

Madeline Ehrlich – Associate Director at 1969 Gallery

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This week we sit down with Madeline Ehrlich! Madeline is the Associate Director at 1969 Gallery in New York City, a gallery that specializes in contemporary emerging art. She previously worked with the nonprofit Project: ARTspace, wrote as a contributor for Greenpointers and interviewed artists such as Louis Fratino, Danielle Orchard, and Hein Koh. She holds a BS and continues to work in both art and medicine. Please enjoy reading Madeline's thoughtful and empowering Frank Talk!

What was your first job in the Arts?

My first job in the arts was volunteering as an assistant for a nonprofit called Project Art Space. I come from a background in the sciences, graduating with a degree in Biochemistry and working in Pulmonary/Crit Care research at Mount Sinai. I was immediately drawn to the unconventional nature of the art world, that still intrigues and inspires me today.

What was the most useful or important thing you learned at that job?

The importance of community and nurturing connections.

Tell us a little more about yourself.

Since my move to New York after college, I've been continuing to work in both medicine and art. It has been a hustle to simultaneously work between 2 very different industries, but I find remarkable balance in doing so.

What do you do now?

I work alongside Quang Bao at 1969 Gallery in the Lower East Side. The Gallery is 4 years old, and we have many exciting things on the horizon for us!

Where are you from?

West Lafayette, Indiana. I've had the opportunity of meeting a handful of artists from the Midwest while living in New York, and we've always had an instant connection.

Has where you come from shaped what you do in the arts today?

I would like to think that my Midwestern spirit and strong values of integrity and authenticity come through in my personal and professional conduct.

What is the best piece of advice you can give about working in the art world?

Never compromise who you are or what you're passionate about on behalf of another. Stay true to yourself and you can't go wrong.

What is one of your greatest accomplishments in your career so far?

I've worked with so many amazing individuals while working in the arts, but my greatest accomplishment would have to be my curatorial debut, *Tell Them About Me*, open now at 1969 Gallery!

What has been a challenge for you?

I'd have to say that living in New York City has been a challenge in and of itself. I like to think that I had to move to one of the hardest places in the world in order to get soft. Regular escapes to nature (backpacking, skiing, flyfishing, swimming) have become a priority.

What is something you do every day at the office (or your current home office)?

I have a daily meditation practice that serves me both personally and professionally. It's my answer to the question "how do we get resourced?". During this time, we're all being taught/given the opportunity to be more compassionate with ourselves. A challenge while living alongside modern technology is how to accomplish #selfcare without being performative.

What is one of the weirdest things you have had to do on the job in your career?

I am an advocate for reproductive justice and find myself in dialogue about it with clients and artists. I have become somewhat of a spokesperson for menstrual cups and facilitated galleries in ordering menstrual products for their staff. This is hardly the strangest things I've done, but one that I am proud to stand behind!

What defines a good employee? What defines a good boss?

The best relationships are those that are collaborative and mutually respectful. One example that has always stood out to me is Quang Bao, the owner of 1969 Gallery, refers to his employees as "colleagues". We are a team and need one another to succeed.

What do you think makes a person hireable?

Someone who is resourceful, passionate, intentional, and collaborative. I believe there is strong value in having an abundance versus scarcity mindset.

What is your advice to making yourself stand out in your workplace? Any good tips for a giving a great interview?

I believe that authenticity and vulnerability are traits that are undervalued in the workplace. While we all have our own vulnerabilities, creating safe spaces for learning and taking radical responsibility for one's shit-uation is imperative to the success of a business.

Is there any advice you would like to give people entering the art world?

Be yourself and trust that you have something unique to offer the community.

What is the best exhibition you have seen in the last year?

Two of my favorite exhibitions last year were Loie Hollowell's solo exhibition at Pace and Alex Da Corte at Karma. Both of them fill you in fast and offer a big punch!

If you could own a work by 5 different artists, who would be in your collection?

I would love to own pieces by contemporary artists Jasmine Little, Maria Fragoso, Quentin James McCaffrey, Louise Giovanelli, and Van Hanos.

What artwork is in your home office?

Andrea Heimer, Rebecca Morgan, Angela Heisch, Michael Stamm, Bridget Mullen, Rebecca Ness, Matt Bollinger, Coady Brown, Aaron Zulpo.

What is your go to snack in quarantine? And your go to soundtrack?

I've been living in California since March and have been able to forage/eat so many local fruits and veggies. Also, I discovered Doritos. My soundtracks of choice have been podcasts such as The Daily, Embodied Astrology, and Rebel Eaters Club.

Since we are all at home and exploring more galleries and museums online, perhaps some for the first time, when the quarantine is lifted, what is your first art filled destination?

The last museum I was able to visit was the Prado in Madrid earlier this year. I'm looking forward to being back at the MET and visiting the Goyas.

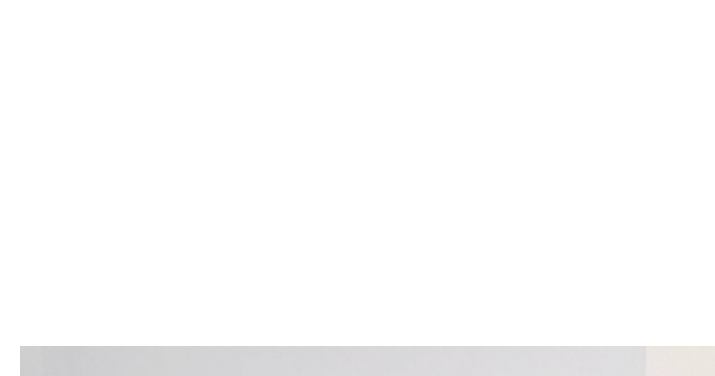
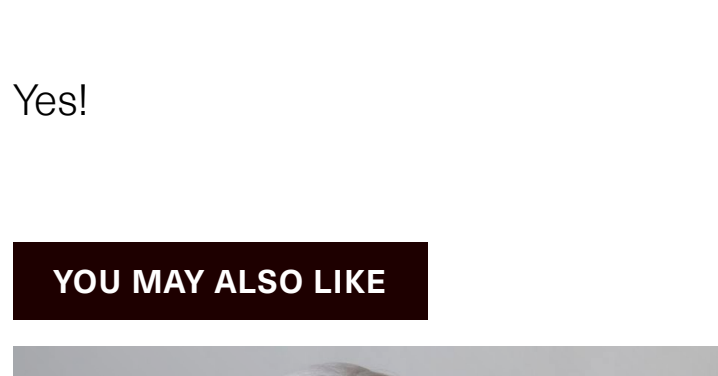
It can be argued that the art world is finally forced to adopt and adapt technologies that have long been a part of other industries. Agree or Disagree?

Agree!

And finally, do you think the art world should be more transparent?

Yes!

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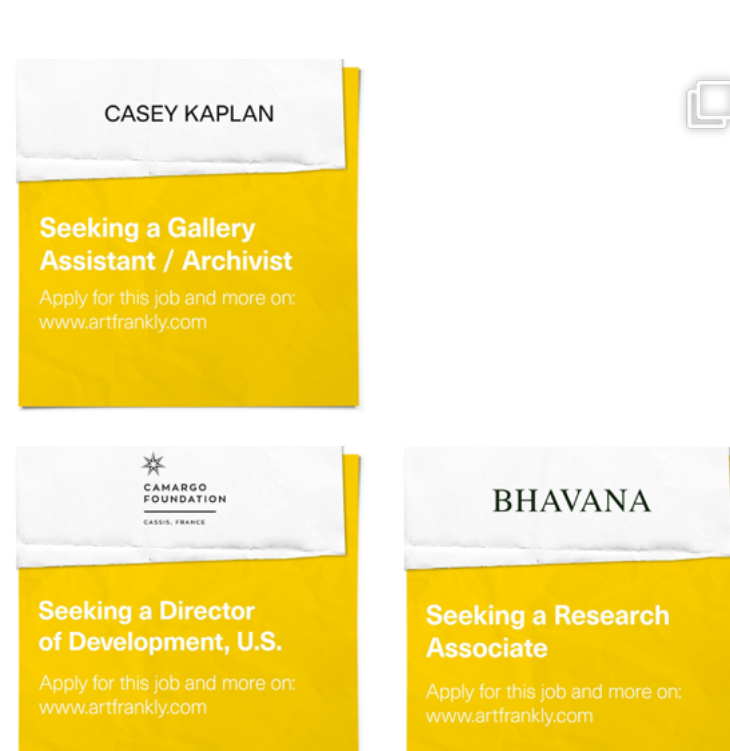
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