



CURATORIAL & ORAL HISTORY

# INTERNSHIPS

The  
**Museum**  
at  
Bethel Woods

THE STORY OF THE '60s & WOODSTOCK

# WHO AM I?

**Julia Fell**

Curator of Exhibits

...And Oral Histories...

**...And Internship Supervisor**

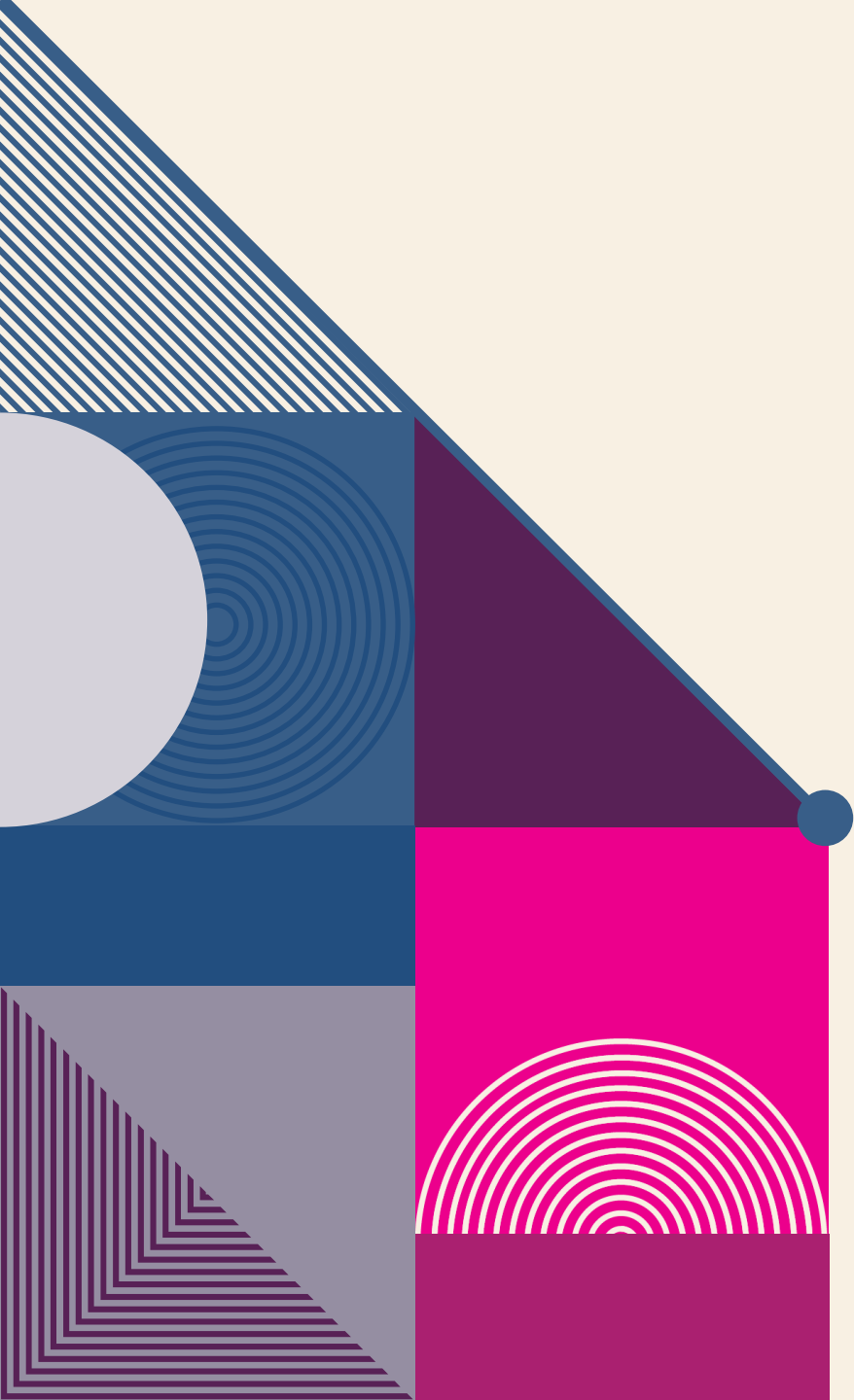
At The Museum at Bethel Woods



# WHAT IS THE MUSEUM AT BETHEL WOODS?

The Museum at Bethel Woods preserves the historic 1969 Woodstock site and interprets the social and political history, popular culture, and lasting influences of the 1960s and the festival through exhibits, programs, and research.





# IN THIS PRESENTATION

History of BW Internship Program

Internships by the Numbers

Curatorial (Summer) Internship

Remote Oral History Internships

# HISTORY OF BW INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

During its development, The Museum at Bethel Woods made the connection with the **Cooperstown Graduate Program** (Cooperstown, NY).

Each summer **since 2012, a CGP graduate student has served as the Bethel Woods curatorial intern.**

As an alumna of CGP myself, the partnership has flourished since becoming internship supervisor in spring 2021.



2016 Intern Andrew Lang handles a fringed leather jacket for display



# INTERNSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS

## STATS OF SUCCESS:

	2008-2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Internships	1 (per year)	N/A	3	4	5	8
Hours	400 (per year)	N/A	580.5	672.75	804.5	1117.5
Oral History Interviews	0	N/A	23	24	38	82

Since 2021, the Museum has hosted **20 internships** for undergrad and graduate students.

This increases our capacity and fulfills our mission to provide educational opportunities.

# INTERNSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS

## FUNDING:

Funding has largely come through grants at both the local and federal level.

Grants funded by IMLS and NEH to conduct oral history pop-up programming have included budget lines to support internships for the last several years.



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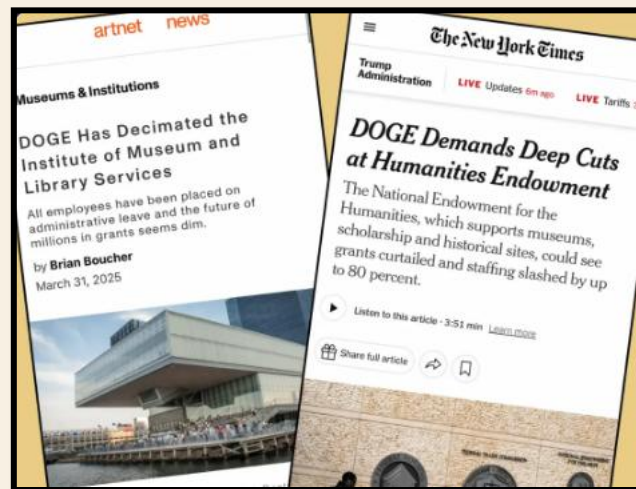
NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
FOR THE  
HUMANITIES

# INTERNSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS

## WHAT ABOUT 2025??

With many grants being disrupted this year amongst government mandates, funding has been difficult to secure.

The Museum has not offered internships in 2025 – something we are working to change as we adjust to a new climate and seek other funding opportunities.





# CURATORIAL INTERNSHIPS CHANGING PARADIGM

In the past, curatorial internships were more focused on collections work. While valuable, interns received a less rounded experience.

In recent years, the focus has shifted towards **exhibitions, public programming, and oral histories** as the Museum's own priorities have evolved.

Our focus is on an **interdisciplinary experience.**

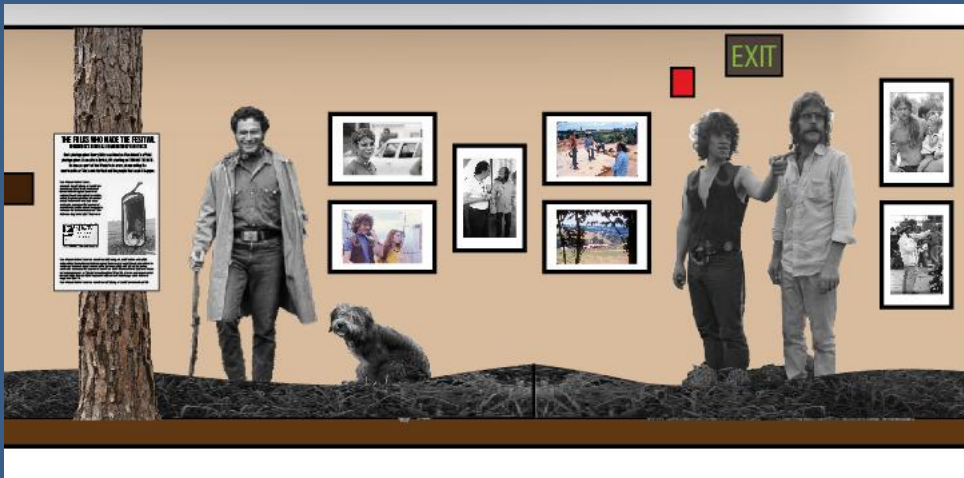


2023 Intern Ethan Ryan helps install a temporary exhibit "Through Lisa's Lens"

# CURATORIAL INTERNSHIPS EXHIBITIONS

Interns have become involved in the **development, design, installation, and activation of special exhibits.**

Smaller temporary spaces make for perfect opportunities for interns to shine!



2024 Intern Deanna Nicolari with life-sized murals of Woodstock staff in "The Folks Who Made the Festival."

Interns are trained and involved in the creation of exhibit elevations, as well as production and installation processes.



# CURATORIAL INTERNSHIPS

## PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

Interns work side by side with Museum staff to **develop and execute public programming** throughout the summer, with a focus on Woodstock Anniversary Week.



2024 Intern Deanna Nicolari connected with visiting Woodstock alumni and helped present programming with Woodstock staff during the 55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

# CURATORIAL INTERNSHIPS

## ORAL HISTORY

Summer interns get **hands-on experience conducting oral histories** on site at the Museum, and during pop-up programming when available.

They learn how to approach potential storytellers, the interview process, and transcription.



2022 Intern Amelia Deering interviews a Woodstock alumnus at a pop-up oral history program on site.



2023-2024 intern Ethan Ryan connected with storytellers at a pop-up program in Boston, MA.



# GOING REMOTE: ORAL HISTORY INTERNSHIPS

2020 and the COVID Pandemic presented many challenges to the Museum field – but also opportunity.

With the advent of Zoom as an efficient and user-friendly video conferencing platform, a new era of remote work and interaction was born.



# GOING REMOTE: ORAL HISTORY INTERNSHIPS

The Museum started using Zoom to conduct oral histories in late 2020, as the need for connection and legacy sharing had become very apparent.

Bringing interns into the fold during a time when in-person opportunities were scarce seemed a natural fit.

# GOING REMOTE: THE MODEL

- Site visit at start of internship (orientation)
- Weekly check-ins with supervisor via Zoom
- Weekly oral history interviews
- Transcription work
- File sharing via Google Drive
- Access to Museum Zoom and Descript accounts



2022 fall intern Will Kleffner during his orientation visit, at the Woodstock Monument

# GOING REMOTE: CHECK-INS AND MANAGEMENT

Jarrett Hill Internship Hours & Work Log  
Total Hours So Far: 47.25/100

Date	Hours	Location	Comments
8/29			START OF ACADEMIC YEAR
9/5			LABOR DAY
Wed. 9/7	10:00 AM - 3:00 PM (5 hours)	In-person	<p><b>Due &amp; To Do:</b> Orientation Visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet Museum team</li> <li>Tour main exhibit and special exhibits</li> <li>Tour grounds, take AR tour weather permitting</li> <li>Meet with HR and complete onboarding paperwork</li> </ul> <p>As time allows, go over internship logistics, below.</p> <p><b>Assignments:</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> JULIA: Welcome social post w/ pic of Jarrett at bus</p>
Mon. 9/12	10:00 - 11:00 (1 hour)	In-Person	<p><b>Due &amp; To Do:</b> Overview of internship structure, reporting, and procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress tracking</li> <li>Reaching out to prospects</li> <li>Release forms</li> <li>Zoom recording for video and phone calls</li> <li>Descript &amp; transcription</li> </ul> <p><b>Assignments:</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Watch example video and review example materials  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Review resource materials in Google Drive  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> List at least 3 professional development goals related to oral history at the bottom of this document</p> <p>Interview w/ Denise Demise Dunne (Jarrett sit in, participate to comfort level)</p>
Mon. 9/19	10:00 - 10:45 (1 hour)	Remote	<p><b>Due &amp; To Do:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Debrief first interview</li> <li>Brief discussion of blog post ideas (travel from Florida, up the east coast)</li> </ul>

- Interns meet with supervisor weekly, and track hours in a shared Google doc.
- Assignments, discussion topics, and other notes are recorded.
- Interns self-report independent work.

# GOING REMOTE: TRAINING & WORK

Interns observe an interview, then conduct one of their own with supervisor present for support. Dependent on their skill and comfort level, they are then free to take interviews independently.



2023 intern Hannah Riley meets with and interviews a Woodstock alumnus via Zoom

# GOING REMOTE: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Bethel Woods  
CENTER FOR THE ARTS

EVENTS MUSEUM VISIT CAMPING PROGRAMS SUPPORT US ABOUT

Home | Alan Wilson: The Bridge between Woodstock and the Delta Blues

## Alan Wilson: The Bridge between Woodstock and the Delta Blues

*The Museum at Bethel Woods Fall Oral History Intern Will Kleffner reflects on the connection between blues music and Woodstock.*

Before Alan Wilson became a founding member of the Canned Heat, a blues and rock group based in Los Angeles, California, he was a young jazz and blues enthusiast. An Arlington, Massachusetts native, Wilson was born on July 4, 1943. Growing up in the 1950s, he was infatuated with jazz music, associating jazz with the emerging Beatnik culture. After a close friend played a Muddy Waters record for him, he became invested in blues, often writing blues music articles for the *Broadside of Boston* newspaper and *Little Sandy Review*. Wilson's passion for blues music extended beyond academia: by the early 1960s Wilson became a well-established member of the Cambridge, Massachusetts folk music scene. He possessed a strong musical prowess often influenced by Delta Blues artists like Booker T. Washington "Bukka" White, Nehemiah "Skip" James, and his biggest influence, the "Father of the Delta Blues," Eddie James "Son" House, Jr.

Son House was first recorded for Paramount Records in 1930. In 1941 and 1942 he recorded for the Library of Congress with ethnomusicologist Alan Lomax<sup>1</sup>. Lomax was the Assistant in Charge of the Archive of Folk Song from 1937 to 1942, where he obtained thousands of field recordings of folk and jazz musicians. These recordings of House would play an important role in Alan Wilson's knowledge of the musician. By the 1960s, Wilson was under the impression that House had long since passed away, but following a conversation with Bukka White in April of 1964, he was proven wrong. White suggested that House might be living in Memphis, Tennessee<sup>2</sup>.

Eager to validate this unsubstantial tip, Wilson's close friends and fellow blues fanatics Phil Spiro, Dick Waterman, and Nick Perls traveled to Memphis in search of the musician. Failing there, the men then traveled to Mississippi where they tracked down one of House's performing partners, "Fiddlin'" Joe Martin. He put them in touch with Benjamin Brown, Sr., who had been married to House's stepdaughter. Brown provided contact information for one of House's distant relatives in Detroit. This relative confirmed that House was living in Rochester, NY.



- Interns are encouraged to write several blog posts about topics of interest to them
- Opportunities to meet with other professionals at Bethel Woods, or in my network are offered



# GOING REMOTE: REVIEW EXERCISE

To ensure that interns are feeling heard, especially in a remote work environment, a mid-internship check-in takes place.



One **rose**, or something positive that happened this week, is



One **bud**, or something that I'm looking forward to next week, is



One **thorn**, or something that I need help with, is



One thing I will try next week to **turn my thorn into a rose** is

# GOING REMOTE: SUCCESSES

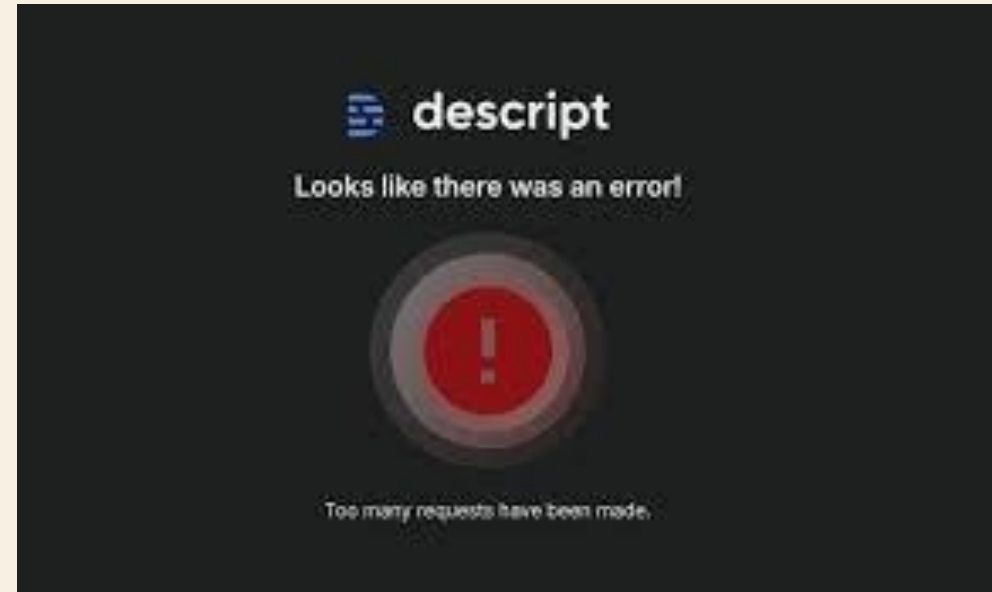
- Interns increase Museum capacity
- Internship requirements and professional development goals for students fulfilled
- Continuing strong relationship with CGP and opening the door to other partnerships
- Interns have presented at AAM and MANY Conferences



2023-24 Intern Ethan Ryan interviews a conference participant as part of the Museum's AAM session in 2024.

# GOING REMOTE: STRUGGLES

- Technology glitches
- Lack of face-to-face connection
- Less opportunity to work with entire Museum team, more isolated
- Less hands-on



# GOING REMOTE: OPPORTUNITIES

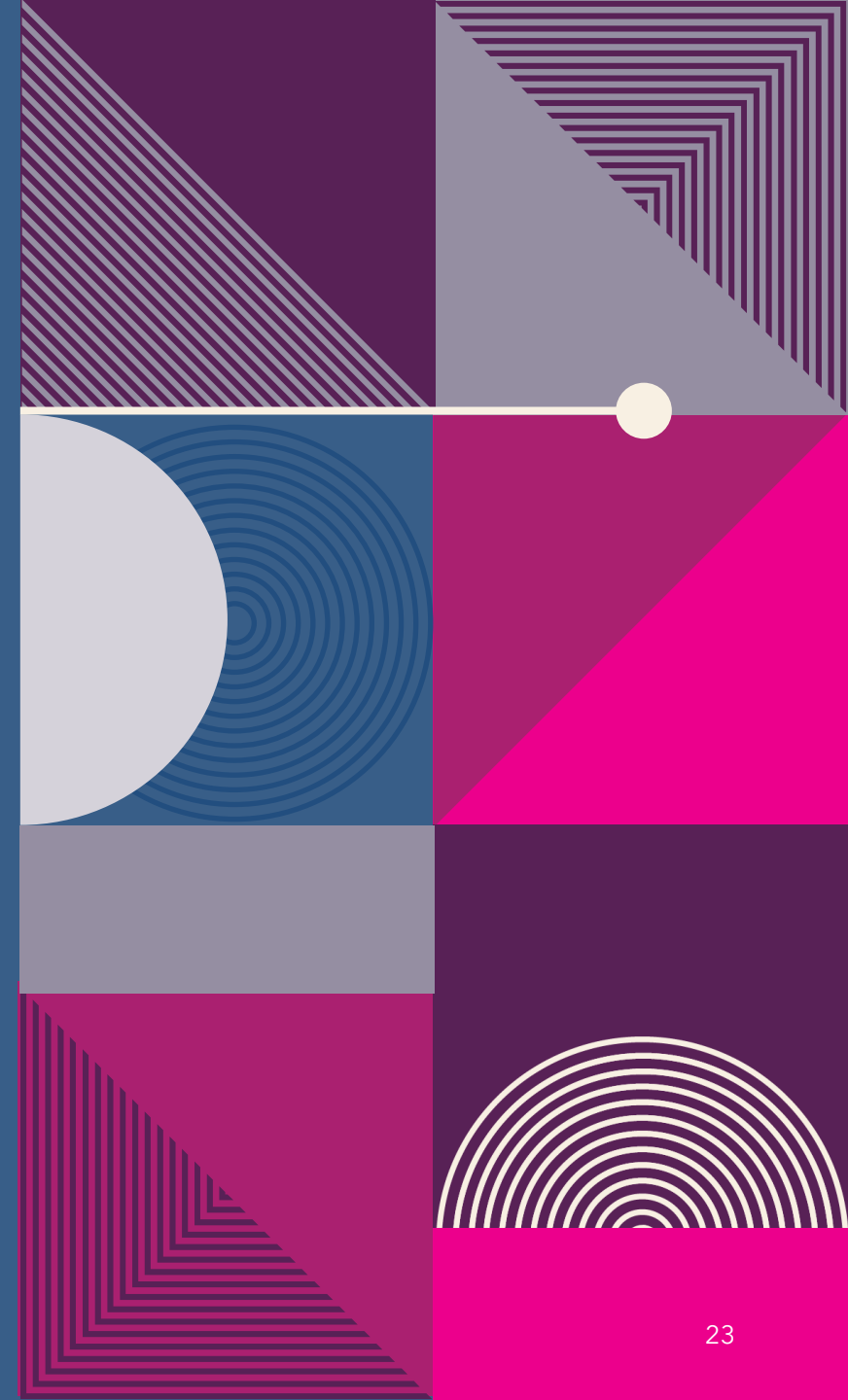
- More opportunities for students with no need for time consuming/expensive travel
- More capacity for the Museum
- Ongoing work relationships and growing professional network!



2021 summer intern Shyia Magan, 2021 remote intern David Gain, and 2023/24 summer/remote intern Ethan Ryan in Boston in March 2024.

The Museum at Bethel Woods is committed to providing hands-on, interdisciplinary work opportunities to students and emerging professionals.

We are proud to bring the spirit of Woodstock to life by showing young people what they can accomplish!





An abstract geometric design on the left side of the slide. It features a vertical stack of shapes: a top section with a series of concentric white arcs on a magenta background; a grey horizontal bar; a dark purple section with concentric white arcs; and a bottom magenta semi-circle. To the right of these is a square divided into four quadrants: top-left is magenta with white concentric arcs, top-right is white with magenta concentric arcs, bottom-left is white with magenta diagonal stripes, and bottom-right is dark purple with magenta diagonal stripes. A horizontal white line with a small circle at its end extends from the top of the design towards the center.

# THANK YOU!