

# the Columbia Museum of ART

Position: **Curator**

## **The Position:**

The Columbia Museum of Art (CMA) is seeking a collaborative curatorial leader with a strong academic background, a vision for embracing new cultural trends and technologies, and who understands and embraces programming for diverse audiences. The curator will work with CMA staff and leadership to help define and implement fresh presentations of our permanent collection, and create exhibitions and programming that inform, engage, and expand our audiences to promote the CMA as a leading fine arts museum. The curator will share management of the curatorial department including, but not limited to, oversight of staff roles and responsibilities, the museum's annual exhibition program and collection research, writing, presentations, acquisitions, patron relations, and networking. Executive Director, Della Watkins, leads the museum's commitment to be welcoming, community-centered, vibrant, and inspiring. In addition to these values, the CMA staff and board eagerly embrace diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion to contribute to an open environment for the communities we serve. The person selected to fill this curatorial position will have demonstrated the capacity to promote these attributes.

## **About the Museum:**

The CMA is the largest international art museum in the state of South Carolina, located a short distance to Charleston, SC, Greenville, SC and Charlotte, NC. Columbia is the state capital and the second largest city in the state. In the heart of South Carolina at the convergence of three rivers, the area is home to thriving colleges and universities, award-winning hospital systems, and diverse and charming neighborhoods to suit any lifestyle. Several business and retail districts with outdoor cafés, coffee shops, art galleries, and shops present year-round opportunities for entertainment, socializing, and enjoying the outdoors. The city includes historic architecture of a bygone era while high-tech start-ups and artist venues make up Columbia's diverse downtown areas.

Established in 1950, the CMA is exceptional in its impact, attracting both national and state recognition, and is distinguished by its innovative exhibitions and creative educational programs. The museum now welcomes more than 135,000 visitors annually—including more than 28,000 children—and acts as a catalyst for community creativity and serves as the cultural anchor of Columbia's downtown district. In order to serve even more audiences, the CMA recently underwent a renovation of the 1998 facility, including new collection galleries with a progressive thematic layout, new studios for art-making and cutting-edge program and event spaces. The newly renovated Boyd Plaza adjacent to the CMA provides an attractive outdoor art and gathering space downtown. The CMA is committed to the concept of an inclusive and participatory 21<sup>st</sup> century museum, where art is meant to be experienced, not just seen.

The CMA is a collecting institution and maintains a collection numbering approximately 7,000 works of art. The CMA's collecting emphasis is on American, Asian, European, and

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Contemporary art. The collection includes artists as aesthetically and stylistically varied as Sandro Botticelli, Renee Cox, Charles and Ray Eames, Sam Gilliam, Robert Henri, Claude Monet, Tintoretto, Pat Steir, and Andy Warhol. The governing Collections Committee has an eye to the future and embraces accessions of remarkable artworks that foster ideas through visual conversations. The CMA encompasses 124,000 square feet of permanent and temporary exhibition galleries, studios, public spaces, and storage. The museum actively mounts approximately four special exhibitions per year, with a dynamic menu of related public and educational programs. The CMA operates with an approximately \$4.5 million budget and a staff of 29 full-time and 27 part-time employees (including security and special event staff).

## **Scope of Work:**

- Collaboratively conceptualize and research an exhibition and collection strategy that supports the museum's vision, mission, and core values for discussion with the executive director, director of art and learning, and presentation to the board of trustees
- Encourage and facilitate a culture of collaboration by serving as a Lead Manager across programmatic and supporting departments to ensure effective communication, efficiencies, and accountability
- Co-Lead the annual planning of the exhibition schedule, including those exhibitions initiated by the CMA, traveling exhibitions, artist installations, private collections, and loans
- Initiate and manage relations with assigned institutions, collectors, and/or businesses in developing exhibition loan contracts, check lists, and schedules.
- In concert with a curatorial team of six team members, oversee coordination of exhibition installation design, layout, graphics and shipping/handling.
- Show commitment to the positive development of curatorial team through leadership, management, and supervisory duties, including but not limited to, annual performance appraisals and professional development.
- Review exhibition proposals and ideas for artistic merit, mission fit, budget and scheduling factors.
- Actively solicit, cultivate, and steward relations with colleagues, donors, members, lenders, staff and guests.
- Champion the museum as a welcoming place by serving as a positive museum representative through participation with programs, development, and publicity marketing and networking activities.
- Develop, maintain, and strengthen relationships with members of the broader arts community including artists, curators, educators, writers, journalists, collectors, and cultural institutions both nationally and internationally

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- Provide expertise and information for collections committee meetings, collections management policy and strategy, assigned grant applications, and general fundraising activities as requested.
- In collaboration with Development staff, help identify potential donors, collectors, and sponsors for the collection and designated exhibitions.
- Ensure proper dissemination of exhibition schedule, visual materials, content and text for exhibition promotion, and related information to CMA departments.
- Responsible as assigned for coordination, development, and monitoring of the curatorial departmental annual budget
- Serve on curatorial and cross-departmental special project teams as assigned to foster collaboration and communication.

## **Requirements:**

- MA in art history or related field, PhD preferred
- 8+ years of increasingly applied curatorial experience
- 5+ years of growth in management-level museum experience
- Demonstrated excellence in conceiving and organizing successful exhibitions for new audiences
- Demonstrated level of knowledge in the museum's collecting areas including American, Asian, European and Contemporary art
- Proven ability to foster and encourage innovation around new models for partnering (both internally and externally), and for exploring new creative relationships with artists central to the CMA mission
- Demonstrated experience developing, communicating, and managing department projects, staff, budgets, and goals
- Effectively navigate through the complexity of key issues, challenges, and opportunities to affect actions; guide staff to proactively build and align stakeholders, capabilities, and resources to achieve institutional objectives
- Proactively model the importance of timely collegial interaction, personal accountability, maturity, professionalism, communication, and exchange across disciplinary boundaries
- Demonstrated experience in donor cultivation and stewardship
- Self-directed and motivated
- Work with curatorial team to ensure care and conservation of works
- Mastery of English language and the ability to plan and deliver oral and written communications that make an impact, persuade, and inform their intended audiences
- Knowledge of research tools and methodologies
- Monthly evening and weekend time and occasional travel
- This position requires a criminal background check
- A considerable amount of time sitting, standing, walking, climbing stairs, and reaching
- Experience handling objects and tools

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- The ability to lift up to 30 pounds

**Contact:**

The Columbia Museum of Art is an Equal Opportunity Employer, committed to diversity, accessibility, equity, and inclusion. Confidential inquiries, applications, and recommendations are welcome. Please email cover letter and resume to Mrs. Jeanna Dixon-McCray, at [JDixon-McCray@columbiamuseum.org](mailto:JDixon-McCray@columbiamuseum.org) with “Curator” in the subject line.

**Salary Range:** Commensurate with experience