

Paul Schmelzer

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An arts journalist exploring
the intersection of visual culture
and community.

Professional Experience

Managing Editor

walkerart.org

Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, 2011–

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Hailed as “a model for other institutions of all kinds” (*The Atlantic*), the Walker Art Center website won a 2012 Muse Gold Award from the American Association of Museums, two Best of the Web prizes at Museums and the Web 2012, including Best Overall, and a 2012 Webby Award nomination. As editor, I set the site’s vision; contract writers; edit all copy; write essays and conduct artist interviews for videos and text-based presentation; manage editorial calendars and budget; and oversee day-to-day production of this high-churn news site. I founded the *Walker Reader* content newsletter and @walkermag, the editorial Twitter account. I chartered content partnerships with media outlets, including Art 21 (New York), Latitudes (Barcelona), and *Public Art Review* (St. Paul). I conceived and realized many editorial series, including Artist Op-Eds, which features opinion pieces (both online and in print pamphlets) on politics and culture by artists including Ron Athey, Dread Scott, and Ana Tijoux, and Lowercase P: Artists & Politics, an election-year series on artists’ personal approaches to issues of power, participation, and community. I’m currently part of the team leading the redesign of this industry-leading museum website.

Conference Organizer

Superscript: Arts Journalism & Criticism in a Digital Age

Walker Art Center, 2014–2015

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I organized and co-emceed this inaugural conference on the challenges and possible futures for online arts publishing, held in May 2015. This international three-day convening showcased 17 writers, editors, and artists (from *LA Times* critic Christopher Knight to poet Claudia La Rocco, *The New Inquiry*’s Ayesha Siddiqi to *Buzzfeed Books* editor Isaac Fitzgerald), two keynotes (James Bridle, Ben Davis), two film premieres, and a mentorship program for

emerging bloggers, among other events. In addition to managing speaker selection and event logistics, marketing, contracts, and invoicing, and promoting Superscript on media outlets (from KFAI to the *Columbia Journalism Review*), I created Superscript Reader, an online series of commissioned writings from artists, editors, and technologists on themes not addressed within the conference.

Managing Editor

American Independent News Network
Washington, D.C., 2010–2011

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As a member of the senior leadership staff for this 10-site nonprofit news network, I supervised editors at sites in Colorado, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, and New Mexico to produce fair and accurate accountability journalism in the political realm. I conducted daily management calls with editors and weekly all-staff editorial calls; advised on journalistic strategies, hiring, freelance contracting, social media, and SEO; and managed collection and analysis of network-wide weekly traffic statistics and monthly KPI reports.

Editor/State Director

Minnesota Independent
Minneapolis, 2007–2011

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I managed daily coverage of political news in the public interest, including award-winning team-reporting on the 2008 Republican National Convention and the elections of 2008 and 2010. I held editorial meetings; assigned and tracked story progress; mentored young reporters; cultivated and managed a roster of freelancers; maintained metrics on traffic and news impact; edited audio, video, and print news; and managed use of a portfolio of social networking tools. As the site’s media writer, I won the 2008 Frank Premack Award for Public Affairs Journalism from the University of Minnesota School of Journalism, the first time the prize has gone to an online journalist.

Founder

Eyeteeth: A Journal of Incisive Ideas
Minneapolis, 2003–present

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I create articles, videos, and audio and text interviews on the intersection of contemporary art and social change for a site ranked among Minnesota’s top 10 blogs.

National Design Advisor

American Independent News Network
Washington, D.C., 2006–2007

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I managed rebranding and website design for this national network: I wrote the RFP, oversaw renaming of sites, and served as liaison between contractors and internal clients in eight states.

Senior Fellow

American Independent News Network
Washington, D.C., 2006–2007

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I created multimedia reports about media and politics in Minnesota.

Associate Director of Marketing/Editor

Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, 1998–2007

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I managed production of the center’s magazine and blogs; assigned and edited stories; interviewed artists; art-directed photo shoots; managed the magazine’s 2005 content redesign; wrote radio and print ads; trained bloggers; and supervised marketing coordinator and designer.

Associate Editor

Adbusters Magazine

Vancouver, BC, Canada, 2003–2005

Copywriter

Lindsay, Stone & Briggs Advertising
Madison, WI, 1995–1997

Education

St. John’s University, Minnesota

B.A. English/Communication, magna cum laude

University of Westminster, England

Humanities Coursework

Selected Appearances

“2043: No Es Un Sueño,” Artist Op-Ed Launch + Artist Talk with Postcommodity (Raven Chacon, Cristobal Martínez, Kade L. Twist), moderator, Walker Art Center, March 11, 2017.

“Conference as Publishing, or Expanding a Digital Arts Journalism Conference Online,” Museum Computer Network (MCN) 2015 National Conference, Minneapolis, November 7, 2015.

“Collector’s Corner,” *The Gaby Roslin Show*, BBC London 94.9, discussing *The Heterograph Project*, a conceptual art project that has seen some 70 celebrities sign the name “Paul Schmelzer,” September 13, 2015.

“Museums as Media Organizations” (featured in tandem with Sree Sreenivasan, Chief Digital Officer at the Metropolitan Museum of Art), *Museopunks* podcast, eds. Jeffrey Inscho and Suse Cairns, September 2013.

“Connecting Beyond the Museum Walls: Innovations in Online Audience Engagement,” American Alliance of Museums Annual Meeting and Expo, Baltimore, May 22, 2013.

“The Voice(s) of the Museum,” National Museum Publishing Seminar, The University of Chicago Graham School, June 22, 2012.

“The State of Creative Writing and Literary Editing in Minnesota,” Minnesota Colleges and Universities English and Writing Conference, Minneapolis College of Art and Design, March 30, 2012.

“Art, Politics, and Censorship,” a panel discussion presented in conjunction with the exhibition *Three Artists: Guo Gai, Meng Tang, Slinko*, The Soap Factory, Minneapolis, September 17, 2011.

“Push ‘N’ Pull: How Traditional Advocacy Organizations and Netroots Activists Can Create Social Change Through Impact Journalism and Action,” panelist, Netroots Minnesota, November 21, 2009.

“Mass Media Ethics: Moral Reasoning and Case Studies,” guest lecturer, Journalism 3771, University of Minnesota School of Journalism & Mass Communication, November 18, 2009.

“What is News Now?,” Pecha-kucha-style

presentation with Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Chris Ison and artist Kathryn Refi, Weisman Art Museum, Minneapolis, September 17, 2009.

“Designing Obama,” presenter on the history of political graphics, moderator of a discussion with Obama campaign designers Sol Sender and Scott Thomas, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, May 12, 2009.

“All Things Considered,” daily report from the Republican National Convention, KUNM-FM, Albuquerque, NM, September 2–5, 2008.

“Getting Heard this Election Season: What Stands Between the Public and a True Story?” *Live from Main Street* (with Amy Goodman and Laura Flanders), Minneapolis, June 8, 2008.

“The Changing Role of Media Critics,” panel moderator, National Conference for Media Reform, Minneapolis, June 6, 2008.

“What exactly is ‘New Media’ and why are so many former print people signing up to work in it?,” *Almanac*, Twin Cities Public Television, September 7, 2007.

“The War of Art: Modern Censorship/Contemporary Art,” Free Speech class, St. John’s University, Department of Communication, November 2000–2005, April 2002.

Selected Awards

Gold Award: Online Presence, Media & Technology 2012 MUSE Award, American Alliance of Museums, for walkerart.org.

Best of the Web: Best Overall Site, Museums and the Web 2012, for walkerart.org.

Best of the Web: Innovative/Experimental, Museums and the Web 2012, for walkerart.org.

2009 Society of Professional Journalists Page One Award (First Place), Web Site: Best Use of Video, “The F30 Pedal Cloud brings people-powered protest to the RNC,” *Minnesota Independent*.

2008 Society of Professional Journalists Page One Award (First Place), Web Site: Best Single News Story, “Annarama! Anna Nicole Smith and the Experience Newspaper,” *Minnesota Independent*.

2007 Frank Premack Public Affairs Journalism Award, University of Minnesota

School of Journalism, Excellence in Opinion Journalism, “Who Owns the J-Word? Videoblogger’s Jailing Raises Questions for Journalists,” *Minnesota Independent*.

Selected Recognition

“By styling their Web site as a dynamic blog and news resource rather than a stale well of information about ongoing exhibits, the Walker Art Center quickly rocketed to the top of the Internet charts.”

—Kyle Chayka, ranking walkerart.org as the number-one museum website, ArtInfo.com, May, 18, 2012

“The Walker’s new site is helmed by Paul Schmelzer, who has long run the excellent *Eyeteeth* blog. If anyone can figure out how to turn the Walker’s website into an art mag frontend for the museum’s collection, Schmelzer can.”

—Alexis Madrigal, *The Atlantic*, December 5, 2011

“Schmelzer is an award-winning journalist who has worked at both the local and national levels. In part because of Schmelzer, no American art museum is more prepared to produce journalism than is the Walker.”

—Tyler Green, *Modern Art Notes*, December 5, 2011

References

Available upon request.

Publications

I've written more than 300 articles, essays, and blog posts for magazines, newspapers, and online publishers, including *Adbusters*, *Alternet.org*, *Art 21*, *Art in America*, *Artforum.com*, *British Heritage*, *City Pages*, *Huffington Post*, *Hyperallergic*, *Isthmus*, *The Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel*, *Ode Magazine*, *The Progressive*, *Public Art Review*, *The Rake*, *Raw Vision*, *re-form* (Medium.com), *Utne Reader*, and *World-changing*, among others. I was commissioned by the RSA and Arts Council England to interview Native activist Winona LaDuke, architect Cameron Sinclair, and artist Rirkrit Tiravanija for the 2006 book *Land, Art: A Cultural Ecology Handbook*. I edited *Trieste* (2014), an exhibition catalogue for a trio of shows curated by artist Jay Heikes and published by Federica Schiavo Gallery (Rome), Marianne Boesky Gallery (New York), and Grimm Gallery (Amsterdam), and my conceptual art project—*Signifier, Signed*, in which I ask celebrities to sign not their autographs but my name—has been featured in *Cabinet*, the *Star Tribune*, *Readers Digest*, and on BBC London.

Selected Online Publications

"The Non-Digital Visitor," [Art in America](#), October 2016.

"The Art of Black Lives Matter Minneapolis," [Hyperallergic](#), December 23, 2015.

"Further Speculation on Digital Arts Media's Future(s)," [walkerart.org](#), May 27, 2016.

"Keeping Track: The Political Railway Graffiti of Impeach," [re:form](#), March 15, 2015.

"Back Alley Poster Show: Designer Erik Brandt's World Famous Garage Gallery," [re:form](#), September 17, 2014.

"Laugh At Death: Kris Martin on Mortality, Silent Bells and the Skeleton He Buried in an Art Museum's Front Lawn," [Huffington Post](#), April 18, 2014.

"Reddit's Alexis Ohanian on Tech, Epic Fails, and Social Change," [walkerart.org](#), January 20, 2014.

"How Culture Shapes the Contemporary City Nato Thompson on Urbanism, Social Practice, and the Creative Time Summit," [walkerart.org](#), October 23, 2013.

"The Momentary Monument: Philippe

Vergne on Thomas Hirschhorn's Ode to Gramsci," [walkerart.org](#), September 12, 2013.

"Drone, not Drones': Behind the Slogan that Capped Low's Infamous Rock the Garden Set," [walkerart.org](#), July 12, 2013.

"Completely Punk Rock": Cindy Sherman's (Nearly) Forgotten History with Babes in Toyland," [walkerart.org](#), February 7, 2013.

"Gardening Between Hope and Doom: Fritz Haeg on *Edible Estates*," [walkerart.org](#), November 24, 2012.

"Fill-in-the-Blank: Candy Chang's Urban Interventions and Open-Ended Questions," [walkerart.org](#), April 17, 2012.

"Graffiti on the Concourse: Keith Haring's 1984 Walker Mural," [walkerart.org](#), March 30, 2012.

"Design's 'Dark Lord' Discusses the Walker Art Center Black Metal Logo," [walkerart.org](#), January 19, 2012.

"Work Hard & Be Nice to People: Designer Anthony Burrill's Advice for Living," [walkerart.org](#), December 5, 2011.

"The Problem of Paint Recoating Sculptures by Calder, Oldenburg, West, and di Suvero," [walkerart.org](#), December 1, 2010.

"Without a Face: Izabella Demavlyns on Photographing Pakistan's Survivors of Acid Attacks," [Eyeteeth](#), March 22, 2010.

"Critics' Picks: Rob Fischer at Franklin Art Works," [Artforum.com](#), October 2009.

"Eyeteeth Interview: Photographer Zack Bent on Mythology, Joseph Beuys, and Bottling Tears," [Eyeteeth](#), July 27, 2009.

"Practical propaganda: Amy Franceschini reinvents the Victory Garden," [Art 21](#), March 1, 2009.

"Where's all the rightwing street art?" [Art 21](#), February 26, 2009.

"Chakkrit Chimnok's banana-leaf utopia," [Art 21](#), February 24, 2009.

"Transcending protest: Looking for pragmatic or poetic art of change," [Art 21](#), February 23, 2009.

"Best of 2008: Trevor Paglen," [City Pages](#), December 24, 2008.

"How Care Manifests the World," 2007 *McKnight Distinguished Artist: Kinji Akagawa* (chapbook), [The McKnight Foundation](#), October 2007.

"Who Owns the J-Word: Videoblogger's Jailing Raises Questions for Journalists," [Minnesota Independent](#) (archived), April 7, 2007.

"How the Land Lies: Omaa akiing" (an interview with Winona LaDuke), [LAND ART: A Cultural Ecology Handbook](#), RSA/Arts Council England, London, 2006.

"How the Land Lies: Design Like You Give a Damn" (an interview with Cameron Sinclair), [LAND ART: A Cultural Ecology Handbook](#), RSA/Arts Council England, London, 2006.

"How the Land Lies: the land" (an interview with Rirkrit Tiravanija), [LAND ART: A Cultural Ecology Handbook](#), RSA/Arts Council England, London, 2006.

"Audio Blog: Thomas Hirschhorn on *Cave-manman*," [walkerart.org](#), November 6, 2006.

"Alec Soth: Interview with the Binocularographer," [walkerart.org](#), May 1, 2006.

"Divinity for the Reality-Based Community," [Adbusters](#) (archived), March/April 2005.

"Insurgent Inquiry: The Art of Allora & Calzadilla," [Adbusters](#) (archived), March/April, 2004.

"A Groundswell of Support for Reforming the Media," [Utne Reader](#), November/December 2003.

"The Anarchist in the Library: Discussing Cultural Democracy with Siva Vaidhyathan," [Eyeteeth](#), April 21, 2003.

"The Death of Local News," [Alternet.org](#), April 22, 2003.

"Paul Schmelzer Examines the Mystery Art and Ministry of Simon Sparrow," [Raw Vision](#), Spring 2001.