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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 a 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-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.

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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?

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 organization 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 neighborhoods 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 return 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.

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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 a 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. On occasion 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 delicately 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."

Letter of Interest – Sculpture Commission

Dear Selection Committee,

My sculpture is greatly inspired by connections between living elements.

Through public art, I capture these symphonies of sites, freezing the fleeting moments of our shared existences. When it comes to reverence for the natural world, you don't get more apt than Colorado. For years, I've been traveling to Colorado and I even have a studio in Evergreen. The unique flora and fauna in the state has inspired much of my art, from the leaves on the lush forests to the hawks flying above.

My versatility – I can create sculpture that's free-standing, wall-mounted, or suspended – leads to limitless possibilities. I've also collaborated with architects and engineers and even created my own structures utilizing benches and windchimes, as well as work that's interactive and lends itself to photography. I also have experience designing for parks, such as my sculpture *Water*, which can be viewed as either a fish or underwater grass, depending on the viewer's stance. I use hardy metals to transform transitory moments into timeless sculpture. Light, whether sustainable LEDs, vibrant neon, or natural sunlight, adds inherent visibility. One light-based piece, my commission for Washington, DC's Ballou Senior High School, *The Knight*, depicts a school mascot and, by incorporating direct input from the student body, showcases a style familiar to teenagers: comic book heroes.

My work is self-fabricated, ensuring the client gets the best possible experience. Of course, sculpture needs to be durable, and all my work requires nominal – if any - maintenance, yet remains steadfast against weather and time (including light-based work). I'm comfortable keeping to timelines and budgets and am hopeful to embark on a project as a collaboration between artist, architect, contractors, and the greater community. I would love to contribute sculpture to delight Wake County visitors and residents for generations!

Three proposals – Public Art

Project 1: *Gear Up*

We're all influenced by the places and people that surround us. Just as Southern Illinois University laid the groundwork for my artistic education, SIU's physical infrastructure and supportive environment were the central inspiration behind *Gear Up*. Through a series of interconnected gears, *Gear Up* brings a common motif to life. From ground level to several stories above the ground, the gears appear to move upward as they travel toward the sky ...an apt metaphor for SIU's Transportation Education Center!

A near-universal symbol of mechanical technology, *Gear Up* uses its gear imagery on multiple levels. 27' x 16' x 18' and built from aluminum, *Gear Up* expresses motion both through its choice of subject and its ascending form; a comment on technological innovation and progress. As a sculpture envisioned for a specific populace, *Gear Up* also suggests the intellectual growth of SIU's students. However, education doesn't occur in a vacuum. *Gear Up*'s individual pieces are intertwined. Though each piece is distinct, their connective grooves point to the importance of teamwork, synergy, and active conversation. Mirroring the physical forum of SIU, autonomous thinkers come together as a cohesive, productive whole.

For this project, I let the site determine the design. For seamless architectural integration, I've selected a blank wall near a frequently-used side entrance. Thematically, connecting the sculpture to the facility draws attention to the SIU as a physical structure where interconnectivity and teamwork bring upon world-changing ideas. Functionally, images of the site seem to suggest the particular area may already act as an informal gathering area for students and faculty. *Gear Up* implies togetherness and build-in seating solidifies this notion. At ground level, the sculpture becomes a large bench with each groove a separate seat with the artwork's circular layout conducive to face-to-face dialogue. Another gear placed against the building provides opportunities for an individual to sit or lean in the artwork's center; perhaps conducting a surrounding group. This layout lends itself to an outdoor forum for everything from casual get-togethers to formal staff meetings.

If needed, *Gear Up*'s intended placement also takes into account the wall's access to electricity. My current interest in lighting is via LEDs placed within the gears for visibility, a distinctive day or night presence, and a sustainable option, in keeping with SIU's LEED certification.

Project 2: *MotorHead*

In mechanics, each action has a reaction and *Motorhead* (working title) embodies that concept. Movement - the twirling, twisting, energetic motion of an abstract motor – is the sculpture’s “action.” *Motorhead’s* “reaction” is the anticipated response of its audience (and I don’t mean heavy metal fans!). My primary interest was in designing public sculpture in the interests of generations of Southern Illinois University’s skilled mechanics. The reaction? A sense of instant recognition, pride, and passion toward their field of study.

Mechanics can be simultaneously simple, yet incredibly complex. Crafted from aluminum and standing at 22’ x 16’ x 8’, *Motorhead* is an abstract depiction of a standard motor (or, alternately, a figure bent in mechanical workmanship) with a nod to the Futurist Movement. By virtue of its familiar subject matter, *Motorhead* directly connects with its viewership. Its iconography instills interest, excitement and, of course, energy – reminding mechanically-minded viewer of the purpose and indelible role of SIU.

SIU’s unique topography plays a major role in *Motorhead*. Placement surrounding by concrete padding adds to the sculpture’s power. While conceptualizing the sculpture as site-specific, its position of prominence adds another factor: reverence. When centered as a focal point, *Motorhead* transforms from poignant reminder of a well-known object to a symbol of honor. Lighting enhances this effect with white spotlights surrounding the concrete pad. Not only does this form of lighting offer visibility essential for an airport setting, it increases the significance of the motor in the lives of its viewership.

Like an illuminated trophy case or museum exhibition, spotlighting alludes to the dedication, knowledge, and enthusiasm of all mechanics...past, present, and future.

Gallop Park is home to many connections. The foot of a child stepping over a patch of grass or the strength of the wind against a bending poplar. But some of the strongest natural connections in Gallop Park are in the inherent interactions between birds, water, and their surrounding environments (and, sometimes, connections between birds *and* water, in the case of diving ducks). When preparing this maquette, those two elements spoke to me. I've chosen to depict them in my proposed public sculpture for Gallop Park, *Ebb and Flow*. The title refers to the in-and-out, up-and-down motion of the water and the birds of Gallop Park, both integral parts of Gallop Park, itself.

Standing at 14' x 6' x 6', *Ebb and Flow* will be self-fabricated in my Chicago studio (a fellow Midwesterner!) with the bird figures crafted from aluminum, the waves at the bottom and "tubing" attached to the birds made from stainless steel, and the blue color painted with transparent lacquer. The sculpture depicts three dipping and weaving birds; I've tried to imagine a particular species to represent but, after researching Gallop Park, discovered the area includes a dizzying multitude of different types of birds. Therefore, let's just leave it up to each individual viewer to choose the bird they find significant. The birds are attached via steel "streams" that trace the bird's movement as they soar and dip through the sky. Finally, the bottom of *Ebb and Flow* is a base of blue waves, representing the many water sources throughout Gallop Park. These include the Hudson River (obviously), Geddes Pond, and even Gallop Park's rain gardens.

Ebb and Flow is designed to offer special importance to particular visitors of Gallop Park. Those renting kayaks, canoes, or paddleboats will find special meaning in *Ebb and Flow*'s reference to water. Even schoolchildren learning about the Hudson River in summer camp will notice *Ebb and Flow*'s waves. As for the birds, their presence in *Ebb and Flow* will be appreciated by the many bird watchers who have made Gallop Park their stomping ground. Further, participants in Gallop Park's bird walks will find the sculpture a pleasant complement to their activities.

. But, of course, *Ebb and Flow* is intended for each and every Gallop Park visitor. The presence of the birds overhead or the waters down below, as part of nature, connects us all. I would be honored to fabricate *Ebb and Flow* for those enjoying Gallop Park and Ann Arbor as a whole.

Grant Narrative (abbrev) – Team Sculpture Project

When we think of public art, one factor remains consistent: the importance of the viewer. Our proposed sculpture, *Reaching Up*, puts the experience of the audience front and center. This is a sculpture that was designed in a collaborative setting, Sedgwick Studio, with input from the organization throughout the process: from inception to installation. Working together, we’ve devised several themes and concepts inherent to this piece. This makes it ideal for placement in Central Park, with public parks being locations all eight artists on this team have previously performed commissioned projects. On an aesthetic note, *Reaching Up* is abstract, yet organic-inspired in form. Standing at 14’ x 6’ x 5’, the sculpture takes on many types of resemblance. Appropriate for its role in a public setting, it has an appearance that seems to reflect (no pun intended) the nature that surrounds it. Two intertwined “strands” of metal resemble blades of grass or spinning leaves. In another connection between *Reaching Up* and its environment, the twisting, metal strands appear akin to paths one may take throughout the terrain of the park. The sculpture’s form could also be interpreted as an infinity symbol or even a figure – “reaching up” to new heights.

The second manner *Reaching Up* addresses the role of the audience is through its unique construction, an aspect that truly incorporates the cumulative skills of Sedgwick Studio’s team of artists. Fabricated from stainless steel, the artwork has two contrasting finishes. One side is matte and the other side polished into a mirror finish. This gives *Reaching Up* its uniquely interactive quality. Using a mirror allows visitors to see themselves in the artwork, making them literally part of the sculpture. Considering that Central Plaza, like all of Marion, will host family-focused community activities, we can easily imagine *Reaching Up* as being a work of entertainment, perfect for those looking to take photos. On top of that, the sculpture will reflect the surrounding area, including both the vegetation and the sunlight.

Sedgwick Studio is a dedicated art space in Chicago with multiple craftsmen fabricating the artwork, from both within the Sedgwick Studio and outside contractors and artisans. As mentioned, many of our prior projects have been sited in public parks, similar to Central Plaza and we’re familiar and comfortable with their unique needs. *Reaching Up* seems to be aptly suited for the atmosphere at Central Plaza. Of course, durability is public sculpture’s duty. *Reaching Up* handles all elements – from harsh weather to the test of time – and is designed to remain safe and enjoyable for years of public interaction while requiring nominal maintenance and meeting deadlines and budgets. With site as the most important factor in my work, all of Sedgwick Studio is comfortable working with landscape architects, contractors, stakeholders and the community as a whole.

Hopefully, the sculpture – and its universally attractive aesthetic – will become a landmark in the

upcoming park setting. In Marion, a city with great appreciation for culture and the arts, *Reaching Up* is a sculpture to delight Central Plaza visitors and residents for generations.