2015 Latino Museum Studies Program
Practicum List

Practicum Summary

Latino Museum Studies Program (LMSP) applicants have the opportunity to apply for one of fourteen, four-week practicums. These are offered in the form of a scholarship to work with a museum or cultural unit. Fellows remain in Washington after the first component and are provided additional housing and a stipend. The practicums provide a unique opportunity to assist in furthering the work of participating institutions while offering fellows additional knowledge and insight as well as expanding their educational and professional networks.

Please review the following list of practicums and indicate your top three choices in your online application and answer the corresponding essay question pertaining to your choices. Projects will be awarded based on the overall strength of your application as well as the quality of the answers to your essay question.
PRACTICUM 1

Anacostia Community Museum (ACM)

Project: Reinterpreting archival and object collections
Lead: Dr. Ariana A. Curtis, Curator

The Anacostia Community Museum (ACM) explores issues in contemporary urban communities and is dedicated to a community-focused approach to research, documentation, and educational and cultural programming. From its creation in 1967 through 2006, the ACM focused on African-American history and culture. The mission expanded to include urban communities more broadly. Many of the archive and objects in the ACM collection have unarticulated connections to urban communities in the U.S. and abroad. This fellowship focuses on the research and identification of Smithsonian objects and archives as part of re-interpreting ACM’s permanent collection.

ACM’s first large-scale Latino focused exhibition, Unconventional Gateways, will open in 2016. Unconventional Gateways is a research project for an exhibition based in the DC metro area and comparatively examines: Baltimore, MD; Charlotte, NC; and Raleigh-Durham, NC. The increase in U.S. born Latinos and the influx of Latino migrants and immigrants changes the social and cultural life in these four urban areas. Unconventional Gateways probes issues of citizenship, racialization, rights, and community building. The fellow will assist curator Ariana Curtis in connecting this new project and its acquisition to the archives and objects in the museum’s permanent collection.

Responsibilities will include:
- Identifying and researching items in the ACM object collection and archival collection with attention to notions of: immigration, migration, Latino history and culture.
- Suggesting public programming and community outreach based on findings.
- Attending relevant community events and forums.
- Participating in museum meetings and activities as directed, to gain broader understanding of the Unconventional Gateways research project and Latino initiatives at ACM.
- At least one blog about experiences and interesting findings.

Useful links:
http://anacostia.si.edu/Research/CurrentProjects

http://cdi.anacostia.si.edu/explore/urbanstudies/unconventional-gateways/
PRACTICUM 2

Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage (CFCH)

Project: Recovering Voices: Heritage Languages in Afro-Cuban Religion
Leads: Michael Atwood Mason, Director
       Mary Linn, Curator
       Greg Adams, Archivist

The Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage (CFCH) promotes the understanding and vitality of contemporary grassroots cultures in the United States and abroad. It produces the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, exhibitions, documentary films and videos, symposia, and educational materials. The CFCH conducts research, maintains archives, and provides educational and research opportunities. The CFCH has a staff of folklorists, ethnomusicologists, and cultural anthropologists, who carry out research, public programming and educational outreach.

In preparation for an upcoming Festival program on Cuba and in conjunction with the Recovering Voices initiative (see link), the fellow will work with the director and curator to identify specific materials in our collections related to African-based heritage languages from Cuba in our collections. These languages continue to play an important role in the cultural heritage and daily lives of people involved in the Afro-Cuban religions known as Santería, Arará, Palo Monte, and Abakuá. This research will result in a co-authored publication on current efforts to sustain the use of Lucumí or Anagó, the heritage language spoken in Santería.

Responsibilities will include:
- Conducting research in CFCH archives to locate and transcribe key examples of Cuban heritage languages from the 1989 Festival Program on Cuba as well as Folkways Recordings.
- Selecting noteworthy images from archival documentation of the 1989 Festival.
- Conducting research in order to contextualize archived materials, both in the U.S. and Cuba.
- Working closely with the archivist to catalogue images and recordings, including adding metadata for discoverability in search databases.
- Working with curator to incorporate the context and imagery into the proposed publication.
- Blogging about the project and findings (in English and Spanish where possible) as well as presenting to museum staff.

Useful links:
http://www.folklife.si.edu/
http://recoveringvoices.si.edu/index.htm
PRACTICUM 3

Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage (CFCH)

Project: Smithsonian Folklife Festival Research and Documentation Project
Lead: Cristina Diaz-Carrera, Folklife Specialist

The Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage (CFCH) promotes the understanding and continuity of contemporary grassroots cultures in the United States and abroad. The largest and most visible project of the CFCH is the annual Smithsonian Folklife Festival. The Festival is a living exhibition staged on the National Mall during the last week of June and the first week of July, and brings traditional artists together for concerts, demonstration, narrative sessions, and informal interactions with each other and the public. The event is documented through photo, audio, and video, which are used to create online resources to reach a larger virtual audience.

The 2015 Festival will feature a program on Peru called Perú: Pachamama. This program will showcase the country’s unique cultural heritage as well as its remarkable landscape and history by featuring twelve distinctive case studies. Assistance is needed fleshing out the online presence of these stories after the Festival has concluded, giving our featured artists the opportunity to reach the largest audience possible.

Responsibilities will include:
- Logging photo, audio, and video materials.
- Transcribing key pieces of audio and video.
- Assisting to select and caption media that will be used for digital storytelling.
- Writing of several blog pieces.
- Assisting CFCH staff with scripts for online exhibition pages.

Useful links:
http://www.festival.si.edu/2015/Peru/
http://www.festival.si.edu/
This practicum is in the Division of Home and Community Life, which uses scholarship and collections to educate and inspire a broad audience about domestic and social environments and the intersections between public and private life in our nation’s past.

Working with the curator, the fellow will review oral history collections in order to develop a potential video/audio presentation for the Many Voices, One Nation exhibit. The priority will be to develop conceptual outlines and identify clips of oral histories, performances, and other soundscape material. This is a cross disciplinary and comparative project, and will require background research and creation of working bibliographies. Collections consist of clothing and identity, music, wine and agricultural work, mainly of Latino collections but also Arab American, Chinese American, and others. A work space is available for the selected fellow, but need not be present at NMAH. The fellow will regularly use the NMAH Archives Center and Library of Congress (LOC) among others.

Responsibilities will include:

- Acquiring an understanding of the overall function and operation of the Museum while completing research, collections, and exhibit projects in the Division of Home & Community Life, at the National Museum of American History.
- Regularly meet with staff members in other departments that sustain the intellectual direction of the museum to learn basic museum practices and career opportunities.
- Examining collections as required to complete research and writing/reading assignment.
- Assisting with the development of exhibit products, and case study exhibit approaches.
- Complete a report with annotated working bibliography on an agreed upon topic relating to the history of the immigration and soundscapes.
- Give colloquium presentation on academic research in relation to immigration, ethnic history, migration, or music, race, identity, and sound.

Useful links:
http://americanhistory.si.edu/

http://americanhistory.si.edu/about/departments/home-and-community-life
This fellowship is in the division of the History of Medicine and Science at the National Museum of American History. The Division manages the largest and most significant collection of health-related artifacts in the Western Hemisphere. The Collections in medical science seek to capture the historical experiences of researchers, physicians, communities, patients, and their families. This project supports the on-going documentation and collecting related to the history of health, medicine, and the body in Latino communities.

Responsibilities for this project include:

- Depending upon the background and interests of the applicant, research will be on one of the following subject areas: disability (including diagnosis, treatment, and understanding of physical impairment, insanity, neuro-diversity, and “invisible” disabilities), public health, herbal medicine and curanderismo, HIV and AIDS, LGBTQ and sexuality.
- Participating in museum and division meetings and activities as directed, to gain deeper understanding of the workings of a large and complex museum.
- Identifying and evaluating resources (including primary and secondary materials, archives and other existing collections, key historical people and events, media, and similar) related to selected health topic.
- Creating an annotated collecting guide that includes collecting sources and bibliographic references where appropriate.

Useful links:

http://americanhistory.si.edu/

http://americanhistory.si.edu/about/departments/medicine-and-science
This practicum is in the Division of Home and Community Life, which uses scholarship and collections to educate and inspire a broad audience about domestic and social environments and the intersections between public and private life in our nation’s past. The division cares for its collections and develops them to represent the country’s many peoples in the areas of home life, racial and gender identity, family structure, work, consumer culture, standards of cleanliness and health, diverse forms of housing, modernization and the role of technology, invention, leisure, community institutions, religion and religious affiliation, and education.

The Smithsonian NMAH has the opportunity to collect a large number of Mexican folk art, home décor, and domestic objects that reflect Latino racial and gender identities, life cycles, lifestyles and family traditions, patterns of domestic production and consumption, leisure, tourism, and religion. This practicum includes critical background research on Mexican folk art objects in order to bring the collection to the Smithsonian. Each object reflects the lives of local Latino artisans, different parts of Mexican society, and illustrates notable folk art traditions. Some items are made of clay specifically for tourist markets; others would have been used in the home for generations. This practicum will directly influence the Smithsonian’s collections by supporting the on-going documentation and collecting related to the history of home life in Latino communities at NMAH.

Depending upon the background and interests of the fellow, responsibilities for this practicum include:

- Research in Latino folk art, consumerism and tourism in Latin America, and transnational histories and experiences.
- Background research on specific objects in this collection, including primary and secondary materials, archives and other existing collections throughout the Smithsonian and beyond, key historical people, events, and media to produce an annotated collecting guide with bibliographic references where appropriate.
- Identification of the objects’ importance to Latino history and culture as well as American history more broadly.
- Outlining justifications for collection in reference to collections committee standards.
- Participating in museum, division, and exhibit meetings as directed to gain deeper understanding of the workings of a large and complex museum and the development of history exhibitions.

Useful links:
http://americanhistory.si.edu/
http://americanhistory.si.edu/about/departments/home-and-community-life
http://americanhistory.si.edu/profile/1114
PRACTICUM 7

National Portrait Gallery (NPG)

Project: Research and blog entry writing about new Latino acquisitions
Lead: Taína Caragol, Curator of Latino Art and History

Since the hiring of the Curator of Latino Art and History in the spring of 2013, the National Portrait Gallery (NPG) has acquired over 50 artworks representing Latinos. Among these are a portraits by Cuban photographers Augusto Tagle and Julio Berestein, of José Gómez-Sicre, a seminal figure in the reappraisal of Latin American art in the US after WWII; an acrylic on paper drawing of writer Nicholasa Mohr by renowned Puerto Rican artist Antonio Martorell; a one-of-a-kind portfolio titled Los Portraits by Puerto Rican photographer ADAL (a.k.a. Adál Maldonado) comprising photographs of distinguished diasporic Puerto Ricans in the fields of literature, music, theater, visual arts and sports; portraits by Chicano photographer George Rodríguez of teachers Sal Castro and Jaime Escalante, two trailblazers of public education who worked from Los Angeles; and a portrait of Sandra Cisneros by San Antonio photographer Al Rendón, among many others.

The fellow will assist the museum in publicizing information about these artworks by researching the artists and sitters and writing between four and seven articles of single artworks or groups of artworks that will be published between August 2015 and February 2016 in the museum blog, Face-to-Face. This practicum presents a great opportunity for deepening one’s knowledge of Latino history and portrait artists.

Responsibilities for this practicum include:

- Conducting research on historical and contemporary Latino subjects and portrait artists represented in NPG’s recent acquisitions: this might include archival and bibliographic research in the museum’s object files and the library, and contacting and interviewing artists and sitters.
- Writing entries between 450 and 700 words on the artworks.

Useful links:
http://face2face.si.edu/
http://npg.si.edu/
PRACTICUM 8

National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP)

Project: Comienzo: Emerging Conversations about the Collections of the National Trust for Historic Preservation
Lead: Carrie Villar, John & Neville Bryan Senior Manager of Museum Collections

The National Trust for Historic Preservation provides leadership, education, advocacy, and resources to save America's diverse historic places and revitalize our communities. The National Trust’s exceptional network of 27 historic sites represents well over a thousand years of human experience in America. The National Trust collection includes over 60,000 museum objects. Until very recently, this collection has not been conceived of or managed as a cohesive whole. Because of this, scholars and the general public have been unable to learn about the collection in its entirety or to compare and contrast the wide array of items in it to make new discoveries about American history.

At places as varied as the Cooper-Molera Adobe in Monterey, California; the Shadows-on-the-Teche in New Iberia, Louisiana; and Chesterwood in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, the National Trust’s highly significant collection encompasses historic structures and landscapes as well as fine and decorative arts, furnishings, textiles, leather goods, silver, bronzes, sculpture, pottery, musical instruments, Napoleana, presidential gifts of state, historical artifacts, and other pieces that span centuries, nations, and styles; and includes such renowned craftspeople and artists as Thomas Affleck, Mies van der Rohe, Louis Comfort Tiffany, William-Adolphe Bougeureau, Daniel Chester French, Mary Bonner, Gustave and Christian Herter, Frank Lloyd Wright, Andy Warhol, Frank Stella, and Maria Martinez, to name a select few.

Based at National Trust Headquarters in Washington, DC, the Historic Sites Department of the National Trust works closely with the historic sites to utilize historic places and collections to tell richer and more diverse stories of the history of the United States.

Responsibilities for the practicum could include:
- Identifying and researching items related to the Latino history and culture in the National Trust’s collection. This may include travel to one or more National Trust Historic Sites.
- Identifying connections and themes related to Latino history and culture that emerge from viewing the National Trust collection as a whole.
- Making recommendations about the development of collections-based programming and outreach related to Latino history and culture.

Useful links:
http://www.preservationnation.org/

NBC Latino’s coverage of the work of 2012 LMSP fellow, Christian Larsen:
PRACTICUM 9

Smithsonian American Art Museum (SAAM)

Project: Preparing content for didactics, social media and the website regarding the technical study of artwork by Latino-American artists
Lead: Tiarna Doherty, Chief of Conservation

The Smithsonian American Art Museum (SAAM), the nation's first collection of American art, is an unparalleled record of the American experience. The collection captures the aspirations, character and imagination of the American people throughout three centuries. The museum is home to one of the largest and most inclusive collections of American art in the world. Its artworks reveal key aspects of America's rich artistic and cultural history from the colonial period to today. At the Lunder Conservation Center, visitors have the unique opportunity to see conservators at work in five different laboratories and studios. The Center features floor-to-ceiling glass walls that allow the public to view all aspects of conservation work.

SAAM's conservation department has recently conserved paintings by Latino-American artists. These include a small 19th-century panel by P. Bacener and a 1960 painting by D. Ulloa. In the process of working on these paintings, conservators have gathered information related to the artists' technique which will be of interest to other museum professionals and the museum public. This practicum will include designing and writing content about these projects for use on the website and social media platforms.

The practicum will also include helping organize archives related to the Lunder Conservation Center, a visible conservation laboratory.

Responsibilities for this practicum include:
- Reviewing conservation and curatorial files as source material for research.
- Assisting conservators with research into artist's materials and methods.
- Re-formatting photographs of artwork, digital x-radiographs and other illustrations for the content produced.
- Drafting illustrated text in formats for future website postings and social media.

Note: Reading knowledge of Spanish is helpful.

Useful links:
http://americanart.si.edu/lunder/
http://americanart.si.edu/
PRACTICUM 10

Smithsonian American Art Museum (SAAM)

Project: Exhibitions and Collections Research
Lead: E. Carmen Ramos, Curator of Latino Art

The Smithsonian American Art Museum (SAAM), the nation's first collection of American art, is an unparalleled record of the American experience. The collection captures the aspirations, character and imagination of the American people throughout three centuries. The museum is home to one of the largest and most inclusive collections of American art in the world. Its artworks reveal key aspects of America's rich artistic and cultural history from the colonial period to today. The Museum owns an ever-expanding collection of Latino art, which encompasses paintings and sculptures from the Spanish colonial period in Puerto Rico, folk and self-taught art from the Southwest, and works in all media by important artists working since the mid-twentieth century.

The fellow will work closely with SAAM’s curator for Latino Art to conduct research in support of upcoming Latino-related exhibitions and permanent collection expansion. The fellow will largely but not exclusively focus on newly acquired works being presented in *Down these Mean Streets*, a summer/fall 2016 exhibition that considers photographs of the inner city. Overall the fellow’s research and writing projects may be used to strengthen the Latino collection’s web presence.

Responsibilities for this practicum may include:
- Creating artist and object files for potential acquisitions.
- Researching sites featured in urban photographs since the 1960s. This research may inform exhibition didactics and web-content for *Down these Mean Streets*.

Useful links:
http://americanart.si.edu/
http://americanart.si.edu/pr/staff/bios/ramos_bio.pdf

Presentation titled, “What is Latino about American Art?” (Oct. 25, 2013) by E. Carmen Ramos: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YZcSQqsHwHg
The Latino DC History Project is a multi-year initiative to document, preserve, and share the stories of Latino/as in the institutions, culture, economy and daily life of the nation's capital. Working with the Smithsonian Latino Center (SLC) Exhibitions and Public Program Director, the fellow will explore the feasibility of a long-term muralism project in DC as a component of the Latino DC History Project.

Practicum activities will culminate in a final report and presentation that will include:

- An overview of the history of murals in Latino communities.
- Aesthetic and formal considerations based on research into history painting and theories about public art and muralism.
- Exploration of projection-based murals.
- Reflections on a participatory method of public art making which involves community members in its planning or execution, including building a bibliography on social practice art.
- Research into funding/sustainability of this program, i.e., developing a sense of the budget for executing different kinds of murals and research into grants.
- Report of ideal locations for murals with photos and rationale, including neighborhood profile.
- List of possible themes, which will be developed in consultation with the SLC Exhibits Director, Latino DC History Project researchers, and community members.
- List of possible artists and institutional partners such as the DC Department of Parks and Recreation.

Useful links:

http://latino.si.edu

http://latino.si.edu/PDF/Project_Overview_Web_Latino_DC_History_Project.pdf
**PRACTICUM 12**

**Smithsonian Latino Center (SLC)**

Project:  *Somos Americanos: Photographic/Video Research Project*

Lead:  Evelyn Figueroa, Project Director

*Somos Americanos: A Visual History of Latino U.S.A.* is a multi-disciplinary, bilingual traveling exhibition that engages Latino and non-Latino visitors alike through multifaceted community-centered stories about Latino history, legacy and national Latino identity in the United States. The exhibition is scheduled to open in May 2017.

The fellow will assist with the photographic and video research needed to develop the exhibition. Responsibilities will include:

- Researching photographic, graphic materials, video collections, and other exhibition graphic resources that are related to primary and secondary themes included in *Somos Americanos*, and that are available in existing Smithsonian collections, and at museums, archives, libraries and other Latino organizations across the U.S.
- Researching copyrights and reproduction issues/limitations related to specific materials.
- Documenting the materials through visual samples and detailed descriptions, and organizing them according to the exhibition thematic outline.
- Documenting the process and contact information needed to borrow or to have access to the materials.
- Generating a detailed report on all resources and materials researched including detailed descriptions and background information, the depositories where the materials can be found, any related copyrights/license issues, and the process and contact information needed to request the materials.
- Presenting a full report to SLC *Somos Americanos* team at conclusion of project.

Requirement:  Reading knowledge of Spanish language.

Useful links:

http://latino.si.edu

http://americanhistory.si.edu/collections

http://www.siris.si.edu/

http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/
PRACTICUM 13

Smithsonian Latino Center (SLC)

Project: Smithsonian Latino Virtual Museum—Smithsonian Latino, Hispanic and Latin American Art Collections Research and Publication Project

Leads: Melissa Carrillo, New Media & Technology Director  
Olga U. Herrera, LVM Senior Curatorial Advisor and Scholar, George Mason University

The Smithsonian Latino Center (SLC) celebrates the artistic and scientific achievements of Latinos and ensures that their contributions to the country are shared throughout the Smithsonian. By taking advantage of the Smithsonian’s vast network of museums and research centers, the SLC offers diverse cultural programs ranging from exhibits and family activities on the National Mall to symposia and cultural celebrations in its virtual museum and galleries.

The Smithsonian Latino Virtual Museum (LVM) is an offering of bilingual, mixed-media experiences and educational online resources of the SLC. Its mission is to highlight and make known the vast and rich collections, research and scholarship, exhibitions and educational activities of the Smithsonian Institution as they relate to U.S. Latinos and Latin America.

The fellow will work directly with the Director of New Media and Technology and a LVM curatorial advisor to research and provide editorial support for an electronic publication on the Latino Virtual Museum and its initiative on Smithsonian Latino and Latin American art collections and exhibitions. The script for the electronic publication will also serve as a guide for curating collections online.

Responsibilities will include:

- Working with the LVM team on the preparation of the electronic publication for both eBook and iBook formats. The publication will work across platforms for both PC and Mac users.
- Conducting research which includes archival research at the Smithsonian Archives on Latin America/Latino exhibitions held at the Smithsonian Institution since the 1880s.
- Updating existing lists and suggesting images for entries.
- Identifying images of artwork in Smithsonian collections via the web.
- Writing introductory text for the publication.

Useful links:

http://latino.si.edu/virtualgallery/lvghome.html

PRACTICUM 14

Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES)

Project: Museums, Exhibitions, and Latino Audiences
Leads: To be determined, SITES Project Director for Latino Initiatives
       Katherine Krile, Assistant Director of Exhibits

The Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) brings Smithsonian knowledge, discoveries, and experiences to people where they live—from remote rural communities to small towns to dense urban centers. Through exhibitions and programs that draw on Smithsonian collections and expertise, we tell stories that define America in all its diverse voices and cultural expressions. As SITES revitalizes its mission, we are developing new working models with Smithsonian outreach units and museums, and with our national partners. We are looking at ways in which we can better leverage the Smithsonian presence nationally, creating community around Smithsonian exhibitions as they tour, and working with host venues to meet both the Smithsonian’s and their own missions.

SITES is establishing a program to identify and implement projects highlighting the American Latino experience while simultaneously building capacity for sustaining Latino initiatives. This project will allow SITES to assess the work that the organization has already done reaching Latino audiences and will suggest opportunities to expand our reach strategically and effectively. Working with SITES’ project director for Latino initiatives, the fellow will explore 1) the motivations and anticipated outcomes of existing and prospective venues in hosting Latino-themed exhibitions and/or drawing a Latino audience and 2) the multiple attractors that bring Latino audiences to museums.

Responsibilities will include:

- Researching and summarizing trends in venue and visitor responses to SITES’ previous and current exhibitions on Latino art, history, and culture.
- Reviewing and consolidating information from existing Smithsonian and other organizations’ evaluation and branding reports on Latino audiences’ engagement with museums and exhibitions.
- Interviewing staff at a selection of museums about their short- and long-term goals for engagement with Latino audiences.
- Suggesting avenues for further venue and audience research.
- Presenting findings in a written report for SITES staff.

Useful links:
http://www.sites.si.edu