

MAHA SHAMI

ABOUT ME

My name is Maha. My practice explores themes of identity, escapism and nature.

I have a passion for colour, decolonized perspectives and how art can be applied to address personal, community and global needs.

I am a community worker who strives for a world in which everyone can access equal economic, political and social rights.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Heritage Participation Officer - Oxford House in Bethnal Green September 2022 - September 2023:

Delivering a complex multi-year arts and heritage programme at Oxford House. Work closely with Project Archivist to prepare for exhibition, planning and delivery of programme. To deliver a family summer programme.

Animation Lead on Ananse Project - The Natural History Museum August 2021 - August 2022:

Worked collaboratively with Community Centered Knowledge and Museum teams to create 2 animated films using content from workshops with elders and children from the local community. My responsibilities included: choosing animation approach, creating content and managing a team of two additional animators to create work; designing, resourcing and leading workshops for primary school children; designing project brief, timelines and project content and approach with an aim of centering a de-colonial perspective.

Community Engagement Officer - The Natural History Museum August 2021 - August 2022:

Supporting community events, visual minutes at conferences, preparing and sorting resources, welcoming visiting groups and assisting with orientation, leading craft and science engagement activities, facilitating discussion groups.

Guest Lecturer and Henna Workshop Lead - Natural History Museum - 9th July 2022:

Worked collaboratively with Hana Ayoob to give a lecture educating people about the scientific, artistic, and historic nature of henna/mehndi. I also hosted a workshop with the public discussing and applying henna, it's cultural importance and celebrating eid.

Animation Intern - Reanimation January 2020 - July 2020:

Managing admin, planning & facilitating animation workshops, interpreting briefs and concepting.

FREELANCE

Community Artist and Facilitator - George Greens School - 2022 - present:

Worked on multiple artivism projects which used creative techniques such as cyanotype, photography and drawing to explore themes such as urban nature and identity. These projects involve a series of workshops and community exhibitions.

Freelance Artist, Filmmaker and Arts Facilitator 2022 - present:

Proven track record of delivering exceptional creative outcomes and facilitating creativity within my community on a freelance basis. Skilled in animation, drawing and painting. Worked with George Green's School, NIE Theatre, the Natural History Museum, App developers and other partners.

Art Workshop Facilitator - Stanley Picker Gallery March 2022:

Worked with producer to research, develop, and host workshop about decolonising colour theory and exploring non western perspectives.

Online Intern - Stiwidio Maelor Residency March 2020:

Worked with Veronica Calarco to run an online competition (in which the prize was an artist's residency for a student and a practicing artist) Responsible for organising, filing, advertising and running the competition. Also responsible for finding judges, advertising & marketing.

Animation Director - 2 voor 12 December 2019:

Interpreting brief for Dutch TV, receiving and implementing feedback, using collage in experimental animation.

VOLUNTEERING

Curator at Reconnecting Show June - July 2021:

Decided how students pieces were to be displayed and arranged and then managing, cataloguing and assembling pieces at our graduation show.

STEM Ambassador - January 2021 - Present:

Storytelling with school children, developing and hosting workshops that break down the dichotomy of Science and Art.

Animation Intern - Hsu Cheng at RCA March 2019:

Supported in stop - frame animation processes such as hand painted frames.

Designer - Wellcome Collection September 2018:

Leading a team to create a window display, taking artistic risks and creating a high quality and dynamic window display in Brick Lane Bookshop.

Shop Assistant - Tenovus Cancer Care & Dogs Trust March 2013 - March 2016:

Developed teamwork, learnt practical skills such as pricing, storage organisation & using a till.

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ACHIEVEMENTS

2017 Achieved Bronze, Silver and Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award.

2020 Film 'Odo's Bahrain' selected for two festivals (3 Minute Film Festival & Minute Madness Toronto)

2020 Film 'The Light' selected for two festivals (Flickfair and Life screenings International One Minute Film Festival)

2021 Exhibition: IABA Reconnecting Exhibition, Oxo Tower Wharf, Barge House St.

2023 Exhibition: Hidden Expressions, 21 Old Ford Rd, Bethnal Green

SKILLS

Software - Fluent in the Adobe Creative Suit & Microsoft. Basic understanding of tv paint, cinema 4D and excel.

Communication Skills - Highly skilled communicator with a warm and approachable manner. Experienced in leading activities with a range of different audiences. Clear written and verbal communication with experience in writing briefs and project plans, leading work of others and delivering workshops. Ability to creatively problem solve scientific and cultural content, leading activities with an understanding of different audiences.

Visual Notes - Ability to pull out main points and present in engaging illustrative style.

Project Management and Organisation - Able to prioritise heavy workload, work agilely and cooperatively and a highly adept creative problem solver.

Kingston University 2017 - 2021 Illustration Animation with honours (BA Hons) 1st

Cardiff Arts Academy 2016 - 2017 Level 3 Foundation Diploma in Art and Design Merit

Cowbridge Comprehensive 2009 - 2016

A - levels: Art - A* Geography - B Biology - C History - C
13 GCSE's: A* - C Including English, Maths and The Welsh Baccalaureate.

EDUCATION

NON QUALIFICATION COURSES

Natural History Museum 2022 Intro to UK Natural History Course, Information Management Training, Autism Awareness Course, Safeguarding Training.

GEM Winter 2022 Foundation Course: Museum Learning

British Library 2022 Introduction to Oral History

Artwork Professional Development 2023 Essential Safeguarding for the Arts

V & A Academy 2023 The Principles of Interpretation

RADA 2022 Stepping up with Confidence

City Lit 2023 Intro into Dramatherapy

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