While Nickelodeon's "Sanjay and Craig" are the curators and "superstars" of the animation exhibit opening in their honor Saturday, April 12, at Cal State Fullerton, graduate Emily Tyler has played a significant supporting role.

As exhibit designer, Tyler has worked tirelessly behind the scenes to bring the exhibit — showcasing Sanjay Patel and his best friend, Craig, a talking snake — alive for the 5-7 p.m. public opening.

"Butt What Is Art? A Sanjay and Craig Fine Art Retrospective" exhibit, opening April 12 in Pollak Library's Atrium Gallery.

In January, Tyler earned her M.F.A. in art-design, focusing on exhibition design and museum studies.

WHAT'S YOUR ROLE WITH THE EXHIBIT?
It's all about the 'dude-snake duo!' Sanjay and Craig are the superstars of the show and are appropriately billed as the exhibit's curators. In short, my role has been to act as the exhibit designer for the show. I was tasked with steering the design of the gallery space, and planning and managing the exhibit's physical installation.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO HAVE BEEN SELECTED?
The student mentorship and outreach programming that Nickelodeon has demonstrated to CSUF is an important relationship, and one that will benefit and inspire students in the future. I'm thrilled to have been selected for this opportunity to contribute to such a significant collaboration.

WHAT DID YOU FIND INTERESTING AND FUN ABOUT THIS EXHIBIT?
I love that the exhibit has a sense of humor. One of the funnier moments working on this project was when the creators arrived at the gallery with a "Gross Jar" filled with grossness and rubber cockroaches to integrate into the display. In my profession, the 'totally gross' doesn't typically coincide with the 'totally awesome!'
WHAT'S IT BEEN LIKE TO WORK WITH NICKELODEON AND CSUF FACULTY AND STAFF?
I was delighted to discover that I would have the opportunity to meet and work with the show's creators, as well as Nickelodeon executives. The Sanjay and Craig animation is produced by Nickelodeon as an artist-driven series. It was important to involve the creators to the same degree in the development of an exhibit that features their innovation. I also have been working closely with Larry Johnson, professor emeritus of art, and his attention to detail and inclusive communication is an inspiration. In the gallery, the assistance and enthusiasm from Trish Campbell, exhibit program coordinator, and her interns, has been invaluable. The exhibit results from a truly collaborative effort.

HOW DOES THIS PROJECT TIE INTO YOUR CAREER GOAL?
A major motivation and educational goal for completing my M.F.A. in art was to develop professional versatility. I hope to continue to work on projects like this, where I can choose to independently curate and design exhibits for nonprofits, galleries, museums, universities, corporations and private collections. I like tackling the challenges presented by different types of exhibits.

WHAT IS YOUR REACTION TO THE INSTALLED EXHIBIT?
A major goal for the exhibit design was to best represent the 2D world of Sanjay and Craig and communicate this environment. The animation brings its visual world to life so vividly, and so I wanted to do the same in the gallery space. The colorful world of Sanjay and Craig inspires the kid in me, and I hope that viewers are similarly engaged and leave with smiles on their faces and are impressed by Nickelodeon's animatic process.

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