

Olivia Comstock

Updated August 2025

Education

- Present PhD candidate in Art History, University of Minnesota (UMN), Twin Cities.
- Committee: Jennifer Marshall, Emily Capper, Elliott Powell
- Examination fields: American Art, Contemporary Art, American Studies
- Dissertation in Progress: "Allen Fannin: Hand Spinning and Weaving, Nitty-Gritty Needs, and 'The Black Craftsman Situation'"
- 2021-22 Fulbright Research/Study. Humboldt Universität. Berlin, Germany
- 2019 B.A. in Philosophy, minor in German. University of Idaho. Moscow, ID
- 2017-18 National Student Exchange. University of New Mexico. Albuquerque, NM

Fellowships and Awards

- 2026-27 ACLS/Luce Dissertation Fellowship in American Art (\$38,000).
- 2025-26 Predoctoral Fellowship, Smithsonian American Art Museum (\$45,000).
- 2025 Hella Mears Graduate Fellowship in European Studies, Center for German and European Studies, UMN (\$6000).
- 2025 Research Travel Grant, the Graduate School, UMN (\$3000).
- 2025 Saltus Grant, the Center for Premodern Studies, UMN (\$1400).
- 2021-25 Graduate Student Research and Travel Awards, Department of Art History, UMN (\$300, \$1500, \$1500, \$1800, \$1800, \$2500).
- 2023-25 Toward Equity in Publishing Program, *American Art Journal* (\$1000).
- 2024 Writing Retreat. Center for Race, Indigeneity, Disability, Gender & Sexuality Studies, UMN.
- 2024 Graduate Research Partnership Fellowship for Summer Research, Department of Art History, UMN (\$5000).
- 2023 Graduate Student Internship Program, College of Liberal Arts, UMN (\$6000).
- 2021-22 Fulbright Open Research/Study Award, Germany (\$15,000).
- Independent Project: "Design Your Own Fluxus Experience" Workshops
- Affiliate Institutions: Museum FLUXUS+, Humboldt Universität, and Freie Universität
- 2021 Graduate Student Summer Research Fellowship, Department of Art History, UMN (\$5000).
- 2020 Graduate Recruitment Fellowship, College of Liberal Arts, UMN (\$25,000).
- Two semester relief from teaching.
- 2020 Beverly & Richard Fink First-Year Fellowship Award, College of Liberal Arts, UMN (\$4000).
- 2019 Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society
- 2019 Honor's Core Award, University of Idaho
- 2016-19 Francis Seaman Philosophy Scholarship, University of Idaho
- 2015 Honor's Program Fellow, University of Idaho

Publications

Peer-Reviewed Articles

"Toward a Critical New Deal Legacy: The Performance of Colcha Embroidery in New Mexico," *Source: Notes in Art History*. "Confronting the Legacy of the New Deal" special issue, 44, no. 1, eds. Erika Doss and Mary Okin, 2025.

"Table Remains: Sites of Discipline and Alternative Empathies, or an Invitation for Found Object Transformation," *US Latinx Art Forum*, X as Intersection: Writing on Latinx Art--Materiality of Memory, 2025.

"Weaving Anni Albers through Édouard Glissant: The Opacity of Embodied and Material Knowledge," *Journal of Black Mountain College Studies*, Volume 15, 2024.

Reviews

"Bobby Marines' 'Resurrection' at Northeast Sculpture Gallery Factory: February 2023," *Venue*, Volume 1, no. 2, 2024.

Magazines

[*Crafting Queer Futures: A Conversation With Embodied Material Artists*](#), *MN Artists*, 2023.

Blogs

[*More Beautiful, & More Terrible: Thinking with Baldwin*](#), Weisman Art Museum, 2024.

[*Why Look at Animals?*](#), Weisman Art Museum, 2023.

[*Telling our Stories: A Conversation with Multimedia Artist Marina Castillo*](#), Chicano and Latino Studies Dept, 2023.

Presentations and Lectures

2025 Nov 20-22. Panel organizer and presenter, "The 'Black Craftsman Situation' and Haystack Mountain School of Crafts 1974 Afro-American Session" American Studies Association Annual Conference, San Juan, Puerto Rico. Co-chair: Margie Tang-Whitmore. Discussant: Shoniqua Roach.

2025 February 12-15. Panel organizer, "Hands-On: Critical Connections Between Craft and Pedagogy." College Art Association Conference. Co-chair: Julia Hamer-Light. Discussant: Michelle Millar Fisher.

2024 October 22. Guest Lecturer, "Artists Respond to Fascism and WWII: German Émigrés and Art Education." For "ARTH 2390: US Art and Visual Culture." University of Minnesota Duluth.

2024 June 24-26. Panel Organizer and discussant, "Student-Led Art Museum Learning: Student Gallery Teaching Programs and Belonging through Participation." Association of Academic Museums and Galleries Annual Conference. Online.

- 2024 February 14-17. Presenter, "Toward a Critical New Deal Legacy: Handicraft and Hispano/a Art in New Mexico." College Art Association Conference, Chicago. Organizer: Erica Doss and Mary Okin.
- 2023 November 9-11. Invited presenter, "Settling in Again: A Day-in-the-Life of Marguerite Wildenhain." Society for US Intellectual History Conference. Denver, CO. Organizer: Juliana Ariel DeVaan.
- 2023 October 13-15. Presenter, "Weaving Anni Albers through Édouard Glissant: The Opacity of Embodied and Material Knowledge." ReVIEWING Black Mountain College 14: International Conference. Asheville, NC.
- 2023 September 23-24. Presenter. "Revisioning the Past for the Present: Octavia Butler and Bisa Butler." University of Pittsburgh Film and Media Studies Graduate Conference. Online.
- 2023 June 22-24. Presenter. "Weaving Édouard Glissant's Opacity: the Case for Craft Making as Material Knowledge Production." Caribbean Philosophical Association Conference. Online.
- 2023 Accepted but unable to attend. "Black Aesthetics of the Everyday: Worldbuilding through the Joy of Quilting." College Art Association, NYC.
- 2021 September 30-October 2. Invited presenter. "Art and Queer Community," Fulbright Prism Out in the World Conference. Online. Organizer: Mailé Nguyễn.
- 2020 May 13. Presenter. "Silencing Non-binary Gender," Society of Women in Philosophy Inland Northwest Conference. Online.
- 2018 Presenter. "Sara Joyce: Catalogue Raisonné of Clay." Western Regional Honor's Conference. Orange, CA.

Curatorial Experience

- 2024 Independent Curator. *Edible*. March 2-April 21. Northern Clay Center. Minneapolis, MN. Exhibition catalogue.
- 2021 Co-curator. *iPresente!: 50 Years of Chicano & Latino Studies*. February 8-May 16. Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio (CLUES), St. Paul, MN.

Relevant Professional Experience

- Spring 2025 Tretter Transgender Oral History Project Cohort
- Conducted five oral history audio interviews with trans and gender nonconforming narrators for Phase III of the Tretter Transgender Oral History Project
- Sept 2022-June 2024 Public Engagement and Learning Associate, Weisman Art Museum, Minneapolis MN. Part time.
- Developed diverse curriculum focused on accessibility for undergraduate student gallery teaching program.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Managed and trained student gallery teachers. - Wrote articles for WAM blog.
Summer 2023	<p>Exhibition Intern, Northern Clay Center, Minneapolis, MN. Part time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developed curatorial concept for <i>Edible</i>. - Installed summer exhibition. - Managed artist contracts. - Catalogued permanent collection.
Spring 2023	<p>Community Engaged Learning Project, Chicano and Latino Studies Department, UMN. Part time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaborated with Serpentina Arts to meet the needs of local Latinx artists. - Wrote biographical and artist statement for artist in consultation with artist.
Fall 2021	Co-facilitator, Shelley Sacks <i>Frametalks</i> , Museum FLUXUS+, Berlin, Germany
May 2019-Aug 2020	<p>Notetaking and Captioning Assistant, University of Idaho Center for Disability Access and Resources. Full time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provided C-Print captioning services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students. - Managed, hired, and trained over 70 undergraduate student notetakers per semester. - Managed student notetaking and captioning accommodations. - Used Accessible Information Management database. - Led disability trainings for new university instructors.
Summer 2019	<p>Research Assistant, Dr. Casey Johnson, Department of Politics and Philosophy, University of Idaho. Part time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supported project on care ethics.
Spring 2019	<p>Digital Preservation Intern, University of Idaho Archives and Special Collections. Part time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preserved and ingested born digital collections on obsolete media into the digital archive. - Created metadata reports using digital forensic tools.
Spring 2018	<p>Community Engaged Learning Intern, University of New Mexico Art Museum. Part time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wrote three art acquisition proposals.
Sept 2017- May 2018	<p>Staff Member, <i>Scribendi: Arts and Literary Magazine</i>, Honor's College, University of New Mexico. Part time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reviewed and selected submissions, copyedited submissions for final publication, and communicated with authors. - Designed magazine layouts with InDesign. - Marketed magazine.

Teaching

- 2022-present Teaching Assistant, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN
ARTH 1002: Why Art Matters (Writing Intensive with TA-led sections)
ARTH 1921: Introduction to Film Studies (Writing Intensive with TA-led sections)
ARTH 1004: Introduction to Asian Art (Online Writing Intensive with TA-led sections)
ARTH 3019: Buddhist Art and Architecture (Writing Intensive. Reader/Grader)
ARTH 3012: 19th and 20th Century Art (Reader/Grader)
ARTH 3315: Art, Science and Technology in Europe, 1400-1800 (Reader/Grader)
ARTH 3921: History of Film (Writing Intensive with TA-led sections)
- 2018-19 Drop-in German Tutor, University of Idaho

Professional Service

- 2024-2025 Founder and facilitator, Visual Studies Graduate Writing Group, UMN.
2022-2024 Art History Graduate Student Committee for Visiting Scholars, UMN.
2018-20 Founder and facilitator, Queer Sewing Circle

Professional Development

- 2022 Commenting on and Grading Student Writing, UMN
2020 New Teaching Assistant Orientation, UMN
2020 C-Print Captioning STEM Training, Rochester Institute of Technology
2020 The Future of Notetaking Accommodations, Accessible Information Management
2019 C-Print Captioning Training, Rochester Institute of Technology

Languages

- German Intermediate
French Reading knowledge
Adobe InDesign