

LAURA PHILLIPS, PhD

Education

PhD, Cultural Studies

2017 – 2022

Queen's University, Kingston ON

- Research Interests: Decolonizing arts, culture, museums & gallery spaces.
- Thesis Title: [*Transformative Opportunities through Decolonizing & Indigenizing Museums: People, Collections, Exhibitions.*](#)
- Supervisors: Professor Dylan Robinson, Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Arts; Professor Laura Murray.

MPhil, Archaeology

2007 – 2009

University of Bristol, UK [Masters]

- Dissertation topic: Collecting the 'Minoans' in 20th & 21st Century Bristol

Post-Graduate Diploma, Archaeology

2001 - 2002

University of Oxford, UK

- Research Area: Professional Archaeology and Heritage Resource Management

Honours BA, Classical Studies

1993 – 1997

Western University, London ON

- Major: Classical Studies

Experience

Lecturer

August 2024 - present

University of Oklahoma

- Lecturer in the Masters of Arts Museum Studies program.

Volunteer Docent

January 2025 – present

First Americans Museum, Oklahoma City, OK

- Volunteer docent / tour guide.

Part-Time Faculty

September 2023 – June 2024

Fleming College, Peterborough, ON

- Instructor for 'Curatorial Research Methods' and 'Collections Management' for the Museum Management and Curatorship post-graduate program.

Course Director

January 2024 - present

Ontario Museums Association

- Course Director for the certificate in Collections Management professional development course (online, asynchronous with optional weekly live chat).

Sessional Lecturer

Winter 2024 term

St Lawrence College, Kingston, ON

- Instructor for 'The Language of Visual Experience', in person course.

Sessional Lecturer

Autumn 2023 term

University of Calgary

- Instructor for 'Indigenous Arts of the Americas', undergraduate course in the Department of Art History (online, asynchronous).

Sessional Lecturer

Autumn 2022 & 2021 term, Winter 2023, 2024

Ischool, University of Toronto, ON

- Instructor for 'Curatorial Practice MSL2000'; 'Museums, Archives & Reconciliation INF1005/1006' for the Master in Museums Studies & Information Management programs.

Course co-leader

March - December 2023

Continuing Education Department, Ontario College of Art & Design, Toronto, ON

- Instructor for 'Beyond GLAM Land Acknowledgements: Activating Decolonization and Indigenization in Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museums'.

Sessional Lecturer

Winter 2022 term

Department of Visual Studies, University of Toronto, ON

- Instructor for 'FAH 494 – Unsettling Curatorial Practice in Modern & Contemporary Art', 4th year seminar.

Instructor

3/2020 – 10/2022 (part time, remote)

MuseumStudy.com

- Teaching 'Decolonizing Museums in Practice', part time - in certain months.

Facilitator

11/2020 – 7/2024 (part time, remote)

Cree School Board, Eeyou Istchee

- Teaching essential and administrative skills to support staff, part time.

Intern

10/2020 – 4/2021 (part time, remote)

Mitacs Accelerated Internship, Queen's University, Kingston, ON

- Part of intern group – Abolitionist Dream mapping project run by Dr. Lisa Guenther, Queen's National Scholar in Political Philosophy and Critical Prison Studies, <https://www.abolitiondreaming.com/>

Research Assistant

08/2018 – 6/2022 (part time, remote)

for Professor Dylan Robinson, Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Arts, Queen's University, Kingston, ON

- Conference coordination, reproduction permissions for publications, research accounting, assistance with manuscript preparation, project specific research including research belongings currently held in European collections.
- Assistance with supervision of MA student while Dylan was on leave.

Consultant: Research Policy

2/2021-6/2021 (part time, remote)

Cree School Board, Eeyou Istchee

- Researching and drafting a Research Policy, Protocols and Agenda for the Chairperson's Office and the Council of Commissioners.

Teaching Fellow

Winter 2021 term (online, remote)

Department of Languages, Literatures & Cultures, Queen's University, Kingston, ON

- Teaching undergrad course 'Unsettling Museums in Ka'tarohkwi / Kingston'.

Research Assistant

4/2021 – 8/2021 (part time, remote)

for Professor Sarah Schulist, Queen's University, Kingston, ON.

- Assisting with Indigenous Language conference planning and community outreach

Consultant: Collections & Exhibitions

9/2014 – 7/2021 (part time 2017-2021)

Aanishchaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute, Ouje-Bougoumou, QC

- Responsible for overall management of staff and procedures in Library, Museum and Archives (conservator, curator, registrar, archivist, librarian, interns, volunteers).
- Management and systems administration of collections database (MINISIS MINT/M3).
- Preparation of grant applications; overseeing permanent exhibition development; management of master exhibition schedule.
- Project Manager for Arts Council of Canada funded project *Rediscovering the Tradition of Painted Caribou Coats in Eeyou Istchee* and award-winning travelling exhibit development *Footprints: A Walk Through Generations*.
- Report preparation and presentations for the Board of Directors
- Strategic planning related to collections care and exhibitions.

Guest Curator: Pot-Pourri

11/2017 – 3/2018 (part time)

Cultural Studies, Queen's University, Kingston, ON

- Curated exhibit 'Nalakwsis', a solo exhibit by a youth artist from Whapmagoostui Cree First Nation.

Freelance Consultant

2016 – 2020 (part time)

Museums Association of Saskatchewan [MAS] (home based)

- Wrote curriculum for professional museum workshops 'Responsible Curation and Exhibition of Indigenous Collections', in collaboration with Dr. Evelyn Siegfried and Audrey Dreaver.
- Wrote 'MAS Collections Stewardship Self-Assessment Workbook' based on the provincial museum standards.
- Wrote tip sheets 'Responsible Curation and Exhibition of Indigenous Collections' and 'The Importance to Museums of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples & The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Canada'.
- Wrote curriculum and tip sheets on 'Significance' and 'Risk Management' in museums.

Collections Manager

1/2014 - 8/2014

The Wolfsonian Museum, Miami Beach, FL

- Rationalization and reorganization of historic collections storage facility to maximize useable space.
- Updated collections care policies and procedures.
- Drafted collections management work flows to increase efficiency of multi-disciplinary museum teams.
- Coordinated the museum disaster response team and worked with city wide cultural entities on emergency response planning.

Head of Museums Documentation

2010 - 2013

Qatar Museums, QATAR

- Project Manager for the implementation and overall strategic integration of centralized bilingual (Arabic, English) museum database (KE EMu/Axiell).
- Developed and implemented project change management procedures.
- Won support and confidence of stakeholders for institution wide collections management enterprise system.
- Provided high level project progress reports in formats easily understood by non-specialist senior managers; oversaw training for multiple museum teams, including local non-specialists.

Museum Documentation Assistant

2007 - 2010

Bristol Museum & Art Gallery, Bristol UK

- Implementation of new database for diverse collections.
- Curatorial support, collections research, seconded to museum development project for M-Shed development.
- Deinstallation of exhibits, collections inventory projects.

Senior Library Assistant

2006 - 2007

University of Bristol, Bristol UK

Heritage Systems Administrator

7/2006 -10/2006

The National Trust, Swindon UK

Heritage Datasets Development Officer

2005 - 2006

English Heritage, Swindon UK

Senior Collections Documentation Assistant

2004 - 2005

The Pitt Rivers Museum of World Cultures, Oxford UK

Collections Documentation Assistant

2002 - 2004

The Pitt Rivers Museum of World Cultures, Oxford UK

SKILLS OVERVIEW

- Completed KaosPilot Masterclass, Phase 1 and Master Archer, Phase 2 (experiential learning techniques)
- Exhibition planning and development.
- Collections research and development.
- Decolonisation and (re)conciliation approach to life and work.
- Regional, provincial, national and international experience of collaborations and partnerships.
- Collaborations with internal / cross departmental partners.
- Policy and procedural development for collections care.
- Knowledge of legislation and procedures for arts, culture and museums / galleries.
- Multi-level leadership.
- Motivation of staff to support a unified vision.
- Grant writing skills using creative approaches to projects.
- Monitoring of project and departmental budgets.
- Participant in regional, national and international heritage networks.
- Writing for diverse audiences, specialists and non-specialists.
- Planning and teaching of training courses and workshops.
- Strategic planning linking work plans and institutional priorities.
- Performance management, champion of professional development.
- Collections management for diverse collections, for institutions of all sizes and operating environments, including remote locations.
- Change management planning.
- Risk management, especially in relation to collections care.

Select Publications & Professional Development

- 2025 – (under review) "Settler colonialism, mining and the historical development of the Miller Museum of Geology in Ka'tarohkwi/Kingston, Ontario, Canada," *Journal of the History of Collections* [33 pages].
- 2025 – (under review) "Extracting Minerals from Enlightenment Recognition: Mining a Museum of Geology for Decolonizing & Indigenizing Narratives," *Collection Forum, Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections* [36 pages].
- 2025 – (editor) *Thomas V. Hill: A Retrospective of an Artist — Exhibition Catalogue* (Woodland Cultural Centre: Brantford).
- 2025 - "Unsettling Curatorial Practices through Museum Studies: A Case Study of our '5 Things' Assignment" (co-authored with my 2022 MSL 2000 class), in *Pedagogical Reckoning: Decolonizing, Degendering, and Deconstructing the*

Western Art Historical Canon, edited by Gillian Greenhill Hannum and Sooran Choi, Vernon.

- 2025 – “First Americans Museum: “The Intangible Comes Alive”, in conversation with Dr. Kelli Mosteller and Obinna Ojemni. Museum Ethnographers Group (UK), Blog, 23 February 2025. <https://museumethnographersgroup.org.uk/blog/first-americans-museum-the-intangible-comes-alive/>
- 2025 (forthcoming) – Conference publication co-author with Terri-Lynn Brennan, “Modelling Respectful Engagement with Indigenous Neighbours & Partners”, conference proceedings *Ontario Archaeology Society Annual Symposium 2021*.
- 2024 –co-authored with Terri-Lynn Brennan and Danielle Marshall, “Murney Tower: Indigenous Content, Truth Telling and Settler Discomfort in a Colonial Space. Sound Familiar?”, In *Engaging Indigenous Communities: Respect, Reciprocity, and Reconciliation: Past, Present, and Future: Proceedings of the 2020 Conference that Never Was*, edited by Karl Hele (Winnipeg: Aboriginal Issues Press), pp. 7-52.
- 2024 – “‘The Intangible Comes Alive’ at Oklahoma’s First Americans Museum, in conversation with Dr. Kelli Mosteller and Obinna Ojemni”, *MUSE Magazine*, Winter 2024, 28-27.
- 2023 – “Dazhiikigaadeg Maanendamowin: Wanichigewin gaye Wijiwiidiwin gii-ayaag COVID-19 / Transforming Grief: Loss & Togetherness in COVID-19 exhibition at Fort York in Tkaronto/Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 24 March 2023 – 07 January 2024”, *Museums and Society* Vol. 21, No. 3, 131-153. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.29311/mas.v21i3.4421>
- 2023 – Conference presentation with Heather George: “What Comes after the Land Acknowledgement: Professional Development to Activate UNDRIP and the TRC Calls to Action”, *National Trust Conference*, 28 Oct 2023.
- 2023 – “(Mostly) Indigenous Readings that Challenge Imposed Euro-Enlightenment [aka Colonial] Perspectives in Museums”, *The Jugaad Project: Material Religion in Context – Museums Focus Issue*. <https://www.thejugaadproject.pub/home/indigenous-readings>
- 2023 - “Decolonising Publications: Reflecting on the meaning of peer in ‘peer review’”, *ICOM Voices*. <https://icom.museum/en/news/reflecting-on-the-meaning-of-peer/>
- 2023 – “An Incomplete Glossary of Change to Activate Decolonising and Indigenising Practices in Museums”, *Museums International Towards Decolonisation* volume 74, <https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.queensu.ca/doi/full/10.1080/13500775.2022.2234199>.
- 2022 – “Teaching Decolonizing Curatorial & Museum Practices”, *Museum Worlds* 10, pp. 112-131. doi: 10.3167/armw.2022.100109.
- 2022 - “Inventory at Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute,” In *Inventorying Cultural Heritage Collections: A Guide for Museums and Historical Societies*, edited by Sandra Vanderwarf and Bethany Romanowski, 199–203. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

- 2022 – Publication with MSL 2000 Curatorial Practice class – “Our Manifesto for Curatorial Practice as Forum: Sharing our Experiential Learning Activity”, *FWD: Museums Manifesto*, pp. 148-157.
- 2022 - “Closing: Focus Issue, Indigenous Collections – Belongings, Decolonization, Contextualization”, *Collections: A Journal for Museum and Archives Professionals* vol. 18 (1), 101-106 [co-editor for this volume].
- 2022 – Conference Presentation with Eeyou colleagues – “Continuous Learning Journey: Professional Development for Support Staff”, *Assembly of First Nations National Forum on First Nations Education*, 17 August 2022, Toronto.
- 2022 - “Re-writing our own curriculum to enact change: Decolonizing museums for professional development and post-graduate programs”, *Viewfinder: The New Museum Educator’s Curriculum*, <https://medium.com/viewfinder-reflecting-on-museum-education/re-writing-our-own-curriculum-to-enact-change-decolonizing-museums-for-professional-development-5ec1c8da3235>.
- 2022 – Podcast - ‘A settler view from Ongoing Colonized Lands’, *The Sounds of Unsettled objects: Post-colonial perceptions of belonging, exile and home*, Glasgow Museums & UNESCO-RILA, <https://soundcloud.com/unescorila/draft-a-settler-view>.
- 2021 – Conference paper ‘A settler view from Ongoing Colonized Lands’, *Unsettled objects: Post-colonial perceptions of belonging, exile and home*, Glasgow Museums & UNESCO.
- 2021 – Workshop co-leader with Terri-Lynn Brennan, “Modelling Respectful Engagement with Indigenous Neighbours & Partners to Present Truth”, Ontario Archaeology Society Annual Symposium.
- 2021 – Book Review, “Jo-Ann Archibald, et al. Decolonizing Research: Indigenous Storywork as Methodology,” *The American Indian Quarterly*, 45 (1): 85-91.
- 2020 - Coordinated Publication on behalf of Aanischaaukamikw, “Project Report: Painted Caribou Coats in Eeyou Istchee”, *KULA 2020: Knowledge Creation, Dissemination, and Preservation Studies Special Issue: Indigenous Knowledges*, <https://doi.org/10.18357/kula.132>
- 2020 - Coordinated Publication on behalf of Aanischaaukamikw, “Book Review of the Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada”, *Journal of Museum Ethnography*.
- 2019 - Publication, *Profiles of Collection Cataloguing & Documentation Efforts by Museums, Archives & Library Special Collections*, Primary Research Group.
- 2019 - Coordinated Publication on behalf of Aanischaaukamikw, *Footprints: A Walk through Generations Exhibition Catalogue*.
- 2019 - Coordinated Publication on behalf of Aanischaaukamikw, “Beyond Property and Trade: Establishing a Community Loans Program” *MUSE Magazine* Jan/Feb 2019.
- 2019 - Coordinated Publication on behalf of Aanischaaukamikw with Frances Wilkins, “Words Matter: Exhibition Text Collaboration Process for Nimitaau / Let’s Dance”, forthcoming.

- 2018 - Conference Poster, "Decolonising Collections Information", Digital Humanities 2018, Mexico City, Mexico; awarded conference bursary.
- 2018 - Conference Talking Circle Co-Leader, "Building Capacity for Indigenous Museums", Canadian Museums Association Conference, Vancouver, BC.
- 2017 - Conference Presentation panel member, "Exhibitions, Landscapes, Community Cultural Heritage and Healing", Carleton University, Ottawa, ON.
- 2017 - Conference Presentation panel member, "Welcoming the e mitsuits utstuden (beaded hood) home", Canadian Museums Association Conference, Ottawa, ON.
- 2017 - Publication: "Tipsheet: Responsible Exhibition and Interpretation of Indigenous Artifacts", *Museums Association of Saskatchewan*.
- 2017 - Publication: "Tipsheet: The Importance of UNDRIP and the TRC to Museums", *Museums Association of Saskatchewan*.
- 2017 - Publication: "Collections Stewardship: Self-Assessment Workbook", *Museums Association of Saskatchewan*.
- 2017 – Publication: "Small objects, big impact." *Fwd: Museums Small* 2017: 83-87.
- 2016 – Co-Authored Article: "Beadwork Barrettes on Display at Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute", *MUSE Magazine* July/August 2016: 52.
- 2016 – Co-Leader of Talking Circle: "Museums and Reconciliation- a talking circle", *Canadian Indigenous and Native Studies Association Conference 2016*, First Nations University, Regina, Canada.
- 2015 - Co-Authored Chapter: "Seeing Ourselves: Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute – Community Consultations and Forward Planning", *Proceedings of Canadian Indigenous and Native Studies Association [CINSA] 2015 Conference*.
- 2014 - Co-Authored Chapter: "Collective Opportunities: Collections Management in Qatar", *Museums in the Material World: Collecting the Arabian Peninsula*.
- 2014 - Co-Authored Article: "A newly discovered Minoan Faience Plaque from the Knossos Town Mosaic in the Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery: A Technological Insight", *Annual of British School of Archaeology at Athens*, vol. 109: 97-110.
- 2014 - Professional Development, "21st Century Museum Leadership Seminar", George Washington University, Washington DC, USA.