

Maryhill Museum of Art

Curator of Art

Maryhill Museum of Art seeks an accomplished and collaborative Curator of Art to provide intellectual and creative leadership for the Museum's unique collection; develop compelling exhibitions that engage both new and existing audiences; and ensure thoughtful stewardship, interpretation, and development of the collection.

Located on 5,300 scenic acres overlooking the Columbia River near Goldendale, Washington, Maryhill Museum of Art is one of the Pacific Northwest's most distinctive cultural institutions. Its mission is to ignite a journey of educational enrichment in the Columbia River Gorge by preserving, interpreting, and showcasing art and historic collections through high-quality exhibitions and educational programs, public access to its collections, and an engaged community of members and donors.

The Museum occupies a historic Beaux-Arts mansion built in 1914 as the home of entrepreneur and road advocate Samuel Hill. Hill's friend Loïe Fuller, a pioneering modern dancer, encouraged him to transform the unfinished residence into a museum. Fuller helped establish the foundation of the collection, including works by Auguste Rodin. The Museum was dedicated in 1926 by Queen Marie of Romania and opened to the public in 1940 on Sam Hill's birthday.

Today, Maryhill Museum of Art has a collection of approximately 10,000 paintings, prints, sculptures, Indigenous art, fashion and textiles, ecclesiastical artworks, chess sets, and other materials. Some of the strengths of the collection include approximately 4,000 Indigenous artworks, approximately 90 works by Auguste Rodin, and the celebrated Théâtre de la Mode (1946). The Museum also maintains over 5,500 historic images and an archive documenting its institutional history and founders.

The historic building and its 2012 addition provide approximately 35,000 square feet of space with galleries on all four floors. Maryhill's remarkable physical setting, history, collections, and location in the Columbia River Gorge give the Museum opportunities to connect art, history, landscape, and community in ways few institutions can replicate.

BASIC FUNCTION

The Curator of Art will develop a compelling curatorial and exhibition program that combines scholarship with accessibility and invites visitors to make meaningful connections among art, history, and culture. This leader will think creatively about how the permanent collection can be interpreted and presented while developing temporary exhibitions that expand the Museum's reach and attract both new and repeat visitors.

Reporting to the Executive Director and working in close collaboration with the Collections Manager, Curator of Education, and other staff, the Curator of Art will foster a collaborative working environment across departments and will help translate Maryhill's mission and strategic priorities into exhibitions, acquisitions, scholarship, publications, educational experiences, and public programs. The Curator of Art will also serve as an outward-facing representative of the Museum, developing productive relationships with artists, scholars, donors, collectors, lenders, galleries, and other museums and cultural organizations.

ONGOING RESPONSIBILITIES

CURATORIAL LEADERSHIP AND EXHIBITIONS

- Develop and implement short- and long-term curatorial visions for Maryhill's permanent collection and exhibition programs consistent with the Museum's mission, priorities, and values.
- Develop and manage the curatorial department's annual budget.
- Identify opportunities to reinterpret and activate the permanent collection in ways that encourage discovery, deepen the visitor experience, and offer reasons for repeat visits.
- Organize exhibitions with external partners and manage relationships with guest and advisory curators, lenders, and other partner institutions.
- Evaluate exhibitions and curatorial initiatives with colleagues and use attendance, audience response, scholarship, and other appropriate measures to continuously improve the Museum's offerings and appeal.
- Organize and implement the annual Pacific Northwest Plein Air in the Columbia River Gorge paint-out and exhibition in collaboration with participating artists and the local steering committee.

COLLECTIONS & SCHOLARSHIP

- Provide intellectual and strategic leadership for Maryhill's approximately 10,000 object collection and related archival holdings.
- Work with the Executive Director, Collections Manager and Board to establish priorities for acquisitions, deaccessioning, conservation, research, and use of the collection per the museum's collecting plan
- Maintain knowledge of scholarships and developments within fields represented by the Museum's collection and identify opportunities for original research. Respond to scholarly and public inquiries regarding objects in the collection and encourage appropriate access to the collection by scholars, educators, and other researchers.
- Ensure that the care, handling, documentation, conservation, and use of collections meet appropriate professional and ethical standards.
- Remain knowledgeable about laws, regulations, and ethical considerations relevant to the Museum's holdings, including NAGPRA, CITES, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and other applicable requirements.

EDUCATION, INTERPRETATION & PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Work closely with the Curator of Education to connect exhibitions and collections to educational programs, lectures, tours, public programs, and other experiences for visitors of different ages and backgrounds.
- Translate scholarship into compelling, accessible stories that help audiences understand Maryhill's collection.

- Participate in lectures, gallery talks, donor events, and other public programs and represent the Museum at appropriate professional and community events.

DEVELOPMENT & EXTERNAL RELATIONS

- Partner with the Executive Director and the Board to identify, cultivate, and steward collectors, donors, lenders, and prospective supporters of exhibitions, acquisitions, conservation, and other curatorial priorities.
- Serve as knowledgeable ambassador for Maryhill Museum of Art and its collections within professional, philanthropic, and community circles.

LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

- Supervise and support the Collections Manager and other staff, interns, volunteers, or contractors assigned to curatorial projects.
- Counsel and mentor staff and volunteers regarding museum standards and best practices.
- Provide Executive Director with timely information and recommendations concerning collections, exhibitions, acquisitions, conservation needs, scholarly opportunities, and other curatorial matters.
- Foster a collaborative working environment across departmental lines and contribute beyond narrowly defined responsibilities.

EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal candidate will have the following experience and qualifications:

- Significant curatorial experience within an art museum, cultural institution, or comparable organization, including demonstrated success conceptualizing and realizing exhibitions that combine strong scholarship with accessibility and public appeal; experience developing a long-term exhibition and collections strategy and translating that strategy into programs, budgets, and schedules.
- Demonstrated ability to research, synthesize, and communicate complex information to scholarly and general audiences through exhibitions, publications, lectures, and other forums.
- Experience supervising, mentoring, and developing staff and the ability to foster trust, respect, and productive communication within a small and highly collaborative team; a collegial leader who values the expertise of colleagues and can work effectively across curatorial, collections, education, development, marketing, visitor experience, and administrative functions.
- Broad intellectual curiosity and expertise in one or more areas relevant to Maryhill's collections, coupled with enthusiasm for working across a diverse and eclectic collection rather than within a narrowly defined specialization.
- A graduate degree in Art History, Museum Studies, or a related discipline; an advanced academic background appropriate to the scope of the position is preferred.
- At least 5 years working in a cultural or museum setting. Knowledge of collection management software, particularly PastPerfect, would be useful.

- Strong written and oral communication skills and comfort representing an institution publicly before donors, members, trustees, scholars, peers, and general audiences. Grant writing experience and existing collector or donor relationships are desired.
- A person who is comfortable working in a distinctive rural environment and is enthusiastic about becoming part of the broader cultural community of the Columbia River Gorge and Pacific Northwest.
- An outcome-oriented, hard worker with high energy and initiative; a doer with willingness to work hands-on; experience in program evaluation, planning, and management are essential, and skills in art handling, art transportation, and exhibition installation are valuable.
- An emotionally mature individual with strong self-awareness and a good sense of humor.

COMPENSATION

The salary range is **\$85,000 - \$110,000** annually. Compensation will be competitive and based on experience.

For more information please contact:

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