

CLEO SMITS

cleo.smits@nyu.edu

USA: 591 Breezy Hill Road, Hillsdale, NY 12534

UAE: NYUAD, PO Box 129188, Abu Dhabi | +971.56.289.5664

EDUCATION

New York University in Abu Dhabi, Abu Dhabi, New York, Paris, Buenos Aires May 2015
Bachelor of Arts in Art & Art History with a Museum Studies Pre-Professional Track GPA: 3.74/4.00

- Related Coursework: The Multiple Lives of the Work of Art (Philippe de Montebello), Modern Art of the Arab World (Salwa Mikdadi), The Exhibition Industry & Renaissance Orientations (Alexander Nagel), Museum Studies (Glenn Wharton)

Emma Willard School, Troy, NY, USA July 2011
High School Diploma, Cum Laude
Emma Willard Award for Distinguished Leadership, Senior Art Award, Clementine Miller Tangeman Award

EXPERIENCE

Curated Exhibition (Senior Capstone) March 2014- Present
Arts Center Project Space, Saadiyat Island, NYU Abu Dhabi, Abu Dhabi, UAE

- Conceptualized, researched, and curated an exhibition that investigated tactics in contemporary institutional critique through an art historical framework with Serkan Ozkaya, Babak Golkar, and the Gulf Labor, under the mentorship of Maya Allison and Salwa Mikdadi

Mattatuck Museum, Waterbury, Connecticut, USA July-August 2014
Curatorial Intern

- Unframed and catalogued the Kay Sage Collection, including 14 Kay Sage and 5 Yves Tanguy drawings
- Researched and designed a re-hang of the Waterbury Button Museum, including wall text and brochure

The Third Line Gallery, Dubai, UAE June-July 2014
Gallery Intern

- Led website reorganization efforts to improve user experience by upgrading the gallery's artist database
- Created a database of over 100 contemporary art institutions in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East

NYU Abu Dhabi Art Gallery, Abu Dhabi, UAE April 2012 – August 2013
Exhibition Research Internship and Gallery Docent

- NYC: funded to study contemporary artists and prepare extensive background research for an exhibition of Indian Modernist painters from the Progressive Artists Group & the Calcutta Group
- Abu Dhabi: Assisted in installations/deinstallations, translated for visiting artists such as Nadia Benchallal
- Prepared the brochure and created floor plans for Jessica Mein's exhibition *Sliced Sky*

Abu Dhabi Art Fair, Abu Dhabi, UAE November 2012 & 2014
Volunteer and Gallery Assistant

- Installed and deinstalled artworks and assisted with the design of the layout for the Leila Heller Gallery
- Engaged with customers and dialogued about the artworks for the Lawrie Shabibi Gallery
- Facilitated events with Lord Norman Foster, Jean Nouvel, Frank Gehry, and Marina Abramović

LEADERSHIP

Residential Education Department, NYU Abu Dhabi, UAE August 2014 – May 2015
Residential Assistant (RA)

- Act as liaison between student body and administration, responsible for first-year residence hall of 24 students from 16 countries, and serve as peer counselor and community leader
- Program on-campus and off-campus events to integrate students into university life and to encourage assimilation into the UAE (ex. tour of art galleries and spaces in Dubai with 50 students)

Tango Society, NYU Abu Dhabi, UAE December 2012- Present
Founder

- Hire professional dancers to offer courses on-campus and organized milongas and trips to connect students with the greater UAE tango community

SKILLS AND INTERESTS

Fluent in **French**, proficient in **Spanish** and **Italian**
Ample experience with documentary and artistic **photography**
Proficient in **Microsoft Word**, **PowerPoint**, and **Excel**