

Emma Sonnier

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Emma Sonnier is a curator and cultural program developer specializing in interdisciplinary exhibitions and community programs. She approaches museum work as civil service – sharing stories, cultivating understanding, and building connection across difference.

EDUCATION

Johns Hopkins University

Currently pursuing a Master of Arts in Museum Studies

Remote

Expected Summer 2027

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

Loyola University in New Orleans

Bachelor of Arts in History with Concentration in Art History

New Orleans, LA

2017-2022

SKILLS & INTERESTS

Core Competencies: Project Management, Research, Writing, Adaptability, Creative Problem-Solving, Initiative, Integrity, Data Analysis, Empathy, Collaboration, Relationship-Building, Communication

Technical Skills: Collector Systems (CMS), AI, Artwork Archive, Google Workspace, Basecamp, Adobe Suite, Canva, Microsoft Suite, Social Media, Tally Form Builder, QuickBooks, Zoom, Kofi, WIX, WordPress

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

Interests: Travel, Mixed Media Art, Installation and Performance Art, Fashion, Live Music/Arts Events, Community Event Planning, Mutual Aid, Female Painters and Photographers throughout Soviet Occupied and Independent Latvia, Contemporary Arts, World Religions, Ballet & Contemporary Dance

WORK & LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

ARCHIVES Exhibitions, Charitable LLC

Curator & Programs Director, Co-Founder of ARCHIVES

Lafayette, LA

August 2024 – Present

- **Exhibition Curation & Planning**
 - Conceptualize exhibition themes, author labels and supplementary texts, select artwork, lead exhibition design, and ensure thematic alignment for optimal audience engagement and community relevance.
 - Lead research and evaluation, producing content honoring academic integrity and community stories.
 - Catalog artwork with standardized documentation for administrative organization and efficiency.
- **Fundraising & Entrepreneurial Activities**
 - Raise over \$10,000 for ARCHIVES' inaugural exhibition by designing comprehensive fundraising campaigns featuring silent auctions and giveaways, directly supporting artist compensation and increasing community engagement.
 - Lead fundraising initiatives through donor outreach, email campaigns, social media, and community partnerships, generating over \$7,900 in combined funding for exhibitions and the Acadiana Arts Access Microgrants program.
 - Co-direct all day-to-day operations, cultivating strategic relationships with local businesses, nonprofits, sponsors, and partners to secure programming support during regional economic downturn and reduced arts funding.
- **Outreach & Charitable Activities**
 - Act as the representative for ARCHIVES in radio, TV, podcast, and social media appearances to increase reach and build community relationships.
 - Spearheaded mutual aid events alongside exhibitions, securing food and hygiene product donations to support vulnerable populations and prioritize community needs.

- Launched mentorship opportunities, including free quarterly networking nights and workshops, resulting in increased artistic collaboration and wage transparency dialogue.
- Host open panels, feedback sessions, and online surveys to inform programming decisions, ensuring collaboratively grounded alignment with community interests and needs.

Acadiana Center for the Arts

Lafayette, LA

Visual Arts Assistant, Visual Arts Department

April 2023 – February 2025

- Planned, installed, and executed exhibitions across seven in-facility galleries, assuming lead preparator and assistant curator responsibilities to free the Visual Arts Director for administrative and fiscal priorities.
- Coordinated and communicated with artists, lenders, and board members to facilitate successful submissions, inventories, digital records, contracts, and logistics.
- Regularly attended board and Visual Arts Committee meetings to provide informed input on artist selection, thematic direction, and internal operational challenges, creating stronger board relationships and transparency.
- Authored exhibition texts, non-interpretive and interpretive labels to increase audience comprehension.
- Facilitated cross-departmental collaborations with Development, Marketing, Performing Arts, and Arts in Education to streamline event execution and boost internal alignment.

RELEVANT RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Hilliard Art Museum

Lafayette, LA

Research Assistant, ULL University Art Museum

June 2019 – August 2019

- Compiled sources, annotated research, and authored summaries to inform publication on A. Hayes Town.

PRESS

- *Art & Exploration*, "[A Curator's Perspective with Emma Sonnier](#)" (Podcast Interview), Apr. 3, 2026.
- *KATC-TV Acadiana's News*, "Community Stories: ARCHIVES Root" (TV Interview), Dec. 12, 2025.
- *The Current LA*, "[The art collective is dead, long live the art collective](#)" (Arts and Culture Edition Feature), Jul. 2, 2025.
- *Country Roads Magazine*, "[ARCHIVES: A new platform in Lafayette envisions a better ecosystem for the arts](#)" (Print and Digital Feature), May 21, 2025.
- *Lafayette Arts Association*, "[The Bird Show](#)" (Selected Juror), Feb. 20, 2025.
- *KLFY Passe Partout*, "ARCHIVES x LoudHouse" (Live TV Interview), Oct. 1, 2024.
- *KRVS Après-Midi*, "[ARCHIVES Exhibitions x LoudHouse](#)" (Radio Interview), Sept. 24, 2024.

PRESENTATIONS & WORKSHOPS

- *ARCHIVES Exhibitions* and *ULL College of the Arts*, "Next Phase: Surviving Install" (Workshop Developer & Lead), Aug. 14, 2025.
- *ARCHIVES Exhibitions* and *the Hallway Gallery*, "Next Phase: Conceptualizing Exhibitions with Anne Boudreau" (Workshop Developer), July 31, 2025.
- *Acadiana Center for the Arts*, "Creative Acadiana x ARCHIVES: Figure Drawing Night" (Workshop Developer), Mar. 13, 2025.
- *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, 2024.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- *National Emerging Museum Professional Network*, "Museum Advocacy Day", Apr. 9-10, 2026.
- *MuseumExpert*, "Panel on Museums and the Executive Orders of 2025", Feb. 12, 2026.
- *MuseumExpert and National Emerging Museum Professionals Network*, "Career Development or Resistance? Professional Development Seminar", Jan. 28, 2026.
- *International Council of Museums*, U.S., Student Member.
- *National Emerging Museum Professional Network*, Member.