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Professional Materials

Karen Antell, Editor

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This anthology presents a treasure trove of ideas from beyond the library world. Cultural institutions of all kinds, including libraries, museums, academic institutions, and performing arts centers, will glean programming ideas that are presented in succinct chapters scanning a broad realm of possibilities. Seasoned editor Carol Smallwood divides the book into five parts, and the book as a whole gives insight into the entire programming process.

The book’s five parts are titled “Literary Arts,” “Visual Arts,” “Performing Arts,” “Mixed Arts,” and “Management and Administration.” Each chapter within these sections highlights a real-world example, and the topics covered range from writing (an outreach event for all writers at the University of Florida’s library, from the novice writer to the seasoned author) to music (a performance of rarely heard music in Chicago, a collaborative effort put forth by the Grant Park Festival Orchestra and the Music Library of Northwestern University) and everything in between. Some of the projects and programs discussed had no budget or very low budgets, and the book provides tips on how to manage within such financial constraints. Other chapters discuss how various projects obtained funding and succeeded through collaboration. The “Management and Administration” section is very hands-on and provides the most practical information. The chapter titled “Behind the Scenes” includes advice on working with presenters, such as how to put together a formal independent contractor agreement and what to include in a letter of request when borrowing artworks and other materials from outside individuals and organizations. The section ends with a chapter organized by the ALA Public Programs Office, listing a variety of online programming resources and ideas, including a useful section on funding and support resources.

A thorough index completes the anthology. Moreover, although each chapter stands alone, it should be noted that the anthology is easily consumed as a whole, and a greater understanding of uniting the arts with the library is gained when consulting the volume in its entirety. The chapter headings and subheadings expedite this process, making this book an excellent point of reference for information professionals looking to create successful library programs, events, and outreach opportunities that include the art world—Elizabeth Lane, Associate Librarian for Public Services, Frick Art Reference Library, New York, New York


Coming from a distinguished career in technical services, Johnson delivers an exceptionally well written and much-needed book about what one must do to get one’s library ready for the next frontier: the conversion from a largely print collection to one more heavily oriented toward electronic