

Transcript: Art Fund Interview with Brook

Speakers:

Ana Baeza Ruiz

Brook (pseudonym)

Ana Baeza Ruiz [00:07.950]: Okay well it's great to see you, and thanks so much for taking part in this interview, the purpose of this interview is to ask you to reflect on your experiences of taking part in the project at modern as a whole. So we'll be covering different aspects from communication you're learning the relationship between this project and the bigger world of work and industry. And so we're looking here, for your honest and frank reflections, this is why it's anonymous. And there are no good or bad answers it's really about what your experience has been and whatever you say in the course of this interview will then be taken up by Zoe and Sean and colleagues at the museum for future possible projects, they might run. We're going to cover about eight questions so we'll be total of about just over 20 - 25 minutes so I'm going to start with the first one, which is a very general opening question, and this is: how will you describe your participation in the project.

Brook [01:13.020]: In terms of my involvement?

Ana Baeza Ruiz [01:15.360]: Yes, in terms of your involvement and we will discuss some of that in more detail, but I think just how you consider how you've participated just your general sense of what's come out of this project, how will you describe your involvement in it.

Brook [01:31.980]: I would say that that was really good overall at portraying kind of what people in social media do in terms of analysing, creating content and so on. And it was nice because we had quite a while I mean it wasn't a long experiment, but in the time that we did have we could do three iterations within it, so I think every time I did an iteration I kind of understood more and more and more what they were what Zoe and Sian were trying to get across from the beginning of understanding data, understanding what it means, and then working from that data and like doing another content and so on. I think at the beginning, I was completely clueless, so think the project is quite nice because it kind of summarizes that world in a really nice short sweet way, and also kind of get to practice that as well yeah.

Ana Baeza Ruiz [02:38.760]: Right, so we will get to talk about that experimental model a little bit more later on, but before that, just to go back to what you've taken out of this project and what you've learned specifically...what would you say that you have learnt in the course of this project?

Brook [02:54.930]: Okay, so I would say that of course we've learnt, in terms of skills, technical skills, I would say that we've learnt how to use Teams, of course, so like the project Notebook like we had a lot of overlapping kind of things in Teams, so we'd have folders and so on. At the beginning, I was quite confused and then because the project was three months, we could actually I learn a lot about how to use this the Teams meeting software. I already had expertise in Photoshop, but I feel because I got to actually create content for Instagram in terms of posters and fonts and so on, I think my mind, because I do Interiors-based course, my mind changed graphically. Which then helps me right now in my project work at the moment for my actual degree course. And then I also to say that in the end me and my colleague, we did the last iteration on Canva so it was very nice to kind of see how Canva works collaboratively as well as like by myself and like how easy it is to use as well. [04:18.180] And then, in terms of other skills that people skills, I would say that it kind of made me quite confident in presenting. I'd say that was already quite sure of myself when presenting to people, but because we were in a room with people we've never met and everyone just kind of had to have a professional front of them I feel more confident now to take that kind of approach in work now. And also, we had to meet at the expense of our own time, so, for example, I would text, my colleague, and then we would meet, and then we still kept that professional friendship between us which is really nice. So you got to have technical skills, but also like professional interpersonal skills yeah.

Ana Baeza Ruiz [05:13.230]: Great thanks so much, I think we can go a little bit more into that interpersonal skill question and my one question is around communication, so how would you judge the way in which people communicated and collaborated during the project. You might want to comment on your own group on things that you observed in other groups, or perhaps also in the project leaders, so this is an open space, but just generally on this question of communication and collaboration, what are your thoughts on this?

Brook [05:44.040]: I'd say within my own group we collaborated very well, I feel like me and my colleague, we were very open-minded to things. It was good. From other groups who I've seen... I mean, I know that one group kind of had a problem of figuring out who would be in charge of certain things. But I mean I guess that's like more of a personal thing to them, rather than the project itself. And then in my group yeah I feel like everyone kind of spoke really well and when we would come together, everyone felt as though you know we just got on quite well. With Zoe and Sian I'd say they were very vocal about everything, and what one thing that they did really well was not just communicating really well but also making sure that we feel safe and we feel like we can approach them in case we are unsure about something. They always made sure to say it, like every single time that they're there for us so yeah I'd say everything went really well.

Ana Baeza Ruiz [07:04.410]: I'll just ask a follow up question on this, I think it's really interesting and it reflects the perspectives of some of your other colleagues of good teamwork. What would you say where the things that made teamwork be good, that made this collaboration work. Can you maybe just list a few things?

Brook [07:19.830]: Within my group?

Ana Baeza Ruiz [07:21.540]: yeah from your experience.

Brook [07:23.280]: Okay, what made things work, so I would say we were very we were open-minded, so and we didn't jump to conclusions. For example, if I would say something, my other partner would be like, or is this what you mean like, do you want to take charge in this... we would listen to each other, openly. And I also think we would kind of do a mind map of ideas at the beginning, we always did this, and if she didn't like something I would 100% try to understand why, and vice versa. So we always came to a mutual agreement on things before we even started with the actual iteration itself. But yeah I think it's down to like personality, but it's also down to how we approached it in the sense that we listed out things that we could do and then we spoke between ourselves. Okay, A working, B working, C I don't really like it so much, and then we would kind of like Okay, how can we solve C together and then you know just do the project.

Ana Baeza Ruiz [08:36.270]: Thanks that's helpful okay so I'm going to move on to thinking about the broader model of the project, which, as you very well know I'm sure much better than me is inspired on the Let's get real it's about experimenting and trying things out. But I'd like to hear from you, in your words, how would you explain this model of working and experimenting that was used in the project, how did you find it and what do you think you're going to take away from it, if anything.

Brook [09:04.050]: So, with the model, I would say at the beginning, I was quite confused because I hadn't done anything to do with doing social media before, I didn't realize how focused you have to be on a goal and you only have can have like one certain goal in mind release. For example, if you use hashtags you can only kind of base your analysis on the use of hashtags but then if you use like hashtags and Location, and this, and this, and this, then the iteration is not as focused anymore. So I feel like they experiment planner which is what you're talking about kind of helped us have that focus in our mind. And it was really good I think that type of planner I would say, would even help me way we did my own project, sometimes, because I think as a creative you kind of tend to kind of want to do a bit of this and a bit of this, and a bit of this, but then you don't actually understand if the outcome is successful you don't understand what made this successful, and I feel like the experiment planner kind of helps you understand what they made this successful or not, based on one thing they use the each time.

Ana Baeza Ruiz [10:28.380]: Right, so it sounds like you might be taking this experimental model to your future work which is great to hear. There's a question that concerns more your individual involvement in the project and links to the first question that we had, but this is more around, how do you feel your input was valued and incorporated in the project. You've already touched on this a little bit, but if you could give one or more examples that would be great.

Brook [11:00.720]: um. I felt that my skills in my input were very much appreciated, I mean I, like everything that I produced within the project graphically and also thinking about things such as like hashtags also like the content that we created to the content itself the graphics everything I think it was quite a collaboration between me and my group, but I believe that my say was heard and I'm happy with the result, so yeah.

Ana Baeza Ruiz [11:43.110]: OK so I'm going to move into a different set of questions which is more about how this project sits within the wider context of the world of work. Throughout the weeks that you've been taking part in this project there's been a number of guest speakers that have come to speak about their experiences in across a host of institutions, how well do you think this worked this way of bringing different perspectives to the table, did you find that his input useful?

Brook [12:13.560]: Yes, I found it really useful, I think dependent on again each person and their personality and it was nice to see everyone is so different in this industry and that everyone kind of has a space within it. And yeah it was just really cool, I've I liked the fact I saw that museums kind of collaborate with each other to kind of bring the best of the cultural world to social media. And I also liked the fact that I got to learn new things within the interviews that were taking place, like by the other creators that had come on to the show into our platform. I liked that I found out that you can actually be a freelancer and kind of work with different companies, because I am quite traditional and I thought that you kind of have to have like a contract with one company, but now I realized like that's not the case, and you can work your way around there and no matter what background you're from as well, you can always kind of try and get into it being really passionate about so yeah I think he was really informative both inspirational.

Ana Baeza Ruiz [13:34.680]: Great and so that all sounds really great and positive is there anything about these sessions, with the guests, because that could have been done differently?

Brook [13:46.350]: Honestly, I don't think so because, obviously, as much as I think it would have been nice, obviously, if we could network with them in a way, I think we have been told that we can kind of you know, to reach out to them on LinkedIn and send the message that they've given us an interview. But it's quite, it's not as nice if we were actually going to see them on like a meeting or in real life. But thinking about the current climate, and then also thinking about that people weren't from the same professional institution and like they weren't from the same educational institution like people like I know one girl was from Venice so she says she was in Venice, so I think it worked, the best he could have done by yeah.

Ana Baeza Ruiz [14:43.680]: Okay um so this discussion relates to another question which is that the idea behind any kind of work experience project like this one, is that you can increase your knowledge of the world of work and enhance your confidence when you start to think about applying for jobs which you'll be doing quite soon, if you haven't done so are doing so already. Do you have any comments on how well this aspect of the project that is connecting the project to the world of work, has worked for you?

Brook [15:19.980]: It's been quite well the project itself kind of basis around social media, so I feel like I do feel more confident now to have be have a conversation with someone that works in social media for like content creators and so on, because I feel like I kind of understand a bit more now. Obviously there's so much to know, but I feel like I know the basics and then, also in terms of work and how I get my how I can transfer the skills to the work environment. We have actually had like discussions about it, and then we also had the presentation and, in doing that presentation, I think I have been reflected on what I had learned and then I realized that actually a lot of the skills that I've learned, I can apply on to any kind of career path that I'll take.

Ana Baeza Ruiz [16:17.910]: Would you like to expand on some of those skills that you maybe haven't mentioned so far, but that you think critical skills that you've gained through this.

Brook [16:27.270]: um yeah so obviously I've mentioned Photoshop before. So now I know how to like form certain like shapes or the kind of graphically how things work because I could actually just focus on that so now, I see a change in my educational work, and I know that is going to help me in my professional world to produce work that's graphically and visually aesthetically pleasing because I had opportunity to just focus on that, but like one thing a time, rather than having to cram too much in as I do in like my degree. And then obviously people skills we've learnt a lot about it because we were always talking, always needing to meet up by ourselves and kind of having that courage to reach out to Sian or Zoe or my partner to solve situations and so on, I think. That's given me confidence for the future.

Ana Baeza Ruiz [17:37.800]: Great cool, I have one question left, which is about how MoDA might take on board all of this feedback, and how it will progress into the future. So if MoDA was to run a similar project again next year. Would you recommend it to your friends, is the first part of the question and why, yes, or why not, and then the second part of the question is, are there any changes that you might suggest if this project were to happen again.

Brook [18:10.620]: um I would say so, would I suggest it's my friends, yes. I think it's very, very nice it's like such an amazing opportunity because you don't get the opportunity to work with museums, on a daily basis. And especially museums and also social media combined, it's like so contemporary and it's such an amazing opportunity and the way the project was led by Sian and Zoe was very, very nice and I feel that anyone would feel comfortable to participate and or at least try and apply and participated yeah definitely yes. And I would say, for the future, one thing that could maybe one thing that I want I would have loved is if we somehow work out how we could be in different groups so switch groups from time to time, because we were just in one certain group. It was nice because we obviously went through that journey together, but then, at the same time, I feel like [19:14.100] I'm quite a social person, so I did want to kind of work with my other colleagues that were on the other side, and so on, and also meeting them with they've also been helpful because everyone thinks differently, and I know that there was this group that had a few people that had already worked for social media in a way, so the love to kind of see their insight on it, and so on. But because we kind of just had formal meetings, I couldn't get to that personal, professional relationship with other people that were taking part in the project.

Ana Baeza Ruiz [19:55.950]: Great and I think that's covered a lot of ground, however, we do still have some more minutes, so I think you know we have time if there's other things that you'd like to share, about the project that you feel you haven't had a chance to speak about. This can be anything so it's an open floor for you, if you want to say anything more.

Brook [20:20.550]: No really I just yeah I just think it's been such a nice thing to do, and also, it was nice because I got to like time-manage my degree with this, and it was so amazing that we also got paid for it as well, so it wasn't just like voluntary work, it was like I felt like our work was valued so yeah definitely and I just I hope to see more of this, at least be inspired in a way by what we've created and then in the future they'll have less work to do in order of like coming up with ideas, in what way they should pause their content and so on, because we've given them quite a few ways of doing it, and now it's just a matter of them choosing from and then re adapting it to like new content from the collections that they have and so on, so yeah I would love to see their Instagram grow definitely, because I think he has so much potential...

Ana Baeza Ruiz [21:27.450]: A great well thanks so much Brook I think we can probably stop there, and because I feel you've shared a lot so I'm going to stop recording, just thank you again and I'll stop recording now.

Brook [21:39.570]: Thank you.