

Brett Swinney

1346 N. Greenview #2R Chicago, IL 60642 | 773.350.7149 | brettswinney.com

Education

MA, School of the Art Institute of Chicago (Art Administration & Policy), 2014
BA, Columbia College Chicago (Photography), 2004

Work Experience

Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events Cultural Affairs Coordinator II

September 2021 – Present

- Directed and oversaw citywide public art initiatives, including murals, digital billboards, banners, fence installations, and temporary and permanent art installations.
- Identified project opportunities for artists, community, and civic stakeholders, developed artist calls, and managed the selection process, including recruiting panelists and reviewing applications for art projects around the city.
- Managed budgets, expenditures, and grants; coordinated fabrication timelines and collaborated with City departments, artists, and construction teams to ensure projects were completed on schedule.
- Curated public art exhibitions, including Exquisite Canvas (2023), and Cultural Center shows, including Forever in Your Debt, and supported DCASE events, including Under The Dome, Chicago Jazz Fest, and Taste of Chicago.
- Engaged the community in project planning and design to build strong relationships with arts professionals, private companies, community leaders, Aldermen, and government agencies through meetings and public forums.
- Served on selection panels for the Cultural Grants Department, including programs like the City Arts Neighborhood Access Program.
- Provided technical guidance to artists, community groups, business associations, and local officials on executing public art projects.
- Led the documentation and production of public project materials, maintaining comprehensive records and archives.

Arts + Public Life

Community Art Engagement Manager

July 2019 – September 2021

- Coordinated transition to virtual programming in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which generated an average of 20 monthly programs for the first five months of the lockdown.
- Worked with Artist Residents to develop programming related to their creative practice.
- Managed community partnerships, including the Washington Park Camera Club and the Committed Knitters, to generate meaningful public programming.
- Curated First Monday Jazz Series at the Green Line Performing Art Center.
- Managed Vends + Vibes, an annual holiday marketplace that hosts 30+ vendors and brings out 1000 people over two days in December.

- Provided technical assistance to exhibitions and community programs.

Links Hall

Production Director

July 2016 – June 2019

- Directed, managed, trained, and recruited a reliable tech team of lighting designers and apprentices who effectively partnered with the artists and staff and maintained/restored Links Hall and Constellation's equipment and facilities.
- Co-produced commissioned performances and festivals, focusing on providing a supportive platform for BIPOC Artists.
- Lead Visual Coordinator for THAWALLS (2017), which entailed working with six artists to produce installations installed throughout Navy Pier for ten weeks.

Cream Co

Program Manager

July 2015 – June 2019

- Developed site-specific installations that promote alternative economic plant-based exchanges for Cream Co. for art and community institutions, including Hyde Park Art Center, Tarble Art Center, Museum of Contemporary Art, and Navy Pier.
- Created and maintained relationships between the greater public and Cream Co. through the management of web and social media platforms.

Art Collective Real Freedom Projects Experience Co-founder, Producer

June 2020 – Present

- Recruited Artists, Producers, and Performers to come together to address the lack of visibility of BIPOC content within virtual spaces.
- Launched a Twitch channel to stream content collected from the BIPOC creative community in Chicago.

Anysquared Projects

Co-founder, Curator, Board Member

January 2010 – June 2023

- Curated artwork in small businesses, including Handlebar, Cole's Bar, Revolutionary Brewery, Township, and New Wave Coffee.
- Organized the Cinema Minima Residency, a short film/story micro-residency that funded the creation of three short stories and three short films.
- Produced public events and installations around Logan Square Arts Walk (2009), Logan Square Arts Sale(2010), Cinema Minima Film Series(2010-2014) & Milwaukee Avenue Arts Festival (2010-2012).
- Working with active collective members to establish a 501-3c non-profit organization to support future growth and financial sustainability.

Art Leaders of Color Network (ALCN)

Founder, Producer

March 2015 – June 2020

- Organized the Puppeteer of Color Incubator (POCI) and created a cohort of artists to address the lack of visibility of BIPOC artists within the puppet industry. Recruited two producers to recruit and maintain the cohort and organize workshops and performance opportunities during the 2019 Chicago International Puppet Festival.
- Initiated the P.O.W.E.R. Project, a 4-year collaboration with the Comfort Station, a platform for emerging BIPOC producers to gain access to financial and administrative support to create communally centered, socially engaged artistic programming.

**Selected
Production
Experience**

**Hyde Park Jazz Festival
Volunteer Coordinator**

July 2014 – September 2021

- Implemented a web-based registration process that streamlined volunteer placements and increased reporting accuracy.
- Coordinated placements for 300+ volunteers for 13 venues over two days.
- Managed 200+ volunteers during the festival, addressing any staffing or logistical issues.

At Pluto

Production Assistant

October 2012 – September 2021

- Hospitality Coordinator for Pitchfork Music Festival (2013-2019).
- Production Assistant and Social Media Coordinator for Flesh & Bone (2017).
- Venue Manager for Hyde Park Jazz Festival (2013).
- Photographer for Umbrella Music Festival (2012).

**Selected
Awards**

- Creative Residency for Black Puppeteers, Spring 2025
- Chicago Puppet Lab Resident, Fall 2023 - Summer 2024
- Awesome Foundation, *The Division Street Project*, October 2021.
- Propeller Fund, *Lavender Menace Occupation*, Fall 2016.
- SAIC Enrichment Fund Grant, *Cinema Minima Residency*, Spring 2013.
- Awesome Foundation, *The Division Street Project*, May 2013.
- Chicago Artists Month Featured Program, *AnySquared's LIP (Life in Progress) Series* - selected as 1 of 12 highlighted programs in 2010.