



Smithsonian

## Robert Frederick Smith Summer 2023 Internships Offsite at Apollo Theater Archives

### ARCHIVES (1 POSITION)

#### Apollo Theater – New York, New York

The Apollo Theater Archives documents the history, cultural impact, and ongoing activities of Harlem's legendary Apollo Theater through a unique collection of photographs, oral histories, audiovisual content, institutional documents, promotional materials, and other memorabilia.

#### **Position Description:**

Established in 2009, the Apollo Theater Archives continues to inventory and catalog both new acquisitions and existing unprocessed materials, rehouse and preserve items, digitize key objects, and investigate how these materials can be put to use in service of the Apollo Theater Foundation's mission. The selected intern will have the rare experience of contributing to an archive during its formative stages. She or he will work closely with the Apollo's staff archivist to preserve, describe, and provide access to artifacts new and old, uncovering previously undocumented items and helping to lay the foundation of an archive that will one day serve scholars, researchers, and enthusiasts both in-person and via web portal.

For the Summer of 2023, internship responsibilities will focus on two key areas:

- Helping to catalog, describe, and arrange materials resulting from the digitization of the [Frank Schiffman Apollo Theater Collection](#) at the National Museum of American History – a key collection whose ingest into the Apollo Digital Archives represents a substantial addition to the theater's archival holdings.
- Cataloging and describing newly digitized videotapes from Apollo Theater Amateur Night programs from the late 1980s through the early 2000s.

*The Apollo Archives are quickly evolving. This list of internship duties is provided as a sample of likely responsibilities but may change by Summer 2023.*

#### **Sample of Intern Duties:**

- Describe and catalog digital and physical artifacts
- Arrange collections
- Help generate and manage data objects and collection metadata
- Help Foundation employees identify, locate, and retrieve archival materials
- Research, refine, and contribute information to the Apollo's database of past theater events
- Refine data in Collective Access, our collection management system
- Digitize photographic and documentary materials as needed
  - Photograph oversized objects
  - Generate high-resolution scans of paper files
- Help answer research questions from scholars, journalists, performers, and others

- Identify archival materials that can be utilized to enrich tours, presentations, events, and other public programs

**Learning Outcomes:**

- Increased knowledge of archive fundamentals including arrangement, appraisal, description, preservation, and reference
- Gain an understanding of how archives are utilized by performing arts institutions
- Develop technical and interpersonal skills essential to a career in archives
  - Collection management (arranging, numbering, appraisal, accessioning and deaccessioning)
  - Data management (creating and refining data, mostly in spreadsheet formats)
  - Curation and reference (answering internal and external requests for information and materials)
  - Digitization (document and photo scanning, video transfer)

**Prerequisites:**

- Demonstrated interest in African American history and culture
- Basic research skills
- Familiarity with spreadsheets, word processing, and databases
- Preference for candidates with experience with basic digital media concepts (audio, video, and photographic file types) and some experience in basic video editing (iMovie)

**Work Environment:** The Apollo Theater Archives are a new department but have already developed into a fast-paced environment, fielding requests from both within the organization and outside parties. The archives frequently collaborate with the Apollo's education, programming, and marketing departments, requiring quick thinking, flexibility, and a willingness to experiment with unfamiliar ideas.

The ideal candidate would be able to work independently, think collaboratively, and contribute to solving the problems of an organization just beginning to formalize its archival practices. Employees of the Apollo Theater Foundation are passionate about culture – music, theater, and comedy in particular – and the Harlem community surrounding the theater. The selected intern will have the opportunity to attend Apollo events, and are encouraged to do so.

**Tentative Schedule:** Start date no later than June 5

**COVID-19 Vaccine Requirements:** The Apollo is a 100% vaccinated institution. All onsite personnel, including interns, must be fully vaccinated.

**Eligibility:** Must be a United States citizen