

Seema Rao

Museum Leader & Art Historian

Cleveland, OH · seema@brilliantideastudio.com · seemarao.co

Museum executive, educator, and art historian with two decades shaping how cultural institutions connect with audiences — through content strategy, interpretation, digital engagement, and intergenerational learning.

EXPERIENCE

Chief Experience Officer

Akron Art Museum

2019–2022

Rebuilt content strategy and brand voice org-wide; led the public website relaunch (+200% views); originated the TikTok program (11M views, 675K likes; Top-5 museum account per Hyperallergic).

Principal & Creative Director

Brilliant Idea Studio

2017–Present

Museum and cultural consulting: audience research, content strategy, interpretation planning, and digital engagement for institutions and startups.

Director, Intergenerational Learning

Cleveland Museum of Art

2007–2017

Led studio classes, interactive media installations, and all-ages learning; connected diverse publics to the collection.

SELECTED WORK

- Website relaunch — **+200%** views in a year
- Creativity-based AR game — **Webby-nominated**
- Chatbot content strategy — **covered in the New York Times**
- Multimodal centennial campaign — reached **every ZIP code** in the county
- Safety communication — **Visual Comms Silver**, OMA 2020
- Social-media heritage game — +11% post engagement

EDUCATION

MA, Art History

Case Western Reserve University

BA, Biological Sciences & South Asian Studies

University of Chicago

MLIS, UX Design

Kent State University

RECOGNITION

Webby-nominated AR game

NYT-covered chatbot strategy

Visual Comms Silver, OMA 2020

Top-5 museum TikTok, Hyperallergic

PUBLICATIONS

Inclusive Interpretation Tips

AASLH · 2018

Change at Work: Not Just Surviving and Thriving

CreateSpace · 2018

To Journey in Twitter Canoes

Museums and the Web · 2018

SPEAKING

2024 Keynote — Western Museums Association

2020 Keynote — Making Museums Accessible

2018 Talk — Hack the Museum, MuseumNEXT London

2017 Keynote — Trust the Revolution, MuseumNEXT Portland