical Theory** 2013-2019

University of Delaware / **Honors BA with distinction in English, minors in History and Medieval Studies** 2008-2012

Selected Outreach and Engagement

Board Member, **New Light Theatre**

Past Member, **Anti-Racist Action Committee of Theatre Philadelphia**

Past Panelist, **NEA Grants for Arts Projects**

Member of the **IHGC Mellon Global South Laboratory in Performance Cultures & Embodied Creative Practices**

Invited pre-conference participant and panelist, **Bucknell University Digital Scholarship Conference**

Skill Summary

Oral Communication

Written Communication

Project Management

Strategic Planning

Fundraising

Adaptability

Program Development

Assessment

Organization

Humanities Content Expert

Technical Competence: Microsoft Suite, Google Suite, Project Management (Monday.com, Asana,), CRMs (Tessitura), Adobe