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A past and a future with art in mind

Summary: From her UMM experience to a Minneapolis Institute of Art internship: UMM alumna Christy Meyer plans to further her involvement in the future through internships and jobs revolving around art.

(August 1, 2006)-Christy Meyer '06, St. Joseph, a studio art and art history major with a speech communication minor, spent much of her University of Minnesota, Morris career being very involved with the arts, with plans to further her involvement in the future through internships and jobs revolving around art.

At UMM, Meyer held a Humanities and Fine Arts (HFA) Center Art Gallery internship for two years, from 2004-2006, assisting Michael Eble, assistant professor and curator. "I helped him with a variety of tasks things like hosting and opening receptions, designing posters and postcards, writing press releases, participating in the selection process of future gallery exhibitions, framing, installing exhibits, creating a mailing list, photos, documenting the shows, creating labels, placards, etc. Lots of things," she explained.

After reading about a two-month internship opportunity with the Minneapolis Institute of Art volunteer internship program on the museum's Web site, Meyer decided to apply by sending in an application, transcripts, a resume with two professor recommendation letters and an essay. She was awarded the internship and credits her UMM education as being a vital part to her acceptance. She noted: "I was able to get a solid foundation in both studio art and art history at UMM. Being an intern at the HFA Gallery for two years was an excellent and applicable experience."

After graduating and completing a two-year UMM internship, Meyer started her internship with the Minneapolis Institute of Art in the department of Museum Guide Programs in the beginning of July. "So far," Meyer said, "I've been working on a project dealing with the history of the docent program, volunteer tour guides at the museum. I have been searching through every file the department has in their possession for information on all the people who have ever served as a docent. I've been compiling everything to make a complete history of when each person entered the docent training class and started touring, as well as when they went sustaining (cut their tours in half), and when they went honorary (stopped touring). This is something the department has needed for a long time since they don't have one concise place to look up information on a previous docent without sifting through hundreds of files." After completion of this project, Meyer will research some African art objects for the permanent collection's files.

Although it is challenging to join a department that is already fully functional and try to understand everything while interning for just two months, Meyer enjoys her work at the museum: "I like the feeling of having access to the 'behind the scenes' work. Everyone is very friendly and willing to talk about what they do, so I have an idea of some different career options. Soon I will meet with the person in charge of the framing department, which interests me a lot."

Meyer noted that her internship with UMM and her internship with the Minneapolis Institute of Art are actually very different experiences, but both beneficial: "At the gallery on campus, I was able to take part in a variety of tasks

assisting the curator with everything from planning, to set-up, to take-down. It was a lot of hands-on work. At the museum, my work is very project oriented, consisting of a lot of research in the same office. I am pretty much working on the same task for several weeks at a time. I get to do the time intensive research that the staff doesn't have time to do."

In addition to past and present internships, Meyer was also very involved with the Henjum Creative Study Institute, held at UMM this past June, by teaching a painting class. The program is a two-week enrichment course offered to Morris area students, grades 9-12. Eble, Meyer's painting professor, taught the class last summer but was unable to do so this year. He offered the position to Meyer and she accepted. She taught her students acrylic painting, covering still life, portrait, landscape and abstract versus realistic painting. "It was a great experience," said Meyer. "It showed me both the benefits and difficulties involved with teaching. It was a good opportunity to explore another career option for myself."

With solid experiences and a well-established goal of searching for a career in a framing shop, an art gallery or related work after the Minneapolis Institute of Art internship, Meyer's passion for art, that was nurtured during her UMM years, has helped pave the way for her future dream job.

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