



SMART MUSEUM OF ART
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

INTERIM CURATOR OF ASIAN ART

Organization

The Smart Museum of Art at the University of Chicago (smartmuseum.uchicago.edu), located in one of the nation's greatest cities for art and on the campus of one of the world's leading research universities, opens the world through art and ideas. The Smart Museum is widely known for its ambitious, interdisciplinary exhibitions and programs and plays a central role in the University's arts initiative, which has brought extraordinary new focus and energy to the arts on campus. At the same time, the Museum collaborates closely with other units on campus and institutions and scholars in the city, across the country, and around the world. Its exhibition projects frequently arise from partnerships with faculty colleagues and other institutions and travel nationally and internationally. The Smart Museum is also deeply engaged in programming for the communities that surround it.

The University of Chicago has long been committed to the study of Asian civilizations and cultures, and in recent years has established centers in Beijing and Delhi. Asian art is an important focus of the Department of Art History and other areas of the University and a core component of the Smart's permanent collection. The Asian collection includes over 800 works in all media and encompasses a rich variety of forms, materials, and functions, ranging from millennia-old ritual objects to contemporary photography. Covering a wide geographic region, the collection's main areas of strength are the traditional arts of East Asia, the arts of pan-Asian Buddhism, and patterns of cultural transmission in literati painting and Asian ceramic traditions. However, exhibition, acquisition, and research activity is not limited to these areas. To view past Asian art exhibitions and collection installations please visit <http://smartmuseum.uchicago.edu/exhibitions/past-exhibitions/>.

Please note: The Smart Museum is currently conducting an international search for a new Director. This full-time interim curatorial position has been created for approximately twelve months beginning as soon as possible and continuing through Fall 2017.

Position Summary

The Interim Curator of Asian Art will serve as a coordinating curator for previously planned exhibitions and will be primarily responsible for the annual reinstallation of the Museum's permanent collection. In collaboration with other museum colleagues, s/he will work closely with faculty, guest curators, and students to support, encourage, and develop related public programs for exhibitions and collection installations that strengthen the Museum's engagement with Asian art. As a member of the Smart Museum's highly collaborative collections, exhibitions and education team, the interim curator has primary responsibility for the coordination of exhibitions, collection installations, research, and publications in this key area of the Smart Museum's collection. In addition, working with the Smart's Curator and Associate Director of Academic Initiatives, the curator encourages curricular and co-curricular collaboration with the Departments of Art History, Visual Arts and others whose content expertise aligns with Asian exhibition projects and collection installations. Reporting

to the Interim Director of the Smart Museum (or his designee), the Interim Asian Art Curator works in close partnership with the other members of the collections, exhibition and education team (CEE).

Essential Functions:

50% As coordinating curator, work closely with faculty, guest curators, students, and other Smart Museum colleagues to support, encourage, and develop exhibitions, collections installations, and related public programs that strengthen the Museum's engagement with Asian art.

- Implement exhibitions and programs with faculty, students, and others that support the research, curricular, and pedagogical work of our faculty and students. Upcoming projects include *The Other Side: Osaka Prints from the Brooks McCormick Collection* (working title) with consulting curators Richard Born and University of Zürich professor Hans Thomsen, and faculty curator Chelsea Foxwell: early-February 2018 to early June 2018; and *Allure of Matter* (working title), a multi-venue exhibition project with faculty curator Wu Hung: mid-September 2019 to early January 2020.
- Work collaboratively with education and interpretation colleagues and with faculty, students, staff, and civic partners to organize workshops, seminars/webinars, conferences, and other exhibition related programs.
- Work closely with the Museum's external relations team to develop plans to promote exhibitions, collections installations and related programs to diverse audiences on campus, throughout the south side, across Chicago, and beyond.

25% As a member of the Smart Museum's highly collaborative collections, exhibitions and education team (CEE), the Interim modern curator has primary responsibility for directing exhibition, collections installations, research, publication activities and acquisitions in this key area of the Smart Museum's collection.

- Serve as an active member of the curatorial team of four and participate in standing curatorial and cross-departmental committees.
- Serve as a member of the Smart Museum's CEE team to encourage collaboration that integrates object-driven learning both at the University and with the broader public.
- Develop and oversee the 2017/2018 annual reinstallation of the Janis Kanter and Thomas McCormick Gallery as part of the Museum-wide Conversations with the Collections Initiative.
- Work closely with the director and serves as a curatorial liaison to the Collections Committee of the Museum's Board of Governors to support on-going acquisition activities for this area of the collection.
- Participate in scholarly conferences as appropriate that contribute to the Smart Museum's visibility within the field.
- Assist other staff with regular, ongoing tasks including general collection management and maintenance, research, and the development of collection policies. Provide input on photography and conservation needs for the

permanent collection. Assist with weekly gallery cleaning. Travel as an art/exhibition courier as needed.

- 15% Encourage curricular and co-curricular collaboration with the Departments of Art History, Visual Arts and others whose content expertise aligns with the Asian art exhibition projects and collection installations.
- Work closely with and serve as a liaison to the Department of Art History, Department of Visual Art's Open Practice Committee, the Renaissance Society, Logan Center Exhibitions, Arts + Public Life, the Gray Center for Arts and Inquiry, the Arts, Science & Culture Initiative, the Neubauer Collegium, and others to develop appropriate exhibition related collaborations that complement and provoke engagement between diverse art audiences and contribute a unique voice in the University's cultural landscape.
- 5% Develop and manage Exhibition budgets.
- Propose, approve, track, and coordinate allocation of expenses related to the Smart Museum's Asian exhibitions projects.
 - Work with the Director of Administration to develop and maintain a multi-year exhibition project and collections budgets and prepare reports as needed.
 - Work with the Director of Development and External Relations to identify and coordinate applications for exhibition funding opportunities through appropriate grants.
- 5% Serve as a member of the Smart Museum's staff and assist with various programs and projects. This includes coordination with colleagues across UChicago Arts, representing the Smart Museum on various arts-related committees both within the University and beyond, and other duties as assigned.

Qualifications

The ideal candidate must possess:

- A familiarity with both traditional and contemporary Asian art, with experience working in Chinese, Japanese, or Korean art
- Eagerness to work within the unique environment of a research university such as the University of Chicago, where a commitment to rigorous debate, field-changing research, and boundary-breaking collaborations is fundamental.
- At least two (2) years of progressively more responsible experience working in art museums on a part-time or full-time basis.
- A graduate degree in Art History or a related field or equivalent relevant experience required, Ph.D. desirable.
- A record of work on innovative research and exhibitions.
- Dedication to the care and stewardship of artworks and knowledge of conservation issues

- Exceptional organizational skills required. Must be able to oversee complex projects and schedules, maintain deadlines, establish and work within budgets, with the ability to set priorities and manage several projects simultaneously required. Ability to successfully manage a workload that balances long-range planning with the unanticipated daily demands of art exhibition spaces required.
- Familiarity with the full range of current issues in museum practice particularly as they affect the acquisition, exhibition, and interpretation of traditional and contemporary Asian art
- An ability to speak, read, and write in English required and Chinese and/or Korean and/or Japanese preferred.
- A substantial commitment to collaboration of all types, with museum colleagues, students, faculty, and external partners
- Comfort in establishing positive and effective relationships with internal and external communities, including major donors and collectors, board members, artists, members of the press, art dealers, professionals at other institutions, faculty, students, and the public required
- Excellent written and spoken communication skills with the ability to synthesize and accurately present relevant information required.
- Knowledge of database management software preferred
- Willingness and ability to work occasional evenings and weekends as required.

Mental Demands:

- Organizational and human relations skills with ability to collaborate well and supportively and cultivate good relationships with colleagues within the Museum and its many collaborators.
- The temperament to work with a diverse and demanding population is expected.
- Must be self-directed and self-motivated, able to set goals and develop projects.
- Clear, effective, and tactful oral and written communication skills; ability to handle sensitive information with discretion.
- Ability to prioritize and execute multiple tasks simultaneously with an ability to view a project in its entirety.

Physical Demands:

- The successful oversight of exhibition installations in a 10,000 square foot set of galleries requires the ability to conduct regular building rounds.
- Considerable office work.
- Ability to occasionally travel out of town.

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by people assigned to this job. They are not an exhaustive list of all duties and responsibilities associated with it.

This position offers competitive compensation and the excellent benefits package available to exempt staff members of the University of Chicago.

All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, protected veteran status or status as an individual with disability.

The University of Chicago is an Affirmative Action / Equal Opportunity / Disabled / Veterans Employer. (humanresources.uchicago.edu/fpg/policies/200/p201.shtml)