



Steve Boyd-Smith

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Work Experience

Founder/Lead Amplifier | Amplifier Experience Design, St. Paul, MN (2022-present)

Strengthening communities by helping them reveal their own stories. Assessments, Interpretive Planning, and Exhibit Design for museums, cultural centers, and historic sites, with a focus on community-driven stories.

Interpretation & Design Group Manager, Creative Director | 106 Group, Saint Paul, MN (2011-2022)

Built an exhibit design group from the ground up. Developed vision for the group, standards to support them, and staff to carry it out while also directing, writing, researching, and managing exhibit planning and implementation projects.

Independent Producer of Interpretive Experiences | I Tell Stories, St. Paul, MN (2003-2011)

Creating innovative multimedia interpretive pieces for a variety of clients through a team-based process. Facilitation, conceptualizing, grant writing, script writing, documentation, and content development with a variety of partners including content experts, designers, architects, media producers, artists, and web designers.

Interpretive Projects Lead | Minnesota Zoo, Apple Valley, MN (2005-2011)

Led teams of content specialists, contract artists, volunteers, and others in the creation of engaging exhibitry supporting animals and their habitats. Managed processes, inter-departmental collaborations, budgets, and overall messaging.

Curator of Online Interpretive Projects | Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, MN (2001-2003)

Led a grant-funded team to research and experiment around the question “what can an exhibit be on the web?” Vision-development, vision-keeping, staff supervision, budget management, project management, content direction, writing, and collaborative design were included.

Senior Exhibit Developer/Project Manager | Gerard Hilferty & Associates, Athens, OH (1994-2001)

Content direction, collaborative design, project management, facilitation, production observation, database development, proposal writing, copy writing, and specification writing as a member of a nationally-recognized exhibition design firm. Developed more than 30 galleries totaling over 100,000 square feet in six states.

Assistant Curator & Researcher | Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, MN (1991-1994)

Select Projects

Old North Church, MA

Crafting an exhibit concept for the site of the revolution-era “one if by land, two if by sea” lanterns from Paul Revere’s ride

Damascus Trail Center, VA

Project manager and team lead for exhibits at a new visitor center at the intersection of three national trails

Woodbury Heritage Society, MN

Led a visitor experience assessment for this historical society in one of the fastest-growing suburbs in the nation

Water Works Park, MN

Interpretive planning and concepting for a new park at *Owamniyamni*, the falls at the heart of Minneapolis

African American Resources, Cultural and Heritage Society (AARCH), MD

Team lead, interpretive and exhibit planner for new museum by an established group of elders and young adults

LeDuc Historic Estate, MN

Team lead and exhibit planner with artist Seitu Jones for a new exhibit about Minnesota's growing postbellum African American population and their continuing legacy

Alabama African American Civil Rights Heritage Sites Consortium (AAACRHSC), AL

Team lead and exhibit planner for a collaboration among 20 historic places of worship, lodging, and civic engagement that played significant roles in the African American struggle for freedom

Poindexter Village, OH

Team lead, interpretive planner for new community-driven museum of African American heritage, in partnership with the Ohio History Connection

Delaware Canal State Park, PA

Team lead, exhibit planner for indoor and outdoor exhibits including escape room-inspired outdoor exploration

Experience Akwesasne, NY, QB, ON*

Lead planner, Tourism Interpretive Plan for a Mohawk homeland

Polish Cultural Institute and Museum, MN

Lead planner of new exhibit program for this homegrown site

Washington Crossing Historic Park, PA

Team lead, Visitor Interpretive Experience Plan for this iconic site

Flying Cloud Drive, MN*

Interpretive lead, working with four consulting Dakota tribes to interpret the results of significant recent archaeological discoveries along the Minnesota River

Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest, VA

Team lead, exhibit development, and community engagement for Thomas Jefferson's retreat home and plantation

Hickory Run State Park, PA*

Team lead, exhibit development, generating wonder that "Nature Did This"

Point State Park, PA

Team leadership and exhibit development throughout the heart of Pittsburgh

Ohiopyle State Park, PA*

Team lead and exhibit development from concept through installation of indoor and outdoor exhibits connecting visitors to history and the landscape, exploration and conservation

Minnesota Zoo, MN*

Leadership for development of all interpretation at MNZoo, including Heart of the Zoo/Penguins of the African Coast; Family Farm; Faces of the African Forest; Russia's Grizzly Coast; MN Trail

Indianapolis Art Museum: Cycles: African Life Through Art*

Online exhibit development

Smithsonian NMNH: Lakota Winter Counts*

Online exhibit development

Kathmandu Science Museum, Nepal

Exhibit concept

* award-winning

MN Historical Society: Forests, Fields, and the Falls (online)*

Project management, creative direction, content development

National Historic Trails Interpretive Center, WY

Exhibit development and project management

North Carolina State Museum of Natural Sciences, NC

Team lead and exhibit developer: Mountains to the Sea, Arthropod Zoo, Heritage Hall

Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, TX

Exhibit developer for pre-design prospectus

Select Publications & Presentations

- Lessons from Culturally-Specific Museums: History is Essential | **AASLH conference** (2021)
- “What if reimagining museums begins by asking ‘Who do we serve?’” | **Superhelpful Letters** (2020)
- When is Historic Preservation Radical? | **AASLH conference** (2020)
- Seeking Absent Voices: Inclusion and Relevance | **AASLH conference** (2017)
- Who Is We? Authorship, Authority, and Voice | **AASLH conference** (2016)
- The Mobile Bandwagon: What Works & What Doesn’t | **AAM conference** (2014)
- Learning from Zoos and Aquariums | **AAM conference** (2012)
- “Psychedelic Art (Denver Art Museum)” **Exhibition Review** | **Journal of American History** (2011)

Education

M.A. American History | Northwestern University (1990)

B.A. History | Carleton College (1989)

Select Awards & Honors

- History Leadership Institute, American Association for State and Local History (2022)
- Master Interpretive Manager, National Association for Interpretation (2018)
- Ohiopele State Park, AAM Excellence in Exhibition Label Writing Competition (2016)
- Russia’s Grizzly Coast, Association of Zoos and Aquariums Award (2009)
- Lakota Winter Counts, Webby for Cultural Institutions (2005)
- Cycles: African Life Through Art, American Association of Museums MUSE Award Gold (2005)