



THE CHARLES HOSMER
MORSE MUSEUM
of American Art

Chief Preparator

Position Description

This full-time position reports to the Museum's Director and Chief Curator and works closely with all departments at the Museum.

The Chief Preparator, a member of the Collection Department, is responsible for all aspects of preparation, installation, transportation, and maintenance of all artwork and inventoried material within the collection of the Charles Hosmer Morse Museum of American Art. In addition to an exceptional understanding of art handling, they should be skilled in areas of specialization such as carpentry, mount making, lighting, packing, framing, digital architectural rendering, photography, and handling of oversized artwork. The Museum is widely known for its extensive holdings of artwork by Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848–1933), but it features art of all types dating from 1830–1930. The Museum is a benefaction, and as stewards of the benefaction, all members of the staff work together to honor the legacy of the Museum's founder Jeannette Genius McKean (1909–89) and the Museum's founding Director Hugh F. McKean (1908–95).

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- 5 years' museum or art-related field preparation experience; a B.A. in art-related coursework a plus.
- Proficiency in rough and finish carpentry and use of shop tools and equipment.
- Knowledge of proper and safe use of a variety of equipment (forklift, scissor lift, high lift, etc.), hand tools, chemicals, paints, etc.
- Knowledge of proper packing techniques and materials (including specialized shipping and/or storage crates) for art.
- Ability to properly analyze the physical requirements and the inherent risks associated with the handling, transportation, or display of art objects.
- Ability to organize and plan schedules within a changing work environment while adhering to the time-sensitive nature of production work and to coordinate several tasks with many people simultaneously.
- Organized and self-motivated, have problem-solving skills, and sound judgement.

- Ability to apply creative methods to solve installation problems with diligence.
- Communicate effectively, orally and in writing, and be able to follow both oral and written instructions.
- Must be comfortable climbing ladders and operating lift equipment.
- Must be able to lift, carry, push, pull, or support heavy objects, crates, a variety of trade tools, equipment, and materials.
- Must be able to safely lift a minimum of 50 lbs., and balance and lift more with the aid of a team.
- Must be able to climb, balance, stoop, kneel, and crouch to gain access to equipment.
- Must be able to work with machinery that creates noise and vibration and work in environments with exposure to noise and vibration.
- Must be able to work in confined areas or at heights to perform duties.
- Proficient in computer programs including but not limited to Outlook and Zoom and familiarity with collection databases like TMS.
- Valid driver's license, with safe driving record.

Duties (including but not limited to)

Exhibition

- Coordinate (with Registrar) installation, and de-installation of permanent and temporary exhibitions.
- Prepare artwork for exhibitions, loans, and photography—including evaluating condition, general cleaning, mounting requirements, and packing solutions.
- Packing and unpacking materials and artifacts.
- Install proper lighting (or work in coordination with contract lighting specialist) and maintain exhibition area lighting along with Facilities Department staff.
- Manage, under direction of design team, matting and framing of works of art in an archival manner.
- Interpret and produce work from architectural/design plans and fabrication shop drawings.
- Plan and manage the construction and fabrication of exhibition walls, cases, pedestals, props, and other display elements.

Supervision and Coordination

- Supervise full- and part-time Preparators; arrange for contract workers as needed for special projects.
- Oversee careful and proper handling, hanging, and moving of art objects, crates, and general property.

- Oversee transportation of art objects and inventory between storage and Museum, and local pick-up and delivery of artwork as directed.
- Supervise the wood shop and maintain inventory of shop equipment.
- Coordinate packing and unpacking, loading, and unloading.
- Oversee procedures and safety measures of a variety of equipment, hand tools, chemicals, paints, etc.
- Travel and/or coordinate staff for travel with loans, conservation, or acquisition.

Budgetary and Administrative

- Process purchase orders, invoices, schedules, calendars, crew vacation requests, and time sheets with approval of Museum Director and Chief Curator.
- Assist in developing and monitoring budgets; oversee and evaluate external vendors and contractors in coordination with the Facilities Department as needed.
- Attend and participate in Collection and Exhibition meetings and other project-based meetings and correspondence.

Organization, Monitoring, and Development

- Organize, maintain, and inventory exhibition case furniture, crates, and other non-art items necessary for the display and shipping of artwork (mounts, blocks, show frames, etc.) and exhibition design (gallery measurements, models, etc.).
- Identify and prioritize collection conservation needs in association with Curators and Registrar.
- Monitor and maintain all exhibition areas and report defects or deteriorations to Facilities Department and Collection Department.
- Monitor and maintain, with the Registrar and/or Conservators, the condition of materials and objects in the storage areas, and report defects or deteriorations.
- Arrange and participate in professional development to learn new skills, maintain current professional standards of art and object handling, storage, maintenance, and support of a variety of artwork.
- Assist with Collection inventory.

Qualified applicant may send resume to officeservicesmanager@morsemuseum.org.