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Writing Samples

Sample Print Campaign - Educational Publisher, targeted to home schooling

Take a child from backyard to Bangkok in under 300 pages...no luggage required.



World Book Atlas lets young minds fly

As parental educator, you've already brought the classroom to your kitchen table. Now, bring a whole world of knowledge to your number one pupil with *World Book Atlas*. Imagine tiny fingers traveling the Silk Road and exploring the vastness of Antarctica just by turning a page. And it doesn't stop there. Let World Book's entire line of historical, scientific and cultural reference materials take your child on full-

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fledged field trip from classroom to Battle of Gettysburg to Roman Empire to Ice Age. Just be sure to leave the Tyrannosaurus in the Jurassic Era - unless he has a permission slip.

Web Content – “About Us” (Fashion Boutique)

WorkShop is a community made of cloth.

WorkShop blossomed in 2009, owner Anne Novotny’s vision of a creative space in Chicago’s Pilsen district. Housed in a hundred-year old building, we’ve planted flowers, herbs and succulents around our borders. Window displays serve as platforms for area artists and neighbors pop in for beginner’s classes in DIY fashion design. *WorkShop* is also *truly* a workshop. Inspired by the concept of “open air kitchen,” sewing machines hum, patterns are pinned to walls, and visitors witness the creation of Novotny’s label, Frei Designs. We stock shelves by seeking independent, locally-based artisans who share our passion for environmental sustainability and ethical fair trade. Connecting style with conscience, *WorkShop* emphasizes the personal, the architectural, the organic.

WorkShop, like a garden, never stops growing.

Web Content - Product Descriptions (Vintage Apparel)

Before there was the Snuggie, there was...the Onesie. Okay, maybe most of you never owned a onesie - at least, not an *adult onesie* - but, hey, no time like the present! Our vintage adult-size one-piece onesie jumpsuit, likely produced in the 1980’s (the neon orange is a dead giveaway), is more than mere novelty but super fun alternative to winter pajamas. This is extra roomy, extra comfy, full-body sleepwear and, unlike robes, keeps tootsies warm on cold mornings. No-slip footing leaves you free to race across the kitchen for an extra bowl of Froot Loops. In fact, this onesie loungewear is so cute, it may tempt out-of-the-house excursions. But who’d want to miss Saturday morning cartoons?

Statement of Intent - Visual Artist

Madison, Wisconsin is a city of stories. High-rise offices, darkened movie theatres and sunny park benches set the scene. Madison's people, diverse in their histories, become characters in an ever-evolving narrative. Public art plays an intrinsic role. Large-scale, touchable sculpture invites exploration - whether physical interaction (sitting, climbing, leaping) or visual examination.

My interactive work has always attracted families and I hold extensive knowledge of maintenance and liability issues. While design elements such as concept, craftsmanship and execution are clearly vital, practical matters including budget preparation, contracts and insurance are equally important. The proper execution of all facets ensures a project's complete success.

By incorporating illusionary movement, my sculpture invites contact. Through elements of touch, the viewer (or sitter, climber, leaper) connects with the work on an immediate, visceral level. The sculpture - as playmate and educator - becomes a character of its own, communicating with city and citizen. In unspoken dialogue, the story of Madison continues indefinitely.

Artist Statement - Visual Artist

A star made of traffic cones resembles a grain of pollen, spiked seedpod, or diatom. Doorknobs resemble a virus or colony of fungi while sunflowers, pineapple, and birds of paradise compose a larger than life garden shovel. The relationship between natural and manmade forms fascinates me. Common everyday objects are created for function yet retain inherent aesthetic, with imagery as poignant as that of the natural world. Synthesizing macro and micro patterns of nature with human-crafted objects incites dual dialogue between the manufactured and the organic. Removing manmade objects from their original context lets us focus on their environmental origins, revealing unexpected beauty.

Promotional Description - Sculpture Studio

Most passengers at CTA's Sedgwick station don't realize they stand above history. Below the platform, Sedgwick Studio holds a colorful story. Built by Commonwealth Edison, it opened in 1900 as an electrical substation for one of Chicago's last privately-owned train lines. After removal of transformers converting AC to DC in the early 1960's, the building sat vacant for over a decade. Luckily, several artists saw high ceilings and specious interior as studios, purchasing the property in 1976. Today Sedgwick Studios is buzzing with energy as a live/work space for five artists with sculpture fabrication, neon shop, and public exhibitions.

Press Release - Art Conservation Firm
Statement regarding conservation of murals in local schools

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STATEMENT REGARDING HISTORIC MURAL COLLECTION

We'd like to thank the team at our local school board for entrusting our conservation team with the honor of handling their historic mural collection. We'd also like to take this opportunity to thank all individuals who have spoken on behalf of the importance of these artworks. As a company based on the philosophy that "art matters," observing citizens passionate to see the best possible outcome for this artwork couldn't have made us more proud. Like most, we're dedicated to ensuring these community treasures are treated with the highest standard in quality throughout the conservation process.

Our goal – and the goal set forth in our code of ethics – is to stay as true to the artist's original intention as possible. Whether prominent painter or unknown craftsman, we keep one question in mind when making decisions: "Is this what he or she would have wanted?" Artists put a great amount of labor and love into their work and our preservation aims to cherish that notion, starting with careful cleaning and ending with integration into the community the artist intended to inspire.

These murals are deeply rooted in Chicago neighborhood and their history doesn't stop at the conservation stage. And the conservation stage need not exclude the community. We're inviting the public to join us in the journey of restoration and, through guided tours and workshops, watch these historic artworks returned to their original brilliance. Viewed through the eyes of Chicago's diverse citizens, these cultural treasures will take on new light...and conservation promises them an even brighter future.

Press Release - Art Gallery, literary event announcement

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LADY AUTHRESSES CELEBRATE END OF GIRLHOOD GRADUATE SCHOOL DAYS
WITH QUAINF FICTION READING, *DEBUTANTE BARBECUE*

On Saturday, August 13, at 8:00pm, Division|Collective presents the public debut of four womanesque graduates (and one “little sister”) of SAIC’s MFA in Writing program. After two years hunched over quill and ink, the apple-cheeked, cherry-eyed, melon-mouthed debbs finally toss aside schoolyard shackles! With dainty fortitude, they blossom like literary tulips into their true roles – wives and mothers! To celebrate, the debutantes will offer a final reading of droll, inoffensive stylings at Happy Dog Gallery (1542 N. Milwaukee). Afterward, they will pick bird-like at potato salad, faint from corsets, and promptly be taken home. Anticipate breathless readings by:

Shanita Bigelow (favorite clothing: “anything with whalebone”)

Lesley Dixon (favorite food: “tap water”)

Heather McShane (favorite makeup: “Revlon ‘please don’t touch me’ concealer”)

Cynthia Pelayo (favorite Tenet of Islam: “sawm”)

Following the probably-more-disturbing-than-planned reading, guests will be treated to a potluck, Southern-style barbecue and live, non-ironic bluegrass music. Though debutantes will be escorted by beaus (lest they break into hysteria), visitor are asked to bring extra meat. The *Debutante Barbecue* is open to the public. The ladies request a \$5 donation to cover the cost of Sun-In and antidepressants.

Article, essay-style - Art Restoration Firm
Creative content on conservation/restoration of antiques associated with Saint Francis Cabrini

What We Talk About When We Talk About Display Cases

Windows to Another World: Part One

Furniture serves a function. A sofa relieves weary legs, a table becomes surface for family gatherings, a desk sets the stage for projects, presentations, or (all too often) procrastination. Even a gilded vase complements aesthetic or simply excites the eyes. Objects have occupations. Their labor, like any other job, provides purpose.

The display cabinet is humble. Modest in stature, it holds no candle to a baroque chaise or Barcelona chair. Plain, sturdy, intentionally unremarkable, it inspires no awe. Other furniture elicits action, from dresser drawers pulled and rustled through on hectic mornings to a mounted globe you just can't resist spinning, but the display cabinet remains motionless. Hinged doors open. They close. At first glance, that's about it.

At second glance, there's much, much more.

The display cabinet also serves function, despite its meek façade. In fact, its meek façade *is* its function. A subtle backdrop, display cabinets imbue their contents with prominence, elevating items to artifacts. Like a podium in a lecture hall, their statute spells importance. Their windows whisper "look within." Display cabinets are simple for a reason. They let their subject do the talking.

About a month ago, I searched the CDI offices for a story. An engaging page-turner. Armoires? Credenzas? La-Z-Boys? Diana Bernacki mentions Mother Cabrini. She speaks of blood on a bathmat. Dysentery. Christmas candy and a rocking chair. Her manner is off-hand and casual, as if recounting a story she's told hundreds of times. But I'm all ears, firing questions and typing rapidly. This is great material! Diana is surprised at my enthusiasm. "How do you find this *interesting*?" she says. "How do you *not* find it interesting?!" I reply.

In late 2012, Bernacki & Associates were selected to conserve, restore, preserve, and finally display artifacts of Saint Francis Xavier Cabrini, otherwise known as "Mother Cabrini" – the first US Citizen Saint. As Diana says, "objects are objects but there's fascinating history behind those objects." Among those objects were address books, personal notations, and writing instruments. Clothing, linens, undershirts. "The *carcass* of a desk" was restored. The rocking chair where she sat and died. Bernacki & Associates meticulously researched construction and materials according to conservation and historical standards. Working under an aura of particular peace and unity, the team created a complete archival unit rivaling that of any museum while remaining reverent to the spirit of a Saint. Now a first-hand witness, I can attest that the results are truly spectacular. The shrine's arrangement is in harmonic accord. The display cases are elegantly understated. The gloss of their finish and whorl of their wooden pedestals in homage to artifacts they exhibit and - as intended – they let the artifacts do the storytelling.

Mother Cabrini's history is riveting...even to a jaded, agnostic internet-addict. The paper boats she made as a child in Italy, signifying her wish to travel as a missionary. The Pope's directions to "look not East, but West," pointing away from social work in China and toward suffering immigrants in the United States.

There's her role in establishing Columbus hospital, making her forever "Chicago's Own." Diana knows the "Cabrini" name well. Their relationship is both spiritual and comfortably familiar. To me, the "Cabrini" name means, as a child, "ducking down" when driving through the projects. If you'd asked me a few months ago, I'd have guessed "Cabrini" was a one-time alderman.

After a trail of emails, a two-hour interview, and a trip to Lincoln Park, I certainly know better.

I visited the National Shrine of Saint Francis Xavier Cabrini on a bleary-eyed Friday morning. Appropriately accompanied by a (literal) sister, we brought along my grandmother for her 90th birthday. With occasions I've been in churches – weddings, funerals, and touristy sightseeing – countable on one hand, a shrine is beyond foreign. My preconception of the clergy plays like a medieval mini-series and I worried about propriety. What does one wear to a shrine? Is black off-limits? Can I bring my cell phone? Luckily, Diana set me straight before my visit. "The nuns are part of society," she said, describing the sisterhood as adept, skilled, and educated. "They're not cloistered. They drive cars, they're computer-savvy. They run Quickbooks."

A flashing marquee at the shrine's entrance backed Diana's promise of modernity. Inside, a specious, warmly-lit lobby sparked with shots of brilliant color; a pastel floor mosaic, peek of stained glass, white dove flapping wings against pale blue sky in animated interlude to a video documentary. A man named Anthony greeted me with enthusiasm in stark contrast to the stoicism I expected. I was introduced to Sister Bridget Zanin, Director of the Shrine, dressed in slacks and blouse. Both seemed friendly, eager to explain the life of Mother Cabrini. In lieu of interview, I opted to wander, soaking in the atmosphere. We set off, I with notebook, my sister with camera, Grandma ambling along.

As I walk, my feet bother me. I've had painful blisters for days (4" heels and an 8,000 sq. ft. conservation lab don't mix) and, in this sacred place of worship, I've doubted my choice of sandals. But a quote on the wall reads, "Mother Cabrini was a mystic who kept her feet upon the ground" and I take it as affirmation. Her habit stands front and center. Her slippers delicate set at corner. Black with leather swaths and nearly identical to mine. Her bathmat – with spot of blood – is to the right. Upon red upholstery, the pink fibers appear pronounced. The texture prominent. On solid red elm base, its display case is waist-high, inviting you to lean closer. Behind acrylic, you notice the stain's darkness and the irregularity around its edges. The display case is a strange dichotomy. Sometimes honorable, sometimes brutally human.

Before it's time to go, I decide I want a rosary. Made in Italy and a pretty shade of seafoam with Mother Cabrini portrait at center. Sister Bridget records the purchase...in Quickbooks. On our way out, we stop at a stand marked "Petitions" where visitors write prayers on note cards and drop them into a clear receptacle. My message reads, "I hope this story affects someone, somewhere."