BRIANA PICKENS

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Experienced producer driving multichannel projects, campaigns and initiatives across the art, culture and community sectors

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

PRODUCER, Work Friends Studio   2024 - Current
Chicago, IL

- Drove end-to-end project lifecycle for the 2025 Chicago Art Book Fair in collaboration with Chicago Exhibition Weekend, leading production schedules, vendor and exhibitor relations, and visitor experience for 900+ attendees
- Oversaw planning and delivery for the redesign of Dust.fyi, a digital resource hub by a Chicago-based artist and social justice collective, enhancing public access to tools and action opportunities to support grassroots organizing
- Transformed research insights into actionable design and content strategies, driving improvements in accessibility, usability, legibility and user engagement
- Directed design and development of responsive web and mobile experiences using Cargo and CSS, adhering to digital accessibility standards and aligning with the collective's goals

DIRECTOR, Patron Gallery   2021 - 22
Chicago, IL

- Owned project timelines and task management for the end-to-end production of 15+ exhibitions and public programs, coordinating designers, engineers, and fabricators across a multi-year calendar, generating over $1.2M in revenue
- Managed cross-functional teams of up to 10, serving as the main point of contact for artists, clients, and external institutional partners, ensuring strategic alignment and successful project delivery
- Produced content-driven activations and digital storytelling initiatives, including the Context series, to elevate artist narratives and attract new and diverse audiences, increasing foot traffic and sustained, positive engagement

MEMBER AND AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, South Side Community Art Center   2021
Chicago, IL

- Led decision-making for an organizational redesign, clarifying staff roles and responsibilities resulting in the strategic expansion of the team with 2 new hires to improve processes and support programmatic growth
- Developed new ideas for the ongoing calendar of exhibitions, programs, and content in collaboration with the executive team, translating ideas into actionable project plans
- Conducted qualitative research and synthesized community feedback that led to the adoption of a new customer relationship management (CRM) system, improving stakeholder communication and data-driven decision-making

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, Rhona Hoffman Gallery   2020
Chicago, IL

- Managed artist and client relations, coordinating communications across stakeholders and teams to ensure alignment, transparency, and quality control throughout all phases of exhibition production
- Owned project timelines, calendars, and task management for content and advertising strategies across, social, digital and print media, increasing visibility and engagement for exhibitions
- Supported day-to-day business operations including fabrication and material procurement, inventory management, and artwork sales, overseeing $500K+ in revenue

COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS COORDINATOR, Art Institute of Chicago   2018 - 2020
Chicago, IL

- Planned and managed small and large-scale (500+) public programming from conception to execution, collaborating with community stakeholders to shape innovative engagement strategies
- Managed the production and distribution of creative assets (print, digital, and multimedia), identifying new opportunities to amplify brand story, including introducing music curation as a new interpretive medium
- Led cross-functional collaboration between design, marketing, and education teams to integrate omnichannel content into exhibitions in alignment with institutional accessibility goals

EDUCATION

UX/UI Designer Certificate   May 2025
Designlab UX Academy

Master of Fine Arts in Literary Arts   May 2018
Brown University, Providence RI

Bachelor of Arts in African-American Studies   May 2014
Washington University in St. Louis, St. Louis, MO

SKILLS

- Multichannel project management
- Cross-functional collaboration
- Production management
- Strategic visioning
- Digital experience management
- Partner relations
- Customer experience (CX)
- Stakeholder communication
- Budget & resource allocation
- Vendor & contractor management
- Feedback analysis
- UX/UI
- Content strategy
- Content development
- Copywriting and editing
- Storytelling

TOOLS

- Notion
- Smartsheet
- Airtable
- CRM
- Google suite (+ Analytics)
- Adobe suite
- Figma/FigJam