



POSITION: Chief Curator
REPORTS TO: Director
STATUS: Full-time, Exempt

Job Summary

The Chief Curator at the Mississippi Museum of Art is a seasoned art curator and member of the leadership team. They are an integral part of shaping the artistic vision, strategic priorities, and mission of the organization. Through leadership and collaboration, the Chief Curator supports acquisitions and develops exhibitions that center artists' voices, lifts up marginalized histories, and explores new narratives. With a strong connection to the local community, state, and country, they lead MMA's exhibition development plan with a focus on the visitor experience. They support MMA's continued efforts to foster meaningful relationships and open dialogue with our diverse community, bringing relevant exhibitions to Mississippians that enable us to be a place for conversation, connection, and wonder. In addition, the Chief Curator works with the Director, their colleagues, and other partners to develop high quality exhibitions that travel from MMA and across the nation, putting MMA and Mississippi on a national platform.

Essential Functions

Role #1: Leadership, Management, Accountability

- Lead a high performing curatorial department that collaborates effectively with other departments
- Guide team members' growth and development, set clear priorities, and foster an inclusive work environment that fulfills the Museum's mission, vision, and values
- Model the Museum's values by following and enforcing systems, policies, and procedures
- Represent the Museum's mission, vision, values, and strategic priorities with internal and external stakeholders
- Cultivate relationships across all levels of the Museum, serving as a thought leader on the Leadership Team
- Provide organizational leadership aimed at a forward-focused vision that is agile, innovative, and aligns with strategic priorities
- Manage successful relationships with curatorial contractors, such as exhibition designers, publication designers, and publication editors
- Mentor Academic Affairs Fellows, supporting their career paths in the Curatorial sector and Museum field
- Represent MMA as a leader in the Museum field
- Support the Director and Chief Advancement Officer with funding opportunities for exhibitions and acquisitions

- Thought partner with Center for Art and Public Exchange (CAPE) team members to move the work of CAPE forward in connecting to new audiences on a local, statewide, and national level, creating environments that foster connection and care, and leading museum practices towards more authentic ways of relating to community, power, class, and privilege through programs, interpretation, and exhibitions.

Role #2: Exhibition Development

- Oversee cross-departmental process to create a consistent system that drives multi-year exhibition planning with MMA colleagues, beginning with the curatorial and education teams to establish themes and interpretive opportunities, folding in development, marketing, CAPE, operations, retail, and visitor services to achieve a cohesive, collaborative plan that incorporates all facets of the Museum and, when applicable, partners
- With support from the Associate Director of Exhibitions, manage and lead the exhibition development plan to align with strategic goals while considering visitor data and community issues to increase attendance and local ownership
- Work closely with the Director of Education and Associate Director of Exhibitions to incorporate educational and interpretative elements with exhibition plans and in-galleries experiences
- Collaborate with the Director of Education, the Center for Art and Public Exchange (CAPE) team, and other applicable colleagues to develop exhibition-related programs with participation from scholars and artists that explore exhibition themes and attract a local and at times a national audience
- Oversee the permanent collection exhibition *New Symphony of Time* by developing a system of rotating gallery sections with the Assistant Director of the Permanent Collection, other co-curators, and community voices to boost local ownership of and participation in the permanent collection
- Support the planning and coordination of the Affiliate Program; build and sustain successful statewide partnerships to have meaningful impacts on their local communities, support the structure and implementation of the program along with the evaluation process
- Recognize the power and importance of what can be learned from examining historic objects in conversation with context and contemporary issues, and continue to apply relevant and timely interpretation to museum exhibitions
- Mount exhibitions that grapple with the multiple identities and dimensions that inform the experience of Mississippians
- Continue to experiment with the format of traveling exhibitions that invite challenging and novel conversations based on the experience of Mississippians.
- Continue to push the Museum's position as a leader in national conversations and in our community, capturing often-ignored Mississippi stories to link local and national conversations through exhibitions
- Continue to explore the successful model established by *Legacies of the Great Migration* exhibition for partnerships with American museums interested in curating new exhibitions that explore our shared histories, narratives, and experiences.

- Continue to identify mission-aligned museums both in the Southeast and other regions for future shared exhibition development and exchange.

Role #3: Collections Development

- Staff liaison for the Acquisitions Committee
- Work closely with the Director of Collections Management and Registration to oversee the care of the collection and manage the digitized collection through TMS (collection database system)
- Develop and implement a Collections Develop Plan and Collections Management Plan that aligns with strategic priorities and employs a bold strategy focused on aligning the collection with MMA's mission
- With support from the Assistant Curator of the Collection, oversee the collections development process; evaluate the collection from the perspective of the objects' ability to fulfill the Museum's commitment to the community

Role #4: Artist Relations

- Identify and engage with national artists who have family histories in Mississippi
- In collaboration with the Center for Art and Public Exchange (CAPE) team, facilitate relationships between national artists and local communities through artist-in-residence programs, exhibition programming, and commissioned artworks

Role #5: Community Relevance

- Work closely with colleagues from all departments to develop a relevant, meaningful experience for all visitors to Museum galleries and programs
- Prioritize community voices and feedback in determining exhibition planning and themes, layout, and interpretation, ensuring exhibitions and their supporting programs reflect the diverse cultures represented in Mississippi communities
- In collaboration with the Director of Education and Center for Art and Public Exchange (CAPE), maintain and expand the Museum's role as a place of learning and inquiry through educational programming and exhibitions that challenge audiences to think critically and engage with one another
- Collaborate with other departments to move relationships beyond the Museum's walls to regularly serve and better understand the Museum's communities and how best to serve them, particularly through exhibitions and programs

Role #6: Publishing

- Oversee the execution of exhibition catalogues and applicable publications, including collaboration of authors, budgets, deadlines, publication design, and editing process
- Create publications that directly relate to exhibitions and the Museum's collection
- Participate in national publication and peer-reviewed article opportunities

Competency

- M.A. in Art History or related field, Ph. D., or relevant experience
- 10+ years of experience in the curatorial and art museum field, including publishing catalogues and scholarly articles, acquisitions, exhibitions, and installation
- Direct experience with successfully managing a diverse team

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Ability to write for a public and scholarly audience
- Ability to successfully lead a curatorial team and collaborate with a range of departments, colleagues, partners, and museum supporters
- Proven track record in museum administration, leadership, and the production of high-quality work
- Collaborative, flexible, and supportive
- Excellent written, verbal, listening, and communication skills
- Strong public speaking skills
- Strong project management skills
- Adapt at building meaningful professional relationships
- Innovative, agile, and adaptable

Travel

National and state-wide travel may be required

Salary Range

\$95,000 - \$120,000

Expected Hours of Work

Exempt - This is a 40-hour a week job, primarily between Monday through Friday. Some evenings and weekends may be necessary to support Museum events and programs.

Physical Demands and Work Environment

The physical demands and work environment characteristics described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this position. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

- Some duties may require long periods of movement
- Work may be performed both indoors and outdoors in different weather conditions.

About the Mississippi Museum of Art

The Museum is an Equal Opportunity Employer and is committed to creating a diverse environment. The Museum is a private not-for-profit and is not a department or agency of the state or federal government.

The Mississippi Museum of Art is more than an art museum in Jackson, Mississippi. It is a museum *of* Mississippi – a museum that connects Mississippians to our culture, our history, our communities, and to each other. It is a museum informed by the legacy of our past and emboldened by a vision of a future without division.

We believe it is our responsibility to the community to explore and examine every facet of the Mississippi story. The Mississippi Museum of Art is committed to curating a

shared space for every Mississippian – a brave space where we can all find wonder, peace, and a voice.

We pride ourselves in being a visitor and community-focused art museum and garden in downtown Jackson, Mississippi. The Museum employs a collaborative staff that works to ensure the exhibitions, programs, operations, and community outreach fulfill the mission, vision, and core values of the institution. We are committed to building a culture of inclusivity that includes continued professional development opportunities at all levels of the Museum.

Mission

The Mississippi Museum of Art connects Mississippi to the world, and the power of art to the power of community.

Vision

Committed to honesty, equity, and inclusion, the Mississippi Museum of Art is a leader in engaging art, artists, and participants in the critical work of reckoning with the past, connecting with each other in the present, and thinking how museums will work with their communities in the future.

Core Values

- **Artworks + Artists:** Museum programs recognize artworks as primary sources of meaning and explore them in the context of their creation and creators; the Museum builds relationships with artists, amplifies their voices through exhibitions, and engages them with new audiences.
- **Warm Welcome + Inclusion:** The Museum models gratitude and hospitality for all people and demonstrates inclusiveness at all levels of its operations and programs; everything, from the exhibitions to the gardens, is thoughtfully designed to prioritize accessibility, ensuring that everyone can participate fully. The Museum will model open hospitality for all people and will demonstrate inclusiveness at all levels of its operations and programs.
- **Excellence + Equity:** Museum programs, exhibitions, and collections place artistic value as central and simultaneously challenge traditional hierarchies of genre and style.
- **Local Relevance + National Importance:** The Museum facilitates investigations into Mississippi's cultural histories that resonate with Jacksonians and Mississippians; the resulting programs hold up a mirror to the world, attracting local and national partners who seek to explore our shared histories.
- **Honesty + Diversity:** Honoring diverse viewpoints, histories, and lived experiences, the Museum is a place for honest conversations that explore power and privilege in services of learning, understanding, and empathy.
- **Trust + Exchange:** The Museum believes accurate interpretation of artworks depends on lived experience as well as scholarship. The Museum invites intellectual exchange between the audiences, staff, and artists who create exhibitions and deepen their meaning through their exploration.

- **Resilience + Sustainability:** Museum operations and facilities are designed with attention to the present and future needs of visitors and environment alike; recognizing the increasing need for adaptability in the face of uncertainty, the Museum prioritizes strength, adaptability, and growth.

Employee Values

A successful member of the Museum's team will be mission-driven, welcoming, inclusive, respectful, empathetic, ambitious, will bring a level of excellence to their work, have a high respect for artists and artistic integrity, and will collaborate within their department and with other departments.

To apply for an opportunity to be a part of our dynamic team, please send your cover letter and resume to careers@msmuseumart.org.