

SKILLS

- Cultural administrator with broad experience in contemporary art programs and civic initiatives
- Expert in public art program and policy development and analyses
- Extensive experience developing annual work plans and budgets for programs and projects
- Excellent administrative, fiscal and organizational skills
- Outstanding communication skills: written & verbal presentations
- Experienced in developing project, policy, and budget reporting
- Knowledgeable about digital asset management and archiving visual and material records
- Staff management including hiring, training, retaining workers
- Creative thinker in analysis and problem-solving

EXPERIENCE

Consultant, Cultural Programs 1989 - current

Consultant on art master planning, policies, program and project development and exhibits.

Clients include: Cities of Austin, Carlsbad, CA; Norfolk, VA; Portland, San Diego, Seattle, Tacoma, & Ventura. Institutions including Assistance League of Southern California, Forecast Public Art, Portland State University; United Indians of All Tribes and University of Southern California. Services include broad range of cultural needs assessment, policy interpretation, program and policy development and public art collection and project management. Grant writing, reports and presentations to a wide variety of commissions, agencies, foundations and media outlets. Specialized in artist's initiatives.

Inglewood Art Consultant 2012 - current

Recommend, develop and implement art and culture policies, programs and artists' projects, arts education initiatives and art collection maintenance for an underserved, blue collar city in Los Angeles County. Working with a broad range of program goals and private percent for art funds, specializing in community programs and artist initiatives. Inglewoodpublicart.org

Director of Civic Art + Design 2008 – 2009
Houston Arts Alliance, TX

Lead management for public art contracted by the City of Houston. Developed long-range program, projects and annual work plan in conjunction with City CIP; hired, trained and managed staff of five; issued RFQs for specialist contractors. Created monthly work and fiscal reports. Managed contract commissions and significant on-site conservation projects including leveling and as-built works. Curated exhibitions and developed subject matters panels. Responsible for City of Houston public art collection management over 4,000 square miles.

Exhibitions Manager 2007 - 2008
Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena, CA

Managed gallery program for the well-regarded non-profit art center including exhibition paperwork, budgets, signage and logistics. Hired and trained gallery staff for four galleries and managed two off-site public art projects separately created by local and international artists.

Senior Contract Manager 2004- 2005
The J. Paul Getty Trust, Los Angeles
Managed complex contracts and budgets for worldwide projects sponsored by Getty Conservation Institute Responsible for contract compliance, tracking invoices and payments and monitoring budgets and approvals through three departments. Managed supplies and vendor staff specialist.

Metro Art Senior Public Art Officer/Collection Manager 2002 - 2004
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority CA
Developed public art transit planning for projects; lead staff for conservation and maintenance of agency art collection. Public outreach; created interpretive materials for general audiences.

Public Art Collection Manager 1994 - 1998
King County, WA
Managed the municipal art gallery program of contemporary exhibitions and the County art collections of portable and permanent works in municipal facilities cross the 4,000 square miles. Major conservation of Morris' 5-acre earthwork and management of artwork for County Courts remodelling. Oversaw staff of 3. Developed digitized archives of historic projects.

Project Manager III 1990 - 1993
Art in Public Places Program, Washington State Arts Commission
Managed construction-integrated art projects for State Corrections and Labor & Industry. Major restoration of State Convention Center projects included art, landscaping and architectural retrofits.

Exhibitions Director 1988 - 1989
Reed College Vollum Gallery Portland, OR
Curated exhibitions of contemporary nationally recognized artists, developed programming and interpretive materials. Trained and oversaw staff of student gallery assistants.

Project Facilitator 1985 - 1990
Socrates Sculpture Park New York, NY
Assisted in development and realization of exhibits and temporary, site-related sculptures in a 5-acre riverfront lot with biannual exhibitions. Participated in exhibition selections; developed park archives; managed indoor gallery program. Managed and trained facility crews and volunteers.

Chief Preparator, then Archivist 1982 - 1984
Portland Center for the Visual Arts, OR
Managed all exhibits and artist-projects for the artist-run space co-founded by Mary L. Beebe.

Helen Lessick is an accomplished writer or articles, essays and art criticism.

SELECT PUBLISHED WRITINGS and REPORTS

'Artists' Archives,' Sculpture on-line, G. Harper, ed. Washington, D.C., June, 2013
'Beta Test,' Public Art Review Issue #44, J. Becker, ed. St. Paul, MN. 2011
'Canopy: On Helen Lessick's Trees,' with Victoria Ellison, Structural Expressionism, 2017
'Cultural Capital: Public Art in Nairobi,' Public Art Review #46, J. Becker, ed. St. Paul, MN, 2012
'Golden State Alchemy,' Public Art Review Issue #33, J. Becker, ed. St. Paul, MN, 2005
'Greening of Ventura's Public Art,' Cultural Affairs Quarterly, City of Ventura, CA, Spring 2007

'Ground Work: Restoring R. Morris' earthwork,' in Conservation and Maintenance of Contemporary Public Art, Hafthor Yngvason, Editor; Archetype Publications, Cambridge, MA, 2002

'Process and Product: Palimpsest at Art Basel Miami Beach,' Surface Design Journal, Sebastopol, CA 2010

'Promoting Innovation: Standards and Dialogue for Public Art Resources, (A. Nelsen, co-author), Collections: The Journal for Museum and Archive Professionals, Julie Decker, ed. AltaMira Press. Spring 2012

Public/Private: a blueprint for temporary public art projects. Tacoma Arts Commission, WA. 1994

Public Art 101: multiple articles, Seattle Arts Commission, May 1999. Reprinted 2004

'Public Art for Community Change,' essay in Arts Engaged, Doug Borwick, ed. Salem Univ. Press, 2012

Reflex & Aorta, Art criticism & reviews for quarterly regional arts publications, 1988 – 1997

'Still I Rise: Public Art in the Time of Furloughs," Public Art Review, Issue #44, 2011

'Thank You for Applying," Sculpture on-line, G. Harper, ed. Washington, D.C. Dec. 2010

Waterfront Park Master Plan, public art section, EDAW master plan, City of Portland, OR. 2003

'You're in the Public Now," Sculpture on-line, G. Harper, ed. Washington, D.C., October 2010

SELECT PRESENTATIONS AND LECTURES

Sept. 2015: Presenter, Art & Ecology conference, University of Shandong, Jinan, China

July 2015: Presenter, International Conference for Awards in Public Art, IAPA.org, Elam School of Fine Art, University of Auckland, New Zealand

Spring 2014: 'Accumulation + Action,' developer and moderator of a 4-part webinar on public art collections, Americans for the Arts, Washington, D.C.

June 2014: Co-presenter, 'The Future of Public Art,' Public Art Network conference, Nashville TN

April 2013: Moderator, 'Visual Resourcefulness and the Public Art Challenge,' Visual Resources Association national conference, Providence, RI

May 2012: Panelist: 'Artists Advocate for the Environment,' Gershman Y Galleries, Philadelphia, PA

Sept. 2011: 'Creative Processing,' Lewis + Clark College, Portland, OR

June 2011: 'Artist-Initiated Projects,' panelist, Public Art Network, San Diego, CA

April 2009: 'Systems of Sustainability' panelist, University of Houston, TX

Oct. 2008: 'Public Art: Site & Context,' International Sculpture Center conference, Grand Rapids, MI

Jan. 2008: 'Memorials & Monuments' panelist, State of the Arts conference, Richmond, VA

Oct. 2005: 'Temporal Projects, University of Southern California, School of Fine Arts, Los Angeles, CA

March 2005: 'Physical Thinking,' Central Oregon Community College, Bend, OR

April 2002: 'Resident Houses,' Bellevue Art Museum, Bellevue, WA

Oct. 2001: 'Ground Work: Maintaining Robert Morris' untitled Earthwork" Cambridge Arts, MA

Oct. 2001: 'The Temporary and Ephemeral in Public Art,' Seattle Arts Commission, WA

May 2000: 'The Artist in Residence and You,' Portland Building, Portland, OR

May 1998: 'Maintaining Outdoor Public Art' panel, Sculpture 17: International Sculpture Conference, Art Institute of Chicago, IL. Sponsored by Save Outdoor Sculpture!, Washington, D.C.

Jan. 1997: 'The Narrative Landscape: Public Artists' Book Projects,' Univ. Washington Art Program.

Sept. 1995: 'The Changing Role in Public Art,' Rainier Valley Community Center, Seattle, WA
Community arts panel organized by the Seattle & King County Arts Commissions.

June 1994: 'public/private: temporary public art,' Tacoma Central Library, Tacoma, WA

Nov. 1993: 'Speaking of Art,' Pacific Northwest College of Art, Portland, OR

May 1991: 'Censorship in the Arts,' Oregon Education Association, Portland, OR