

Propeller and Intern activities and practice

A little about ourselves:

Propeller Centre for Visual Arts is an artists run gallery started by a group of Ontario College of Art students in the spring of 1996 as a way for graduating students to show their work. In the 10 intervening years the gallery has continued to flourish; it is now located in the heart of the Queen West gallery district, attracting more than 10,000 visitors a year to its shows. Propeller does not have operational funding, so the gallery survives as a visual art centre by the use of membership fees and by renting the space for the purposes of exhibition. All artists who show here in contrast to what occurs in a commercial gallery, are exercising curatorial control over their shows and learning the craft of curating and organizing and disseminating their publicity material. In addition to running the gallery, the Board at Propeller also utilizes the space to run other programs, such as our *Slide Review Nights*, which Propeller held on 8 occasions last year. Propeller organizes *artists' talks*, several Propeller-run group shows for which there are *calls for submissions*, *exchange shows* with galleries outside of Toronto, our *annual curated show*, in which a prestigious guest curator is invited to curate from a group of submissions and for which artists' fees are paid to the selected artists.

The gallery and its administrator act as a resource centre for anyone requesting information about artistic and/or exhibition practice. Propeller keeps a library of relevant art-related resource materials. Propeller networks and works with other artists' run centres in the city. There is a program to encourage the partnership with interns -- there has been several working at Propeller at different times. Propeller is committed to partnering in various ways with community and organizations outside of the gallery exhibition environment. Because of our location, Propeller are visited by numerous groups and individuals, including many school groups. School students are often encouraged by the administrator to seek information about shows through discussion and questions. Propeller do not consider its sole purpose as that of providing exhibition space, but only as a primary activity amongst many other activities in which the centre engages in.

Further information can be obtain by visiting our web site: www.propellerctr.com

Intern Program

Opportunities for interns exist on a continuing basis - please enquire with propeller administrator

Some possible Intern Responsibilities

- the business of working in an artists' run space is at times stimulating and exciting and at times pedestrian and business-like; artists showing here are supported in various ways by the Administrator and helpers - there is an engagement with visitors (as appropriate), offering information to these visitors about work and exhibitor(s); information about Propeller is given out to those requesting it; other miscellaneous questions need to be answered
- as Propeller survives by renting the space, the Administrator is engaged at all times with an assertive promotion of the gallery for the purposes of encouraging renting the space to exhibit; there is a Selection Committee that reviews all submissions; submission requirements for applications for membership or to exhibit are located on our web site under "Propeller Info"
- a cornerstone of Propeller is its mailing list; this list must be updated at regular intervals, by checking the records and updating the information; this is something that an intern might help with by sitting on the phone for a little while and checking through a few of the records
- often the administrator is not able to conduct gallery visits to the extent desired, because the hours are conflictual; an intern willing to sit the gallery space for an hour, while the administrator makes these gallery visits would be very welcome by Propeller
- the artists showing at propeller are exercising full curatorial control over their exhibitions, but are probably open to help from an intern; help could take the form of assistance in the hanging of the show and/or assistance at the Opening Reception

How does an Intern Benefit?

- being within a gallery context for a sustained period can be beneficial for the sitter because a relationship is established between this person and the artist and the visitor to the gallery; it is hoped that an intern will form an engaged relationship with all parties involved in the show
- sometimes visitors are interested in participation at a more intense level in various ideas about art practice and theory and a gallery sitter can exercise his/her knowledge of art in a dynamic interchange

- because Propeller is a well-known gallery, with important contemporary shows in its history, the visitors to the gallery can be significant figures in the art world and media; it is important for any emerging artist to have experience recognizing and engaging with these persons
- there are many galleries that exist in the Queen West district; this is a good opportunity to become aware of their existence and the shows that are occurring
- working on the mailing list will provide an opportunity to be articulate with art lovers/buyers, helping them re-connect with Propeller and offers a unique opportunity to have exposure to persons/organizations associated with the art world; because checking records can become tedious, there is no expectation that the number of calls made will be extensive
(*in the future*)- an opportunity exists for any intern who is interested in filling in as temporary administrator when the current administrator is away; the intern would be compensated with an honorarium relating to the time covered

This gives you some information about our centre. Below I have set out a contract which outlines what we would like to see in terms of commitment from an intern.

Please let me know if you have any other questions.

Ruth Tait
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 Propeller Centre for Visual Arts
 984 Queen Street West,
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 M6J 1H1
 Hours: Wed-Sat 12-6, Sun 12-5 or by appointment
 Tel: 416.504.7142
 Email: gallery@propellerctr.com
 Web: www.propellerctr.com

**CONTRACT
 between Propeller Centre for Visual Arts**

called "Propeller"

and

(Name) _____

of (Address) _____

herein called "the Intern"

The Intern has read the information supplied above and agrees to assist in the areas outlined in "Some Possible Intern Responsibilities".

The intern agrees to commit to a minimum of 15 hours at the gallery at times which are mutually agreed between Propeller and the Intern and to assist in tasks that are mutually agreed upon.

The Intern will notify the Administrator of Propeller whenever he/she is coming to Propeller to work as intern, and, in the case of weekend duties, will give 2 days' prior notice to both Administrator and exhibiting artist(s).

The Intern will notify the Administrator of Propeller and exhibiting artist(s) in a timely way if not able to meet a previously arranged commitment.

Agreed _____

(Intern Signature)