

Katy Williams-O'Donnell

166 Longfellow Road • Jamestown, RI 02835 • (703) 268-1308

katywodonnell.conservation@gmail.com

<https://katywodonnell.wixsite.com/conservation>

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILL SETS

- Over twenty years of experience in the museum field in a variety of museums including two branches of the Smithsonian and the National Naval Aviation Museum
 - Over 5 years of experience working with and for tribes with additional time spent researching and working with Native American material culture.
 - Multiple advanced degrees in museum studies including a Master of Arts
 - 90% completion of a Master of Science in Textiles Conservation with 200+ hours of dedicated benchwork as Textile Conservation Technician.
 - Experience with project management, budgeting, contracting, and grant applications and administration
 - Extensive work with cataloguing systems and inventory control including knowledge of museum software systems such as SIRIS, Access, KE Emu, and Past Perfect
 - Work in leadership positions including training and hiring of new personnel
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EXPERIENCE

Newport Historical Society, Newport, RI and Audrain Museum, Newport, RI

Exhibition Dressing and Conservation Technician, January 2021-Current

- Assessed objects chosen for exhibition in “The World in Motion” exhibition and wrote detailed condition reports
- Completed various forms of repair and stabilization necessary for objects to be put on display
- Custom dyed materials used in stabilization
- Patterned and sewed custom undergarments for support of fragile dresses
- Created custom mounts including foss-shape mannequin parts and padded slant boards
- Worked with professional photographer to catalog material for upcoming publication
- Installed and deinstalled exhibitions including mannequin dressing and post-exhibition storage

University of Rhode Island Historic Textile and Costume Collection, Kingston, RI

Student Textile Conservation Technician, 2018-Current

- Assessed objects within the collections and wrote detailed condition reports
- Wrote detailed treatment proposals including budgeting of time and materials necessary to complete treatments
- Completed treatments for objects including various forms of repair, stabilization, wet cleaning, and removal of surface dirt
- Installed and deinstalled exhibitions including dressing mannequins on custom forms, creating custom mounts, and hanging textiles using a custom designed and installed magnetic mounting system
- Researched objects and wrote catalog descriptions

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University of Rhode Island Historic Textile and Costume Collection, Kingston, RI

Task Force Lead, May-August 2020, Volunteer

- Formed a task force to assess the current needs of the HTCC and established a strategic planning committee
- Managed a team of 10 volunteers and staff and organized weekly meetings for project management concerning installation of a new multicultural dress exhibit and development of a complimentary website
- Researched grant opportunities and created funding trackers
- Developed policy and procedure documents and established a data management system for collecting digital resources

Historic Pensacola Trust, Pensacola, FL

Textile Conservation Technician, February-May 2020

- Inventoried and assessed textile collection and updated collections database using Past Perfect software to reflect current condition and location for 200+ textile objects
- Updated existing catalog records with object identification including ethnic artifacts belonging to multiple cultural groups and attributed specific objects to local designer
- Wrote detailed reports outlining deaccessions recommendations for 60+ objects to present to board of directors
- Installed two exhibitions including dressing mannequins on custom forms, and creation of slant board pin mounts.
- Made custom storage containers including trays, hat boxes, padded hangers, pillow padding for flex-storage, custom fitted slipcovers, and rolled textiles

University of Rhode Island Textile Conservation Laboratory, Kingston, RI

Textile Conservation Technician, 2019

- Assessed objects submitted to the laboratory with photo documentation and wrote detailed condition reports to submit to private clientele
- Wrote treatment proposals including budgeting of time and materials necessary to complete treatments
- Acted as object courier to deliver finished objects to clientele after treatment
- Assisted with lab management and supply inventory

National Naval Aviation Museum, Pensacola, FL

Collections Volunteer, 2012-2013

- Updated KE Emu collections database including creating new records, updating existing records to include complete digital images, correct locations, and expanded object descriptions
- Photo-documented objects for inclusion in an online catalog
- Created new storage containers for housing textiles, space equipment, military memorabilia, and other objects
- Transported artifacts from the main museum display area to the collections building

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M.C. Dean, Inc., Stuttgart, Germany

Contracts, Project Management, 2006-2008

- Managed \$70,000,000 SPAWAR contract with projects and personnel focused in the Middle East, Africa and Eastern Europe
- Responsible for keeping track of contract deliverables and generating monthly reports and budget summaries
- Promoted to lead of Contracts Department after contract completion
- Streamlined administration procedures for tracking all contract deliverables, their associated timetables, overhead costs and program expenditures, which allowed for a tremendous increase in program operation transparency for both the customer and MC Dean's leadership

National Museum of the American Indian, Washington D.C.

Collections Management Intern, 2005

- Lead intern for the Works of Art Rehousing Project assisting to rehouse and stabilize approximately 6,000 works of art on paper.
- Developed skills in collections management including building custom storage containers, rolling textiles, and cleaning objects
- Monitored museum environment and performed Integrated Pest Management

National Museum of Natural History, Washington D.C.

Mellon Scholar- Smithsonian summer research intern, 2004

- Re-cataloged approximately 700 individual pieces of ledger art stored at the National Anthropological Archives at the Museum Support Center in Suitland, MD which included the creation of 300 new records with updated information in SIRIS database
- Researched collections of Cheyenne ledger art to establish provenances and generate artist and collector biographies
- Presented research findings in a forum for the Smithsonian Institution's Anthropology Department

Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma, McLoud, OK

Grants Coordinator and Program Researcher, 2003-2004

- Researched and wrote grants and other funding opportunities
- Developed strategies for economic development, performed feasibility studies and wrote business plans
- Collected demographics for local tribal and non-tribal populations

AmeriCorps VISTA, Oklahoma City, OK

AmeriCorps VISTA Leader, 2001-2003

- Served as the VISTA Director for the Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma assisting the Tribal chairman with economic development initiatives
- Developed grant application to the Administration for Native Americans, AmeriCorps VISTA program, and the National Museum of the American Indian
- Administered a tribal language survey required for grant applications to the Administration for Native Americans Language Grant

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EDUCATION

Candidate for **Master of Science in Textiles, Fashion Merchandizing and Design**, 2022

University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI

Focus: Textile Conservation, History of Textiles

Master of Arts in Anthropology, received Dec 2005

University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK

Focus: Native American Studies, Museum Sciences, Economic Anthropology

Bachelor of Arts, Cum Laude received May 2000

Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, MA

Major: Anthropology concentrating on Native American Studies *Minor:* Biology

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

CURRENT RESEARCH

The 1697 Quilt Blocks: An Object's Life and History

The University of Rhode Island's Historic Textile and Costume Collection contains one of the earliest known examples of English patchwork, a recently donated collection of disarticulated blocks dated from 1697. The blocks were originally part of a larger coverlet that was made, moved through space, possessed by various actors and ultimately disassembled over the course of its life, with pieces now residing in various museums around the US. By examining the role of dealers and donors in the process of the object's disarticulation and dispersion, my research demonstrates how an individual's interaction with an object can influence our understanding of history. New methodology for examination of disarticulated objects and digital reconstruction of the coverlet will allow for complete examination of the original work, including overall designs and patterns, and provide a basis for comparison to other extant examples, furthering knowledge of early patchwork.

PREVIOUS WORK

American Indian Painters of Oklahoma: Artistic Negotiation in the Twentieth Century (MA Thesis, 2005)

This work discusses the emergence of easel painting as an art form in Oklahoma American Indian communities and the commoditization of American Indian art during the twentieth century. The lives and art of five Muscogee Creek painters working during the twentieth century, Acee Blue Eagle, Solomon McCombs, Fred Beaver, Joan Hill and Enoch Kelly Haney, are documented and discussed. Through examination of each artist's works, their personal biographies and changes in their artistic style, this research demonstrates the multiple ways in which artists respond to fluctuations within the market for American Indian art.

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EXHIBITIONS AND INSTALLATIONS

- “The World in Motion” joint exhibition Newport Historical Society and Audrain Museum, Newport, RI 2021
 - “The Kaleidoscope of Textiles” Historic Textiles and Costume Gallery, University of Rhode Island. 2020
 - “Lessons in Ink” University of Western Florida Historic Trust. 2020
 - “Le Bons Temps” University of Western Florida Historic Trust. 2020
 - “Pensacola Quilts! Mary Haas Retrospective” Pensacola Quilt Guild Biennial Show. 2020
 - “One American Family: A Tale of North and South” Historic Textiles and Costume Gallery, University of Rhode Island. 2019
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CATALOGUING

- “Woman’s Bonnet” Research and text. <https://uritextilecollection.omeka.net/items/show/440>
 - “Fashion Plate, July 1799” Research and text. <https://uritextilecollection.omeka.net/items/show/400>
 - “Textile Fragment from Chancay People, Peru” with Aymar Ccopacatty, <https://uritextilecollection.omeka.net/items/show/386> and <https://uritextilecollection.omeka.net/items/show/384>
 - “Textile Fragments from Peru” with Aymar Ccopacatty, <https://uritextilecollection.omeka.net/items/show/385>
 - “Women’s Skirt, Miccosukee/Seminole Tribe” Research and text. <https://uritextilecollection.omeka.net/items/show/380>
 - “Mosaic Quilts” with Susan Day, <https://uritextilecollection.omeka.net/exhibits/show/one-american-family--a-tale-of/mosaic-quilts>
 - “Sample Books” Research and text. <https://uritextilecollection.omeka.net/exhibits/show/one-american-family--a-tale-of/sample-books>
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HONORS AND AWARDS

- **University of Rhode Island Center for the Humanities.** Graduate Research Grant. 2019
- **American Quilt Study Group.** Seminar Fellowship. 2019
- **Honorable Mention.** Pensacola Quilt Guild, *Pensacola Quilts!* Show. 2012
- **Education Award.** Corporation for National and Community Service. 2003, 2002

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- American Quilt Studies Group Annual Seminar, August 2021, conference attendee
 - American Institute for Conservation Annual Meeting, July 2021, conference attendee
 - Costume Society of America, June 2021, conference attendee
 - American Institute for Conservation Annual Meeting, July 2020, conference attendee
 - American Alliance of Museums Annual Meeting, June 2020, conference attendee
 - Association of Academic Museums and Galleries Annual Meeting, June 2020, conference attendee
 - "Lighting: Beyond Standards" webinar with Heather Hendry by Documentary Heritage and Preservation Services for New York, April 2020
 - "Outside In: Museum Conservators Collaborating with Guest Curators" webinar with Lucy Commoner by New York University Institute for Fine Arts, April 2020
 - "A Complicated Web: Tales of North and South in Antebellum America" Joint symposium by the University of Rhode Island, The Costume Society of America Northeast, and The Rhode Island Black Heritage Society, September 2019, attendee
 - American Quilt Studies Group Annual Seminar, October 2019, conference attendee
 - American Institute for Conservation Annual Meeting, May 2019, conference attendee
 - "Exhibiting Fashion" Fashion Institute of New York Symposium, March 2019, attendee
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PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND ASSOCIATIONS

- American Institute of Conservation
 - Costume Society of America
 - American Quilt Study Group
 - Golden Key International Honors Society
 - Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society
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REFERENCES

Rebecca Kelly
Textile Historian and Curator, Private Practice
rkelly328@uri.edu
401-662-7530

David De Muzio
Executive Director Curatorial and Collections
Audrain Auto Museum
ddemuzio@audrainautomuseum.org
(401) 856-4420

Jessica Strubel
Assistant Professor, University of Rhode Island
jessica-strubel@uri.edu
401.874.5481

Ruth Taylor
Executive Director
Newport Historical Society
rtaylor@newporthistory.org,
401-846-0813