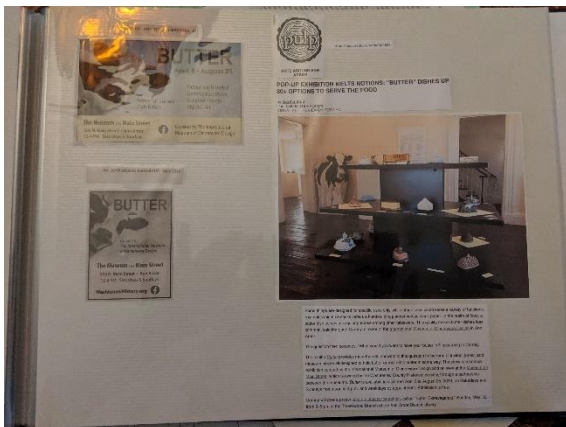


This summer, I had the amazing and life-changing experience of interning as an archival assistant for Dr. Margaret Carney, the founding director of the International Museum of Dinnerware Design (or IMoDD, located in Ann Arbor, MI). Not only did I have the chance to refine and hone my skills and learn an incredible amount of information, I also formed (what I hope to be) a lifelong friendship and mentor/mentee relationship with Margaret (and her three amazing cats, Pingguo, Carob, and Tomato, who I get to see every time I go to work!).



[Image description: The three cats who guard the museum's office space – Tomato (left), Pingguo (top right), and Carob (bottom right).]

At IMoDD I was exposed to many different tasks and jobs, however my internship was focused around archives, as my goal is to (eventually) get my Master's in Library Science and become an archivist. My first task was to create scrapbooks of all of the articles, flyers, and publications that the museum sent out or was mentioned in. This involved organizing chronologically, cutting things precisely, and an eye for detail and placement. When I was finished, I had filled out two scrapbooks almost completely.



[Image caption: A page in one of the scrapbooks I completed. This one has an article on the exhibit "Butter," which was a juried, invitational, and historical exhibition IMoDD put on over summer.]

After I completed the scrapbooks, I catalogued roughly 150 (mostly) archival objects (along with dinnerware itself). In order to do this, I scanned these objects, wrote detailed descriptions of them, and entered them into IMoDD's database. Occasionally, this involved doing research into who the manufacturer or designer of certain objects was – I spent time conversing with manufacturers and finding information on niche sites. This took a while to learn, but by the end of my internship, I felt very comfortable with the task!

Accession Number	Accession Affixed		Main	
Object	Title			
No of Pieces	Century		Date	
Country of Origin			Artist Dates	
Artist Maker			Designer Dates	
Designer			Manufacturer Dates	
Manufacturer				
Signature			Mark Location	
Backstamp				
Dimensions	Height	Width	Length	Diameter
Medium				
Description				
Exhibited				
Condition	Description of Condition		Image	
Location			Type	
Current				
Temp				
Provenance			Insurance Value	
Acquisition Type				
Credit Line				
Comments				
Object Image	Object Image 2	Backstamp Detail		

[Image caption: This is an example of a blank catalogue entry in the museum's database. I filled out roughly 150 over the summer.]

From July 15th through the 21st, I had the opportunity to take over the UM Students' Twitter account (@UMichStudents) and talk about my summer internship and the museum itself. I thought it would be both a good chance to try working with social media in a museum context and fun to talk about the amazing stuff I was doing. Honestly, I'm not sure how many people I was able to reach, but I think it was a good experience to have, anyways.



[Image caption: My introductory tweet on the UM Students' Twitter page.]



[Image description: I also took the opportunity to show off some of the items in the Museum's collection – here you can see some of Dr. Carney's favorite dinnerware (designed by Eva Zeisel) along with some radioactive Fiesta Ware!]

The International Museum of Dinnerware Design is a small, recently established (2012) museum, containing around 8,000 objects related to dinnerware and the dining experience. Because of this, I learned a lot about what running a small museum is like. Dr. Carney is usually a one person show – with help from volunteers and her board – so I got to see all of the different tasks she has to do on the day-to-day. I helped with the search for places to hold pop-up exhibits and grants and also worked on various membership tasks. I learned a lot about donor relations and the financing questions a small museum, especially one that's not connected to an institution, faces.

While my thinking about museums as incredibly important cultural institutions hasn't changed, my thoughts surrounding smaller museums have. I've had the chance to see the difficulty they have receiving funding from donors, along with the disparity between state funding, federal funding, and community involvement in comparison to larger, more established museums.

I had a truly amazing internship experience this summer at IMoDD with Margaret, Pingguo, Carob, and Tomato, and I look forward to my continued work with them.