

## Presentation Script

### Slide 1

- hello, I am Natalie and I am going to talk about my experiential learning experiences
- One was at the Stratford Festival Archives and the other I worked as an art consultant, managing a private collection

### Slide 2:

- I completed this internship between first and second year
- It was very exciting to move to a new city on my own and experience a job I was interested in

### Slide 3:

- I lived in a very old house with no AC and lovely neighbours
- I spent a lot of time walking around and reading books, it was a lot like a Hallmark movie

### Slide 4:

- The Stratford festival is a famous Canadian institution and has been running since 1954
- The archives have existed since 1964 and contain an extensive collection of costumes, props, photographs and textual materials
- Julia Campbell, my classmate and fellow intern, and I got to work with the costumes directly
- The archives are located outside of the festival, in a large warehouse that shares space with the costume storage

### Slide 5:

- The archive has a policy of collecting at least 2 costumes from every show that is staged, meaning there were about 3000 pieces in the collection
- There was a backlog of costumes that never got archives as well as some that were taken out of storage and not returned
- Julia and I had to input the data into the system: Year, production, designer, cutter, actor, role, item, box, condition
- Each costume had to be put on a mannequin and photographed, then properly stored in a numbered archival box
- If information was missing, we used the available textual materials, like costume bibles and programs to research
- we also assisted with exhibitions like the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the archives and an exhibition that went to Toronto for Canada 150

### Slide 6:

- There were some challenges to the job
- The existing cataloguing system had subpar entries, missing information and lack of detail

- There were a LOT of costumes to get through – at least 5 years
- The storage procedures, like how the costumes were assigned to a numbered box, was confusing and had gone through several changes so costumes often got misboxed or misplaced
- There was the chronic lack of funding despite the archive being a very essential service to the festival

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- We got to see some really fantastic costumes, the craftsmanship was amazing
- The orange doublet was worn by Christopher Plummer and William Shatner who was his understudy
- For the archive's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we brought out the robe used in the first ever production at the festival –its absolutely massive, took 5 of us to carry down

Slide 8:

- At the end of the internship, the catalogue has significantly improved entries and could potentially be used for a digital system
- The staff who worked there full time had a reduced workload, allowing them to focus on other tasks
- I learned an incredible amount of collection management and costume conservation
- We staged successful exhibitions and tours
- And I got to live away from home and see a bunch of plays!

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- The knowledge I gained in Stratford allowed me to independently work as a private art consultant this past summer
- I was approached by a family friend, they have an extensive art and furniture collection and wanted it managed

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- This job had a huge list of requirements and not a lot of time to do it
- There was an existing inventory, but it wasn't very good, so I had to redo it
- The art was made up of several different collections- contemporary, historical, lithographs, sculpture
- The central issue was the contemporary art collection, comprised of about 100 paintings by two Argentinian artists, Daniel Diaz and Ernesto Manera
- Art derives its value from its provenance, so it's history of ownership and authenticity as well as public perception of the work and the artist- is the artist represented in cultural institutions?
- The Diaz and Manera works lacked provenance and did not have an established record of public or private holdings
- This made them extremely difficult to sell and they were losing value on the open market
- I had to interview the artists and create a biography for an eventual catalogue

- I created context sheets or authentication labels for them to authenticate their work
- Then all these paintings needed to be properly wrapped and stored
- This was on top of the other art that needed to be catalogued and researched and stored

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- Redoing the inventory was time consuming, I needed to create all new accession numbers
- I had to create provenance from scratch, and interview the artists so the works could eventually sell
- The pieces were massive and mixed media- one had 4000 band aids and another one had a whole stool stuck to it and another one was coated in encaustic that had begun to melt
- The sheer scale of the work was immense and made for long and challenging days

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- I had to be incredibly creative in how I approached problems
- You can see how large some of the works were
- I jury rigged a wrapping station by putting a roll of acid free paper on a metal rod suspended between two chairs so I could roll it onto a table
- I think my gift-wrapping skills improved after wrapping 100s of paintings

Slide 13:

- This is what the new spreadsheet looked like
- It is extremely detailed and organized
- It was very detailed, and the accession number was linked to an image file with the same number so it could be cross referenced
- on the right is an example of one of the context sheets I created for the artists to authenticate their work

Slide 14:

- This job was so challenging but so rewarding
- The works were all authenticated I am helping with the creation of a catalogue
- The new inventory is detailed and easy to follow
- I was able to build on existing knowledge from Stratford and from other projects to successfully complete this job
- Critical thinking and problem solving are such transferrable skills and helped me when faced with challenges
- I learned so much about how the art market works and how to store art and how to network

Slide 15:

- Thank you for your attention, now we have 3 minutes for questions

