

# Emma Sonnier

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Emma Sonnier is a curator and program developer with five years of experience, specializing in community-focused, interdisciplinary art exhibitions and contemporary mixed media installations.

## EDUCATION

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### Johns Hopkins University

Remote

*Currently pursuing a Master of Arts in Museum Studies*

- **GPA:** 4.0
- **Courses Taken:** Exploring Museum Professions, Curatorship: Principles and Practices, Private Collections and Museums, The Business of Museums

### Harvard Business School

Remote

*Negotiating Salary*

### Loyola University in New Orleans

New Orleans, LA

*Bachelor of Arts in History with Concentration in Art History*

- **GPA:** 3.4

## SKILLS, ACTIVITIES & INTERESTS

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**Technical Skills:** Research, Strategic Leadership, Writing, Exhibit Design, Team Management, Project Management, Collector Systems (CMS), QuickBooks, AI, Artwork Archive, Google Workspace, Basecamp, Adobe Suite, Canva, Microsoft Office, Instagram, Facebook, Zoom, WIX Website Builder, Fundraising, Negotiation, Networking, Social Media and Event Marketing, Grant Writing, Budgeting

**Languages:** Proficient in English, Limited Working Proficiency in German and French

**Interests:** Travel, Painting, Textile Art, Live Music/Arts Events, Community Event Planning, Genealogy, Mutual Aid, Female Creativity in Soviet Latvia, Science and Arts Museums, Contemporary Arts, Theater, and Performance Art.

## WORK & LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

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### ARCHIVES Exhibitions, Charitable LLC

Lafayette, LA

*Curator & Programs Director, ARCHIVES Team*

August 2024 – Present

- **Exhibition Curation & Planning**
  - Conceptualize and execute exhibitions.
  - Arrange selected artworks, installations, and interactive components to create thematic, mission-aligned displays.
  - Highlight emerging, mid-career, and established artists through exhibition programming.
  - Create mentorship and community engagement opportunities through hybrid exhibitions and workshops open to the public.
  - Conduct extensive research on exhibition themes, relevant artists, and artwork provenance.
  - Build and manage diverse teams to foster collaboration and maintain high professional standards.
- **Gallery/Venue Preparation & Operations**
  - Serve as the lead gallery preparator.
  - Oversee exhibition setup, design, and logistics, including audio-visual setup.
  - Ensure high-quality, polished presentations.
  - Train and manage volunteer preparators and art handlers.
- **Grant Writing & Fundraising**
  - Complete grant writing and applications for state funding.

- Raised over \$4,000 in private donations for the inaugural exhibition.
- Directed fundraising initiatives that generated a profit of over \$11,000 on a budget under \$400.
- **Stakeholder & Community Communications**
  - Function as the primary point of contact amongst donors, supporters, and community partners.
  - Build strong relationships to support ARCHIVES' mission and goals.
  - Coordinate events and opportunities with local businesses sharing similar missions.
  - Negotiate agreements with artists, venue owners, sponsors, and businesses to establish mutually beneficial partnerships and collaborations.
  - Resolve disputes and address arising issues promptly and empathetically, ensuring optimal outcomes for all parties involved.
- **Community Outreach**
  - Coordinate free, accessible pop-up arts events with an average attendance of 183 people.
  - Target underrepresented communities in Acadiana and incorporate them into programming.
  - Actively seek emerging talent to provide platforms for growth and exposure.
  - Attend seminars, lectures, networking events, and art exhibitions both in-person and online to strengthen ARCHIVES' presence locally in Lafayette, in New Orleans, and within the digital arts community.
- **Brand Development & Marketing**
  - Collaborate on developing ARCHIVES' brand identity and marketing strategies.
  - Manages social media alongside Lex R. Thomas and Kaylin Anderson.
  - Increase visibility and engagement through targeted campaigns.
  - Act as the representative for ARCHIVES in radio, TV, podcast, and social media appearances.
- **Mission-Driven Programming**
  - Design and implement programs aligned with the ARCHIVES' mission.
  - Build opportunities for artists through inclusive exhibitions, workshops, residencies, and
  - Organize enriching social events for networking and community building.
  - Engage in community outreach to inform programming decisions, ensuring alignment with community interests and needs.

## **Basin Arts**

*Art Handler*

**New Orleans, LA**

February 2025- Present

- Collaborate regularly with the lead curators, Dirk Guidry and Bethany LeJeune, to install artwork in over 15 office and retail spaces.
- Assist in the safe handling, storage, and transportation of artworks in compliance with gallery and museum standards.
- Execute regular inventories and condition reports.
- Operate tools effectively and efficiently under time constraints.
- Quickly and quietly install selected artworks to accommodate office staff.

## **Acadiana Center for the Arts**

*Visual Arts Assistant, Visual Arts Department*

**Lafayette, LA**

April 2023 – February 2025

- Facilitated in planning, organizing, and installing exhibitions, ensuring alignment with institutional goals and curatorial vision.
- Functioned as the gallery preparator for five sub-galleries.
- Maintained the quality of gallery walls and spaces.
- Installed, curated, and handled artwork for exhibitions in five sub-galleries.
- Conducted research on artists, artwork, and themes to support exhibition development.
- Coordinated and communicated with artists, lenders, and board members to facilitate submissions, contracts, and logistics.
- Drafted and finalized exhibition texts, wall labels, interpretive texts, and promotional materials for public engagement.
- Coordinated the safe handling, storage, and transportation of artworks in compliance with gallery and museum standards.

- Maintained accurate records of exhibition details, artwork inventories, and correspondence.
- Collaborated regularly with the curator to ensure the smooth execution of exhibitions and events.
- Collaborated with artists and curator to design exhibition layouts, prepare gallery spaces, and execute lighting and display setups.
- Assisted in executing creative programming in collaboration with other departments.
- Created educational materials for various exhibitions with family-focused activities.
- Oversaw and directed gallery contractors.
- Implemented hands-on activities for children within appropriate exhibitions.
- **Highlighted Experience:**
  - Reaux Family Vault Gallery Coordinator
    - Reopened the Reaux Family Vault, creating an online submission portal to provide accessible gallery opportunities for early-career artists studying at UL's College of the Arts.
    - Conducted outreach at UL to recruit emerging artists and promoted professional development and career advancement.
    - Curator and sole preparator for Reaux Family Vault exhibitions.
  - Online Exhibition Proposal Submission Portal Creator
    - Created an online exhibition proposal portal to streamline submissions, ensuring accessibility and equal opportunities for artists of all career levels.
    - Gathered necessary data to design and implement a comprehensive exhibition proposal submission form.
    - Compiled and organized submitted information into concise packets and presentations for the Visual Arts Committee and Board.

### **Young Rembrandts**

**New Orleans, LA**

*Art Teacher*

October 2019 – April 2020

- Managed art classes for 15-25 K-8th-grade students in the New Orleans, Kenner, and Jefferson public school districts.
- Prepared lesson plans to foster skill development and creativity among students.
- Created a disciplined yet engaging environment, guiding students through projects.
- Provided personalized guidance to students based on their skill level and interests, helping them develop their artistic abilities.
- Implemented classroom management strategies that create positive and stimulating environments for diverse students.

### **Paul and Lulu Hilliard University Art Museum**

**Lafayette, LA**

*Research Assistant, University Art Museum*

June 2019 – August 2019

- Worked under the guidance of art historian Carol Reese in researching the architecture of A. Hayes Town for traveling exhibition publication.
- Conducted extensive research in several document archives, libraries, and digital databases to support projects and identify relevant sources.
- Performed data entry tasks to ensure that important information is easily accessible.
- Collaborated with researchers and writers to coordinate research activities and ensure project timelines are met.

### **National World War II Museum**

**New Orleans, LA**

*Retail Sales Associate*

September 2018 – February 2019

- Provided high-quality customer service, assistance, and personalized recommendations.
- Demonstrated expertise in product features to assist customers in making informed purchasing decisions.
- Handled cash transactions accurately and efficiently, maintaining a balanced cash drawer at the end of each shift.
- Empathetically resolved customer complaints promptly and effectively.
- Collaborated with the visual merchandising team to create eye-catching displays that matched the museum's branding and mission.

- Maintained cleanliness and organization of assigned areas within the store.

## **Mahtook & LeFleur**

*File Clerk & Runner*

**Lafayette, LA**

May 2017 – August 2017

- Sorted mail and packages efficiently.
- Maintained and organized client files, ensuring confidentiality and accuracy of information.
- Safely transported important legal documents to courthouses and offices.
- Performed administrative tasks, including answering phones, taking messages, and greeting clients.
- Ran errands for the firm, like picking up coffee, delivering documents, etc.
- Assisted in trial preparation by organizing exhibits, witness lists, and trial binders.
- Monitored office stock levels and reported to the office manager for restocking assistance.
- Maintained confidentiality of sensitive client information at all times.
- Maintained a polished and professional demeanor alongside established law professionals.

## **Bruce Schultz Photography**

*Darkroom & Field Intern*

**Lafayette, LA**

May 2016 – August 2016

- Supported photographer, Bruce Schultz, in client relations and darkroom operations.
- Organized and operated darkroom equipment, including a portable darkroom tent for on-site portraiture sessions.
- Developed 8x10 tintypes and managed hazardous chemicals while ensuring safety protocols were met.
- Assisted in setting up and handling a selection of vintage cameras, providing technical support during shoots and client interactions.
- Anticipated the needs of the lead photographer, Bruce Schultz, resulting in smoother and more efficient photo shoots and darkroom projects.
- Worked closely with clients, making sure that the demands of each client and the photographer were met throughout photo shoots.

## **AWARDS & PRESS**

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2026

- *Art & Exploration*, “[A Curator’s Perspective with Emma Sonnier](#)” (Podcast Interview), Apr. 3.

2025

- *KATC-TV Acadiana’s Newschannel*, “Community Stories: ARCHIVES Root” (TV Interview), Dec. 12.
- *The Current LA*, “[The art collective is dead, long live the art collective](#)” (Arts and Culture Edition Feature), Jul. 2.
- *Country Roads Magazine*, “[ARCHIVES: A new platform in Lafayette envisions a better ecosystem for the arts](#)” (Print and Digital Feature), May 21.
- *KRVS Radio Acadie*, “[Art Circle Feature: Emma Sonnier & Candice Leigh](#)” (Interview), May 8.
- *Basin Arts*, “[Art Circle Spotlight: Emma Sonnier](#)” (Interview), Apr. 24.
- *KRVS Radio Acadie*, “ARCHIVES Artwalk Pop-Up” (Interview), Mar. 24.
- *Lafayette Arts Association*, Selected Juror of “[The Bird Show](#)”, Feb. 20.

2024

- *KLFY Passe Partout*, “ARCHIVES x LoudHouse” (Live TV Interview), Oct. 1.
- *KRVS Radio Acadie Après-Midi*, “[ARCHIVES Exhibitions x LoudHouse](#)” (Interview), Sept. 24.
- *The Current LA*, “[LoudHouse Collective and ARCHIVES Exhibitions](#)” (Interview), Sept. 12.
- *KLFY*, “[ARTIST ROUND UP: Zine Making with ARCHIVES & LoudHouse Collectives](#)” (Online Article) Aug. 10.

2023

- *The Advocate*, “[Lafayette Students to Sell Art, Perform During Art Expo on Saturday](#)” (Online Article), Mar. 31.

## **PRESENTATIONS & WORKSHOPS**

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2025.

- *ARCHIVES Exhibitions* and *ULL College of the Arts*, “Next Phase: Surviving Install” (Workshop Lead), Aug. 14.
- *ARCHIVES Exhibitions* and *ULL College of the Arts*, “Next Phase: Group Critique with Brett Chigoy” (Workshop Host), Aug. 7.
- *ARCHIVES Exhibitions* and *the Hallway Gallery*, “Next Phase: Conceptualizing Exhibitions with Anne Boudreau” (Workshop Host), Jul. 31.
- *ARCHIVES Exhibitions* and *Basin Arts*, “Critique Night” (Workshop Coordinator), Jul. 10.
- *Acadiana Center for the Arts*, “Creative Acadiana x ARCHIVES: Figure Drawing Night” (Workshop Lead), Mar. 13
- *ARCHIVES Exhibitions* and *Black Café*, “Artists’ Lounge” (Workshop Lead), Mar. 6

2024

- *Acadiana Center for the Arts*, “Creative Acadiana x ARCHIVES: Preparing for Your First Big Exhibition with Bob Borel & Emma Sonnier” (Workshop Co-Host), Dec. 3
- *Acadiana Center for the Arts*, “ARTIST ROUND UP: Zine Making with ARCHIVES & LoudHouse Collectives” (Workshop Coordinator), Aug. 21

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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2026

- *National Emerging Museum Professional Network*, “Museum Advocacy Day”, Apr. 9 – 10.
- *Johns Hopkins University’s Advanced Academic Program*, “Curated Conversations: Building Intelligent Museums with AI”, Feb. 18.
- *MuseumExpert*, “Panel on Museums and the Executive Orders of 2025”, Feb. 12.
- *MuseumExpert* and *National Emerging Museum Professionals Network*, “Career Development or Resistance? Integrating Political Resistance into Professional Development”, Jan. 28.

*Memberships*

- *Association of Academic Museums and Galleries*, Member.
- *International Council of Museums*, U.S., Student Member.
- *National Emerging Museum Professional Network*, Member.
- *Johns Hopkins University’s Story Lab*, Member.

## EXHIBITION AND PUBLIC ART PROJECTS

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2026

- *Children’s Museum of Acadiana Mural with Lafayette City Government and Dirk Guidry*, Lafayette, Dec. – Feb.

2025

- “*Root*”, ARCHIVES Exhibitions at the Hallway Gallery on Garfield, Lafayette, Dec.-Jan.
- “Next Phase: Hybrid Workshop and Exhibition Series, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Fletcher Hall Gallery, Lafayette, Aug.-Sept.
- “*whimsy*”, ARCHIVES Exhibitions at the Hallway Gallery at the Warehouse on Garfield, Lafayette, July-Aug.
- “*Boundaries*”, ARCHIVES Exhibitions at the Hallway Gallery at the Warehouse on Garfield, Lafayette, Apr.-May
- “Lynda Frese: *Far-Out*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, Apr.-July
- “FrancoFAE: *Correspondance*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, Apr-June
- “*Soft Sculpture*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, Apr.-June
- “*Prairie Stories: Art & Ecological Restoration on the Prairies of Louisiana*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, Feb.-May
- “*Voice and Form: UL College of the Arts’ Formal & Conceptual Development Classes*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, Dec.-Mar.
- “*The Art in Farming*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts and Bethany LeJeune, Lafayette, Dec.-Feb.

2024

- “*In Flight: Pelicans of Acadiana*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, Dec.-Jan.
- “Anne Boudreau: *STANDING AT THE EDGE | then, now, when*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, Nov.-Jan.
- “Jesse Poimboeuf and John Slaughter: *Enchanting Nature*”, The Framing Shop Gallery, Closing Exhibition, Lafayette, Nov.-Dec.
- “ARCHIVES: *Systems*”, Chase Tower, Lafayette, Oct. 5
- “*CuriousArt: The Fascinating Assemblage of George Graham*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, Sept.-Dec.
- “Terry Lenoir Palmer: *Cognitive Distortions*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, Sept.-Oct.
- “Roz LeCompte: *RÉVERIE*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, Aug.- Oct.
- “*Ceramics Now: Contemporary and Traditional Practices in Acadiana*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, June-Aug.
- “Quilters’ Guild of Acadiana: *Coffee, Tea, or Me*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, July-Aug.
- “*Faith House 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Women Artists Exhibition*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, July.
- “Luann Duhon: *Bird is the Word*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, June-July.
- “Nhi Ngo: *Things I’ve Felt*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, June.
- “Jesse Poimboeuf: *Winging It*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, May-June.
- “Mila Granger: *The Queen’s Corridor*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, May-June.
- “Sara Hardin: *Unconscious Place*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, Feb.-Mar.
- “Ben Koch”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, Jan.-Mar.

2023

- “Ralph Schexnaydre: *Translating the Sun*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, Nov.-Jan.
- “Mary Attwood & Ange Riehl: *Improvisational Exploration*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, Sept.-Oct.
- “Kelli Foret Richard: *Drawn to Grow*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, Aug.-Oct.
- “*Cūr Nōn*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, June-Aug.
- “*Faith House 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Women Artists Exhibition*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, July.
- “Michelle Fontenot: *Peace, Love, & Mosaics*”, Acadiana Center for the Arts, Lafayette, May-June.

2019

- *H&W Mural with Ken Art*, New Orleans, May – Jul.
- *Loyola University in New Orleans*, “Loyola Alumni Show” (Student Curator), New Orleans, Jan.-May.

## REFERENCES

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Anne Boudreau, UL Professor and Installation Artist

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