

# INTERESTED IN WORKING IN THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY?

Hear from Stephanie O'Neill-Winbow, Learning Curator:  
Family & Community Projects at Watts Gallery



## 1. How did you get into this creative career?

The way I got into my creative career is quite the traditional way into my immediate sector. I went from studying IB (equivalent of A-Levels) and then went to university to study History of Art. Whilst there, I started volunteering in the university's Gallery, mainly stewarding in the galleries themselves, and then saw lots of children coming into the Gallery. I realised that I could combine working in a creative environment with children and young people, without it being in a formal education/school setting! After my degree I got an internship in that same Gallery for 5 months, and after that I moved to London and volunteered as much as possible in as many different creative organisations as possible, whilst also working part time in a ticket/box office. Eventually I started to work freelance as a museum and gallery educator, whilst doing my MA in Museums and Galleries in Educator (part time over two years). After this, I was offered a part time maternity cover role in a Museum...and from there I just kept going. It was a lot of really hard work; studying, volunteering, showing interest and going above and beyond. I was really focused in trying to collect as many tools for my toolbelt as possible; meeting lots of people, sharing my interests, listening to their advice, and saying yes to everyone opportunity that came my way!

## 3. What advice would you give to somebody looking to get into this career?

Into my specific career of working in an Art Gallery... I would say go to as many art galleries, museums and exhibitions as possible. This seems so obvious, but I actually think it's really important to say, and to encourage. 1) It will help you keep the joy of the why you want to work in an AG/M 2) You'll have lots to talk about and share to others in the industry 3) Whilst you may just be enjoying yourself on visits, I know that every time I go to an AG/M I learn something, I think differently - even after 13 years of working within this industry.

## 5. How did you know this is what you wanted to do?

I always knew I wanted to work in a role that was more than just an office job, and with children. I strongly considered teaching but decided it wasn't for me - so when I was studying History of Art at university, I realised, through volunteering, that I could combine working in an art gallery, in a creative setting, with children. I remember it was a bit of a light bulb moment. Before that I had considered going into auctioneering, which would also have been great, but my current role brings so many aspects of what I've always been passionate about together.

## 2. What are the steps a young person should take to go into this career?

Be open minded! Say yes to as much as you can, even if it might not be 100% up your street - working with creative careers often means it's really important to be flexible, think outside the box and the more ideas and experiences you have, a bit from here, a bit from there, it will make you stand out. If you're able to volunteer, then do. Or create your own opportunities - ways to tangibly show your interest and passion.

## 4. What is your favourite thing about the industry you have chosen to work in?

We bring joy, interest, learning, playfulness and identity to people's lives. It's a rather cheesy thing to say but the Earth without art is just...eh!

Check out useful website by scanning the QR code!

