



The Humanities Center Public Humanities Fellow Program
Position Descriptions

Position 1

LOCATION: City of Asylum

TITLE: Public Humanities Fellow

START DATE: May 15, 2017

Organization Description

History:

In 1989, after publication of his novel *The Satanic Verses*, a fatwa was issued by the Supreme Leader of Iran that ordered the killing of its author, Salman Rushdie. As a result, Rushdie was forced into hiding. Because of Rushdie's fame and his resources, he was able to do this securely, though as his memoir *Joseph Anton* reveals, even his resources were stretched to the limit. Most endangered writers, however, come from circumstances where they have neither fame nor resources.

In 1993, in response to a growing incidence of attacks on writers and specifically writer assassinations in Algeria, a group of writers led by Rushdie formed the International Parliament of Writers. At the behest of the IPW, governments in several European cities agreed to provide one to two years of support for endangered writers in exile. These were called "Cities of Asylum," and they aimed to protect not only freedom of speech and freedom of publication but also the physical safety of writers.

In 1997, Salman Rushdie gave a talk in Pittsburgh as part of his re-emergence into public life, during which he briefly mentioned the Cities of Asylum network. Diane Samuels and Henry Reese happened to be in the audience, and they were immediately drawn to this mission. Following the talk, they wrote to Cities of Asylum in Europe about starting a chapter in Pittsburgh. Getting no response, they regularly e-mailed their inquiry, until in 2003 they were put in contact with author Russell Banks, who was charged with expanding the Cities of Asylum movement to the U.S.

City of Asylum/Pittsburgh, along with two other U.S. cities — Las Vegas and Ithaca — quickly joined the network. Las Vegas and Ithaca were sponsored by universities; Pittsburgh, however, began and continues to operate with a different model than all other Cities of Asylum. Rather than being institutionally sponsored, it is a grassroots organization, supported by the generosity of individuals and foundations. Rather than focusing on emergency relief and providing a temporary way-station for an exiled writer, City of Asylum/Pittsburgh's commitment was to help the writer build a new home and a new life as part of a community.

Mission:

City of Asylum creates a thriving community for writers, readers, and neighbors. We provide sanctuary to endangered literary writers, so that they can continue to write and their voices are not silenced. We offer a broad range of literary programs in a variety of community settings to encourage cross-cultural exchange. We anchor neighborhood economic development by transforming blighted properties into homes for these programs and energizing public spaces through public art with text-based components. For more information on City of Asylum, see here: <http://cityofasylum.org/home/>.

Position Description

Sampsonia Way is an online magazine sponsored by City of Asylum celebrating literary free expression and supporting persecuted writers worldwide (<http://www.sampsoniaway.org/>). The magazine is looking for a humanities graduate student who will help plan and execute a series of interview/profiles on exiled writers living in the United States but originally from one of the 7 countries affected by the US government's recent travel ban. The interviews will follow a previously established format, with which the graduate student must become familiar. For an example, see here: <http://www.sampsoniaway.org/interviews/2016/05/02/the-bonsai-poet-of-bangladesh/>.

The project involves exhaustive research, interviews with authors, use of technology to generate new (or rarely explored) journalistic genres, editing, and constant communication with an editor.

Note: Scope of the project is subject to change due to new governmental policies. The number of writers profiled may be adjusted based on the time it takes to create each one.

Responsibilities:

- Research writers from countries affected by the travel ban who are in exile from their home country and currently live in the United States
- Gather work from writers
- Select one writer from each country
- Interview each of the selected writers via Skype
- Work with translators; transcribe interviews; edit and fact-check interviews
- Edit interviews in collaboration with a Sampsonia Way editor
- Organize Google Hangouts with selected writers

Qualifications:

- Ability to work independently and in collaboration with Sampsonia Way staff
- Ability to think flexibly and productively about the countries affected at the moment of the executing the project
- Journalist and interviewing experience
- Technology skills: Skype video recording, Google Hang-Out livestream, WordPress
- Ability to develop an effective work plan, organize details, set priorities, and meet deadlines

Position 2

LOCATION: Kelly Strayhorn Theater

TITLE: Public Humanities Fellow

START DATE: May 15, 2017

Organization Description

Overview:

Named for two of Pittsburgh's most celebrated talents in the last century—dancer Gene Kelly and composer Billy Strayhorn—the Kelly Strayhorn Theater (KST) contributes to the renaissance of East Liberty and redefines theater with provocative, original programming and a social experience unlike any other venue in the region. KST celebrated its centennial anniversary in 2014–2015 and continues to play a key role in the vibrant and diverse cultural history of Pittsburgh's East Liberty.

The Kelly Strayhorn Theater is a destination for innovative works in dance, theater, music and live art. KST encourages diverse, inclusive, and high-quality, artistic, cultural and educational activities through the Alloy School, artSEEDS student matinees, and artist residency programs. By nurturing these pursuits, we contribute to cultural understanding, quality of life, as well as economic development in our community, county, city, and region.

Mission:

The mission of the Kelly Strayhorn Theater is to serve as a catalyst for creative expression and the active engagement of audiences. Focusing on the performing and media arts of our time, KST takes a diverse, multidisciplinary, inclusive and international approach to the presentation and understanding of performance arts. KST programs examine the questions that define and inspire us as individuals and communities. For more information on the Kelly Strayhorn Theater, see here: <http://kelly-strayhorn.org/>.

Position: Defining Diversity at KST

The Kelly Strayhorn Theater (KST) is looking for a humanities graduate student who will help plan and execute a project that captures the diversity of audiences at KST events. The fellow will work with KST staff to identify a working definition of diversity and plan a project that aligns with that definition. The project may involve interviews, profiles, or surveys, and will be an important contribution to KST's ongoing conversations about its audiences with supporters and community members.

Responsibilities:

- Becoming familiar with KST programming and audiences.
- Developing materials that document the diversity of KST audiences, and working with KST staff to determine a final form the materials will take (print, online, multimedia, etc.).
- Understanding the way that KST positions itself within local, regional, and national communities.

Qualifications:

- Ability to work independently and in collaboration with KST staff.
- Ability to think flexibly and productively about diversity.
- Comfort using various forms of media to represent complex issues.
- Ability to develop an effective work plan, organize details, set priorities, and meet deadlines.

Position 3

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Position: Celebrating 10 Years of KST Presents

The Kelly Strayhorn Theater (KST) is looking for a humanities graduate student who will help plan and execute a project highlighting the 10th anniversary of KST Presents, the theater's series designed to showcase new work. Materials for use in the project include an archive of photos, interviews, and notes from nearly 50 international artists who have performed at the theater as part of the series. Goals for the project include documenting the performances that have taken place at the theater and demonstrating the support that KST has provided to emerging artists over the last 10 years.

Responsibilities:

- Becoming familiar with the archive of materials from KST Presents performances.
- Working with KST staff to create a plan for using the materials to document the history of the series.
- Working with KST staff to think about possible uses for the project when complete.
- Understanding the way that KST positions itself within local, regional, and national communities.

Qualifications:

- Excellent research skills.
- Comfort using various forms of media.
- Ability to work independently and in collaboration with KST staff.
- Ability to develop an effective work plan, organize details, set priorities, and meet deadlines.

Position 4

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Position: Art and Engagement in the Penn Corridor

The Kelly Strayhorn Theater (KST) is looking for a humanities graduate student who will help develop a database of approaches to community-engaged art based on the efforts of selected arts organizations in Pittsburgh's Penn Avenue Corridor. The goal of the database will be to provide a resource to individuals or organizations interested in promoting community-engaged art. One of the goals of the database will be to document best practices of efforts that have succeeded in the past.

Responsibilities:

- Becoming familiar with community engagement at KST and the philosophy that guides it.
- Becoming familiar with other community engaged art projects on the Penn Ave. Corridor, including Assemble, BOOM Concepts, and others.
- Working with KST staff to think about what shape the database should take when complete.
- Understanding the way that KST positions itself within local, regional, and national communities.

Qualifications:

- Strong research skills, especially in conjunction with community organizations.
- Comfort using various forms of media.
- Ability to work independently and in collaboration with KST staff.
- Ability to develop an effective work plan, organize details, set priorities, and meet deadlines.

Position 5

LOCATION: Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy

TITLE: Public Humanities Fellow

START DATE: May 15, 2017

Organization Description

Mission:

The mission of the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy is to improve quality of life for all of the people of Pittsburgh by restoring the park system to excellence in partnership with government and the community. Projects and programs are conducted with respect for the environment, historic design, and the diverse needs of the region.

History:

The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy was formed in 1996 when a group of concerned citizens joined forces to address the deteriorated state of city parks. They committed their efforts to improve quality of life for all of the people of Pittsburgh by restoring the park system to excellence. Adapting an innovative public/private partnership model, in 2001 the Parks Conservancy and the city jointly published Pittsburgh's *Regional Parks Master Plan: A New Ethic of Stewardship* as the blueprint for parks restoration. In 2011, this master plan was updated to accommodate changing circumstances and a broadening scope of work.

Today, the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy is a national leader in parks planning, restoration, management, and maintenance. The organization fulfills its mission through: revitalizing historic landscapes and buildings; conserving and creating public artworks; restoring natural areas; expanding environmental education and volunteer programs, and managing and programming the Frick Environmental Center, Schenley Plaza, and Schenley Park Café and Visitor Center. The Parks Conservancy was originally focused on the city's four historic regional parks, but public recognition of the organization's capabilities have led to requests from neighborhood groups, development organizations, and elected officials for assistance in other city, community, and neighborhood parks. For more information on the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, see here: <http://www.pittsburghparks.org/>.

Position: Activating the Frick Environmental Center's Arts Program

In September 2016, the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy opened the Frick Environmental Center in Frick Park. The new center is Platinum LEED Certified and the only publicly owned and accessible Living Building Challenge site in the world. To meet the requirements of the Living Building Challenge, the building must supply its own energy and water on a net-zero annual basis. The building has a geothermal pump that supplies heat from the Earth's core; solar energy provides electrical power; and rainwater is captured, filtered, and recycled for building use and irrigation.

Living Building Challenge certification specifies that art must be integrated into the site's design. Incorporating beauty as a means to elevate and inspire the building's users continues to inform the building's programming. In the early planning phase, the Parks Conservancy committed to an environmental art program at the center, and artists were involved throughout the design/build process. *Rain Ravine* by the artist Stacy Levy is a public art installation that captures rainwater as it cascades off the building's roof and directs its flow through an extended series of sandstone ledges and channels that follow the contours of the hillside down to the wetlands below. In addition,

local artisans were commissioned to transform reclaimed trees into interior furnishings that take their direct inspiration from nature.

Now that the building's construction is complete, the Parks Conservancy is turning its attention to developing an on-going art program for the site that would include both educational offerings and exhibitions. Assistance is needed with the following tasks:

- Research and draft a simple series of policies and procedures, based on best practices at similar facilities, to guide decisions about commissioning or acquiring works of art through purchase or donation.
- Work with the director of the environmental center to identify spaces appropriate for the display and storage of artwork.
- Assist in organizing a year-long program of temporary art exhibitions that focus on themes of nature, the environment, and humankind's relationship to the natural world. This would include identifying prospective artists, reviewing portfolios, and outlining a schedule for exhibitions.
- Assist the director in developing a list of topics and a schedule of classes and workshops with a focus on art and nature. Programs would include offerings for adults and children.
- Assist in researching and identifying grant opportunities to help underwrite the art program.

Qualifications

- Ability to work independently and in collaboration with PPC staff.
- Ability to develop an effective work plan, organize details, set priorities, and meet deadlines.
- Excellent interpersonal and research skills.
- Experience in or familiarity with art curation and/or arts education.

Position 6

LOCATION: Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy

TITLE: Public Humanities Fellow

START DATE: May 15, 2017

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Position: Uncovering Pittsburgh's Civil War History within City Parks

Pittsburgh celebrates its place in the country's colonial past, the American Revolution, and the French and Indian War at Point State Park and the Fort Pitt Museum. This National Historic Landmark site is visited by thousands of cultural tourists and school kids on field trips each year. The Civil War, however, is barely a footnote in most historical surveys of Pittsburgh. The Parks Conservancy is interested in documenting this largely overlooked chapter in the city's history, calling attention to several civil war sites of interest that survive today in local parks. This effort would not only collect and consolidate information about civil war sites that is not widely known or generally available, but it will also fill in significant gaps in the city's history and serve as a resource for tourism organizations, educators, community historians, and others. By highlighting and documenting these sites, this project will help position Pittsburgh as a cultural destination for visitors interested in the Civil War, and potentially inspire themed tours offered in partnership with museums, city and county tourism offices, and local historical societies.

First, and perhaps most important, among the city's Civil War Sites is Arsenal Park. Few residents outside of the Lawrenceville neighborhood know the park as a place where scores of women and children worked feverishly at the

Allegheny Arsenal to assemble munitions during the Civil War (1861-5). They are the forgotten heroes who supported the Union Army and tragically lost their lives in an explosion on September 27, 1862. The blast and fire claimed the lives of 78 young women and girls along with six boys; an additional 150 workers were injured. This event remains the largest civilian disaster of the entire war. Most of the victims are unidentified and buried in a mass grave in Allegheny Cemetery. The arsenal's magazine is the only surviving landmark in the park. A sidewalk marker and a single plaque inside the nearby Arsenal Elementary School are the only other reminders of the ordinary citizens who died in service to the war effort. Little is known about these individuals, their working conditions, or even the cause of the blast.

Across the river in what was then Allegheny City, stood the Western Penitentiary where captured Confederate soldiers were held. Allegheny Commons, the city's oldest park, was also the site of a massive fair to support the War effort. Thousands attended the fair to view the displays and help fund the war effort. Elsewhere in the park a 70-foot-high stone memorial commemorates the 4,000 soldiers from Allegheny County who served. The historical record shows that an "orphans' home," for children orphaned by the war was located on one of the streets that border the park. Around the city at vantage points high above the rivers, more than 30 defensive fortifications were constructed between June and July of 1863 when city officials feared a Confederate invasion. The remaining walls of an earthen redoubt are accessible through a trail at the edge of Emerald View Park on Mt. Washington.

These examples are a handful of known civil war sites in the city's parks. Additional research and documentation would provide a more complete and richer history. Specifically, research on the Allegheny Arsenal could become part of an "interpretive grove" planned for Arsenal Park that tells the story of the site, the dramatic events that occurred here, and commemorates the community's role. Uncovering the city's Civil War History within its parks includes:

- Create a comprehensive list of Civil War-related sites, monuments, memorials, etc. within Pittsburgh's parks.
- Research and write concise histories of each of these sites. Basic interpretive information could be used in site signage or guided and self-guided tours.
- Identify local and regional partners with an interest in Civil War programming and assessing their interest in working collaboratively to promote these cultural assets.

Qualifications

- Ability to work independently and in collaboration with PPC staff.
- Ability to develop an effective work plan, organize details, set priorities, and meet deadlines.
- Excellent interpersonal and research skills.
- Experience in or familiarity with historical research techniques.

Position 7

LOCATION: Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy

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START DATE: May 15, 2017

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Position: Revealing Pittsburgh's Community Parks

The City of Pittsburgh has a wealth of parks, nearly 170 in all. Twenty-one of these parks are designated "Community Parks." Community parks occupy the middle ground between the larger, 200-acre plus "regional parks," such as Emerald View, Frick, Highland, Riverview, and Schenley, and the smaller "neighborhood parks" with more limited facilities that serve residents close to home. A broader and deeper understanding of the history of Pittsburgh's community parks would benefit the Parks Conservancy's and the public's understanding of their significant contributions to civic life and to the people who have grown up in and around these anchors of community life.

Community Parks serve multiple neighborhoods and their special facilities -- which may include sports fields, indoor and outdoor pools, recreation centers, and picnic shelters -- serve a diverse group of users. Community parks account for 465 acres of park land in the city. They range in size from Mellon Square, the smallest but an icon of mid-century design in the heart of the city's downtown district, to Arsenal Park in Lawrenceville, home to the largest civilian disaster of the Civil War, and the secluded South Side Park, where tree-lined trails wind upward from Carson Street to yield some of the best views of the city.

Revealing Pittsburgh's community parks is an historical research project. Primary sources are historical records maintained by the city, local historical societies, and community associations, as well as interviews with neighborhood historians and long-time residents and park users who grew up in close proximity to the park. These park histories will unite anecdotal accounts and the historic record to provide provocative and revealing profiles of some of the city's best and least known community parks. Assistance is needed with the following tasks:

- Work with the Parks Conservancy's curator to determine which parks to research.
- Research and draft six to twelve brief community park histories.
- Identify most representative historic photographs to accompany the narratives.
- Interview local historians and community residents who can provide undocumented and anecdotal histories of the park.
- Histories and photographs may be published in part or in their entirety on the Parks Conservancy's blog, website, newsletter, and other publications. The author will be fully credited.

Qualifications

- Ability to work independently and in collaboration with PPC staff.
- Ability to develop an effective work plan, organize details, set priorities, and meet deadlines.
- Excellent interpersonal and research skills.
- Experience in or familiarity with historical research techniques.
- Superior writing skills.
- Familiarity with graphic design.
- Ability to travel within Pittsburgh to access historical archives and conduct one-on-one interviews with community members.

Position 8

LOCATION: Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy

TITLE: Public Humanities Fellow

START DATE: May 15, 2017

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Position: The Story of Schenley Park: Cultural Inspiration for Generations

Situated in the heart of Oakland, Schenley Park has come to be Pittsburgh's civic park. Created in 1889 with land donated by heiress Mary Schenley, the park now contains 456 acres of trails, woods, and attractions. A daily destination for university students, business-people, and outdoor enthusiasts, the park also hosts major annual events such as the Vintage Grand Prix and the Pittsburgh Race for the Cure.

Visitors to Schenley Park can spend a morning at the remarkable Phipps Conservatory, enjoy lunch and a concert at the Schenley Park Café and Visitor Center, relax on Flagstaff Hill, play a round at the Bob O'Connor Golf Course, head to the Schenley Oval Sportsplex for ice skating or summer sports, or take a dip in the swimming pool. And of course, the trails offer a refreshing and convenient escape from the city.

The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy restored the Schenley Park Café and Visitor Center in 2001 and operates the space today with event and culinary partners, Eat'n Park Hospitality Group. In 2005, the Parks Conservancy worked with City of Pittsburgh crews to rehabilitate the Phipps Run stream channel that stretches from behind the Visitor Center

down to Panther Hollow Lake. Restoration of the Panther Hollow Watershed is continuous, with the ultimate goal of restoring Panther Hollow Lake to a water quality that will once again allow for recreational use.

But the story of how Mary Schenley came to make her remarkable donation; how the park grew and changed from there forward; and how the civic institutions in and around Schenley Park have grown and impacted so many is a story that has not yet been, but should be, told. Telling this story involves the following tasks:

- Aid in formative research of telling the story of Schenley Park and how it has inspired creativity in the arts and Pittsburgh's culture.
- Information compiled will contribute to an eventual book.
- Work closely with Parks Curator Susan Rademacher, author, in telling the story of how culture has grown up around the park.

Qualifications

- Ability to work independently and in collaboration with PPC staff.
- Ability to develop an effective work plan, organize details, set priorities, and meet deadlines.
- Excellent interpersonal and research skills.
- Experience in or familiarity with historical research techniques.
- Superior writing skills.

Position 9

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TITLE: Public Humanities Fellow

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Position: What's Out There Weekend 2018: Pittsburgh

The Cultural Landscapes Foundation has chosen Pittsburgh as its host for the "What's Out There Weekend" program in 2018 (see [here for reference: http://tclf.org/news/features/whats-out-there-weekend-reveals-houstons-landscape-legacy?destination=search-results](http://tclf.org/news/features/whats-out-there-weekend-reveals-houstons-landscape-legacy?destination=search-results)). Planning has begun but a great deal of work is involved in ensuring that Pittsburgh's cultural landscapes can and will be fully represented in this event of international significance.

A non-profit established in 1998, The Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF) connects people to places. TCLF educates and engages the public to make our shared landscape heritage more visible, identify its value, and empower its stewards. TCLF achieves this mission through the ongoing development of its three core programs:

- >What's Out There®, North America's largest and most exhaustive database of cultural landscapes;
- >*Pioneers of American Landscape Design*®, an in-depth multimedia library, inclusive of video oral histories, chronicling the lives of significant landscape architects and educators;
- >*Landslide*®, an ongoing collection of important landscapes and landscape features that are threatened and at-risk.

Assistance is needed with the following tasks:

- Aid in researching and producing capsule descriptions for a range of cultural landscape sites identified with a team of Parks Conservancy and relevant partners throughout Pittsburgh, with a primary focus on parks.
- Consider opportunities for enlisting participation by partners and aid in the design of the signature events.

Desired Qualifications

- Ability to work independently and in collaboration with PPC staff.
- Ability to develop an effective work plan, organize details, set priorities, and meet deadlines.
- Excellent interpersonal and research skills.
- Experience in or familiarity with historical research techniques.
- Superior writing skills.
- Familiarity with graphic design.
- Ability to travel within the Pittsburgh area to access historical archives and view sites.
- Experience with event planning or an interest in gaining this experience.