

Steve is an award-winning exhibit developer, creative director, interpretive planner, and project manager. He has created marvelous experiences for museums and sites for more than 30 years. He founded Amplifier Experience Design with a deeply personal focus: restoring dignity to people, living and dead, by revealing their stories.

Steve comes from a background in public history and theater (set design, sound design, and directing). He leads teams and engagements in the mode of developing a show: bringing out the best of each individual in service to a coherent, expressive whole.



## Select Projects

### **Nina Simone Childhood Home | NC**

Leading a team of partners to plan the visitor experience and sustainable operations of the newly-preserved birthplace of Nina Simone, a property managed by the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund of the National Trust for Historic Preservation

### **"Changing Times" Hmong Museum Traveling Exhibit | MN**

Exhibit development for a traveling children's exhibit celebrating Hmong traditions and adaptations

### **Ohio Village | OH**

Interpretive Plan for history programs and exhibits outside the Ohio History Center in Columbus

### **Philando Castile Peace Garden | MN**

Working with community members to envision the impacts desired and strategies for implementation for a community-led Peace Garden at the site where Philando Castile, a Black school worker, was killed by police

### **Hastings Black Heritage Trail | MN**

Prime contractor leading a team in the development of a Black Heritage Trail in the small but significant river town of Hastings

### **"Journey to Freedom" Underground Railroad Traveling Exhibit | IL\***

Exhibit developer with a strong group of academic and lay historians, celebrating the Underground Railroad in Illinois

### **James Brice House | MD**

Interpretive Planning for a historic house in historic Annapolis, integrating stories of the enslaved, free Black, indentured, immigrant, and convict craftspeople who built and operated the house

### **Harriet Beecher Stowe House | OH**

Led the development of an Interpretive Plan for the house of the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, later a lodge listed in the *The Traveler's Green Book*

### **Ohio River Museum | OH**

Interpretive planning for a fresh start on the Ohio River Museum: research, interviews, and workshops, engaging new voices and discovering new stories representing a variety of perspectives on the river's significance

### **Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest | VA\***

Team lead, exhibit development, and community engagement for a Thomas Jefferson plantation; Interpretive Plan through comprehensive Schematic Design to completed exhibits focusing on the enslaved population

---

### **Old North Church | MA\***

Concept for an exhibit at the site of the revolution-era “one if by land, two if by sea” lanterns from Paul Revere’s ride; separately, exhibit development for an award-winning exhibit supporting the self-guided tour of the church

### **Shakopee Riverfront Cultural Trail | MN**

Team lead for a Visitor Experience Plan, working with city and county staff, the county historical society, and the Shakopee Mdewantkanton Dakota Community to distribute stories and experiences along a newly-planned trail

### **Peavey Plaza | MN**

Interpretive concept planning through installation of interpretive exhibits as part of mitigation for adverse effects of this NRHP-listed property during its revitalization

### **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

### **Experience Akwesasne | NY, QB, ON\***

Lead planner, Tourism Interpretive Plan for a Mohawk homeland

### **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

### **Cataloochee Valley, Great Smoky Mountains National Park | NC**

Assessment for interpretation and exhibits about the isolated Appalachian community that thrived here before the park

### **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

### **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

### **Hickory Run State Park | PA\***

Team lead, exhibit development, generating wonder that “Nature Did This”

### **Nine Mile Canyon | UT**

Interpretive plan making sense of a 46-mile-long driving and hiking route featuring cultural and sacred rock art and dwelling sites

### **Thomas Edison National Historical Park | NJ**

Schematic Design for outdoor exhibits at Edison’s home and factory

### **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

---

---

## Work Experience

**Principal/Creative Director** | Amplifier Experience Design, St. Paul, MN (since 2022)

**Interpretation & Exhibit Design Group Manager** | 106 Group, St. Paul, MN (2011-2022)

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

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

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

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

## Select Publications & Presentations

- History: Essential, Urgent, Past, Future | **AASLH conference** (2025)
- 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)

## Education

**M.A. American History** | Northwestern University

**B.A. History** | Carleton College

## Select Certifications & Awards

- History Leadership Institute, American Association for State and Local History (2022)
  - Master Interpretive Manager, National Association for Interpretation (2018)
  - AAM Excellence in Exhibition Label Writing, for Ohiopyle State Park (2016)
  - Certified Interpretive Planner (NAI)
  - Meets Secretary of the Interior Standards for History
-