Museum Preparator

*This is a general description, and duties may vary based on the museum's specific needs. It’s always important to tailor position descriptions to fit your organization's unique needs and culture.*

Position: Museum Preparator

Reports To: Curator, Registrar, or Exhibitions Manager

Potential Staff Reporting to this Position: None

Job Description

The museum preparator is responsible for safely handling, installing, and presenting artworks in the museum’s collection and exhibitions. This role is crucial in ensuring the displayed works' visual integrity and physical safety.

Responsibilities:

1. Art Handling: Handling, moving, and storing artworks following best practices to ensure their safety and preservation.
2. Exhibition Installation: Packing and unpacking crates and storing them for future use—installing and de-installing exhibitions, including artwork layout, construction of exhibition furniture, and lighting design.
3. Maintenance: Maintaining the appearance of galleries and exhibition spaces, including cleaning and minor repairs.
4. Documentation: Documenting the condition of collections and reporting any issues or concerns to the appropriate staff.
5. Collaboration: Working closely with curators, conservators, and other museum staff to ensure the successful presentation of exhibitions.

Qualifications:

* Experience in object handling and exhibition installation, preferably in museums or galleries.
* Knowledge of professional practices in art preservation and safety.
* Excellent problem-solving and technical skills.
* Ability to work well in a small team environment.
* A degree in art, museum studies, or a related field may be beneficial but is not always necessary.

Skills

Consider the following set of essential skills that museum preparators need. Even without direct experience in a similar position, someone with these skills could accomplish the tasks by leveraging the following:

1. Collaboration & Communication: Working collaboratively with staff to ensure successful project execution.
2. Problem-Solving: Familiarity with safety protocols, procedures, and regulations, including knowledge of proper lifting techniques, how to use personal protective equipment (PPE), handling hazardous materials, and emergency response protocols. Ability to anticipate and address logistical, technical, and unexpected obstacles and implement creative solutions to overcome challenges.
3. Adaptability: Ability to work in dynamic environments with changing schedules, tight deadlines, and evolving project requirements while maintaining a high level of professionalism, attention to detail, and commitment to standards.
4. Attention to Detail: Ensuring accuracy and thoroughness in work.
5. Practical Application: Experience in carpentry, woodworking, construction, mount making, and display methods. Proficiency and certification in rigging. Experience operating and maintaining forklifts, pallet jacks, art dollies, and lifting straps.